



المؤتمر الأول للمغتربين العرب  
"جسر للتواصل"  
FIRST CONFERENCE OF  
ARAB EXPATRIATES  
**A Bridge**  
for Communication



**DECLARATION  
OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF  
ARAB EXPATRIATES:  
"A BRIDGE FOR COMMUNICATION"**

**General Secretariat, Cairo**

**4 - 6 December 2010**

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**The Arab Communities abroad, participating in the First Conference of Arab Expatriates held at the Headquarters of of the League of Arab States in Cairo from 4 to 6 December 2010 under the auspices of Mr. Amre Moussa, Secretary General of LAS.**

- Having reviewed the studies, reports, proposals and ideas suggested in the working papers submitted to the conference and the comprehensive discussions that took place during the open session attended by the ministers and representatives of the communities under the chairmanship of the Secretary General, the working sessions and workshops as well as the interventions of the participants;

**Unanimously agreed on the following:**

1. To express its appreciation for the initiative of LAS to convene the "First Conference of Arab Expatriates: A Bridge for Communication, which was attended by the Arab Ministers in Charge of immigration and migrants affairs as well as a large number of representative figures of Arab communities abroad, civil society and expatriate's youth organizations as well as concerned Arab, regional and international organizations.
2. To express its thanks to the Arab Expatriates Department of LAS for the efforts it exerted during preparations for the Conference.
3. To express its thanks to the members of the Preparatory Committee of the conference for their contributions.

**I- The Role of Civil Society Organizations in countries of residence:**

1. The importance of the role of civil society organizations in the countries of residence in order to improve cultural, social, political and economic conditions of Arab communities. The action of such organizations is characterized by its comprehensive and diverse character including social, cultural and other fields as well as issues related to women, highly qualified community members, care for new generations, friendship and sports associations, investment as

well as many other activities including communication with poorer and marginalized segments of their communities.

2. Most of the civil society organizations are concentrated in Europe, North America and Australia. Such organizations do not exist in the other regions, particularly in Africa. It is therefore important for Arab communities in these regions to consider establishing their own civil society organizations.
3. Support should be provided to associations operating in the economic, political, cultural and social fields. These associations should be linked to the Arab world in order to defend its causes and to project the best image of Arab citizens abroad. In turn these associations should assist in development efforts in the Arab world by helping to establish twinning links with peer organizations in various Arab countries.
4. To emphasize the importance of maintaining contact with the Arab Expatriates Department of LAS in order to enrich its web site data-base of Arab civil society organizations abroad. This would help in increasing communication and coordination among them to better serve and defend interests of Arab communities.
5. To exert efforts for the establishment an Arab Media Institution with the help of Arab migrant media experts.
6. To establish specialized law institutions to defend Arab expatriates and Arab causes in countries of residence.
7. To strengthen the role of the private sector and Arab civil society organizations –within the Arab world- to enable them, along with governments, to communicate with Arab migrant communities.
8. To invite the Arab League to organize more visits to areas where there is no LAS representation, in collaboration with Arab Ambassadors and Arab civil society organizations in these areas.
9. To call upon Arab civil society organizations abroad to exchange experience and spread best practices to enrich joint Arab action in host countries of Arab migrants.
10. To support the integration of Arab expatriates in their new societies and help them to master the necessary means for that purpose; foremost among which is to master the national language.
11. To establish an Arab home in western capitals in cooperation with the governments of countries where large Arab communities are living, in order to create linkages between Arab migrants regardless of their country of origin.

12. To allocate awards and appreciation certificates to the best Arab activist and the best Arab civil society organization abroad. These will be awarded on the celebration of the Arab Expatriate Day.

**II- The role of highly qualified persons and exchanging expertise with their Arab homeland:**

1. The participants reaffirmed that highly qualified Arabs residing in host countries are a national and international asset that should receive due attention, support and privileged status in the framework of the strategic options of Arab countries.
2. To call for making best use of Arab scholars in host countries by developing specific programs that would encourage them to contribute to the development efforts of Arab countries and to establish links with Arab scientific institutions in their fields of specialization.
3. To call for encouraging joint Arab action and research projects in which Arab scholars residing in host countries and their counterparts living in the Arab world would cooperate to formulate an Arab-regional approach to activate the contribution of migrant scholars in strengthening development efforts.
4. To urge highly qualified Arabs residing in host countries to establish and support associations and institutions related to their fields of specializations; to establish communication networks with highly qualified specialists in their host countries with a view to launch partnerships and cooperation with them in order to achieve development goals in the Arab world.
5. To call for establishing an observatory of highly qualified Arabs within the Arab Expatriates Department as a prerequisite for sectoral networking between highly qualified Arabs residing in host countries and their counterparts in the Arab world. The participants call upon institutions concerned in the Arab countries to cooperate with the observatory and to provide it with relevant data.
6. To urge ministers of migrant's affairs in the Arab world to exert efforts to create links among migrants willing to contribute to the development of their countries of origin by undertaking necessary contacts with authorities concerned in each country to facilitate their task.
7. To encourage and activate scientific exchange between highly qualified Arabs in host countries and Arab education institutions.

8. To call upon the Arab elite in the host countries to interact and communicate with the broad base of Arab communities abroad.

