

# Leaders arrive in Saudi ahead of 29th Arab League summit

London

**T**op leaders of the Arab world started arriving in Saudi Arabia ahead of the 29th Arab League summit to be held in Dammam today.

The Omani Deputy Prime Minister for Cabinet Affairs Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said arrived at King Abdulaziz Air Base in Dhahran yesterday for the 29th Arab League summit.

Earlier yesterday, the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, the Iraqi President Fuad Masum, and the Lebanese President Michel Aoun arrived in Dhahran ahead of the summit that is due to take place today.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, the Vice President and Ruler of Dubai, arrived in Saudi Arabia yesterday, ahead of leading the country's delegation to the 29th Arab League Summit.

Sheikh Mohammed is accompanied by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs; Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation; Mohammad Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and The Future; Sultan Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy; Dr Anwar Gargash, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; Reem Al Hashimy, Minister of State for International Co-operation; Sheikh Shakhboub bin Nahyan, UAE Ambassador to Saudi Arabia; Khalifa Sulaiman, Director General of Dubai Protocol and Hospitality Department; and Juma Al Junaibi, UAE Permanent Representative at the Arab League.

In a ministerial meeting that was held on Thursday, the Saudi Minister of Foreign

**In a meeting on Thursday, Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir said that Palestine will top discussions at the summit today**

Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir said that Palestine and the situation there will top discussions at the Arab summit.

The agenda for the summit was set out in the preparatory meeting on Thursday in Riyadh, where the foreign ministers of the 22 countries met. The heads of several international organizations and non-profits are also expected to attend.

The secretary-general of the UN, Antonio Guterres arrived in Saudi Arabia on Thursday.

During the preparatory meeting on Thursday, Saudi Arabia said the Palestinian conflict would top the summit's agenda, though it is likely that airstrikes on Syria from the US, UK and France will now result in a shift in priorities.

Yesterday morning, the three countries launched a co-ordinated attack on Damascus in response to the use of chemical weapons in rebel-held Douma a week ago.

Missiles targeted a research centre, two chemical weapons facilities and an Assad regime command centre.

— *The National/Agencies*



(L to R) Oman's Foreign Minister Yussef bin Alawi, Kuwait Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled al-Sabah, Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Abul Gheit and Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir attend the preparatory meeting ahead of the 28th Summit of the Arab League in Riyadh. (AFP/Fayez Nureldine)

## Qatar slammed for attacking summit

Manama

**B**ahrain's foreign minister has lashed out at Qatar, saying that its stances against the Arab Summit to be held in Dhahran today and its position against Saudi King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz meant that it had no role to play in such pan-Arab gatherings.

"Qatar's media attacks on the Dhahran summit and its ongoing abuses of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques confirm that Qatar has no place and no role in the summit and its representation in any way does not serve

Arab national security," Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmad Al Khalifa on Friday posted on his Twitter account.

"Everyone is optimistic about the Arab summit in Dhahran and its expected results in the service of Arab national security. Only those who sell themselves to the enemies very cheaply would attack the summit," Shaikh Khalid shared with his 605,666 followers on the microblog.

For the Bahraini minister, the Arab Summit in Dhahran, the 29th to be held by the Arab League since its inception, will

sent to the right and clear message to everyone.

"We are determined to build and develop and ensure benefits for all, but we are firm with anyone who targets Arab national security. We will achieve our goals, with the will of God, regardless of the time and the distance."

Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt on June 5 severed their diplomatic, commercial and travel relations with fellow Arab League member Qatar after they accused it of supporting

extremists and funding terrorism. Qatar denied the charges and dismissed a list of 13 demands issued by the Quartet.

Efforts to mediate between the two sides, led by Kuwait, have failed to make any incremental change.

The Qatar crisis has been ruled out of the discussions between the Arab leaders when they gather for their summit in Dhahran.

Qatar said it would be present at the annual gathering.

— *Gulf News*

## HM King to lead Bahraini delegation

DT News Network

Manama

**H**is Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa will head the Kingdom's delegation to the 29th regular Arab Summit, the Royal Court announced yesterday. The delegation will leave for Saudi Arabia today.

HM King Hamad will also

attend the closing ceremony and military parades of the "Joint Gulf Shield" drill, at the invitation of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, the Royal Court's statement added. The Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) is taking part in the "Joint Gulf Shield" drill.

## Saudi supports US-led airstrikes on Syria

Riyadh

**S**audi Arabia yesterday extended support to the coordinated missile strikes by the US, Britain and France on military targets in Syria.

The official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) cited a source in the Saudi Foreign Ministry as saying that "the Ministry expressed Saudi Arabia's full support to the US, Britain and

France's military operations on military targets in Syria".

An official from the Ministry highlighted that the operations were a response to the use of banned chemical weapons by the Syrian regime against innocent civilians and its years of "horrible crimes", the agency report said.

The official held the Syrian government responsible for

such military attack and the international community for not taking serious steps against the regime.

The US, Britain and France launched coordinated strikes against Syria's research, storage and military targets to "punish" the Bashar al-Assad regime for an apparent chemical attack in Douma last week

that killed over 70 people. The military action was denounced by Damascus and its ally Moscow as a "failure" and "an act of aggression".

The Western allies warned Syria on Saturday that they could launch further attacks if chemical weapons were used again in conflict-torn areas.

— IANS