**Aboul Gheit's address at the special session on Gaza and Lebanon at the D8 Organisation for Economic Cooperation Summit**

**19 December 2024**

**The address of Mr. Ahmed Aboul Gheit,**

**Secretary-General of the League of Arab States,**

**In the Special Session on Gaza and Lebanon**

**G8 Summit**

**New Administrative Capital**

**19 December 2024**

Your Excellency President Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi,

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt,

Heads of State and Government of the D8,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Arab region is currently confronting what may well be the most perilous moment in its modern history. The complexity of the crises it faces, their interconnection, and the rapid escalation of tensions are undeniable to all who observe the situation closely.

The events of the past year, marked by immense challenges and suffering, have made it abundantly clear that leaving crises unresolved or allowing conflicts to remain frozen without genuine resolution is a path fraught with danger. Such an approach offers nothing but illusory security and fragile stability—conditions that can erupt into violence at any given moment.

Undoubtedly, the longest and most intractable conflict in this region is the Palestinian-Israeli dispute. This conflict can only be characterised as a struggle for national self-determination by a people enduring under occupation. This is the perspective that the Arab and Islamic worlds hold, and it is likewise the viewpoint embraced by the overwhelming majority of nations globally, many of whom have recognised the State of Palestine and endorsed the two-state solution as the sole viable framework for achieving a peaceful resolution—one that ensures security and peace for all parties involved.

It is evident, however, that the occupying power is the only party that refuses to acknowledge this reality. Israel clings to the illusion that brutal aggression against civilians will somehow perpetuate the occupation, and that the use of force will bring peace and security. In truth, this is a dangerous fallacy. If it were otherwise, we would not have witnessed the violent explosion of events last year. The situation remains volatile, security remains tenuous, and peace remains elusive—as long as the Palestinian people are denied their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state, just as all other peoples who have freed themselves from the shackles of occupation have done.

In its pursuit to entrench the occupation, Israel is unleashing immense and far-reaching dangers upon the entire region—and indeed, the world at large. We have witnessed how the scope of regional conflicts has broadened, how fires of unrest have ignited across the region in recent months, and how the repercussions of the assault on Gaza have spread far beyond Palestinian territory, rippling across the Arab world and beyond.

The cost of maintaining the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land is nothing short of catastrophic. It is a price paid not only by the region but by the entire global community. The victims of the aggression in Gaza are not solely the Palestinians—hundreds of thousands have been killed, injured, and displaced countless times—but also the very fabric of international law, humanitarian principles, and justice. These, too, have been trampled by this aggression. The international community's failure to hold Israel accountable for its blatant disregard of law and humanity will have profound and far-reaching consequences for the global order. The sanctity of these values has been severely undermined, as their violation in Gaza unfolded before the eyes of the world.

What we demand today is an immediate cessation of hostilities in Gaza and the initiation of a recovery phase from this unparalleled tragedy—the destruction of an entire society, its people, institutions, and its very capacity to survive. We place our trust in the Islamic nations, including those present at the D8 summit, to take the lead in supporting the Palestinians in rebuilding their society. I affirm that any support for the Palestinians' steadfastness on their land, their perseverance in the face of adversity, and the creation of hope in place of despair is a crucial form of resistance against Israel’s plan to erase the Palestinian cause. This plan seeks not only to seize the land but to eliminate its people, under the guise of racially motivated biblical claims that are now embodied in the occupation government. This government, with its audacious rhetoric, speaks of occupying all the land, constructing settlements, and annexing it to Israel—yet we say with unwavering conviction that this will never happen, God willing.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lebanon, too, is in dire need of full support at this critical juncture, to recover from the devastating effects of brutal aggression and to end the political paralysis that has plagued the country for over two years. The continuation of the ceasefire, and its rigorous and comprehensive implementation, is essential to ensure the stability of the situation, to facilitate the recovery of this weary nation, and to enable the displaced to return to their homes. This offers the Lebanese people a fresh opportunity to break free from the vicious cycle of despair, poverty, and conflict.

Undoubtedly, the Lebanese people deserve this opportunity after enduring years of hardship. Yet, they must also bear the responsibility of seizing it by swiftly strengthening the political system's stability—starting with the election of a president who truly represents all Lebanese and embodies their aspirations for a brighter future.

At this pivotal moment in the region’s history, we look to our friends for support, and we call on the international community to offer genuine assistance in overcoming the profound humanitarian consequences of Israel's aggression against Gaza and Lebanon. Now more than ever, we require more than mere rhetoric or declarations in favour of the two-state solution; we need a real, steadfast commitment to its implementation.