



(KUNA photo) Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah in talks with his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmoud Qureshi.

Pakistan could help de-escalate tension in area, says FM Qureshi

Kuwait, Pakistan seek closer ties

By Mohammad Al-Badah

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Pakistan expressed readiness to facilitate in de-escalating tension in the region and support peace and stability, visiting Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said.

In an interview with KUNA Sunday, Qureshi said

"we are concerned about rising tension between the US and Iran, Pakistan would always be supportive of peace and stability, we would be more than happy to facilitate in de-escalation and I am sure Kuwait is equally interested in de-escalation."

The minister noted, however, "relations between Kuwait and Pakistan have been historically cordial, and politically we have had excellent relations, we have been supporting each other at the regional level and on many global issues our policies on a number of issues are common, and our approach on many regional issues, on the issue of Palestine, they are close to each other."



(KUNA photo) Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi during the banquet.

FM honors Pakistani counterpart

Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah on Saturday held an iftar banquet in honor of the Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and his accompanying delegation on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

The banquet was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Office Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah and other state officials. (KUNA)

'Pakistan backs stability, security'

KUWAIT CITY, May 19, (KUNA): Pakistan's visiting Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said on Sunday his country supports the security and stability of the region.

During a press conference held on the sidelines of his two-day visit to Kuwait, Qureshi praised the role played by Kuwait in supporting and promoting peace in the region, adding that it is a key player in its stability.

He pointed to the excellence and wisdom of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, noting that he is the driving force of stability in the region because of his skill and experience.

He added that he has already met with Kuwaiti ministers of interior and for-

ign affairs and discussed the problem of visas for Pakistani citizens, pointing out that they agreed to overcome the difficulties in this subject.

The minister stressed that his country supports security and stability in the region through the special relations it has with all countries.

"We do not wish for war, this region has seen a lot of wars and tragedies," he added.

Regarding his country's commitment to the oil sanctions imposed by the United States on Iran, the minister stressed that Pakistan's import of Iranian oil is not much and that his country will abide by sanctions if recognized by the international community.

Qureshi meanwhile said Kuwait wanted the settlement of the Kashmir dispute according to UN Security Council resolutions.

In terms of Kuwait role in the Security Council, Qureshi said "I think they played a very balancing and a very mature role, especially during the recent standoff between India and Pakistan ... and they helped de-escalate and defuse tensions."

With regard to his visit to Kuwait, the minister said, "I'm here in Kuwait to build a comprehensive economic relationship, because there are 105,000 Pakistanis who have contributed to the economic development of Kuwait and I feel that we can facilitate more, by sending skilled and semi-skilled manpower to Kuwait, for further economic development."

"One of the issues that I intend to talk about is how to enhance our economic relationship, the other was to exchange thoughts and get input from the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister on some of the evolving regional developments that are of mutual interests."

Thirdly, the minister said he is scheduled to meet with the Deputy Premier and Interior Minister. Qureshi is on a two-day official visit for talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and other senior officials.

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah met visiting Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi and his accompanying delegation on Sunday.

They considered close relations between both friendly countries and ways of promoting and developing them in all fields.

Both ministers also discussed a number of issues pertinent to bilateral coordination and ways of addressing various regional challenges, the latest regional and international developments and issues of mutual interest.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's Office Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Asia Ambassador Ali Al-Said, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Pakistan Nasser Al-Mutairi and several other senior officials of the Foreign Ministry.

DIWANIYA ديوانية

A DIGEST OF PUBLIC OPINION

'Learn lesson from Saddam downfall'

'Be wise, save region from war'

"IT LOOKS like that Iranian leaders have not learnt the lesson that led to the disaster following the downfall of Saddam Hussein which destroyed all Iraqi cities and killed a lot of Iraqis," columnist *Abdulmohsen Al-Husseini* wrote for *Al-Anba* daily.

"Saddam dealt arrogantly with the events and threatened and challenged and boasted of an imminent strike force in the region."

