

Local

Lebanese President appreciates Kuwait's constant support

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister delivers letter from Crown Prince to Aoun



BEIRUT: Lebanese President Michel Aoun meets with members of the Kuwaiti delegation, led by Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah. — KUNA photos

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Michel Aoun spoke highly of the Kuwaiti Amir, government and people for standing by his country in all conditions. During his meeting with Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah on Saturday, President Aoun praised the historic deep-rooted relationship between the two sisterly countries, according to a statement from the Lebanese presidency. He welcomed Sheikh Dr Ahmad's participation in the Arab foreign ministers' consultative meeting which opened earlier Saturday in Beirut. President Aoun commended the positive impact of the Kuwaiti initiative for improving the relationship between Lebanon and the GCC states, noting that the relations have been improving since the return of ambassadors of both sides. Sheikh Dr Ahmad delivered a letter from His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the President. The letter focused on ways to further bolster ties.

Expression of support

The Secretary General of the Arab League Ahmad Abul-Gheit said on Saturday that the Arab Foreign Ministers held their meeting in Lebanon as an expression of their solidarity and support. He pointed out in a statement to the press, after his meeting with the Arab foreign ministers and President Aoun at Baabda Palace, that the ministers

thanked the president and showed their support for Lebanon. The consultative meeting was held by consensus among all Arab countries to support the Lebanese people and government, he added. They listened to a speech in which Aoun explained the Lebanese situation and the need for international support, as the Arab League wishes Lebanon all the



Arab meeting coincides with delicate conditions

best and utmost success, he mentioned.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdullah Bou Habib said that this routine meeting was held in preparation for the upcoming Arab Summit scheduled in Algeria next November. The meeting has no specific agenda; however, it provides Arab Foreign Ministers with a platform to discuss issues pertaining to the Arab region, he added.

Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati had

international issues of common concern, and highlighted the need to coordinate the stances of both countries towards them. On a separate occasion, Ghanem and Fayeze discussed the sisterly ties between Kuwait and Jordan and explored ways to promote cooperation in all areas, notably the parliamentary one. Both sides commended the distinguished relations between the two sisterly countries and agreed to coordinate stances towards the regional and international issues of mutual concern.

The meetings with the Azerbaijani and Jordanian top lawmakers were also attended by Kuwaiti MP Ahmad Al-Hamad and Charge D'Affaires of Kuwait Embassy in Baku Faisal Al-Mutairi. Themed "Boosting the role of national parliaments in promoting global peace and sustainable development," the NAM Parliamentary Network Conference is being held at Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku under the auspices of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. — KUNA

called on Arabs and more specifically the Gulf Cooperation Council countries to embrace and support Lebanon and its people at this delicate period in its history. In a dinner banquet in honor of the Arab foreign ministers' consultative meeting in Beirut, Mikati added that such urgent matter requires intensifying consultations on the Arab joint action and consensus on issues for the upcoming Arab summit. The premier said that convening the summit is in itself an indication of the will of Arab leaders to overcome all challenges and obstacles to renew joint Arab action and keep pace with regional and international developments in all fields. Mikati reiterated Lebanon's commitment to implementing all UN Security Council and Arab League resolutions, in a way that consolidates the policy of disassociation from any Arab dispute, extends state sovereignty over its entire territory, and prevents all types of offenses towards Arab countries or threats to their security.

Delicate conditions

The Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Dr Ahmad had stated Friday the consultative meeting of the Arab foreign ministers coincided with delicate conditions and mounting challenges in the Arab region and the world at large. "Those conditions require that we act in unison to reach a coordinated approach to addressing the current challenges," he

told reporters upon his arrival at Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport. "The meeting provides a chance for debating all affairs completely at ease without being restricted to a specific agenda, unlike the routine consultations being held at the Arab League on a quarterly basis."

"It is such a proper atmosphere that could help produce a united vision for Arab joint action," Sheikh Dr Ahmad pointed out. Dealing with Kuwait-Lebanon relationship, he said both countries maintained firm integrated relations in all weathers, citing as an example the large numbers of Kuwaiti vacationers in Lebanon. The political leaders of both countries maintain close contacts to serve the interests of both peoples and promote cooperation in all fields, he added. Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad had discussed with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati and parliament speaker Nabih Berri efforts to strengthen bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister and his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Al-Safadi discussed on Saturday the bilateral ties, as well as the latest developments in the Arab region and beyond. Sheikh Dr Ahmad also held similar talks with Somali Acting Foreign Minister and State Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Balal Mohamed Cusman. The talks took place on the margins of the consultative meeting of the Arab foreign ministers. — KUNA

Kuwait speaker meets Azerbaijani, Jordanian peers

BAKU: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem met separately with Speaker of the Azerbaijani Parliament Sahiba Gafarova and President of the Jordanian Senate Faisal Al-Fayez on Friday on the margins of the conference of the Parliamentary Network of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), held in Baku. His meeting with Gafarova focused on the friendly ties and explored ways to promote cooperation in all areas, particularly the parliamentary one, Al-Dustour news network reported. They also reviewed a range of regional and



BAKU: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets Speaker of the Azerbaijani Parliament Sahiba Gafarova. — KUNA photos



Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets President of the Jordanian Senate Faisal Al-Fayez.

