

Arab League Summit Conferences, 1964–2000

Oct 19, 2000



Brief Analysis

For the first time in nearly five years, heads of state and representatives from the 22 members of the Arab League will convene for a summit meeting in Cairo. This will be a critical meeting not only because of the regional tensions steaming from Israeli-Palestinian violence but also because Iraq-and its leader Saddam Hussein-has been invited to participate for the first time in a decade. The Arab press has referred to the upcoming meeting as an "Arab Summit." Technically, this summit-like many previous ones-is not being convened under the auspices of the Arab League. The formal host and convener is the Arab Republic of Egypt.

What follows is a brief overview of Arab summits since 1964:

1st Summit, Cairo, January 17, 1964. The first Arab summit was held to define a united reaction to Israel's diversion of the headwaters of the Jordan River. The summit called for "solving world problems through peaceful means in accordance with United Nations Charter."

2nd Summit, Alexandria, September 11, 1964. The Summit formally approved the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

3rd Summit, Casablanca, September 18, 1965. This summit ended with no notable decisions.

4th Summit, Khartoum, September 1, 1967. Convened after the Six Day War, this conference agreed to take all measures to regain occupied lands. To do so, the heads of states agreed to "unite their political efforts to eliminate the effects of Israeli aggression" to ensure the withdrawal of Israeli forces. It was resolved that the Arab states should increase their military strength and that Saudi Arabia, Libya and Kuwait would finance the process. The summit issued the famous "three no's": "no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel and no negotiations with Israel."

5th Summit, Rabat, December 23, 1969. The summit adjourned without issuing any notable decisions.

6th Summit, Algiers, December 4, 1973. The conference, convened after the October 1973 war, called for the complete liberation of all territories lost in June 1967. It refused any solution that "might be harmful to complete Arab sovereignty over the Holy City of Jerusalem."

7th Summit, Rabat, October 29, 1974. The summit affirmed the "right of the Palestinians to self-determination and to return to their homeland." Despite Jordan's reservations, the conference acknowledged the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

8th Summit, Cairo, October 26, 1976. The conference was held to discuss the crisis in Lebanon. It was resolved to establish a special fund to finance the operations of Arab Deterrent Force in Lebanon. Furthermore, Arab states were asked to contribute to the financial aid necessary to help Lebanon remove the traces of conflict.

9th Summit, Baghdad, November 5, 1978. The conference resolved that the agreements signed by the Egyptian Government at Camp David harmed the rights of the Palestinian people. The Egyptian government was urged not to ratify the agreements and to align itself with the Arab League. Most importantly, the League froze its relations with the Government of Egypt.

10th Summit, Tunis, November 22, 1979. The Tunis Summit affirmed that south Lebanon was an Arab responsibility "as much as it was a Lebanese responsibility." With the resolution, the League pledged to provide financial assistance for the rebuilding of Lebanon.

11th Summit, Amman, November 28, 1980. This summit adopted a strategy for joint Arab economic action in development of member-states economies.

12th Summit, Session One, Fez, November 6, 1981. The first session of the summit resolved to lay a "comprehensive Arab strategy" regarding Israeli involvement in Lebanon. This session was suspended due to unbridgeable differences over Saudi Arabia's eight-point Fahd Plan.

12th Summit, Session Two, Fez, September 25, 1982. The summit, considering Syria's reservations on clause seven, accepted revised a version of the Fahd Plan. The revised clause seven read as, "The Security Council will guarantee peace for all the states of the region, including an independent Palestinian state." Other provisions were for Israeli withdrawal to pre-1967 borders, including "Arab" Jerusalem, the removal of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and the "creation of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital." The idea of compensation for Palestinians who did not wish to return was brought to the table for the first time.

13th Summit, Casablanca, August 9, 1985. This summit ended with no notable decisions.

14th Summit, Amman, November 11, 1987. The summit resolution endorsed UN Security Council Resolution 598 of July 1987 regarding a ceasefire to the Iran-Iraq War, and declared that any decision to resume relations with Egypt "would be left to individual states to decide."

15th Summit, Algiers, June 9, 1988. The conference, held after the start of the Palestinian intifada, asked the UN to take responsibility for ensuring Israel's compliance with UN Resolutions. The summit re-endorsed "full enforcement of the boycott of Israel" and criticized the U.S. for what it called a "bias in policy" towards the Arab-Israeli conflict.

16th Summit, Casablanca, May 26, 1989. The Arab League "strongly supported" the Palestinian National Council's (PNC) decision to pursue "a peaceful settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli dispute." Egypt resumed its seat in the league after nearly a decade of suspension.

17th Summit, Baghdad, May 30, 1990. The summit, held as immigration to Israel from the Soviet Union was increasing dramatically, expressed concern over what it called "the planned, organized Jewish immigration to the occupied territories." The summit resolution called the Jewish migration a gross violation of human rights and the principles of international law. Furthermore, the summit reaffirmed its recognition of Jerusalem as "the integral part of Palestine and capital of its state."

18th Summit, Cairo, August 10, 1990. An emergency summit was called to respond to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The conference condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and demanded "an immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of Iraqi troops from that country." A resolution to establish an Arab force, which would be deployed between Iraq and Kuwait to enforce an Arab solution to the current Gulf crisis, was accepted. The summit reaffirmed full support for Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states and vowed to back measures taken by these countries to safeguard their legitimate rights.

19th Summit, Cairo, June 22, 1996. This was the first summit since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and Iraq was not invited. The summit, which came some months after a wave of terrorist bombings in Israel and immediately after Binyamin Netanyahu's election as Israeli prime minister, publicly denounced terrorism and radicalism; at the same time however, it affirmed on "the inalienable right to resist occupation and aggression." The summit also resolved that comprehensive Middle East peace was dependent on full Israeli withdrawal from "all the Arab

territory" and contingent on Israel signing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Niyazi Gunay is a research assistant at The Washington Institute

Policy #496

RECOMMENDED

BRIEF ANALYSIS

Unpacking the UAE F-35 Negotiations

Feb 15, 2022



Grant Rumley

(/policy-analysis/unpacking-uae-f-35-negotiations)



ARTICLES & TESTIMONY

How to Make Russia Pay in Ukraine: Study Syria

Feb 15, 2022



Anna Borshchevskaya

(/policy-analysis/how-make-russia-pay-ukraine-study-syria)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

Bennett's Bahrain Visit Further Invigorates Israel-Gulf Diplomacy

Feb 14, 2022



Simon Henderson

(/policy-analysis/bennetts-bahrain-visit-further-invigorates-israel-gulf-diplomacy)

TOPICS

Arab & Islamic Politics (/policy-analysis/arab-islamic-politics)

