



Intervention

Of His Excellency
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Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council
for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC)

At the

NATO AND SECURITY OF THE GULF CONFERENCE

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The Gulf Region is strategically considered one of the most important regions in the world, due to its sensitive geographic location on one of the main navigation passages in the world, and the dependence of the world economy on this region as a main source of oil and natural gas, in spite of the unfortunate suffering of this region from turbulence and instability as a result of the three wars it has been through during the two decades, and due to the attacks by international terrorist groups, and Iran's insistence to acquire nuclear weapons which threatens of a nuclear race in the Middle East Region.

One of the reasons for optimism in the GCC Region, is witnessing today the chance and the horizon of bilateral cooperation between NATO and the GCC States.

No doubt that the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), adopted in the NATO Summit in Turkey, June 2004, was a result of the conviction of the leaders of NATO that the necessary security environment for its member States and the world with its various dimensions, requires dealing with the change taking place in the Gulf Region.

Fighting terrorism and proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), prohibition of illegal trade in drugs, weapons and humans, preparedness for disasters, planning for civil emergency cases, training, cooperation and participation in NATO military exercises, and promotion of military cooperation which are the principles of Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, could be a base to launch a practical cooperation between GCC States and NATO, taking into consideration the

specific features and the needs of the GCC States during preparing and implementing these programs.

Through the exchange of views and discussion concerning this Initiative, we see that there is a common vision between the GCC and today's NATO, which predicts profound changes in relations between two sides, and a positive route to develop the philosophy of cooperation and collective security that we both seek to insure security and stability in the region, and in particular with regard to fighting terrorism through a lasting, coordinated, organized and a unified international effort taking into account the respect of the principles of international Law, especially human rights and denouncing terrorism regardless of circumstances and causes.

With this in mind, we are more determined today than ever before to make it absolutely necessary to ensure that the Middle East and the Gulf Region is an area free of WMD, as we are convened that establishing regional security implies clearing it out of these dangerous weapons, This will make a positive contribution in the maintenance of world peace.

One of the most important cornerstones of the settlement of the peace process in the Middle East, The solution that leads to two States to end the Israeli/Arab dispute is very necessary and realities.

As I mentioned in the beginning, the new security dimensions emphasize the inseparable like between development and security, which necessitates the adoption of parallel measures in

the political and security field, as well as close cooperation between NATO and GCC States in the framework of ICI, in order to establish a secured area beyond its external boundaries, and the contribution in establishing a world order that is more stable and just, since the security of GCC States depends on an effective multilateral order.

At the end, I would like to note that, based on the fruitful experience of dialogue and cooperation between NATO and the South and Eastern Mediterranean since 1994, that a similar dialogue between NATO and the GCC states can be an important step towards the achievement of our common objectives and reinforcing multilateral cooperation, after having agreed the common perceptions and the main bases of cooperation, which will lead to a successful dialogue for the benefit of our joint interests based on international law, and we hope that this dialogue will continue between us in the future.

Once again, I would like to express my gratitude to this distinguished gathering. Thanks and appreciation are also extended to all those who contributed to the preparation and organization of this conference .

May peace, God's mercy and blessing be upon you all.