"In this context, we remind how Saddam refused to respond positively to the world requests to withdraw from the State of Kuwait to avoid Iraq being exposed to a catastrophe, and at last both Saddam and his army were overwhelmingly defeated."

"This defeat destroyed his war machinery – the machinery which he was always boasting about. Moreover, the Iraqi infrastructure was also destroyed. Not just that, he failed to encounter the attack on his regime to such an extent he fled away and moved from one rat hole to another, but at last was pulled out like a criminal of war and not as a president of a state."

"After that, he was referred to the court and sentenced to death. The verdict was implemented and those who were supporting him (his allies), did nothing to rescue him and abandoned him to his fate."

"This was the actual fate of Saddam who once challenged the world, but today we see how the leaders in Iran are challenging the world and threatening to close down the water passage of Bab Al-Mandeb in addition to the deployment of ballistic missiles in a bid to threaten the American fleet in the Arabian Gulf which is there to prevent any Iranian attempts to hamper the passage of oil tankers through Bab Al-Mandeb."

"Not just that the Iranian leaders are still steadily frightening the states overlooking the Arab Gulf. In this context, we recall how Iran, had earlier attempted to impede the movement of the oil tankers, but it stopped this attempt following the arrival of the deterring power into the Gulf waters to foil the Iranian attempts to prevent the oil exports of the Arab Gulf states."

"However, although these attempts failed, nowadays, we observe how Iran is threatening the world of closing the strategic straits and weakening the economies of the Arabian Gulf states."

"Anyway, this new Iranian attempt and its threat to close down the passage of Bab Al-Mandeb to prevent the oil tankers passing through to Europe and America will be doomed to failure."

"As a matter of fact, the most important thing for us is to see that the state of war in the region ending, because any prospective war shall lead to the destruction of all countries in the region."

"Such being the case, we hope the Iranian leaders will recalculate their accounts and refrain from involving the region in a war that shall hurt the entire Gulf."

"In the meantime, we hope the Iranians will benefit from the attitudes of North Korea in terms of the latter's response to international demands to prevent their region from being exposed to a destructive war, given the fact this attitude of North Korea reflects some kind of wisdom and rationality."

"Consequently, we hope our neighbors and our brothers in Islam – the Iranians – should work to avoid the war to prevent destruction in the entire region, particularly since we know that Iran too possesses oil and is in a position to build a modern Iran for the good of the Iranian people."

Also:

"The importance of the Gulf states, rests in the fact that these states represent the big states in the world in term of their oil exports," columnist *Hamad Saleh Al-Qattan* wrote for *Annahar* daily.

"Not just that, these states are the basic members in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in addition to more than 40 percent of the world oil passing through the Straits of Hormuz which represents the last marine passage in the Gulf."

"Apart from the above, the Gulf countries are distinguished by the fact that they represent the fountain of Islam along with its various doctrines. In other words, this part of the world contains the holy places of all Muslims, and is linked to each other through a joint civilized history that dates back to the age that preceded the appearance of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him."

"Given the above, we all realize what is currently taking place around us. In this context, we say that everybody at the moment talks about the war in the Gulf between the US and Iran – whether this will actually happen or not."

"In this context, we say some US newspapers affiliated to and supporting the Zionist lobby in America, say the war in the Gulf is inevitable and this actually contravenes the political and military reality in addition to the Pentagon reports which have hinted that the US will not be involved in any war in the Gulf citing the prospective economic and military losses and this means the US politicians and military officials are positive that the war is not a game."

"Speaking of Iran, many Iranian army leaders have expressed their readiness for a war if it erupts. In this context, we say the reports have projected the volume of the Iranian readiness and the deterring force of the Iranian army."

"In the meantime, we found how the Iranian spiritual leader and the Supreme Commander of the Iranian Armed Forces Ayatollah Al-Sayed Ali Khamenei in an indirect manner has said the war will not occur during this period and this reflects a distinguished reading of the military, political and economic situations."

