

# UN-Arab League cooperation essential for tackling regional crises, says UN chief

Author:

Thu, 2022-03-24 00:08

NEW YORK: The UN and the Arab League remain united in their pursuit of multilateral solutions to “cascading” challenges facing the Arab world, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Wednesday.

Stronger cooperation between the two organizations is essential for the enhancement of multilateralism, he added. He pointed out that the war in Ukraine and its profound ramifications around the globe have revealed the need for such cooperation to be all the more urgent, as many Arab countries, including Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, import at least half of the wheat they require from Ukraine or Russia.

Since the war began on Feb. 24, food and fuel prices have soared as supplies were disrupted, which is “hitting the poorest the hardest and planting the seeds for political instability and unrest across the globe,” Guterres added.

He was speaking at a ministerial-level meeting of the UN Security Council. It was convened by the UAE, which holds the presidency of the council for the month of March, to discuss ways to improve partnerships and strengthen and institutionalize cooperation between the UN and the Arab League in areas such as conflict prevention, diplomacy, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and to promote the role of women and youth in efforts to maintain regional and international peace and security.

The meeting was chaired by Khalifa Shaheen Almarar, minister of state at the UAE’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

Guterres highlighted the existing aspects of cooperation between the UN and the Arab League relating to conflicts and crises in the Middle East. He welcomed the latter organization’s “constructive engagement” with efforts to safeguard the unity and “hard-won” stability of Libya since the ceasefire agreement of October 2020, and said he counts on it continuing to prioritize the need for an agreement on a comprehensive political process in the country.

Guterres also said that the two organizations remain firmly united in their support for the Syrian people, “who feel abandoned by the world as they enter the 11th year of a war that has subjected them to human rights violations on a massive and systematic scale and left the country in ruins.”

He reiterated that the only way to break the deadlock in Syria and alleviate the suffering of the people there lies in a “credible” political process that includes the implementation of Security Council resolutions.

Turning to the situation in Lebanon, Guterres said the UN is grateful for the work of the Arab League in urging authorities in the country to address the crisis there through a process that includes meaningful reforms, timely elections, constructive engagement with the International Monetary Fund and the full implementation of applicable Security Council resolutions.

He also welcomed the enhancement of strategic cooperation between members of the Iraqi government and the Arab League, including a mission to observe and monitor Iraq's parliamentary elections in October last year.

A strengthening of regional cooperation is also critical in Yemen, Guterres said. Without efforts to agree a ceasefire, defuse tensions and advance an inclusive political process in the country, unceasing hostilities threaten to cause the already dire humanitarian situation to deteriorate further and dim the hopes of peace, he added.

The UN chief expressed disappointment at the results of a recent pledging event for Yemen, during which less than a third of the funds needed to address the humanitarian crisis in the country were received.

"I cannot overstate the severity of the suffering of the people of Yemen," Guterres said. "I appeal to the generosity of members of the Arab League at this critical time."

During the meeting the Security Council adopted a presidential statement, drafted by the UAE, welcoming the close cooperation between the UN and the Arab League and reiterating the intention to enhance their collaboration in a number of areas, including maritime safety and security, counterterrorism, respect for international law, poverty eradication, water security, and desertification and drought management in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The statement also affirmed the role of the youth population in efforts to maintain international peace and security, including the prevention and resolution of conflicts in MENA.

Ahmed Abul Gheit, the secretary-general of the Arab League, warned that the international order is again at a "most serious," critical juncture as a result of the war in Ukraine.

"It is a deplorable situation," he said and expressed hope that the international community can work to end the bloodshed, while honoring the security requirements of all those involved in line with the UN's charter and principles.

However, he also said that he hopes the situation in Ukraine will not affect the ability of the Security Council to focus on other crises.

"The crises of the Arab world must not be forgotten," Abul Gheit said. "These crises will not resolve themselves."

The conflict in Ukraine provides a new prism through which to view the continuing suffering of the Palestinians, for example, he said as he stressed

that the international order “cannot be based on double standards.”

Abul Gheit lamented the political impasse in Syria and the continuing repercussions for millions of Syrians. He also called for the withdrawal of foreign militias and fighters from Libya, saying that such interventions are complicating efforts to hold democratic elections in the North African country.

