United Nations A/67/895–S/2013/351

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2013

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-seventh session
Agenda items 14, 15, 18 (a), 26, 27, 28, 30, 33, 36, 37, 52, 53, 61, 62, 65, 69, 80, 90, 97, 105 and 121 (n)

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Question of Palestine

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other

Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions

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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other Organizations: Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States

Letter dated 4 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In the capacity of the State of Qatar as President of the 24th Ordinary Session of the Council of the League of Arab States at the summit level, held on 26 and 27 March 2013 in Doha, State of Qatar, I have to honour to forward attached herewith a letter from H.E. Dr. Nabil Al-Arabi, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States along with its enclosure, the resolutions and the Declaration of the said summit meeting.

I should be grateful if the present letter, along with its annex and enclosures, is circulated as an official document of the 67th session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 14, 15, 18(a), 26, 27, 28, 30, 33, 36, 37, 52, 53, 61, 62, 65, 69, 80, 90, 97, 105 and 121(n), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Meshal Hamad M. **Al-Thani**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 4 June 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[*Original: Arabic*]

I have the honour to transmit herewith a paper copy and a digital copy of a file containing the resolutions and declaration adopted at the 24th Ordinary Session at summit level held in Doha on 26 March 2013.

The summit was held in the wake of a succession of regional and international developments. The leaders discussed numerous issues concerning the Arab world, particularly developments regarding the Palestinian cause, the situation in Syria, the development and reform of the League of Arab States and the establishment of the Arab Court of Human Rights.

I take this opportunity to assure you that I shall continue to coordinate with you on issues of shared concern.

(*Signed* Nabil **Al-Arabi**
Secretary-General

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Resolutions

Report of the Presidency on the activity of the Follow-up Committee for the Implementation of Resolutions and Commitments

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General and the final report of the Follow-up Committee for the Implementation of Resolutions and Commitments,

Pursuant to the statutes of the Committee,

Resolves

1. To express its thanks and appreciation to His Excellency, Mr. Jalal Talabani, President of the Republic of Iraq, and the President of the twenty-third ordinary session of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level, for accepting the task of following up the implementation of the resolutions of the Baghdad summit (2012).

2. To express gratitude to the Member States of the Follow-up Committee for the Implementation of Resolutions and Commitments and the Secretary-General for their commendable efforts in following up implementation of the resolutions of that summit.

(Summit resolution 570, 24th ordinary session – 25 March 2013)

Report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General and the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action, and having heard the remarks of the Secretary-General at the opening meeting,

Resolves

To commend the report of the Secretary-General on the various areas of Joint Arab Action.

(Summit resolution 571, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Development of the League of Arab States

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General, the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action, resolution 7372 of the Council of the League at ministerial level (136th ordinary session, 13 September 2011), resolution 567 of the Council of the League at summit level (23rd ordinary session, 29 March 2012) on compensation to the Secretary-General for taking the necessary decisions to restructure the Secretariat-General and develop its systems, thereby

enabling it to upgrade its working methods, function more effectively and keep pace with innovations both in the Arab region and world-wide, and resolution 7582 of the Council of the League at ministerial level (139th ordinary session, 6 March 2013),

Having regard to the Charter and regulations of the League of Arab States,

Having regard to the Document of the Covenant, Accord and Solidarity among Leaders of the Arab States and the Document of Development and Modernization in the Arab World, both adopted at the Tunis summit in 2004,

Resolves

1. To express its thanks to the High-level Independent Commission chaired by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi which prepared its report on the reform and development of the League of Arab States;

2. To welcome the measures taken by the Secretary-General to restructure the Secretariat-General and develop its systems pursuant to the provisions of resolution 567 adopted at the Baghdad summit on 29 March 2012;

3. To take note of resolution 7582 of the Council of the League at ministerial level on 6 March 2013 concerning the establishment of an open-ended committee of Member States and the Secretariat-General for the purpose of considering the suggestions and recommendations in the report of the Independent Commission, transmitting its comments to the Secretariat-General, implementing them in accordance with priorities, successive stages and time frames, and submitting the results of its work to the Council of the League at ministerial level in September 2013.

(Summit resolution 572, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Establishment of an Arab Court of Human Rights

The Council of the League at summit level,

Having regard to the initiative of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, king of Bahrain, concerning the establishment of an Arab Court of Human Rights,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General, the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action, resolution 7372 of the Council of the League at ministerial level (136th ordinary session, 13 September 2011), the outcome of the Manama Conference on the establishment of an Arab Court of Human Rights, held in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 25 and 26 February 2013, and resolution 7489 of the Council of the League at ministerial level (137th ordinary session, 10 March 2012),

With a view to enhancing respect for and protection of Arab human rights,

Resolves

1. To give its consent to the establishment of an Arab Court of Human Rights;

2. To entrust a high-level committee of legal experts from Member States with the task of preparing the basic statute of the Court and to submit the results of its work to the Council of the League at its next session at ministerial level;

3. To invite those Member States that have not yet ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights to do so without delay.

