

Joint Statement of the Consultations of Deputy Foreign Ministers/Special Envoys of BRICS Countries on the Middle East and North Africa

May 17, 2022, virtual (hosted by China)

1. On May 17, 2022 BRICS Deputy Ministers/Special Envoys on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) held a video conference under China's Chairmanship, during which, they exchanged views on the current situation in the region as follows:
2. Noted the rising instability and uncertainties that have impacted the region. Stressed that the regional situation bears closely on the security and stability of the world, and that a peaceful and prosperous Middle East and North Africa is in the interest of the whole world. It is important that countries in the region maintain independence and territorial integrity for development of their people. The legitimate security concerns of all sides should be addressed through dialogue and consultation in a coordinated and cooperative manner. Welcomed all the initiatives and efforts by BRICS countries for the development, security and stability in the Middle East and North Africa region.
3. Reaffirmed the commitment of BRICS countries to the basic principle that peace, stability and development in the MENA region should be achieved and sustained in accordance with, and in full respect of international law, including the UN Charter and decisions taken by the UN Security Council.
4. Stressed that ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa requires developmental cooperation and integration. Called on the international community to support the regional countries in defeating the COVID pandemic by working together and achieving strong recovery. Emphasized the importance of contributing to post-conflict countries' reconstruction, supporting greater economic diversification in oil producing countries, and assisting other Middle East and North Africa countries in meeting their development goals.
5. Condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and stressed the importance of upholding the leadership and coordination role of the United Nations and opposing double standards. Emphasized that the United Nations Security Council efforts must be strengthened to counter the threats posed by groups, individuals and entities listed by the UNSC for terrorism links. Concurred that terrorism must not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. Reaffirmed the commitment to strengthening cooperation with countries of the region on counter-terrorism and deradicalization.
6. Expressed their deep concern with the recent surge of tensions between Israel and Palestine, and called on the relative parties to exercise restraint to avoid escalation. Stressed that the question of Palestine demands special attention and that the two-state solution achieved through direct negotiations without preconditions remains the internationally recognized basis for the peaceful settlement of the conflict. Reiterated their support for the just cause of Palestinian people to restore their legitimate rights, and for the greater solidarity among all parties of Palestine so as to achieve internal reconciliation. Encouraged Palestine and Israel to resume peace talks based on a negotiated two-state solution, and called on the international community to intensify its efforts in support of a UN-led international peace Conference, with a view to achieving a comprehensive, lasting and just settlement that allows Israel and Palestine to live side by side in peace and security. Stressed that efforts should be made to leverage respective strengths, actively promote peace talks, and to help Palestine contain the COVID pandemic, develop its economy, ease its humanitarian situation and improve its people's welfare. Commend the extensive work carried out by UNRWA to alleviate the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people and call on the international community

to provide developmental assistance to support UNRWA activities in order to enable it to increase its reach amongst the Palestinian community.

7. Stressed that the key to solving the Syrian issue is to follow the "Syrian-led, Syrian-owned, UN-facilitated political process" steered by the UNSC, respect Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to support the role of the UN as the main channel of mediation. Emphasized the importance of upholding the Syrian political process of reconciliation and inclusiveness, giving priority to people's livelihoods and accelerating early recovery projects. Took note of the rapprochement between Arab countries and Syria and supported all the efforts conducive to the political resolution of the Syrian issue. Supported the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria and the work of the Constitutional Committee.
8. Emphasized their firm support for Lebanon's efforts to safeguard stability, security, sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity, as well as Lebanon people's rights to pursue a development path suited to their national conditions. Opposed interference in Lebanon's domestic affairs and called on the international community to continuously provide assistance to Lebanon without political conditions, in order to help Lebanon restore political, social and economic stability as soon as possible. Welcome the recent staff-level agreement signed between the Government of Lebanon and IMF to take all necessary measures and undertake long overdue economic reforms to address the severe economic challenges faced by the people of Lebanon. Welcome the timely completion of the parliamentary elections on 15 May.
9. Reaffirmed their support for Yemen's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and for a political settlement to the Yemeni issue. They called on all parties to engage in inclusive negotiations on Yemen, mediated by the UN, and conveyed appreciation for the efforts of UNSG's Special Envoy in this regard. They welcomed the announcement of a truce between the warring sides of Yemen's conflict and the establishment of the Presidential Leadership Council. Appreciated the positive role of UNSG's envoy, Gulf Cooperation Council and all the relevant parties that contribute to a political solution for the conflict. They reiterated their deep concern about Yemen's humanitarian crisis and encouraged the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to Yemen.
10. Reiterated their firm support for Iraq's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. Supported Iraq in safeguarding national security and stability and fighting terrorism. Supported Iraqi people in their quest for peace, prosperity and development. Opposed of any interference in Iraq's domestic affairs and supported Iraq's efforts to promote economic reconstruction and to play a greater role in regional affairs. Expressed their hope that all parties in Iraq engage in a mutually respectful and inclusive dialogue to achieve lasting stability and prosperity at an early date.
11. Stressed that the situation in Gulf Region is of great importance to the regional and global security and to the global energy supply. BRICS supports deescalating tensions in the region and managing differences among regional countries through dialogue and negotiation to achieve peaceful coexistence. Reviewing proposals and initiatives aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the Gulf Region, BRICS countries stand ready to strengthen coordination and synergy in this regard.
12. Stressed their support for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya. Reiterated their respect for the will and choice of the Libyan people and called on all parties to strengthen consultation and dialogue, refrain from any actions that could undermine the October 2020 ceasefire, reach consensus on the constitutional basis and date for the general election so as to push the country back to the right track of stability and development. Supported "Libyan-led and Libyan-owned" political transition process with UN-led mediation as the main channel and urged the UN Secretary General to appoint a Special Representative for Libya promptly.

13. Expressed the conviction that the Sudanese people have the wisdom and ability to deal with their internal affairs. Encouraged all parties in Sudan to resume dialogue so that the political transition can continue, meeting the fundamental interests of the country and the legitimate aspirations of the Sudanese people. Reiterated their support for joint efforts of the UN, AU, and IGAD to facilitate the dialogue between the Sudanese parties and called on the international community to continue to support Sudan in overcoming the current situation.

14. Agreed to meet again under South Africa's chairmanship of BRICS in 2023. Reiterated the need to hold regular consultations on the Middle East and North Africa on various occasions including the UN, and to hold relevant working-level consultations when necessary.

(Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China)