

Premier tackles Gulf, Iran, Palestine, Syria, terrorism, FDI in UN address

Sheikh Jaber: UN provides ideal venue for addressing global challenges

NEW YORK: Representative of HH the Amir, HH the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said the United Nations has proved to be the ideal platform for managing disputes and addressing various global challenges through dialogue. Delivering Kuwait's address to the 74th UN General Assembly on Wednesday, Sheikh Jaber started by congratulating Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria on his assumption of the presidency of the current session of the UN General Assembly on Sept 17, 2019.

He wished Bande success in his mission, renewing Kuwait's full support to his leadership of the General Assembly and appreciating the efforts made by his predecessor Maria Fernanda Espinosa of Ecuador in this regard. Sheikh Jaber also spoke highly of UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres for his efforts in leading "this prestigious organization".

"Over the last seven decades and more, the UN, as a safe haven for dispute management, was able to tackle a lot of formidable challenges and chronic crises, prioritizing the logic of peaceful diplomatic dialogue to protect the next generations from the ordeals of conflicts and war," he said. "Since its emergence, the State of Kuwait has committed itself to a foreign policy based on peace and multilateral dialogue. During its non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council, Kuwait was able to engage and interact directly in addressing various global issues, whether chronic, regular or emergency issues," Sheikh Jaber said.

"With its tenure nearing an end, Kuwait has become more convinced that multilateral dialogue is a crucial means of addressing the global challenges and that the UN provides the ideal venue for such dialogue," Sheikh Jaber stressed. He renewed Kuwait's commitment to the principles and objectives of the UN Charter and reiterated support for the UN in delivering its noble message for protecting the world peace and security.

Acts of sabotage

Sheikh Jaber Mubarak denounced the recent terrorist attacks on two oil facilities in Saudi Arabia as a serious threat to the flow of energy supplies to the world market. He said the Arabian Gulf region has undergone a chain of acts of terrorism and sabotage over the last year, which posed a serious threat to the freedom of navigation inside the region and beyond, and hampered the flow of energy supplies to the world.

Sheikh Jaber cited as an example the terrorist attacks on two oil facilities in Saudi Arabia on Sept 14. He renewed Kuwait's condemnation of these terrorist attacks and reaffirmed full support to the measures the Saudi Arabia might take to protect its security and stability. He reiterated the call for the international community to shoulder its responsibilities for protection of free navigation in this region in keeping with the



NEW YORK: HH the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah speaks during the 74th Session of the General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters on Wednesday. — AFP

provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Palestine question

Sheikh Jaber said the Palestine question remains a central issue for the Arab and Muslim worlds. "If this question continues to be unsolved, it will deepen tensions and instability in the Middle East region. Therefore, we urge relaunching the (Palestinian-Israeli) peace talks within a specific timeframe," he stressed. "The need is that the substantive peace talks must ensure reaching fair and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution, the outcomes of the previous rounds of talks, the relevant UN resolutions and the Arab peace initiative of 2002."

The negotiations must culminate into ending the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and establishing the independent state of Palestine within the pre-June 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital city, he added. Sheikh Jaber highlighted the need for ending Israeli aggressions on holy sites and illegal Jewish settlement expansions in occupied Palestinian territories, warning against any unilateral attempts to impose fait accompli in this regard.

Conflict in Syria

Sheikh Jaber said the humanitarian disaster in Syria, which has entered its ninth year, is a reminder of the failure of the international community to reach a consensus on a possible solution. "The parties to this conflict also failed to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the protracted conflict. Therefore, we affirm our stance that there is no military solution to this conflict and

there is no alternative to a political settlement living up to the aspirations of the Syrian people based on UN Security Council Resolution 2254 and the outcome of the Geneva declaration of 2012," he noted.

Regarding Yemen, Sheikh Jaber said this crisis is another reminder of how to deal with UN Security Council resolutions and the failure of the parties to the conflict to implement the outcomes of the peace talks, including the Stockholm deal reached late last year. "Once again, Kuwait reaffirms that there is no military solution to this conflict and continues to back UN-led efforts to resume the political process in order to restore peace, security and stability in Yemen and preserve its territorial integrity," he said.

Kuwait remains ready to host the Yemeni brothers for another round of peace talks under the auspices of the UN in order to reach a final political solution based on the GCC initiative and its executive mechanism, the outcomes of the national dialogue and the UN Security Council Resolution 2216" he added.

Confidence-building measures

Kuwait also called on Iran to take a number of bold confidence-building measures to help ease escalating tension in the Gulf region. "We reiterate our call on the Islamic Republic of Iran to take serious confidence-building measures to initiate a dialogue that is based on respect for sovereignty of states and non-interference in their internal affairs, ease tension in the Gulf region, and maintain safety of navigation," Sheikh Jaber said in his speech. He argued that such a measure will help create relations based on mutual respect and fruitful cooperation. "This

will embody the region states' aspiration of stability and security to achieve prosperity and development for their peoples," he said.

Eliminating terrorism

Kuwait renewed its call for increasing international efforts to eliminate the scourge of terrorism, describing it as one of the gravest challenges to the world order. "There is no doubt that the growing threat of terrorism and violent extremism is one of the most dangerous challenges facing the world order," Sheikh Jaber said. He reminded the world that the Middle East region has suffered most from the sabotage acts of terrorist organizations, especially the so-called Islamic State terrorist group, which put on a cloak of Islam to cover its destructive intentions.

"This is a direct reason to call for intensifying efforts to counter this real danger in all its forms and manifestations, dry up its sources and funding and activate international and regional conventions on combating terrorism," he said. He regretted that this destructive threat of terrorism is snowballing in a number of states like Yemen, Libya, Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan.

The Kuwaiti premier, however, cited Iraq's success in defeating the so-called Islamic State group as a good example how collective action in dealing with this threat could have great results. In the case of Iraq, which suffered most from IS' crimes, the great role of the international community and its cooperation with the national government helped clear all the Iraqi territories from the IS terrorist entity, he said.

Foreign investments

Sheikh Jaber also said Kuwait is working to create an appropriate environment to lure investments from all over the world. The prime minister expressed satisfaction over the development made over the last years, thanks to concerted efforts and a number of laws enacted by Kuwait. He said Kuwait looks forward to getting improved international indicators, including the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) which is issued annually by the World Bank.

He noted that Kuwait has assumed its responsibility towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, indicating that the country proposed its first national plan for 2019 to achieve these goals. This was done during a high-level political forum, which reflected the determination of the political leadership topped with the directives of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the premier told the attendees.

This aimed at bolstering international partnership and solidarity within the framework of policies made by the government in the long, medium and short terms to achieve the biggest gains of sustainable development and link them objectively to Kuwait's 2035 vision and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, he concluded. — KUNA