"Moreover, it is obvious that those who may be involved in following up the relevant events in the region must know that the leaders of the two parties (US and Iran) have no desire to go to war."

"On the afternoon of March 14, 2015, a drone flew over some sensitive locations, most notably the Seif Palace, the Council of Ministers and the National Assembly building, for 15 minutes before heading towards the territorial waters", former ambassador of Kuwait *Ahmad Al-Dawas* wrote for *Al-Seyassah* daily.

"In August 2015, a small unmanned aircraft flew over Bayan Palace, and security services later found it stuck in a palm tree inside the palace garden. They realized the drone had a camera, which raised the questions – Where did it come from? Who flew it, and why?"

"On November 10 the same year, an unmanned aircraft was seen, but this time over the armored Liberation Brigade on Abdali Road. It hovered around the area for more than 15 minutes before flying away. The guards of the armored brigade heard the noise of the aircraft but initially thought it is part of the regular training. They were obliged to inform their superiors about it but the aircraft was not traceable later."

"No doubt, this is a breach of the security of the country. US newspaper 'Forbes Policy' published an article on August 23, 2013, stating that Iran has established a base for unmanned aircraft on the island of Qeshm near the Hormuz Strait. The runway of the aircraft is 1,600 meters long, allowing for the launch of S-129 and 110 H-type aircraft which can monitor vessels crossing the strait."

"According to the foreign policy, the aircraft can fly for up to 24 hours carrying missiles that are capable of striking ships and ground targets. They are supplied with radar that ensure they don't collide with civil aircraft."

"Bahrain's Foreign Ministry found an Iranian spy

plane in northern Bahrain in May 2015. Bahraini Interior Minister Rashid bin Khalifa described this action as offensive. In April 2018, a similar unmanned aircraft flew over Riyadh but securitymen dealt with it based on the directives given to them."

"Iran began to manufacture drones in the 1980s during the Iran-Iraq war. They have since been used for military and civilian purposes, for example by the Hezbollah and the Syrian regime, according to the security expert at Georgetown University Ariane Tabtabai."

"Visiting Professor Ariane Tabtabai, a specialist in security studies in Georgetown University, explained that Iran launched this technology during 1980s concurrently with the first Gulf war with Iraq. Iran uses this technology for both civil and military purposes, and Hezbollah and Syrian regime have also used this technology."

"Meanwhile, some politicians claim that Iran has established a base for unmanned aircraft in Djibouti to strike its Islamist opponents in Yemen."

"In the past few days, Iran has threatened to ignite a new war in the region. America in response mobilized warships in the Gulf. On Monday, May 13, four ships faced acts of sabotage off the coast of the UAE. On Tuesday morning, May 14th, two oil pumping stations in Riyadh were attacked. The fire that broke out has been extinguished. Later, the spokesperson of the Yemeni Houthis rebels Muhammad Abdul Salam confirmed to 'Al Jazeera' news channel that the Houthis were responsible for the attack in Riyadh. Such serious incidents are expected to increase in the coming days but the Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini says his country is not seeking a war with the United States."

"Iran lost many opportunities. It could have become a developed country if it had utilized its outstanding resources and geographical location. It was better for Iran to learn from the lessons of history, abandon the mentality of medieval wars, achieve a decent living for its people, and become better than some advanced countries of Asia. But Iran wasted its economic resources and public funds in foreign adventures, taking hostile policies against its Arab neighbors."

"Lately, it has become difficult for us as followers of issues in this region to take a quick look at situation in the Middle East specifically, because this view will forcefully take us to conflict and historical conflicts in our region, and this view will naturally turn into a very intense view, columnist *Abdul Aziz Bou Mejdad* wrote for *Al-Shahed* daily."