In Yemen, Abul Gheit said the Houthis refuse to engage with efforts to reach a political settlement and continue to threaten Saudi Arabia and the UAE with attacks using drones and ballistic missiles. He again welcomed the recent adoption of Security Council Resolution 2624, which extended sanctions against the Iran-backed Houthis and categorized them as “terrorists” for the first time.

He said Iran’s disruptive interventions in the region continue and its missile program is a “legitimate concern for the Arab League.” The organization seeks good relations with Iran, after Tehran ends its interference in regional and international affairs, but “this goal is still not within reach,” he added.

Emirati minister of state Almarar said Wednesday’s meeting was particularly important given that most of the issues on the Security Council agenda are Arab issues.

“As a result of the international community merely managing these crises rather than resolving them, several of these issues have been on the council’s agenda for decades,” Almarar said.

“The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other crises in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, Sudan and Somalia have taken a high economic and humanitarian toll on the region.”

He said that these Arab crises, which have taken on cross-border and international dimensions, require efforts to address them on both the regional and international levels.

“The League of Arab States has a long history ... extending back 77 years since it’s founding in 1945,” said Almarar. “It also possesses a deep knowledge of regional challenges, as well as the concerns of its member states, which enables it to play a leading role in supporting the implementation of the Security Council’s core mandate to maintain international peace and security.”

He called for enhanced cooperation between the UN and the Arab League, including the institutionalization of the relationship between them.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Arab League](#)

[United Nations](#)

[Antonio Guterres](#)

[Ahmed Abul Gheit](#)

Arab League and China urge peace talks for UkraineLibya ceasefire under threat, warns Arab League chief

## [Students call on universities to divest from companies supporting Israeli war crimes, apartheid](#)

Wed, 2022-03-23 22:37

LONDON: Students across the world on Wednesday held demonstrations on campus, calling on their universities to withdraw their investments in companies complicit in Israeli war crimes and apartheid.

Protests were held at over 70 universities, with students also sending letters to their vice-chancellors as part of the initiative, which was organized by the UK-based Friends of Al-Aqsa, a nonprofit concerned with defending the human rights of Palestinians and protecting Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem.

Using the hashtag #Divest4Palestine on social media, students called on their universities to boycott investments in companies including Rolls-Royce, BAE Systems, HP, and Booking.com.

“Rolls-Royce and BAE produce the weapons used to attack Palestinians living under blockade in Gaza, and HP provides the technology used at Israel’s checkpoints,” the organizers said. “Booking.com advertises accommodation in illegal Israeli settlements, on land stolen from Palestinians.”

Sima, at Warwick University in the UK, said: “As students at Warwick, we’re appalled that money from this campus goes into sustaining an apartheid state,” and called on the vice-chancellor to “divest from these companies without hesitation.”

Manal, at Nottingham, said: “How can our vice-chancellor think it’s acceptable to invest money in companies involved in war crimes? There’s a lot of talk about ‘decolonizing,’ but we need to see some actual change if this is really going to happen.”

Shamiul Joarder, FOA head of public affairs, said: “The government is currently trying to suppress our freedom to boycott, divest from and sanction Israel (BDS), but the #Divest4Palestine campaign shows that students and academics, along with the rest of the British public, are increasingly showing that they’ve got no tolerance for complicity in Israeli war crimes and apartheid.”

The initiative was part of the International Day of Action, which also saw 25 prominent academics sign an open letter to universities worldwide to #Divest4Palestine in the run-up to Wednesday.

The open letter was coordinated by the FOA and a coalition of UK university student societies. It was also signed by the Palestinian activist Mohammed El-Kurd.







Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Friends of Al-Aqsa](#)

[Israel](#)

[Palestinians](#)

[Rolls-Royce](#)

[BAE](#)

Palestinians call for World Bank pressure on Israel over withheld funds  
Four dead in Israel stabbing, car-ramming, assailant shot

---

## [Four dead in Israel stabbing, car-ramming, assailant shot](#)

Author:

AFP

ID:

1647983230503716700

Tue, 2022-03-22 19:44

BEERSHEBA, Israel: A man wielding a knife stabbed several people and ran over another in southern Israel on Tuesday, killing four, in one of the deadliest

attacks in the country in recent years.

