

SAYYID AMMAR AL-HAKIM WARNS AGAINST REACHING THE NO-RETURN POINT IF POLITICAL CRISIS IS TURNED INTO A POLITICAL COMPLEX



Thanks to all good sincere ones who exerted efforts for the success of this Summit...

We witnessed the holding of the Arab Summit in Baghdad during the few past days despite disturbances and speculations that this Summit would not be held for security and political reasons, thus a big achievement has been made for the people of Iraq in particular and for the political forces, Iraqi government and all the good folks who exerted efforts for the success of this big national event in general. This Summit expressed a popular will, a political will, and an official will to shift Iraq to a new reality differently from what it used to live so it would be part of a regional network with which it interacts, of which it is affected and which it affects. This Summit brought back the Arab Spring to Iraq, so it marked a beginning, an onset, for this spring in Iraq, hence the return of this spring to Iraq. Iraq has been able to be a launching pad for the spring through the resolve of its masses, and it became politically the onset for this spring through the summit. From the Iraqi resolve to the Summit in Baghdad, we find this Arab Spring and Iraq's positive transformations, and we have to thank all those sincere and good patriots who exerted efforts to achieve success for this Summit. Thanks are first due to the citizens of the people of Iraq who tolerated inconveniences in order to provide the suitable grounds to hold this Summit, particularly the honorable citizens of Baghdad who tolerated security harassments, the blocking of roads and many problems so this Summit could be held on time. Thanks continue to His Excellency, President Jalal Talabani and for the head of the ministerial council, for the minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Hoshiyar Zebari, and for all sincere teams in the foreign ministry who worked with a great sense of sacrifice. We also thank the security and military services that undertook a great job in order to provide a secure environment that facilitated the holding of this Summit. We thank the general secretary of the League of Arab Nations and his team as well as all efforts that resulted in achieving success for this Summit. The success of the Baghdad Summit proved clearly Iraq's keen interest in undertaking its distinctive role in the joint Arab work network, and to work hard on the merger process and the openness on its Arab environment in a continuous way. Thus, it proved the fallacy of all advance judgments which were directed towards Iraq casting doubts about the extent of its pride in its identity or ability for openness and communication with its Arab environment.

Arab Summit expressed Iraq's ability to bring viewpoints closer, to reach solutions and treatments of the contested dossiers in the Arab world without Iraq falling into narrow axes...

As we stated before the Summit, that is, that Iraq did all it should and made big strides towards its Arab brothers, now the Arab brothers have to be loyal to this Iraqi step and to offer what they have towards Iraq. Time is now opportune so this vision may be clearly expressed by some respectful Arab countries with regard to their attitudes towards Iraq, that

they transcend some sensitivities and narrow views and to open on the Iraqi reality in a way that suits Iraq's status. Iraq needs its Arab environment just as the Arab world is need of Iraq. Iraq, through this Summit, expressed its big abilities to fill the gap among the Arab brothers and to look for solutions for the outstanding problems and contentions in the Arab world among the brothers in the Arab world. It submitted acceptable solutions which won the participants' consensus. We know that all the 21 countries invited to participate in this Summit did although the level of their representation varied, but there was no boycott from anyone, and the only exception was our sister Syria which was not invited for well known considerations to this Summit. All the countries participated in this Summit and unanimously endorsed the resolutions which expressed an Iraqi ability to bring viewpoints closer and to reach acceptable solutions and treatments in the contentious dossiers in the Arab world without Iraq falling into the narrow axes so it would side with some Arabs in opposition to others. It maintained its independence and was able to open up on everyone and to submit solutions and treatments that were acceptable by and convincing to everyone. Iraq's word came to express this balanced and subjective vision in the Iraqi reality towards the Arab dossiers and towards the reality of the area and the major transformations that take place in it. Also, the Baghdad Declaration has been regarded as a document that won the consensus of the Arab countries in this Summit. It put the precise and complete vision for the most important dossiers submitted in the Arab world.

