

## **Unofficial Translation**

**Speech of  
His Highness  
Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani  
Amir of the State of Qatar**

**At**

**The First Summit of the Cooperation Council for the  
Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) and the European  
Union (EU)**

**Belgium - Brussels  
October 16, 2024**

**In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful**

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**Your Excellencies and Highnesses,**

**Honorable Audience,**

May peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you.

At the outset, I would like to greet you and express my gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Jasem AlBudaiwi, Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, and His Excellency Mr. Charles Michel, President of the European Council, for their diligent efforts in organizing this summit.

The convening of this first Gulf-European summit coincides with the State of Qatar's presidency of the current session of the Gulf Cooperation Council. There is no doubt that this summit is the culmination of tireless efforts over the past years and reflects the mutual interest and keenness of both the GCC and EU to strengthen cooperation, dialogue, and coordination collectively, and to support existing communication channels at the bilateral level between the states of the two sides.

The Gulf Arab states and the European Union have shared deep-rooted historical relations and ties, which have been strengthened over the decades through mutual interests and adherence to principles such as respect for international law, the promotion of international peace and security, respect for

state sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, and achieving prosperity for all.

We value in this respect the European Union's adoption of the Joint Communication of the EU on Strategic Partnership with the Gulf States in 2022 and the appointment of a special representative for the Gulf region. We, in the GCC, are keen on enhancing Gulf-European relations in various fields through coordinated efforts on regional and international issues, stimulating trade and investment cooperation, exchanging expertise in research and innovation, combating climate change, preserving the environment and promoting economic diversification.

On the economic front, we are confident that the future of our Gulf-European cooperation is promising, as the volume of trade exchange between our countries reached \$204.3 billion in 2022, accounting for 13.2% of the total trade volume of the GCC countries.

Furthermore, foreign direct investment (FDI) from these countries in the European Union has increased significantly over the past decade, reaching \$177.8 billion in 2022. Likewise, the volume of FDI from the EU in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries has grown substantially since 2017, amounting to \$233.6 billion in 2022. I call in this respect for the strengthening and deepening of this cooperation through existing mechanisms, and the establishment of new

mechanisms, if necessary, in line with the promising cooperation prospects between Gulf and European countries.

### **Honorable Audience,**

We are all aware of the magnitude of the dangers and security, political, and economic challenges facing the world, particularly the Middle East and Europe, amidst the ongoing war in Gaza, Lebanon, and the war between Russia and Ukraine.

Given the polarization experienced by the international order, the importance of strengthening relations between the Gulf and Europe is increasing. We hope that this will contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the international system in promoting principles of justice and international legitimacy, away from the policies of double standards and biases that undermine the collective security framework agreed upon by the international community since World War II, and which now threaten global stability, security, and peace.

In this context, we appreciate the prominent role played by the European Union in maintaining global security and peace, and contributing effectively to finding peaceful solutions to ongoing international crises, and its efforts in driving the global economy forward and encouraging development efforts in various countries around the world.

## **Honorable Audience,**

Middle Eastern issues hold significant importance for Europe, just as European matters are of special importance to our countries. The two regions share a direct geographical proximity and persistent political, economic, and cultural connections throughout history.

The destructive war that has been waged by Israel on Palestinian territories and Lebanon, where war crimes have become a terrifying routine in the absence of any international accountability, stresses the urgent need for a comprehensive settlement of the conflict based on a just solution for the Palestinian issue according to international resolutions. This includes the complete withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital, alongside the State of Israel.

We call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon, and for an end to the military-backed settlers' provocations in the occupied West Bank. In this context, we in the state of Qatar reaffirm our ongoing mediation efforts with the Arab Republic of Egypt and the United States of America to reach a ceasefire. In Qatar, we see that the ceasefire should pave the way for serious negotiations leading to a comprehensive, just, and sustainable solution to the Palestinian issue in accordance with international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative.

We appreciate the role of those European countries that have taken a stance against the crimes perpetrated by Israel against civilians and support the Palestinian

people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state. We look forward to a greater European role in reinforcing the international consensus on the two-state solution and concretize it from words into action through a reliable and irreversible process for establishing a Palestinian state on the 1967 borders.

In this regard, we value the role of the countries that have recognized the Palestinian state and urge other countries to follow suit.

Regarding the situation in Lebanon, we reiterate our rejection and condemnation of the ongoing Israeli aggression against the sisterly Republic of Lebanon, which has claimed the lives of thousands of innocent civilians and has even targeted the UN peacekeeping forces (UNIFIL) in Lebanon, in flagrant violation of international law and international humanitarian law. We call on the international community to work seriously to achieve a ceasefire and implement UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which is clearly supported by the Lebanese government and is committed to its implementation.

Concerning the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, we affirm the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) stance, which is based on the principles of international law and the UN Charter. This position emphasizes respect for States' sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence, non-interference in their internal affairs, and the prohibition of the use of force or threat thereof. The GCC supports all mediation

efforts, initiatives and good offices aimed at reaching a political solution to this crisis.

We understand European concerns about the waves of illegal immigration into Europe and are willing to cooperate in addressing this issue. At the same time, we believe that the basic thing lies in the need for joint efforts and investment to tackle major disasters, such as civil wars, genocides, and poverty that lead to displacement and waves of illegal immigration waves.

In conclusion, we hope that this summit will be a turning point in the history of the Gulf-European relations in a way that enhances political and economic security and stability for both sides.

I reiterate my thanks to everyone who contributed to the preparation of this summit, hoping it achieves the desired goals for the benefit of our peoples and all humanity.

May peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you.