"The view will expose the truth to us all. Sectarianism is dominating the region to the point that the Kremlin has become Husseiniah in the view of many people and the White House is now a haven in the 'darkest year' in an attempt to strike out all considerations and international interests since the fall of the Shah, followed by the fall of the embassy of the occupying entity in Tehran. Does this serve our interest?"

"We have become overly sectarian to this day that we are not looking for our interest as Muslims. Rather, our interests are limited to doctrines, even if they are in alliance with whom we are certain to be our enemies, while Arab and Islamic countries that are proud of their relations with Israel keep increasing- not just at the expense of Sunnis or Shiites but Islam and its first qiblah. Assuming that relationship with Israel is the very thing that will draw Arabs out of the alleged evils of Iran; is it possible that this illegal relationship is less dangerous than the relationship with Iran when we know well the ambitions of the Zionists and their failed project, 'Grand Israel'?"

"Do we really have the right, as Arabs, to take refuge in Israel that killed us in Palestine? Have we forgotten that we are Muslims and our first qiblah is offensive to them? Did the understanding with Jews and the recognition of their fallen state become legitimate and legal, and respect for their shoes that desecrate Al-Quds Al-Sharif easier than resolving differences between two sects of the religion, Islam?"

"We are experiencing turbulent regional conditions and mutual threats between Iran and the United States have reached the peak. Iran has developed to the level of deploying ballistic missiles and American barge to our territorial waters. Unfortunately, some consider the move to be cold war between the Shiites in Iran and the Christian Trump who sees it as his duty to defend the Jews of Israel. He has long gone to see the Wailing Wall for their sympathy and garnered support against their enemies. Who are the enemies of the Jews? Are they Shiites of Iran or Muslims of all sects?"

"Here, we see the Christian Trump allied with Jews in Israel to achieve common goals, while Muslims stand against each other as if they are not the owners of religion and one issue. We Arabs stand today like spectators on a Christian-Jewish alliance against Islam in its entirety, whether the Sunni sect in Palestine or the Shiite doctrine in Iran. We are sure that the White House does not want our good, and once our economy collapses, it will do to us what it did in Iraq and Syria. How long will this humiliation continue, Oh Arabs?"

"Al-Nahar newspaper highlighted on its first page last week a painful reality, especially in the month of fasting, a fact expressed by Cairo-based Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations," columnist, Professor at Kuwait University's Political Science Department and Assistant Undersecretary at the Ministry of Information Dr *Haila Al-Mekami* wrote for *Annahar* daily.

"More than 50 million Arabs are undernourished especially in the areas of conflict and civil wars, which have had the greatest impact on the disruption of food production and livestock. At the same time, there is rapid population growth with limited natural resources, in addition to disasters, wars and political instability. This phenomenon has been growing since 2011, impeding the implementation of the unsustainable development plan for 2030. We are talking about a crisis of hunger, food, nutrition and people who cannot find something to eat."

"For any development we are talking about, the countries worst hit by the crisis are Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The latter is the most damaged in this regard since about 24.1 million Yemenis – two-thirds of the population of Yemen – need aid and assistance, considering the thousands of victims in past years."

"FAO's recommendations to resolve the crisis lie in supporting the shift from low production agriculture to diversified commercial mass production systems, enabling farmers to better access markets, encouraging investments in agriculture, technology transfer and other innovations, and managing water resources more efficiently and effectively."

"In fact, these recommendations are good, but they are launched under normal conditions, not in the Arab situation that is in conflict, civil wars and proxy wars. How can these countries implement such recommendations? It would have been more useful to recommend stopping wars and supporting political stability so that they could move from subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture."

"But it also leads us to the equation of democratic transformations in the Arab region and ways to achieve them, instead of entering them and then turn these countries into burdens on the international community as failure states or disjointed states. This formula was absorbed by Asian countries early, so they managed to achieve development models with dictatorial or semi-democratic regimes. Those countries focused on development, away from revolutionary thought which results only in further exploitation of financial surpluses and returning to square one."

— Compiled by Zaki Taleb



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