Arab brothers must reciprocate Iraqis' feelings and stances...

Now eyes remain fixed on Iraq to see how it presides over this Summit, how it activates the agreements and resolutions which the Arab leaders produced in Baghdad, and how to turn the Baghdad Declaration into a reality in the joint Arab work. If we can put the right touches, as Iraqis, and prove that the Arab contentions can come to an end, that the Arab cooperation can take place when there is a sound will for it, this will have another initiative that focuses on and is dedicated to the polarity and leadership of the Iraqi reality in the Arab network, but the Iraqi people will keep its eyes fixed towards its Arab brothers, too, whether they will reciprocate the Iraqis' feelings and stances. We know that there are \$20 billion outstanding Arab debts against Iraq from the compensations required of Iraq, and all these billions were not demanded of the Iraqi people, nor were they spent on the Iraqi people's prosperity, but they were with past regimes that used them to kill, to destroy and to wage wars for well known considerations. The new political system and the entire Iraqi nation do not directly bear the responsibility or the consequences of such debts because these billions were not spent to serve its interest. Yes, it does not run away from its commitments, for it is a State, and the State bears the consequences even if it is not directly responsible for them. But it is now expected of the respectful Arab countries to do what many world countries have done when Iraq went to the Paris Club. These countries forgave 80% of the debts owed to them by Iraq, and some of them forgave 90% or even 100% of these debts. It will thus be an important initiative and a message

of affection and love released by the Arab brothers towards Iraq and the people of Iraq. Also, Iraq keeps railing under the burden of the United Nations' Chapter Seven, and the respectful Arab countries are now able to help get Iraq out of this Chapter and restore full sovereignty to it when they deal with flexibility with issues of an Arab nature in their light. Iraq remains under Chapter Seven. The big question is: Will the Arab brothers carry out their obligations towards Iraq just as Iraq, as a nation and a government, carried out its obligations towards the Arabs? We hope so.

Arab Summit expressed a good status in the Arab reality represented in shifting the Arab countries from the concept of the autocratic State to the patriotic one...

Also, this Summit expressed a new status in our Arab reality which is: Although they are not perfect, they have been sound steps in the right direction produced by the Arab revolutions. We have noticed leading personalities and Arab leaders who lately accepted responsibility and are dealing with honesty and vigor in a new phenomenon in the Arab work to re-formulate the concept of the State in their homelands and to shift these countries from the concept of the autocratic State to that of the patriotic one, big and great efforts exerted by these new leaders in their homelands, and we wish them all success.

Tunisian President's apology to the Iraqi people deserves appreciation and gratitude...

The position of the Tunisian President in apologizing to the Iraqi people for the terrorist operations to which it was exposed at the hands of Tunisian citizens who were duped, so they went to kill Iraqis under the label of resistance, etc., although he was not then President when those citizens carried out such crimes, yet he shouldered his responsibility and presented his clear and frank apology to the citizens of the Iraqi people in new examples for the Arab leaderships. This was not common among Arab citizens to hear a word of apology from any Arab leader. It was common for the Arab leaders to find themselves to be above apologizing to anyone, and that they never made mistakes. It expresses a personality that is self-reconciling and expressing humbleness when one is in the position of leadership and pioneering. It expresses an effort to firm a new status in the Arab-Arab relations, and it is worthy of thanks and appreciation by citizens of our people for these positions. This new Arab status will, by the will of Allah, form an important beginning in the paths of the joint Arab work in the near future. As we realize the big challenges that stand before these good nations and countries, we are confident that they are able to transcend them. We in Iraq have passed through such circumstances, and we are still trying to grow this experiment, develop it and get out of the crises we are living.

Visit by Kuwait's Emir provides atmospheres for a true exchange of interests between both nations and countries...