The assailant, who Israeli media have identified as a Bedouin man who previously tried to join the Daesh group, was shot dead by armed locals following the attack in the southern city of Beersheba, police said. Prime Minister Naftali Bennett promised to crack down on "terrorists" following the bloodshed that began shortly after 4:00 p.m. (1400 GMT) and unfolded at a petrol station and on a street outside a nearby shopping center.

Liraz Zrihan, a 25-year-old who was washing her car at the petrol station when the rampage began, said she saw the attacker holding a long knife, "like a sword," while spinning around and looking for people to stab.

According to police and the Magen David Adom emergency medical responders, the assailant stabbed one woman at the gas station, used his car to run over a man in his sixties on a bicycle, and stabbed several others outside the shopping center before he was shot.

Police have not officially identified the suspect.

But multiple Israeli media outlets reported the attacker was Mohammed Abu Al-Kiyan, a former schoolteacher in his thirties from the Bedouin community of Hura, near Beersheba, who was previously convicted over seeking ties with Daesh and preaching extremist ideology.

In 2015, Israel arrested six Bedouins, including four teachers, for allegedly supporting Daesh.

Bennett, who met with his internal security minister and police chief after the attack, praised those who shot the alleged assailant, saying they "showed resourcefulness and courage and prevented further casualties."

"Security forces are on high alert. We will work hard against terrorists. We will pursue them as well and those who help them," the Israeli premier tweeted.

The United Nations' envoy for Middle East peace, Tor Wennesland, condemned the violence, which he said was "the seventh stabbing attack against Israelis this month."

"I am increasingly alarmed by the continued violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel that is taking place on a daily basis," the UN envoy said in a statement.

Stabbing and car-ramming attacks are common in Israel.

But much of the recent violence has occurred in east Jerusalem, the Palestinian sector of the city annexed by Israel after the 1967 Six Day War, or in the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since the same year. Attacks resulting in multiple Israeli fatalities have also been rare in recent years, while Israel's south, including Beersheba, has largely been spared such violence.

The region has seen unrest involving Bedouin, who are part of Israel's 20 percent Arab minority and who have clashed with security forces, typically over land disputes.

Mansour Abbas, the leader of Israel's Raam party that backs Bennett's government and was widely supported by Bedouin voters in elections last year, denounced the attack.

"The Raam party condemns the criminal attack in Beersheba and sends its condolences to the families of those killed," said a party statement posted on his personal Facebook page.

The local council in Hura also condemned the incident as a "criminal and



terrorist act.”



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Israel](#)

[Beersheba](#)

[Mansour Abbas](#)

[Bedouin](#)

[Naftali Bennett](#)

Palestinian assailant dead in Jerusalem stabbing attack: policeIsrael:  
Palestinian shot, killed in alleged stabbing attempt

---

## [Community and conflict: How Turks and Syrian refugees are learning to live together](#)

Author:

Tue, 2022-03-22 23:43

ANKARA: The latest UN-backed study into Syrian refugees living in Turkey and

the thoughts of the two communities was released on Monday.

Supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Syrians Barometer-2020: A Framework for Achieving Social Cohesion with Syrians in Turkey was released under the leadership of Prof. M. Murat Erdogan from Ankara University.

The survey is the third of its kind conducted since 2017. Its findings are based on face-to-face interviews with 2,259 Turkish citizens in 26 cities and 1,414 Syrian households in 15 cities.

The report showed that the level of social acceptance of Syrians is high despite some ongoing concerns.

“Turkish society’s acceptance of Syrians has largely been transformed into ‘toleration’ rather than an understanding of establishing a practice of living together,” it said.

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

New study shows Turkish acceptance of migrants is rising, but problems remain.

80% of Turks say they provided cash or other assistance to Syrians during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Concerns about jobs losses and rising crime were lower than before, and the COVID-19 pandemic had boosted solidarity and neighborly ties between the two groups, it said.

“This can be explained by the normalization trend that created a habit among Turkish society regarding the presence of Syrians, while the pandemic also shifted social priorities toward making ends meet,” Erdogan told Arab News.

About 80 percent of Turks said they provided cash or other forms of assistance to Syrians during the pandemic.

But Turkish people living in border towns with a high density of Syrian refugees were less positive, saying they considered them an ongoing source of problems.