### **III. Culture, Thought and Openness towards others:**

1. To call for establishing Arab associations and organizations in countries of residence that include thinkers, intellectuals, media, specialists and literary figures as a framework and platform for developing work programs that could be implemented.
2. To provide support to Arab migrants in order to participate actively in public life of their new communities and to join relevant associations, organizations and trade unions; so that they may better inform these bodies of the history, civilization and cultural heritage of Arabs;
3. To make use of information technology and modern means of communication to further inform them of our cultural heritage, human values and to explain and defend the Arabs' cause and legitimate rights;
4. To intensify meetings of cultural character and to celebrate Arab Days in host countries by holding fairs and seminars on Arab civilization and culture;
5. To call upon the General Secretariat to involve Arab thinkers, intellectuals and writers in host countries in the events of the Arab Cultural Summit to be held in 2012;
6. To establish Arab cultural centers in host countries similar to the Arab World Institute in Paris;
7. To call for establishing links between Arab information and press professionals in host countries to defend Arab issues abroad in a coordinated manner.
8. To call for providing support to translation activities from and into Arabic to acquaint people with Arab thought, culture and civilization.

### **IV. Political and Social Participation of Arab Migrants:**

1. To call for the mobilization of the potentials of Arab migrants to support our national causes, foremost among which are the national rights of the Palestinian people, particularly, the right of repatriation of the Palestinian refugees and establishing the State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital;

2. To support the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002\*;
3. To commend the recognition by Brazil and Argentina of the State of Palestine within the borders of June 4<sup>th</sup> , 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital; and to call upon all countries to recognize the State of Palestine.
4. To support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem in confronting the policy of judaization, building of settlements, demolishing houses and denouncing these policies in international fora; to ask for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and Lebanese territories up to the 1967 borders and to lift the blockade imposed on Gaza.
5. The conference supports action taken by the Sudan to preserve its unity, sovereignty and stability and calls for the transparency and credibility of its forthcoming referendum.
6. To denounce all forms of terrorism in Iraq and to support the country's efforts for national reconciliation and to stand up against all attempts of hegemony or foreign intervention. It denounces all terrorist acts or providing refuge to extremist groups.
7. To reaffirm the unity of the territory and people of Yemen.
8. To encourage Arab migrants to take part in political activities and parties in host countries in order to form a strong Arab lobby capable of defending the just Arab cause and to communicate with politicians of Arab origin in their host country.
9. To call upon Arab governments to urge Arab migrants residing abroad to take part in cultural and social activities as well as in political parties and organizations in their new communities.
10. To invite the General Secretariat to convene a meeting of parliamentarians of Arab origin in host countries, in coordination with Arab League's missions and Arab Ambassadors Councils, to discuss issues of common interest to Arab expatriates and to establish networks among them.

**V. Intensifying links with new expatriate generations and their culture of origin:**

1. To invite LAS, in cooperation with Arab countries, to develop an integrated and multi-dimensional strategy with a view to

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\* The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya expressed its reservation on sub.para.2 of para.4 concerning support for the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002

strengthening linkages between new generations of expatriates and their countries of origin.

2. To call for intensifying and developing media discourse targeting this segment of the community through various audio-visual means while making best use of modern communication channels, in particular the Internet.
3. To call upon the Expatriates Department of LAS to include on its web site information destined to new generations on Arab civilization and the contribution of its main figures to human civilization at large, in addition to current development efforts of Arab countries in various fields.
4. To multiply exploratory, cultural and study trips to Arab countries in order to strengthen links between migrant youth and their countries of origin and reinforce their national identity.

**VI. The Arabic language and its importance as means of communication between Arab communities and their Arab homeland:**

1. To call for the development of Arabic language programs targeting new generations of migrants and to include Arabic in regular curricula in countries where large Arab communities are concentrated.
2. To call for the development of student and scientific exchange programs between universities in the Arab world and Arab students and professors residing abroad.
3. To develop a unified Arabic language teaching program abroad as well as a comprehensive curriculum for that purpose using various means particularly the Internet as well as capacities available through virtual universities concerned with teaching the Arabic language.
4. To allocate fellowships to new generation of migrants to study in Arab universities or in their countries of residence.

**VII. Establishing an Organizational Framework for Arab Expatriates:**

1. To call upon the General Secretariat to appoint a specialized committee to develop a possible organizational framework for Arab expatriates based on the proposals made during the conference.
2. To make use of modern communication means to maintain contact with Arab expatriates.

3. To reaffirm the importance of studies and research centers in regulating Arab migration; and provide them with assistance and establish an appropriate data-base that allows maintaining links among them.

**VIII. General Recommendations:**

1. To exert more efforts to finalize the establishment of a Ministerial Council of Arab Ministers concerned with migration, expatriates and Arab communities abroad.
2. To recommend that Arab communities abroad should not be involved in inter-Arab or domestic disputes.
3. To call upon Arab governments and their diplomatic representations abroad to facilitate expatriates visits to their countries of origin and find solutions to problems related to military service.
4. To invite the Arab League to carry out in-depth studies on social, cultural, economic and political conditions of Arab expatriate communities in various countries of residence.
5. To give more attention to Arab communities in sub-saharan Africa, Asia and Australia.
6. To call for the convening of the present conference once every two years while organizing inter-sessional workshops. The second session of the Conference could be held in 2012 at the Headquarters of the Arab League or in an Arab capital in agreement with LAS.
7. To submit the present recommendations to the next Arab Summit for adoption.