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Moussa describes the discussions in the meeting of Arab foreign ministers as 'constructive'

The Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, Mr Amr Moussa, described the discussions during the meeting of Arab foreign ministers today in Cairo as positive and constructive, indicating that the climate in the Middle East has become less tense and closer to mutual understanding than it has ever been before. This came about in a press conference conducted at the end of the council's 131st session on a foreign ministerial level, which was hosted on Tuesday by the Sudanese presidency, which it assumed from the predecessor, Saudi Arabia.

Moussa said the distinguishing feature from today's meeting was the stamp of mutual understanding, most noticeable in an agreement made to continue the discussion on matters intrinsically linked to the regional situation and Arab relations before the next summit in an additional special meeting. The Sudanese Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and current President of session, Mr Ali Ahmed Al-Kerti, has indicated that the next Arab Summit will be held in Doha at the end of next March.

In the press conference, which took place today with the participation of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States at the headquarters of Cairo University, he (Al-Kerti?) declared that there is great Arab consensus, which will help in the discussion of several subjects.

He drew attention to the existence of an agreement over the proposed agenda for the next Arab Summit that includes Lebanon, Palestine, the reconstruction of Gaza, the situation in Sudan and the region of Darfur and Somalia and accordingly, ways of dealing with issues linked to shared security in the Middle East.

According to Moussa, the meeting is considered an opportunity for arranging and preparing for the next Arab Summit. He indicated that a meeting will be held by the League's council prior to commencing work on the next Arab summit in two days and to finalize the dialogue on the most important issues and prepare the final schedule for the summit.

As to the International Court's investigation into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, Moussa said that the League's council welcomes the efforts aimed at achieving justice and punishment of the perpetrators, disclaiming any fears about the potential politicization of the Court. He pointed out that the Court works within the framework of being a court and not in the framework of being part a political operation.

On rebuilding Gaza and the manner of getting past the Palestine conflict in obtaining funding for construction, Moussa said that overcoming the Palestine conflict will occur when a Palestinian reconciliation is realized. This must be completed as quickly as possible and consensus on government represents everyone, whether a coalition government or national unity.

This Arab reconciliation has transformed in recent times and Moussa said that everything undertaken now is done to guarantee the success of the next Arab Summit in Doha, indicating that we are on track to achieving Arab reconciliation. He added that while there are many obstacles on the path to success, reconciliation is headed in our direction.

Al-Kerti said that the Council has dealt with the issue of Sudan and Darfur by assigning the Arabic Committee to put into effect a peace initiative in the region, in coordination with the African Union and the United Nations.

He noted the good faith that exists among the Sudanese parties, which will lead to realizing an agreement and then reaching comprehensive peace. The dialogue has grown around the details of this peace, which confirms the existence of a strong platform for achieving immediate peace.