

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful
General Meeting: Institutions and Regional Order

Monday, July 4, 2022

Security and Regional Cooperation in the Persian Gulf

**Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to attend the 10th World Peace Forum and share my views on the security of the Persian Gulf region. I appreciate the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs and Tsinghua University for their initiative in holding this event.

In 2019, the Islamic Republic of Iran introduced the Hurmuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE), a proposal to promote peace and security in the Persian Gulf region. That, of course, was not Iran's first initiative; rather, in 1985 Iran requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to implement Paragraphs 5 and 8 of Security Council Resolution 598. The said paragraphs state:

Paragraph 5: Calls upon all other States to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any act which may lead to further escalation and widening of the conflict, and thus to facilitate the implementation of the present resolution;

Paragraph 8: Further requests the Secretary-General to examine, in consultation with Iran and Iraq and with other States of the region, measures to enhance the security and stability of the region;

Unfortunately, despite Iran's constant pursuit, the above paragraphs were not implemented, and our region has since witnessed numerous wars, widespread presence of foreign forces, accumulation of sophisticated weapons, power-mongering and hostility by various actors, and the nightmare of extremism and terrorism.

No question that the Persian Gulf countries are different in terms of their power structure, geographical size, natural and human resources, and of course, political system, but in spite of that, they are mature enough to overcome their differences, complement each other, and turn their historical rivalries into cooperation by setting up a regional security mechanism.

In this regard, Paragraph 8 of the UNSC Resolution 598 is still valid and would be a good vehicle for the establishment of a security mechanism in the region, and the promotion of peace and stability.

Distinguished Delegates,

The strategic policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on the principle that "security" and

“development” are inseparable concepts. This policy emphasizes three basic principles:

First, the security of the regional countries is interconnected, and each country’s security is directly related to the other;

Second, security is not a commodity to be purchased, rather it has to be developed through collective cooperation; and,

Third, the economic cooperation between the regional countries is an important factor in the promotion of regional security.

The opposition of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the presence of foreign forces in the region, and in particular the United States and Israel, is precisely in line with the security of the entire region. History has shown that the presence of foreign forces in this region has led to successive tensions and even wars. The role of trans-regional actors in West Asia and the Persian Gulf wars is well documented. In fact, those foreign forces consider regional disputes and rivalries, as an opportunity to expand their military presence and of course, arms sell.

The United States has deployed tens of thousands of troops and more than 300 fighter jets at its various military bases in the Persian Gulf region. At least one US aircraft carrier is continuously patrolling in the Persian Gulf waters. On the other hand, the volume of deadly weapons sold by the United States and its allies to the Persian Gulf states is hundreds of billions of dollars, which is almost a quarter of the global arms trade in recent years. But in fact, the strategy of buying arms has not helped the security of those countries and reduction of their concerns.

Iran has no intention to enter into a regional arms race. We rely on our own people and the cooperation with our neighbors. Money can buy the most advanced weapons, but never the security and stability! We need to start with a comprehensive dialogue to establish the regional interconnected security network. Otherwise, insecurity in the region will continue.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Obviously, any new regional arrangement in the Persian Gulf region depends on the cooperation between the two main regional players of Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Islamic Republic of Iran, despite some serious differences between the two, believes that Iran and Saudi Arabia may complement each other’s capacities in order to ensure peace, stability, and development in the region. We are fully prepared to talk with the Saudi government on all bilateral and regional issues and are pleased that with the good offices of the Iraqi government, several rounds of talks have been so far, held between the two governments.

We have the same approach towards other countries in the Persian Gulf, seeking good relations with all those countries. Unfortunately, some of those governments, with a fatal miscalculation, are trying to open the door to the war-mongering apartheid regime of Israel. They even go beyond the normalization of their relations and move towards forming an alliance with the Zionist regime of Israel. This is a big strategic mistake that will increase tensions and conflicts in the region at breakneck speed. The Islamic Republic of Iran warns in advance about the

consequences of Israel's presence in the Persian Gulf and holds those countries responsible for any dangerous consequences.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Participants,

The Persian Gulf region is in need of a security mechanism that prevents the hegemony of any power, whether regional or global. Toward that goal, confidence-building measures have to be taken in areas such as water management, environmental protection, nuclear safety, energy security, tourism, economic cooperation, trade, investment, eradication of poverty, and empowerment of the people.

Our proposal for ensuring peace, stability, and prosperity in the region is based on the commitment of all coastal states of the Persian Gulf to the following:

- Strengthening mutual understanding, friendly relations, and cooperation among all countries of the Persian Gulf region;
- Ensuring territorial integrity and respect of the international borders of Persian Gulf countries;
- Cooperation in eradicating terrorism, extremism, and sectarian tensions throughout the region;
- Peaceful settlement of all regional tensions and disputes through dialogue;
- Ensuring freedom of shipping and energy security for all.

To achieve these goals, it is essential that all governments in the region adhere to the principles of "dialogue", "equality", "mutual respect", and refrain from "the use of force", "aggression", "interference in each other's internal affairs", and "participation in international coalitions against each other".

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always stressed on dialogue as an effective means to resolve misunderstandings, settlement of disputes, and strengthen commonalities. I believe that moving towards a "regional dialogue forum" would help to solve the regional security problems.

In short, increasing fraternal, but frank and candid dialogue among the countries of the region, without the presence and interference of foreigners, is the key to solving problems.

Thank you for your attention!