Czech embassy hosts handover of EU Council presidency event

KUWAIT: On June 30, 2022, a joint press conference was held at the premises of the Czech Embassy in Kuwait to mark the handover of the Presidency of the Council of the European Union from France to the Czech Republic. The Ambassador of the European Union Dr Cristian Tudor, the Ambassador of France Claire Le Flecher for the outgoing Presidency, and the Ambassador of the Czech Republic Jaroslav Siro for the upcoming Presidency spoke at the press conference.

Dr Cristian Tudor, Ambassador of the European Union explained the system of the rotating Presidency by saying: "The Presidency of the Council of the European Union rotates among the EU Member States every 6 months. Before taking up this important role, the EU Member State, which holds the Presidency, prepares its detailed program for the topics and priority issues that will be addressed by the Council of the EU in Brussels. The EU Delegation in Kuwait worked closely with the Embassy of France for the past half year to assist them in achieving objectives of their Presidency. I look forward to continuing this excellent cooperation with the Czech Embassy as they take over the role of rotating Presidency tomorrow."

The EU Ambassador added: "Unfortunately, one of these issues during the last six months was the return of war to Europe in the form of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. Europe will continue to work with Ukraine and like-minded partners to counter this aggression and eventually Ukraine will prevail. He concluded by saying that the EU Delegation plays an important role in organizing and hosting regular meetings at the level of Heads of Missions for the 17 EU Member States represented in Kuwait, which provide a platform for EU Member States Ambassadors to exchange views and coordinate our work in Kuwait.

Claire Le Flecher, Ambassador of France, underlined how the unprovoked and unjustified invasion of Ukraine by Russia on February 24 has unexpectedly affected the agenda of the French Presidency of the European Union. She added that contrary to Russian hopes and calculations, the EU has demonstrated strong unity and collective purpose. "The EU has shown its ability to react decisively on many fronts. First, it had to address as a matter of urgency the major humanitarian crisis provoked by the war and great hundreds of thousands having to take shelter in EU countries, primarily neighbors. Second, it quickly started to address the situation from a security and defense viewpoint, through coordinated supplies of military equipment to enable Ukraine to defend its territory, and it adopted for the first time a Strategic Compass expressing how the EU collectively sees and intends to defend its strategic interests. Third, it took strong action to reduce its dependency on Russian energy supplies. And fourth and last, it adopted several rounds of targeted sanctions against Russia."

The EU also had to keep on, as one of the main engines of the world economy, to press on with its recovery agenda, in a context of rising energy and food prices. It is now focusing on how to help low-income countries face the food security crisis triggered by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. As to key long-term challenges, climate change remains by far the most worrying one for the world. Le Flecher added that "Despite the present energy crisis, the stakes are too high not to sustain the course. New progress has been achieved by the EU on its plan for green transition "Fit to 55". On this issue as many others, we are happy and very confident to pass the relay to the Czech Presidency, with whom France has strongly coordinated during the past six months."

Jaroslav Siro, Ambassador of the Czech



KUWAIT: (From left) Ambassador of the European Union Dr Cristian Tudor, Ambassador of the Czech Republic Jaroslav Siro and Ambassador of France Claire Le Flecher attend the press conference. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Republic, presented the priorities of the Czech Presidency and congratulated Ukraine on the EU candidate country status granted by the EU Member States. In his address, he said: "I am pleased to announce here, that starting on July 1, 2022, the Czech Republic will hold for the next six months the Presidency of the Council of the European Union with the Motto: 'Europe as a task - Rethink, Rebuild, Repower'. It fully reflects the attitude of the Czech Republic to such a responsible task. Let me use this opportunity to thank the French Presidency for their excellent work and performance during their tenure."

He further continued: "The Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has brought along the necessity of a fundamental reassessment of the EU priorities and significantly influenced the preparation of the five Czech Presidency's priorities: sup-

porting Ukraine, energy security of Europe, reinforcement of European defense capacities, strategic resilience of EU's economy and protecting European democracy."

With respect to the relations with Kuwait and the GCC countries, he said: "High on the list of the priorities of our Presidency lies a firm support to the development and strengthening of relations with the Gulf countries, including Kuwait. We support the proposal by the European Commission to grant the Schengen visa waiver to citizens of Kuwait and Qatar, which will help to strengthen people-to-people contacts. Yesterday, the Council of the EU approved the negotiating mandate for the Presidency to negotiate with the European Parliament on the liberalization of short-stay visas for Kuwait and Qatar. This is an important step in legislative procedures of the EU."