

Another “Useless” Arab League Summit

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Welcome to yet another “useless” Arab League summit, here’s what one should expect: feudalistic political back-stabbing, cheap exploitation (and exacerbation) of ongoing human tragedies, indecipherable hoarse voices reading out poorly translated transcripts of American dictates, cosmic levels of hypocrisy and a false sense of self-importance.

What NOT to expect: proper use of the Arabic language, much less a semblance of a unified course of action for the good of this war-torn and conflict-ridden region. I think it’s safe to say that the latest Arab summit in Kuwait was up to expectations.

In keeping with an ungodly tradition the Arab world would have been much better off without; Arab “leaders” and heads of state convened in Kuwait yesterday with a thick, blood-soaked agenda that starts with the war in Syria, which owes much of its horrific descent into civil conflict to the Arab League itself and its member states, and ends with Palestine which, in keeping with yet another sordid tradition, was sidelined as usual and de-prioritized again much to the joy of Israel and the west.

Arab Summits have long been a mere punch-line for the Arab masses; and a bad one at that, but ever since the Arab League became, for all intents and purposes, nothing more than a bloated version of the Gulf-Cooperation Council with a handful of de-facto failed states whose presence is only necessitated by voting purposes and the pretense of consensus, thus rendering the AL a mere crowbar in the GCC’s counter-revolution crusade especially in Syria, these frivolous and often widely ridiculed meetings have taken a more ominous course; extending an open invitation for the over-caffeinated NATO death apparatus to bomb Libya, one of AL’s member states, back to the stone age marked the lowest point in the League’s constant ever downward spiral since its inception. Although the AL has a storied history of willingly providing political covers for the West’s imperial endeavors in our region; from the wars on Iraq to the partitioning of Sudan and nurturing the Israeli expansionist project in Palestine, these days it seems that even the most right-wing war mongers in Washington cannot keep up with the AL’s (read the GCC’s) incessant pleas for military interventions in Arab countries, most notably in Syria.

In his speech addressing the Arab summit in Kuwait last Tuesday; Saudi crown prince Salman Bin Abdul Aziz said that “the international community had “betrayed” Syrian rebels by being too slow to provide them with arms as they fight to topple Bashar Al Assad’s regime”, translation: We are disappointed that we’re not seeing a repeat of America’s bloody wars on Iraq and Libya in Syria.

Prince Salman also called for the “changing of the balance of forces” on the ground in Syria, presumably by sending more lethal weapons and jihadi recruits to the Syrian front; contrast this “fired-up” rhetoric to the notable relaxed attitude (to say the least) when it comes to Palestine, where political “pragmatism” is firmly embedded where “brotherly” compassion should have been, and you come away with the impression that the balance of forces on the ground between the Israeli occupation forces and the Palestinians is evidently acceptable to

the Arab League.

I remember during the Israeli blitzkrieg on Gaza in 2008/2009; the Arab League failed to even convene for a “symbolic” emergency summit to condemn the ongoing carnage at the time; let alone call for arming the Palestinians to defend themselves. Relaxed attitude indeed.

Of course no Arab League summit would be complete without “heart-wrenching” appeals for the Security Council to interfere (militarily?) somewhere in the Arab World; this time it duly came during the host country’s Amir Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah’s speech when he called on the UN Security Council to find a “rapid end” to the Syrian civil war. That plea was echoed by AL Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby, again the magic words here are: foreign military intervention.

Hypocrisy took a gigantic leap forward when the Amir of Kuwait stressed the importance of confronting “terrorism” in the Arab world, this pronouncement should elicit a wave of mad laughter given that the proliferation of radical Islamic and terrorist groups that have been unleashed on Iraq, Syria and Lebanon traces right back to the GCC’s doorstep through funding, substantial media clout and feeding their hardcore ideologies through excessive, unabashed sectarian inflammation.

The Arab world is a mess right now more than any time before; Syria is being ravished by a vicious civil war that is likely to outlast this generation; the entire country of Libya is practically a dystopian no man’s land where lawlessness reigns supreme and trigger-happy armed gangs are leading the country headlong into oblivion, Egypt is reveling in its newfound appetite for state sanctioned genocide under the junta’s rule and through its “revolutionary” court system no less, Iraq is a test ground for terrorist groups looking to hone their sectarian-laced, suicide-bombing techniques, Yemen is a political basket case and a favorite destination for American drones where they bomb unsuspecting civilians to their hearts’ content, inter-relations between Arab countries are at its lowest if not severed outright, even that “bastion of democracy and human rights” known as the GCC is imploding with vicious infighting among its oil-rich members over how post-revolution Egypt should be “managed” which might give you a hint at the current state of affairs in the Arab World; after all when the backward tyrannies of Saudi Arabia and Qatar squabble over who gets to “lead” the Arab World, you know we’re in trouble.

In fact; Arab League summits are increasingly becoming some sort of a ceremonial manifestation of this desolate state of paralysis. Instead of serving as a dynamic springboard for proactive initiatives to counter the various challenges facing the Arab world today; the only function these meetings seem to serve is to give some sort of an Arab caveat to American dictates; thus what best suits America’s interests in our region is prioritized while Palestine, the alleged “central cause” of the Arab World, will always remain on the back-burner till it’s swallowed whole by Israeli settlements and colonies; nothing is too much to make sure Israeli occupation is comfortable and unencumbered in its pursuit of a “Jewish State” on Arab Palestinian lands.

The summit in Kuwait was concluded with a lackluster, paint-by-numbers final declaration that anyone could have predicted, word-for-word, long before even the summit started; calling for a political solution to the Syrian crisis (that of course is just a red herring; arming and funding opposition forces will remain the only policy pursued by Saudi Arabia and Qatar) as well as pledging to “work decisively to put a final end to divisions” between Arab states

which is evidently a tall order; especially that the summit in Kuwait failed to achieve the one “major feat” it was hoping it would: getting a simple handshake between the Saudi and Qatar delegates.

Consecutive Arab league meetings by and large have set the public’s expectations’ bar incredibly low, thus creating a collective poignant sense of void felt by millions of Arabs around the world; so much so that the immediate dissolution of this frustratingly disjointed entity that is the Arab League is widely considered, on a public level, a necessity for the betterment of the Arab World as a whole; the latest summit in Kuwait succeeded only in driving this point home.

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