The visit by His Highness the emir of the sisterly State of Kuwait to Iraq has represented an

important historic event and put an end to a history of problems. It placed the right brick in the building of strong and reliable relations between both brotherly countries. We have to perpetuate this thrust and move on to Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations that are in harmony with the interests of both good nations, with the geographic reality and with the neighborliness that brings these two countries together as well as the social and tribal relations that connect both nations in a long history. The common interests have for so long brought both nations together, bringing them closer to each other, the brotherly countries that they are. We are completely optimistic that these exchanged visits between leaders of both countries provide the fertile grounds for a big action that strongly pushes all outstanding issues to be resolved and provides atmospheres for exchanging true interests between both good nations and countries.

The Arab brothers must shoulder their responsibilities towards the Bahraini people and place matters on the right track...

The issue of the brotherly Bahraini people and its rightful demands represent a basic point at which we must stop. There are solutions which must take their way to be dealt with in order to ensure the rights of this people, strengthen stability, harmony and peaceful coexistence among the citizens of the brotherly Bahraini people. There has to be an equal opportunity among the good citizens of the Kingdom of Bahrain. There must be an end to the serious violations to which the Bahraini people are exposed and to which a report by the international committee specialized in this regard pointed out. It is the issue of all Arabs, and all brotherly Arabs must bear their responsibilities towards a good Arab country that aspires for peace, harmony and coexistence; so, mistakes must be corrected, and matters must be placed on their right track.

It is in nobody's interest in Iraq that the political crisis continues and the exchange of charges that we now see...

The moral thrust the Arab Summit in Baghdad achieved must continue in order to resolve the domestic disputes among the Iraqis and reach a status of understanding and harmony. There must be a shift to the one team work in order to serve the citizens, to serve this good nation. We warned two weeks ago against the political crisis turning into a political complexity, and we noticed how the events speedily succeeded one another in the few past days so a tense scene surfaced among the political forces where each group exchanges accusations with the other through fiery statements, each abusing the other. In what direction are we all going? Let each of us remember before making a fiery statement that he is directing the nozzle of his statements to the chest of an Iraqi citizen like him. We are citizens of one homeland; so, why are we dealing each other in a way which increases the gap and aggravates the crisis among these groups? Dear ones! Adopting the method of continuously creating tensions and crises in the political positions will get us to reach the no-return path, and solutions will be more difficult. One day after another, it will get us to enter a dark tunnel out of which we could

not get out except with extreme hardship. This mandates on everyone to bear his serious responsibilities in this regard. The Iraqi situation cannot continue like this for too long, and it is not in the interest of anyone in the federal government, or in the Province's government, or in the local governments in the governorates, or the political forces or national figures..., it is not in the interest of any of them that the political crisis continues and that the exchange of charges continues in the way which we now find so the matters could get out of control and we enter a dark tunnel. This will represent a dangerous and worrisome situation which we do not wish for our homeland as we enter the broad opportunities, the wide and big scopes in the building, reconstruction, the breaking of barriers, the removing of sensitivities, the opening on our regional atmosphere and on the world community in general.

Moving from the phase of building the authority to that of building the State will create many difficulties, and it is not an easy process...

Casting a quick look at the Arab states that witnessed major transformations during the past months will show us the size of big and destiny-making difficulties to which these countries are exposed in the process of State building for these good nations. The legacies and effects of colonization are yet to come to an end. When these countries became independent, when they obtained their independence, this enabled these countries to build their authority. Till now, they failed since their independence in the past decades of the twentieth century. They failed to build the State. They were able to build power but not a State. Now, after many good Arab countries, including Iraq, had gained their freedom, when their governments were returned to their nations and to the will of these nations, the shift process from the phase of authority building to the phase of building the State will cause us to having to deal with many difficulties, and it is not an easy process. The Arab citizen still finds it hard to differentiate between the logic of power and that of State, and each of them has a path which is different from that of the other. We all bear the responsibility to explain this matter to the Arab brothers and citizens everywhere. Power building needs strength and an excluding mentality, whereas building the State needs law and partnership mentality. Power building needs focusing and expanding authorities, whereas State building needs the distribution of powers and their shrinking. Authority building is supported by the forces that are patriotic and keen, those that put the public interest above everything else. Authority building directs people to serve this authority; State building turns institutions to serve the public. A big difference exists between a service State and a State that is served. State building means that the State is caretaker, serving the public. But authority means that the people are at the service of the government, of the State: The State is served by the people rather than serving the people. A distance exists between the logic of the State and that of authority, and the Arab world must differentiate between both of these concepts. We must create a true shift that pushes to build the State and prevents the building of authority following dictatorial regime that ruled for long decades.

