



مؤتمر القمة الأول لحوار التعاون الآسيوي
First Asian Cooperation Dialogue Summit
Kuwait 15-17 October 2012 أكتوبر 17-15 الكويت



(Courtesy Translation)

SPEECH

OF

**HIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH SABAH AL AHMAD AL JABER AL
SABAH
AMIR OF THE STATE OF KUWAIT**

AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE

FIRST ASIAN COOPERATION DIALOGUE SUMMIT

16 OCTOBER 2012



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In the Name of Allah, The Merciful, The Compassionate

All the praise and thanks be to Allah, Lord of the worlds. Peace and Prayers be upon the most noble of Prophets, our Lord Mohammad, and on his family and his companions

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

Assalamu Aliakum Warrahmatu Allah Wabarakatahu

At the outset, it pleases me to welcome you to the State of Kuwait, and to thank you for your kind acceptance of our invitation to attend the First Asian Cooperation Dialogue Summit, which indeed confirms your keenness on preserving this important dialogue, and the need for all of us to work on its activation, development, and promotion to meet our aspirations and expectations. I wish you all a pleasant stay and hope that our meetings will culminate in success.

It also pleases me to welcome the Islamic republic of Afghanistan as member in our forum, which reflect the growing interest in the forum, and it's objective in promoting development and stability for the people of our continent.

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

This Summit is being held after more than a decade of the establishment of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue Forum, under changing political circumstances and suffocating economic crises at the global level; their consequences still being felt, are causing serious challenges to our continued efforts and attempts at upgrading the levels of development of our continent, in achieving the ambitions and aspirations of its peoples. This requires that we all intensify our efforts, and utilize our meetings to discuss in depth, and with objectivity these challenges, analyzing their causes and



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containing their impact, in order to avoid their recurrence. This will preserve the stability of our countries and permit them to achieve ambitious and effective levels of growth.

By convening the annual meetings at the ministerial level to discuss the means to ensure high level of cooperation and coordination among our countries, which we appreciate. The Member States of this Forum have clearly demonstrated its vitality. Today, we find that we are called upon to develop the mechanism of our cooperation, taking into consideration the visions and the common determination commensurate with our deeply rooted relations, that characterized the ministerial meetings, and enabling us to advance our joint work to a wider horizon. In this regard, we call for the submission of scenarios and concepts consistent with the size of our responsibilities, to pave the way for their implementation. In this concern, the state of Kuwait has the pleasure to host any mechanism which would be agreed upon by experts of our countries in their coming meeting.

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

Achieving the economic cooperation we desire requires the creation of an investment-friendly environment and the necessary enactment of legislations to promote such environments, to stimulate intra-regional trade between our countries, as well as attention to infrastructure common to our countries, particularly in the fields of transportation and communication, that will increase the exchange of goods and services.

The optimal realization of the potential of our countries, and their cooperation in the realization of our economic integration, will enable us to establish strong and robust economies, able to meet challenges and overcome obstacles. In addition, it will accomplish a qualitative move in raising the standards of living of the peoples of the continent.

It should be noted, that the greatest challenge we face is the accelerating population growth in our continent, that has exceeded 60% of



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the total population of the world. This places a burden on our efforts and development plans to achieve the development and progress of our continent. Consequently, this makes it incumbent upon us to work without delay in devising the necessary plans for the optimum utilization of human and natural resources in our Asian continent.

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

Our modern world in general, and our continent in particular, face serious problems, such as poverty, inadequate healthcare, illiteracy, wars and environmental problems. They are obstacles that hampered development in our continent and delayed the fulfillment of what we desire for our countries and peoples.

We are still suffering the consequences of an economic crisis; that did not spare any of our countries; from increasing the numbers of the unemployed persons, thus increasing the level of poverty among the peoples of our continent. This increases the responsibilities we bear, and prompt us to act without delay to achieve economic integration between our countries by providing work opportunities and job security. In face of the repercussions of this crisis, we are required, in general, to participate in drawing up a new map for a new financial order that accomplishes progress and modernity, by keeping pace with the most sophisticated international standards, and the best banking and fiscal practices.

We are also called upon to work collectively to combat diseases and epidemics, help the states that need vaccines and medicines, in order to prepare a healthy Asian, capable of contributing to the achievement of sustainable social and economic development of our countries. We are also called upon to devise comprehensive strategies that will achieve raising the level of education and correlate the needs of our societies of man power and the educational output. We must exert every effort to reform our environment, and to use modern technology to meet the challenges of the



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successive climate changes for the achievement of the security of our environment.

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

Aware as we are of the importance of cooperation in the field of development, and the goals that the Asia Cooperation Dialogue seek to achieve, including combating poverty and improving the level of living for the people of Asia, I seize the opportunity of this meeting today to present an initiative that embodies Asian cooperation, by calling for the mobilization of financial resources to the amount of two billion dollars, for a program that aims at financing development projects, in non-Arab Asian countries, as well as other projects that contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

It may be appropriate to assign one of the development institutions in Asia, such as the Asian Development Bank to manage the proposed financial resources, as well as supervise their utilization in implementing projects in the interest of the Least Developed Countries, that benefit exclusively from the resources of the Asian Development Bank, and are the countries most in need of these resources.

In this context, I am pleased to announce the contribution of the State of Kuwait to that program in the amount of 300 million dollars. It is my hope that we can provide the proposed amount, through contributions from Member States of the ACD Forum. Furthermore, the State of Kuwait; keen on furthering its cooperation with the Asian countries; is willing to join the Asian Development Bank Group.

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

Our continent has suffered from devastating wars, that have exhausted our economies, claimed the lives of many of our citizens, and led to the hampering of development in our countries. In those wars, that



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accomplished nothing but death, destruction and degradation, we were all the biggest losers.

From this podium, we call for the language of reason and dialogue to prevail, as well as, to distance our countries from ruin and destruction, by respecting our charters, agreements and conventions and by resolving our differences by peaceful means, without interfering in the internal affairs of one another, to present to the world an upgraded model for dealing with crises, and the ability to overcome them, in a manner that preserves the integrity of our countries, the sophistication of our societies, and the prosperity of our economies.

Your Majesties, Highnesses & Excellencies,

A demonstration of the deep-rootedness and integration of our continent, is the distinguished feature of incorporating a diversity of cultures, civilizations and religions. Despite their different ethnicities and religions, the people of our continent were accustomed to coexist among each other, thereby reinforcing the principle that knowing each other is better than ignoring each other, and coexistence is better than fighting, and standing by each other is better than being rivals of each other. Such principles must be emphasized, and their implementation encouraged. No life can be just, if one of us attempts to deny or abolish the other. Moreover, adhering to the principles of human rights, as the fundamental pillar of a free and dignified life, considering the rights and freedom they contain, shall provide stability to our countries and peace of mind to our people.

In conclusion, I thank you all once again, as I ask the Almighty to culminate our efforts for the good of our continent as well as for the benefit of our countries and the welfare of our peoples.

Wassalam Aliakum Warrahmatu Allah Wabarakatahu