



**ARAB  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
WEEK**

**LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DEPARTMENT**

<http://www.leagueofarabstates.net/ar/SDG/Pages/ArabWeek.aspx>

**On January 1st, 2016, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development entered into force, in a move aimed at dealing with the global challenges of development, the environment and the quality of human life as an integrated whole that requires setting comprehensive standards and developing international cooperation for sustainable development.**

**The United Nations SDGs 2030 Agenda has set new comprehensive goals, 17 goals for all countries of the world, on the basic principle that “no one is left behind”.**

**Since 2016, the League of Arab States has given special attention to sustainable development and has established the Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation, as well as the Arab Committee for Sustainable Development, of the Economic and Social Council which includes focal points for Arab countries, and other relevant development partners. The Arab League has taken upon itself to play a leading role in the Arab region to support Arab countries with programs, activities and projects that support the implementation of the SDGs 2030 Agenda, and to emphasize Arab government policy makers towards adopting these goals and making them an integral part of national development strategies.**

**In this context, the Arab League has activated its partnership with all stakeholders to implement the SDGs 2030 Agenda in the Arab region, especially the United Nations organizations, as well as building on the progress made in partnerships to restore development after conflicts, so that Arab peoples can consolidate their confidence in a future based on peace, cooperation and respect for the other.**

### **What is the ASD-Week?**

**The challenging conditions in the Arab region and the growing economic, social and environmental difficulties that impede the focus on long-term planning to meet the urgent daily requirements and needs, have led to a slowdown in obtaining the investments required for sustainable development.**

**What we are witnessing is an exacerbation of the level of fragility and risks in different ways and an escalation of conflicts and instability in the Arab region, which represents an obstacle to achieving the goals of sustainable development in the Arab region, and makes the first message towards achieving sustainable development linked to progress in peace and security and the extent of existing stability.**

**Continuous analysis and monitoring are required to put results before decision-makers at the various regional, national and local levels in the Arab region to achieve the SDGs 2030.**

**Hence, the importance of the ASD-Week comes to focus on the efforts of the League of Arab States to spread the concept of sustainable development, its objectives and the 2030 Goals in the Arab region, as an initiative to constitute the largest and most important event in the Arab region that deals with the SDGs and ways to achieve them.**

**The ASD-Week also represents a platform for dialogue to deepen the common visions of Arab countries and partners on concepts, procedures and plans towards achieving the goals and objectives of sustainability in the Arab region, and supports building a specific Arab vision for both the League of Arab States and partners in dealing with it, which is an important step towards raising awareness. The Arab citizen is the focus and general interest for the Arab region's leadership in addressing the goals of the 2030 Agenda in particular and sustainable development issues in general, and gives great impetus to the implementation of development projects on the ground in the Arab region.**

### **ADSW Objectives**

**The main objective of the Arab Week is to support the implementation of the SDGs in the Arab region, by unifying all efforts in the Arab region to achieve the 2030 Agenda, and to provide a framework for a high-level regional dialogue to discuss and present ways to implement these plans in the Arab region while creating a supportive international and regional climate.**



This goal is also achieved through the partnerships achieved through the three editions of the Arab Week between the Arab League and the largest number of international, regional and Arab organizations and foundations, with the aim of facing challenges and exploring opportunities to achieve the most prominent goals related to the future of Arab societies, as well as providing a comprehensive Arab framework for research on issues of sustainable development in the Arab world.

Given that sustainable development is an effort that must be based on the cooperation of the various countries in the region, the Arab League, which represents the optimal framework for fostering this cooperation and providing the conditions for translating the United Nations agenda into integrated programs in the Arab region, held during the ASD-Week 2017 under the slogan **“Towards an Effective Partnership”**, and for a whole year it was able to use these partnerships to establish a number of new programs aimed at advancing sustainable development in the Arab region by supporting Arab countries in implementing the SDGs. And through the slogan of the ASD-Week 2018 **“Moving Towards Action”** The Arab League, in cooperation with its partners, was able to capitalize on the success of the first edition of the Arab Week to establish multiple partnerships in new development fields in the Arab region. The third edition of the ASD-Week held in 2019 under the slogan **“An Integrated Partnership for a Sustainable Future”** emphasized the success of the partnerships formed by the League of Arab States and its use to support Arab countries in achieving the SDGs.

#### **ASD-Week 2022: Together for a Sustainable Recovery**

Continuing to attach importance to the SDGs, and with the relatively improved situation after the outbreak of the Covid 19 pandemic and its effects, and countries taking precautionary measures, and with signs of life returning to relatively normal, the League of Arab States intends to hold the fourth edition of the ASD-Week, under the slogan **“Together for a sustainable recovery”** from February 13 to 15, 2022 in Cairo.