Faili Kurds were wronged on ethnic and sectarian bases..., so the wrongdoing was doubled...

On the fourth of April, we will remember a big massacre and an event that is sad for all Iraqis when the past regime forcefully displaced an important component of the Iraqi people represented by the Faili Kurds, estranging a large number of Faili Kurdish youths. Later, it became clear that they were hurled into the mass graves, thousands of them. It is a painful incident. It took place on a day like this. We have to remember this serious injustice brought on Faili Kurds who were wronged based on their ethnic and sectarian background, so the injustice was doubled for them, and the reward must likewise be doubled for them in this phase, and they must get their full rights.

Reducing poverty strategy requires legislations, swift and clear government measures...

Official reports of the Iraqi ministry of planning point out to the existence of more than 5.55 million Iraqi citizens who are under the poverty line at the time when prices of crude oil are witnessing rising increases, contributing to huge budgets which have been described as being astronomical. From the year 2008 and till this year, and in every year, the Iraqi [State] budget becomes larger than it used to be the year before, yet we find such a large number of the poor in Iraq as pointed out by official government statistics. Also, the strategy for reducing poverty, which the Iraqi government launched two years ago and in the light of which the intensity of poverty in Iraq is supposed to have been allayed, has not scored any progress in narrowing the gap and decreasing the number of the poor in Iraq. There is no clear vision in the possibility that this strategy will succeed in the next two days. This means that the number of the poor may remain as it is or increase because of the ineffectiveness of this official strategy. They are staggering figures, and they need a long stop at them so we may find out how to answer these 5.55 million poor Iraqis who live in a country that has all this huge oil wealth. The funds of the Iraqi people must be spent on the public, especially the poor and needy, and this must be taken in consideration in the nature of budgets. We have always pleaded that the budget must be one for the poor and not only for the rich. It is a big responsibility on everyone's shoulder without any exception: The government bears a portion of the responsibility, but government work alone cannot solve this big problem; rather, we must release real opportunities for the private sector and for investment in Iraq. Investment and the movement of the private sector can create a large number of work opportunities. This will decrease the rate of poverty in Iraq, and this requires legislations, swift and clear government measures.

Congratulations to the ministry of sciences and technology for making a plane without a pilot (drone)...

The Iraqi ministry of sciences and technology revealed the making of a plane flown without a pilot, dubbing it "Baghdad plane." We congratulate the ministry for this big and important step. Reports about Iraqi inventions have for a long time been lost in the tumult of the

political events in Iraq. The presence of a plane thus controlled is greatly important in the military, research, exploratory, environmental and other fields, and it provides documents, many life and important pictures at very simple costs compared these pictures being taken via the movement of ordinary planes. It, therefore, represent an important step for Iraq, and we hope we will hear every day new inventions that restore for Iraq its prestigious scientific status which harmonizes with its civilization.

Targeting shrine of the Martyr of the Niche: [Security] breaches in holy cities represent a gap which must be dealt with...