There remains misunderstanding about how Syrians generate income, with most Turkish people claiming the refugees rely on assistance from the Turkish state. But those who are financially supported by an EU-funded assistance program account for only about 44 percent of the general Syrian population in Turkey.

While concerns remain about the deterioration of public services, loss of jobs, rise in criminality and corruption, the proportion of Turks who said they had experienced personal harm from Syrians in the past five years was 11

percent.

“When I conducted a field study in the southeastern province of Sanliurfa, Turkish residents said they were harmed by the presence of Syrians because they were speaking loudly at night and not sleeping at the right time,” Erdogan said.

“Turks are more inclined to perceive Syrians through the prism of identity concerns.”

According to the report, 55 percent of Turks are against Syrians opening their own businesses, saying it would generate unfair competition.

A total of 77 percent of Turks said they did not think Syrians had cultural similarities with the Turkish. But Syrians considered themselves socially very close to Turks, the report said.

Turkey is home to about 3.7 million Syrians under temporary protection, which represents about 5 percent of the Turkish population. Many of them said they were not settled in the country.

In the latest report, the proportion of refugees saying they did not plan to return to Syria was 77.8 percent, up from 51.8 percent in 2019 and 16.7 percent in 2017.

Similarly, 90 percent of the Turks surveyed said they thought that at least half of the Syrians would stay in Turkey.

Asked where the Syrians should live, 85 percent of Turkish respondents suggested they be housed in camps, secure zones or designated cities instead of integrating with local communities.

“Turks prefer an isolated lifestyle for Syrians in Turkey,” Erdogan said.

While Turkey’s Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu recently announced that the country had granted citizenship status to more than 193,000 Syrian refugees, 71 percent of the Turks polled said they were against giving citizenship to Syrians, while about 17 percent said Syrian children should not be given an education.

A total of 46 percent of Syrians said they had been integrated into Turkish society but would prefer the status of temporary protection rather than citizenship so as not to lose their benefits under the EU support programs. The survey also showed that at least one member of each Syrian family could speak Turkish.

More than 88 percent of the Syrians polled said they had not faced any problems regarding access to health services during the pandemic, but 64 percent said it had negatively affected their financial situation.

The study also found that there had been an increase in the proportion of Syrians moving on to a third country to 49 percent in 2020, from 34 percent in 2019 and 23 percent in 2017.

Despite the high proportion of Turks saying they had extended a helping hand to Syrians during the pandemic, 67 percent of the Syrian respondents said society's perception of them had not changed since the health crisis.

In its recommendations, the report said that Turkey's policies on Syrians that are based on temporariness should be revised as establishing a peaceful Syria remained an unlikely prospect in the short and medium terms.

It said also that more needed to be done to find viable employment for Syrians.

"Agriculture, animal husbandry and the industrial sector all offer opportunities to create employment," it said.

It added that civil society should assume a greater role in aiding integration and that a financial support program needed to be developed to allow local authorities to help Syrians living within their jurisdictions.

It also said the international community should share the responsibility of providing financial support and resettlement options for Syrians.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Turkey](#)

[Syria](#)

[refugees](#)

Syria using shell companies to bypass sanctions, report claims Turkey says  
Russia and Ukraine nearing agreement on 'critical' issues

---

# [Abu Dhabi crown prince says UAE keen on energy security, global markets balance](#)

Tue, 2022-03-22 22:11

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince spoke with Azerbaijan's president about the global energy market in light of the Ukraine crisis, and stressed that the UAE is keen on energy security globally and the stability and balance of energy markets, Emirates News Agency reported on Tuesday.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan also discussed with Azerbaijan's president, Ilham Aliyev, bilateral relations, especially in fields of economy, trade, energy, in addition to a number of regional and international issues of common concern.

The Abu Dhabi crown prince also spoke with Japan's prime minister Fumio Kishida on Tuesday about the Ukraine crisis and also assured him that the UAE is keen to maintain energy security and keep global markets stable.

Sheikh Mohammed's comments come a day after he visited Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm El-Sheikh to meet with Egypt's president Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Middle East](#)

[Abu Dhabi](#)

[UAE](#)

[Azerbaijan](#)

[energy](#)

Abu Dhabi crown prince arrives in Egypt to meet president  
Abu Dhabi crown prince to Japanese PM: UAE keen to maintain energy security, global markets stability