

About Gheit's speech at the opening of the 112th ordinary session of the Economic and Social Council at the ministerial level

Thursday, 31 August 2023

Your Excellency, Mr. Muhammad Muhammad Hizam Al-Ashwal

Minister of Industry and Trade of the Republic of Yemen

President of the current session of the Economic and Social Council

Your Highnesses and Excellencies, Ministers,

I am delighted to begin by offering my heartfelt congratulations to the Republic of Yemen for taking on the presidency of the ongoing session of the Economic and Social Council. Mr. President, I wish you every success in this role. Furthermore, I would like to express my genuine appreciation and gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for its adept and skillful stewardship of the Council during the preceding session.

Mr President,

Today marks the commencement of the 112th session of this esteemed Council, and in a fortuitous alignment, it also brings to a close the 70th year since the inception of its inaugural session. Over the course of these intervening decades and through successive sessions, this Council has orchestrated noteworthy Arab achievements that serve as luminous beacons along the path of collective Arab endeavours.

In accordance with the stipulations outlined in its by-laws, this esteemed Council has shouldered the weighty responsibility of steering the collective economic and social agenda of Arab collaboration. Simultaneously, it has assumed oversight of the entities functioning within this encompassing framework. The scope of this responsibility has burgeoned alongside the increasing interconnection of agendas, the expansion of ministerial council mandates, and the amplification of activities undertaken by specialised organisations within the Arab collective. Yet, through the harmonised efforts of its member states and the unwavering dedication of its secretariat, this distinguished council has demonstrated remarkable acumen in discharging these responsibilities with utmost proficiency.

Through progressive iterations, this Council has adeptly cultivated its operational efficiency, culminating in the achievement of significant Arab consensus across a spectrum of strategic domains integral to the welfare of Arab nations and the prosperity of their populations. Evidenced by a multitude of resolutions, it has steadfastly championed the preservation of fundamental tenets underpinning Arab national security, alongside safeguarding the bedrock principles that uphold economic, social, and developmental advancement.

Mr President,

The timing of this Council's convening carries particular significance, occurring as it does in advance of the forthcoming Arab Development Summit: Economic and Social, set to mark its fifth iteration. This notable event, scheduled to take place in the month of November and hosted by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, holds exceptional importance as it represents the culminating session of the established development summit framework. This change precedes the forthcoming alignment with regular and developmental summits.

In light of this, meticulous preparation for the upcoming development summit is imperative, ensuring its outcomes and decisions serve as a fresh contribution to the ongoing processes of advancement and modernisation across all corners of the Arab world. I am pleased to inform this esteemed assembly that I dispatched a delegation of high stature to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania earlier this month. The

delegation's primary objective was to engage in comprehensive discussions regarding both substantive and logistical arrangements requisite for the forthcoming summit. During their stay, the delegation conducted pivotal meetings with Mauritanian dignitaries, led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the distinguished Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development, along with senior officials who hold responsibility for summit preparations.

The General Secretariat has prepared an extensive report, which you now have before this Council, encompassing elucidations that expound upon the subjects encompassed within the proposed agenda of the forthcoming fifth session of the development summit. Central to the summit's deliberations is the topic of Arab food security — an issue of paramount significance that intricately intertwines with the comprehensive spectrum of Arab national security.

The theme of food security has surged to the forefront of both the international and Arab agendas, particularly in light of disconcerting data pertaining to grain trade and supply chains, stemming from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Moreover, there exist disquieting indicators that underscore the profound impact of climate change on the state of food security across numerous nations, including those within the Arab domain. The imperative of food security extends its influence to the very stability of societies and stands as a foundational pillar within the broader framework of Arab national security.

Given the intricacies and urgencies involved, the call for Arab cooperation and integration in addressing this matter has transformed into an exigent imperative — no longer a luxury or an aspiration subject to deferment. Emerging circumstances have underscored the pressing nature of this collaborative endeavour, with the realisation that its pursuit is irrevocably tied to the well-being of our nations and the longevity of our region's prosperity.

Within this framework, a notable initiative that I have had the privilege to unveil stands before you today. This initiative, conducted in collaboration with the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development, is aimed at bolstering efforts to salvage the agricultural

season within the Republic of Sudan. This cooperative effort is designed to mitigate the burdens wrought by the ongoing conflict, which looms ominously, with the potential to engender widespread famine and displacement within this fraternal nation.

Mr President,

In the agenda of today's assembly, several crucial matters are under consideration, including methods to extend vital assistance to the Palestinian economy in the wake of the formidable obstacles stemming from the actions of the Israeli occupation. Likewise, this meeting also centers on extending support and aid to the Palestinian populace, aiding them in their struggle against the unjust financial and economic sanctions that have been unjustly levied upon them.

The series of crises that have swept through our Arab region and the global sphere in recent years have engendered extraordinary circumstances, ones that persist in our current reality. It is imperative that we distill wisdom from these experiences. Chief among these insights is the undeniable necessity for collective cooperation and solidarity — a shared commitment that becomes pivotal in weathering these challenges with the least possible harm.

In these extraordinary times, it is imperative to provide augmented support to the specialised Arab organisations due to their pivotal role as the driving force behind the collective Arab action system. They spearhead the formulation of initiatives and the execution of strategic plans.

The Economic and Social Council retains its paramount status as the highest authority responsible for overseeing the diligent execution of the tasks entrusted to these organizations as outlined in their charters. Consequently, the situation underscores the imperative for your respected Council to extend its backing to these organisations, thus facilitating the realisation of their intended outcomes and enhancing the operational effectiveness within the Arab framework.

In closing, I extend my sincerest wishes for your success, Mr. President, as you preside over the ongoing session of the Council.

Additionally, I convey my hopes for the triumphant outcome of your deliberations.

Thank you.