It is no secret that this year the Arab Week is held in exceptional circumstances by all standards, and in response to the crisis posed by the pandemic for the development agenda, the League of Arab States was a pioneer in working on an important theme, which is financing.

Even before the pandemic, some Arab countries were struggling to finance efforts to achieve development goals. After that, the matter was undoubtedly more complicated, and the slogan “leaving no one behind” became more important than ever in light of the economic and health threat of the pandemic.

The Arab League had already launched a report entitled “Promoting Sustainable Financing and Financing Climate Related Activities in the Arab Region”, as well as launching during this Week’s edition a report on financing for development in Egypt, which will be the first of its kind globally at the national level, and it issues a document along the same methodology world development finance report.

Egypt is the first Arab country to release this report, but this is only the beginning, as the Arab League, in cooperation with international partners and experts, will launch several similar reports for more than one Arab country. Accordingly, this year's conference agenda will give the main attention to discussing the financing sector and its intertwining with Arab capabilities to accelerate planning and achieve goals, while also shedding light on the opportunities and challenges that the crisis recovery context poses to this sector.

In addition to the **financing for development** theme, the League of Arab States will focus in this edition of the Arab week also on two important themes, namely **climate change** and **technology**.

Climate change is the defining issue of our time, the global impacts of climate change are wide-ranging and unprecedented in scale, from changing weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic floods, adapting to these

effects will be more difficult and costlier in the future if drastic action is not taken now.

As for the technology, the new reality imposed by the crisis, stressed the importance of the role that technology plays as one of the important axes of efforts to preserve public health and continue work to achieve economic and social stability, as it played a vital role in maintaining communication between humans in light of the social distancing policies witnessed by many countries all around.

It is worth noting that the improvement in the situation regarding the outbreak of the virus does not mean that conditions have become normal, but rather closer to normal than they were in the past. Therefore, this version of the ASD-Week will be different in terms of attendance, as the Arab League will reduce the number of attendees and will follow the integrated attendance method in the interest of everyone's safety and in application of precautionary measures.



**ASD-Week Previous editions**

**ASD-Week 2017: Towards an Effective Partnership**

The League of Arab States held the first edition of the ASD-Week under the patronage of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in cooperation with the Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Group, over a period of 4 days, the first of which was held at the headquarters of the Secretariat of the Arab League, and the rest of the days were completed at the Nile Ritz-Carlton Hotel.

In addition to the opening session, the Arab Week 2017 included a high-level session on global concepts of sustainable development, the World Bank held a "Fragility and Water Forum", and the Council of Arab Health Ministers held a "High-level Forum on Health and Sustainable



**Development", and a special meeting was organized on issues of drought risk management in Somalia and the Horn of Africa. And due to the importance of organizing a facility for financing sustainable development and giving a distinguished role to the Arab Science and Technology Advisory Group, a number of special meetings were organized to discuss these important issues.**

**The Arab League held also 9 main sessions that dealt with a number of priority axes for the Arab region, in addition to 12 side events and dialogue in cooperation with the United Nations specialized agencies, the World Bank, civil society organizations, the private sector and other partners in the fields of sustainable development.**

**The ASD-Week included 6 main themes, each of which deals with a concept of sustainable development in order to achieve the SDGs, taking into consideration the interrelationship between the goals and objectives during work, the extent to which Arab strategies and existing action plans need to be aligned with the SDGs, shedding light on challenges, opportunities and indicators, and giving space to stakeholders from partners with their diversity to express their needs, starting with decision makers, the private sector, financial institutions, civil society, the media, researchers, academics and parliamentarians:**

- Approximating concepts and methodologies of work and interdependence around sustainable development**
- Human dignity, quality of life and standards of living**
- Climate risk management**
- Promoting peace, security and justice**
- Infrastructure, economic growth, production and consumption**
- Water and food security: opportunities and initiatives**

**The main sessions of the Arab Week dealt with all issues of concern to the Arab region to follow-up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:**

- Human dignity and quality of life**

- Climate risk nexus
- Promote peace, security and justice
- Science, technology and innovation
- Empowerment of women and child and family protection...pillars for achieving sustainable development
- Towards sustainable economic growth in the Arab region
- Inclusive sustainable industrialization, economic growth and infrastructure
- Water and food security
- The role of civil society in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The ASD-Week included also a number of side events dedicated to discussing intersectional issues of particular importance to the Arab region:

- The role of the private sector in achieving sustainable development
- Financial institutions and financial stock exchanges: opportunities for investment and success
- Towards building national non-governmental forums for sustainable development: "Raed" experience
- The National Youth Conference: An Egyptian Experience
- The media: raising awareness to achieve sustainable development
- Science and Policy-Making: towards a new dialogue... the Royal Jordanian Scientific Society
- Research and development in the field of vaccines and medicines for communicable and non-communicable diseases for developing countries
- Supporting the development of local technology, research and innovation in developing countries



- Increasing scientific knowledge, developing research capabilities and transferring marine technology
- Strengthening scientific research and improving technological capabilities in industrial sectors
- The Arab Parliament as the conscience of legislation
- Arab Youth Parliament

The recommendations of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development 2017, which was organized by ESCWA in Rabat during the period 3-5 May 2017, were also presented.

