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Cooperation between the United Nations and regional
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Note verbale dated 2 July 2013 from the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit herewith the following documents:

- (i) Statement of the Co-Chairs of the twenty-third Gulf Cooperation Council-European Union Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 30 June 2013 (see annex);
- (ii) Final communiqué of the thirty-third session of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council Al Sakhir, Kingdom of Bahrain, 25 December 2012 (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the United Nations requests that the present note verbale and its annex be circulated as a document of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

[Original: Arabic]

23rd Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf-European Union Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting

Co-Chairs' Statement

23rd Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf-European Union Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting

Manama, 30 June 2013

1. The 23rd session of the Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) and the European Union was held in Manama, capital of the Kingdom of Bahrain, on 30 June 2013. The GCC delegation was led by Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al-Khalifa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the European Union delegation was led by Catherine Ashton, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission. Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani, GCC Secretary-General, also participated in the meeting.

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11. The Ministers reaffirmed the position of both sides that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East region was fundamental to international peace and security, in accordance with United Nations resolutions and the Arab peace initiative, leading to the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian State on the land occupied since 1967. The Ministers also welcomed the current efforts of the Secretary of State of the United States of America, John Kerry, to give fresh momentum to the Middle East peace process.

The Ministers affirmed their position regarding non-recognition of any changes to the pre-1967 borders, other than those agreed by both parties, including the city of Jerusalem. They stressed their common position that Israeli settlements in any place in the occupied Palestinian territories were illegal under international law and constituted an obstacle to peace. In this regard, they requested Israel to put an immediate stop to all settlement activities in East Jerusalem and in the rest of the West Bank, including natural growth, and to dismantle all existing settlements. The Ministers also agreed on the need to continue to provide political and financial support

for Palestinian State-building efforts.

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[Original: Arabic]

Final communiqué adopted by the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council at its thirty-third session

Sakhir, Kingdom of Bahrain, Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 Safar A.H. 1434 (24 and 25 December A.D. 2012)

At the invitation of King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa of Bahrain, the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) held its thirty-third session in Sakhir, Bahrain, on Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 Safar A.H. 1434 (24 and 25 December A.D. 2012). ...

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The Council commended the visit of the Amir of Qatar to the Gaza Strip in October 2012. It praised his efforts to break the siege on the Strip, provide humanitarian relief and launch a number of economic and development projects. The Council hoped that the visit would mark the start of new endeavours to unify the Palestinian people and ensure that their legitimate objectives were achieved.

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II. Political matters

The situation in the Palestinian territories and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict

The Supreme Council reviewed the latest developments in the Palestinian issue and emphasized that the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace depended on Israel's complete withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967, namely Palestine, the occupied Syrian Golan and the land that it continued to occupy in the south of Lebanon, and on the establishment of an independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital. Those were the same principles embodied in the Arab Peace Initiative and the authoritative international resolutions.

The Council congratulated the Palestinian people and its leaders on Palestine's attainment of non-member observer State status in the United Nations. It expressed the hope that that achievement would mark a significant step towards the establishment of a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

The Council once more called for Palestinian factions to unite, end their divisions, set aside their differences and put interests of the Palestinian people first.

It condemned the settlement policies adopted by Israel in order to alter the geographic and demographic nature of the Palestinian territories. Those policies constituted an ethical and humanitarian crime and a serious violation of international law and had no legal effect in favour of Israel.

The Supreme Council welcomed the ceasefire agreement in Gaza that had been brokered by the Arab Republic of Egypt. It affirmed the importance of ongoing efforts to strengthen that agreement and avoid any recurrence of hostile actions by Israel. The Council held Israel legally responsible for that aggression and called upon the international community to ensure the provision and delivery of urgent humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip.

In that connection, the Council commended the efforts by GCC member States to provide humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people, especially in the Gaza Strip, and the humanitarian assistance provided by the Bahrain Royal Charter Organization, under the guidance of Sheikh Nasr bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Chair of the Board of Trustees, with a view to alleviating the suffering of the Palestinians living under siege in Gaza.

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Sakhir
12 Safar A.H. 1434
(25 December A.D. 2012)