We have witnessed a terrorist attack on the resting place of the Martyr of the Niche which reveals the extent of the terrorists' grudge and hidden hatred. This follows their attack on the Martyr of the Niche, killing him and turning him into a martyr. Now they return to kill those who visit Martyr al-Hakim even after his death. Notice this hidden animosity! Some representatives and confidants were attacked few weeks ago. We condemn this attack and urge the security services to bear their responsibilities to pursue thee terrorists, especially in the holy cities where people feel secure, so they go to visit the holy places and the Pure Imams (the best of peace and blessings with them). The existence of such security breaches inside the holy cities represents a gap which must be dealt with as soon as possible. We also implore the Almighty's mercy on those who were martyred in this terrorist attack.

Arbil Book Fair praised... Call renewed to hold Baghdad Book Fair...

The Arbil Book Fair was inaugurated with the participation of more than 350 Iraqi, Arab and foreign publishing houses. News reports pointed out on the first day of this fair that 50,000 citizens participated in it. They went there to acquire books from this fair. These are good news when youths and citizens pay such attention to reading books and following up the most recent intellectual, scientific and literary productions and the like. We call on the Iraqi youths to pay attention to reading books and to develop their knowledge and education abilities. The book cannot be disposed of by watching television channels or surfing Internet sites and the like. The book has a big informational value, and it must remain a basic contributor to intellect and knowledge in Iraq. I also renew my deep regret about the cancellation of the International Book Fair in Baghdad which resulted from excuses of the absence of sufficient budgets to hold this fair. We had requested the officials in the ministry of culture to reconsider their decision and to adopt a courageous one to hold this fair at any cost and to monitor the providing of financial resources needed to hold this fair even if it may be later than the date set for it. For Baghdad to remain a station for intellect, the book and knowledge is something important, and I hope this call will find an echo among the officials in the ministry of culture.

Security services raiding offices and newspapers of some parties... a worrisome phenomenon

Some parties have revealed that their offices and newspapers were subjected to raids by security entities that did not mention the justifications and the reasons for these raids. It is a disturbing phenomenon when security entities target political parties, offices and newspapers and play havoc with their possessions without anyone knowing the reasons and the backgrounds. We hope we will be keen about safeguarding democracy, plurality and liberties in our homeland. One who agrees with us as well as one who disagrees must be awarded the full freedom to express his opinion as long as the expressing is done within the political framework and in that of the law. We hope the security services will work hard to present the picture and the justifications that prompted such raids. Also, the behavior of security men during the raid, should there be need for it, must be professional, dealing with the suitable and proper ways so it may strengthen the citizens' positive impression about the security services. This impression must not be jeopardized. Such conduct brings to memory circumstances in which the security services abused the citizens, pressuring them. It is a bygone picture never to return again, and we do not want it to be in Iraq; therefore, we are facing a challenge in a subject such as this.

Chaldeans, Assyrians and Syriacs congratulated on the Babylonian New Year...

In early April, our citizens from among the Chaldeans, Assyrians and Syriacs celebrate the Babylonian New Year. We congratulate these dear and respectful citizens on their Feast and hope their spring this year and every year is celebrated in peace, harmony and coexistence with their Iraqi brothers. The diversity which we live in Iraq is an element of strength and enrichment of the Iraqi reality, and we must always be biased to this diversity, safeguarding and supporting it. The Christian component in Iraq is not a numerical addition but a quality addition, and so are the other components in our homeland such as the Yazidis, Sabians and others.

On the World Health Day... Need for undertaking measures that ensure lightening the burdens of the elderly...

On the seventh of April, we will celebrate the World Health Day when we bring to memory the establishment of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948. Every year an important topic is chosen as a priority and a slogan for that year in health care, and old age and health is chosen as the slogan for world health for this year. We hope it will be a reason for honoring the elderly and for solving their problems. When one finds the elderly standing in long queues at hospitals, clinics, public civilian and social affairs offices tolerating big suffering like others without attention being paid to their own particularity, without any special care afforded them. One feels very regretful about it, and we hope this year will be different from others and a blessing for the elderly, that measures will be undertaken that ensure decreasing the burdens from them.