### **Number of Speakers**

The League of Arab States was keen to adhere to several principles and dimensions when choosing speakers for the Arab Sustainable Development Week, such as the Arab regional dimension, the international dimension, the principle of diversity in the speakers' experiences, their career level, diversity in the fields they represent, and other elements that resulted in the creation of great diversity for all Speakers of the Arab Week.

The large number of sessions and events that the ASD-Week enjoyed led to the presence of more than 100 speakers during all these events, which gave the opportunity to exchange international, regional and national points of view, review best practices in the areas of sustainable development, and present sustainable development issues to a wide and diverse audience.

### **Level and number of attendees**

The sessions and events of the Arab Week were attended by a number of senior officials and decision-makers concerned with sustainable development files at the level of the Arab region, and the UN and the Egyptian sides had a large share of this attendance. In addition, other stakeholder groups in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region, such as civil society, the private sector and youth,

demonstrated the extent of interest in sustainable development issues that were raised during the Arab Week, and a large number of representatives of these groups were registered in the sessions and events held on the sidelines of the ASD-Week. The total attendance of all events reached more than 1,300 participants, with an average of 450 participants per day over 4 days.

### **ASD-Week 2018: Going Towards Action**

The League of Arab States held the second edition of the ASD-Week under the auspices of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning, Follow-up and Administrative Reform of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Group, over a period of 4 days, the first of which was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Arab League, and the rest of the days were completed at the Conrad Cairo Hotel.

This year, the Arab Week included beside the opening session, 12 main sessions and 8 side and dialogue sessions, in addition to a round table on the sustainable financing initiative and the fifth meeting of the Arab Committee to follow up on the implementation of the SDGs 2030 was held.

On the fourth day, the Ministry of Planning, Follow-up and Administrative Reform of the Republic of Egypt organized the "Egypt Day" and the "Egypt Market for Sustainable Development", and reviewed, through the sessions of this day, Egypt's Vision 2030, and organized four round tables on:

- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Environmental dimension: responsible consumption and production
- Clean and affordable energy

- Innovation and scientific research in the service of sustainable development

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development also launched a report and dialogue on "Sustainable Development Financing", and the Department of Sustainable Development and International Cooperation organized a round table on the "Sustainable Finance Initiative" in cooperation with the Egyptian Ministry of Planning, the Islamic Bank, the Ford Foundation, the United Nations Environment Finance Initiative, and the Finance Corporation, the World Bank and the Union of Arab Banks.

The Week's sessions discussed 8 main themes, each of which deals with the concept of sustainable development in order to achieve the goals, taking into account the concepts of interdependence between goals and objectives during work, and the need for Arab strategies and existing action plans to align with the sustainable development goals, shedding light on challenges, opportunities and indicators, and giving space to stakeholders from partners with their diversity to express their needs, starting with decision makers, the private sector, financial institutions, civil society, the media, researchers, academics and parliamentarians:

- Sustainable financing as an entry point to support national efforts
- Achieving SDGs in countries affected by conflict
- Investing in human capital to achieving economic and social development
- Eradicating hunger in the Arab region
- The balance between rural and urban development and the need to give cities personality and spirit
- The demographic dimension and youth energies to support sustainability
- Media, soft power, and civil society as societal enlightenment to achieve sustainable development
- Investing in global and regional development in space technology to achieve sustainable development



The main sessions of the Arab Week dealt with all issues of concern to the Arab region in the framework of the follow-up to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including:

- Active Partnerships
- Sustainable financing
- Achieving sustainable development in conflict-affected countries
- Investing in human capital
- Climate facility and its interrelations
- Ending hunger in the Arab region
- Investing in sustainable energy
- Strengthening the link between disaster risk, climate change and the SDGs
- The demographic situation and the achievement of the SDGs
- Investing in Small and Medium Enterprises
- The interrelationship between rural and urban development
- Cities have character and soul
- Round Table: The Sustainable Finance Initiative

