Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the conference

Strengthen alliances to beat terrorism: MEMAC

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Top military and security experts from all over the world converged on Bahrain yesterday amid rising terrorist threats to discuss the importance of regional and international alliances and coalitions in combating terrorism.

The leaders spoke about the importance of advancing formal co-operation between nations and creating a regional coalition to achieve peace.

The discussions were part of the MEMAC (Middle East Military Alliance & Coalition) conference held on the sidelines of the BIDEC 2017.

Addressing the conference, Royal Guard Commander also Chairperson of the Supreme Organising Committee of Bahrain International Defence Exhibition & Conference 2017, HH, Brigadier, Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa shed light on the vital role played by Bahrain in the region through its alliances with the United States, the GCC, as well as Islamic and Arab countries.

The all-day conference, divided into four segments, had panel discussions focusing on the threats posed by terrorism, extremism, piracy and cyber-attacks to the Middle East region in particular.

The sessions also discussed the opportunities regional alliances

General Wesley K. Clark; Former NATO Commander and Co-Chair of MEMAC

can offer to the region's collective defence and security, as well as various advantages and challenges in forming successful regional alliances.

In this regard, the participants at the panel discussions viewed that the key towards a successful coalition is to have all nations "working harmoniously towards one vision".

They also stressed the need to merge all fields such as political, military and economic towards creating successful alliances and coalition highlighting: "Terrorism is not religion or culture-based".

The need for enhancing cyber security was also highlighted during the discussion, with experts urging to develop more fundamental and practical approaches to fight the menace.

"It was an excellent and focused conference that brought together right people with right agenda,"

Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa

General Wesley K. Clark; Former NATO Commander and Co-Chair of MEMAC told *DT News* adding: "Conferences like this would help advance the cause of security and peace in this region."

Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Chairman of Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (DERASAT), the Chairman of MEMAC, and the Spokesperson of BIDEC told *DT News*, "The discussions provided a strategic insight on military alliances and coalitions and brought a lot of perspective to all those who attended the conference."

He pointed out that the questions raised by the attendees were quite reflective to the discussion. "I would like to thank our partners and supporters especially HH Brigadier Shaikh Nasser Bin Hamad Al Khalifa for his confidence in DERASAT whereby we were able to have a line of strategist military and diplomats to discuss this issue."

The long list of experts at the conference include General The Lord Richards (David); UK Chief of Defence Staff 2010-2013 and COMISAF 2006/7, General Zubair Mahmood Hayat; Chairman, Joint Chief of Staff Committee, Pakistan, General Raja Mohamed Affandi bin Raja Mohamed Nor; Chief of Defence Force of Malaysia, Colonel Pilot Turki bin Saleh Al-Maliki; Spokesman of Arab Coalition Forces to Support Legitimacy in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Amb. Thrasyvoulos Terry Stamatopoulos; Former Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Security Policy, NATO, Greece, General Wesley K. Clark (Chair); Former NATO Commander and Co-Chair of MEMAC and many others.

The conference