The ASD-Week also included a number of side events devoted to discussing issues of special importance to the Arab region, including:

- Digital economy: the future of the Arab world
- Establishing peaceful societies in areas of conflict
- Building people towards a sustainable economy
- Corporate citizenship and the path to sustainable growth
- Together to end malnutrition
- Frameworks for networking between national forums for sustainable development in the Arab countries
- The role of youth in achieving the 2030 Agenda
- Improving and developing education and its effects

### **Number of Speakers**

Like the first edition of the ASD-Week in 2017, the League of Arab States was keen to adhere to the same principles and dimensions when selecting speakers in 2018, which resulted in providing more opportunities for exchanging international, regional and national perspectives, in addition to presenting best practices in the fields of development sustainable, sustainable development issues for a broad and diverse audience.

As a result of the success of the first edition of the Arab Week, and the importance of the topics that were reviewed in the program of the second edition, the number of speakers reached more than 180 speakers during the various events. A group of them, the Arab Youth Platform for Sustainable Development, organized a dialogue session for youth, which the Egyptian Minister of Planning, Follow-up and Administrative Reform was keen to be a speaker, and the number of attendees in this session exceeded 900 participants.

The session of investing in human capital, which was chaired by Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar, President of the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, and with the participation of His Excellency Dr. Tariq Shawky, Minister of Education and Technical Education, received a large number of participants because of its importance to the future of education and the labor market in the Arab region.

### **Level and number of attendees**

The sessions and events were attended by a number of Egyptian ministers, senior officials and decision-makers concerned with sustainable development issues, in addition to high-level representation from the UN side and the World Bank.

Also, a large number of representatives of other stakeholder groups were registered in the implementation of the 2030 plan in the Arab region, such as institutions of social giving, civil society, the private sector,

youth and scientific institutions. The total attendance of all events reached about 2,000 participants, with an average of 900 participants on the second and third days, and 750 participants on the first and fourth days.

### **ASD-Week 2019: An Integrated Partnership for a Sustainable Future**

The League of Arab States held the third edition of the ASD-Week under the patronage of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning, Follow-up and Administrative Reform of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United Nations, the World Bank and the European Union, over a period of 4 days during the period 3-6/11/2019 at the Hilton Heliopolis Hotel, Cairo.

The Arab Week 2019 included in addition to the opening session, 35 activities, attended by about 3,400 participants, and the number of speakers exceeded 277 in these events. It attracted a number of Arab and foreign participants and speakers in various sessions that focused on the three main themes:

- Integration between development partners
- Transition to a better life
- New horizons for a changing world

The sessions also dealt with all issues of concern to the Arab region within the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, 25 dialogue sessions were organized as follows:

- Arab countries and the implementation of the SDGs in a changing world
- Strategic management of development media: shaping awareness of SDGs and facing challenges
- Involvement of stakeholders in the SDGs



- The role of joint Arab action organizations and institutions in achieving 2030 goals
- A global vision: towards a sustainable future
- Humanity without burns
- Zero Hunger Initiative in the Arab Region
- International Alliance for Peace and Development
- Opportunities and challenges for sustainable cities in the Arab world
- Culture of Sustainability in the Arab World: Challenges and Opportunities
- Arab youth and the promotion of education for sustainable development
- Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all
- Integration in financing sustainable development
- The Enlightenment: The Road to 2030
- Impact of climate change on fragile societies
- Contribution of the European Union to the SDGs in MENA region and dialogue with Africa
- Preparing a capacity-building path to address climate-related risks within the SDGs
- Water security and sustainable development in the Arab region
- Teaching and learning: towards a better future
- Integration between the concerned parties to achieve sustainable development.
- Arab Cities: Modernity and History
- Sustainable building materials supply chains in the Middle East and Africa
- Partnership between Arab governments and the social giving sector
- Readiness and future foresight in the Arab region
- Youth initiatives in sustainable development

### **Additional activities:**

In addition to the plenary sessions, several major events and workshops were organized:

- The Voice of Egypt Summit
- The Role of Business Institutions in Supporting the Long-Term Plans of Arab Countries Forum
- Zero Energy and Resource Building Development Forum
- The Arab Forum on the Role of Volunteerism in Achieving the SDGs
- The Forum on the Role of Young Scientists in Achieving SDGs
- Workshop on Youth Led Community Entrepreneurship
- A workshop on introducing SDGs for youth
- Green Economy Workshop
- Workshop on SDGs and their impact on business leadership
- Theatrical performance "The Thirst"

The Arab League also organized a closed meeting on preparing the "Report to Achieving Sustainable Development in Conflict-Affected Countries", followed by round tables for Sudan, Yemen and Libya.