(Summit resolution 573, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Palestinian issue and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict

Developments in the Palestinian issue

The Council of the League at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General and the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action,

Recalling the resolutions of Arab summits, including in particular the summits of Beirut (2002), Sharm el-Sheikh (2003), Tunis (2004), Algiers (2005), the Sudan (2006), Riyadh (2007), Damascus (2008), Doha (2009), Sert (2010) and Baghdad (2012) and the statements released by meetings of the ministerial committee of the Arab Peace Initiative on 12 November 2009, 2 March 2010, 10 March 2010, 26 March 2010, 1 May 2010, 8 October 2010, 15 December 2010, 28 May 2011, 14 July 2011, 23 August 2011, 30 October 2011, 2 June 20-12, 22 July 2012 and 9 December 2012,

Referring to the resolutions of international legitimacy on the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict, in particular the relevant Security Council resolutions relating to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as its capital, and the process for a lasting and comprehensive peace,

Mindful of the grave and growing dangers confronting the Palestinian issue as a result of the pursuit of aggressive Israeli policies, in particular the policy aimed at altering the geographic, demographic and cultural composition of Jerusalem, including measures to expand the building of settlements within the city and impose regulations and laws designed to drive its Palestinian residents out, Judaize the city and erase its Arab identity, targeting Islamic and Christian holy sites there, including in particular al-Aqsa Mosque, and attempting to alter the characteristics of the Old City of Jerusalem, as is clearly apparent from persistent Israeli measures and practices,

In the light of Israel's continued refusal to comply with resolutions of international legitimacy and its extreme violation of international humanitarian law in respect of the Palestinian people through its stifling economic blockade measures, its policy of collective punishment, its fragmentation of Palestinian land and its continuing aggression against vital Palestinian facilities and national institutions,

Reaffirming the firm and unswerving Arab position that the Palestinian issue is a central one for all Arabs, concerning all individuals and all countries of the Arab region, and constitutes the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict in view of the military, political, economic and cultural danger, threatening the entire Arab nation, that it represents,

Mindful of the Arab desire to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain their rights and to provide them with all forms of support and assistance in confronting Israeli plans,

Condemning the continued Israeli escalation of brutal Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people,

Resolves

I. The Arab Peace Initiative

1. To reaffirm that a just and comprehensive peace is the strategic option, that the peace process is comprehensive and indivisible, and that a just and comprehensive peace in the region is attainable only through full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, to the line of 4 June 1967, and from the territories still occupied in the Lebanese south, and through a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 of 1948, the rejection of all forms of resettlement and the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian State having East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with the provisions of the Arab Peace Initiative adopted at the Beirut summit (2002) and reaffirmed at successive Arab summits, and with the resolutions of international legitimacy and their relevant terms of reference.

2. To affirm that the State of Palestine is a full participant in the peace process, and that it is essential to continue to support it in its demand that Israel put a complete halt to settlement activity, that negotiations must be based on the terms of reference of the peace process as represented by the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy, the Arab Peace Initiative and the principle of land for peace, and must take place within a specified time frame, that discussion about borders must be based on an end to the occupation that began in 1967, and that a beginning must be made on the final settlement issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict, chief among these being settlement, Jerusalem, the refugees, borders, water, security, and withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories; to affirm that the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, are a single indivisible geographic unit for purposes of the establishment of the independent State of Palestine on all the territories that were occupied in 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital; and to reject all Israeli attempts aimed at fragmenting the unity of Palestinian territory and all unilateral measures taken by Israel.

3. To place full responsibility upon Israel for the breakdown of the negotiation process, because of its stubborn insistence on continuing to build settlements as an alternative to peace, despite the clear international consensus on the unlawfulness and illegitimacy of those settlements and on the grave prejudice that continued settlement activity represents for opportunities of achieving peace and a two-State solution; and to reaffirm that the Israeli attitude, which is inconsistent with the provisions and bases of international law, resolutions of international legitimacy and the requirements of the task of achieving peace, and the failure of American mediation to achieve any tangible results, will lead to a reappraisal of negotiations, because the course of negotiations has ceased to afford any advantage, and their resumption is contingent on the receipt of a serious proposal guaranteeing the end of the Arab-Israeli conflict and compliance with the terms of reference of the peace process.

4. To reject Israeli attitudes demanding recognition of the Jewish character of the State of Israel, and to reject all unilateral Israeli measures aimed at changing the demographic and geographic reality of the occupied Palestinian territories, including

East Jerusalem, and imposing new facts on the ground, and attempts to bypass the bases of the peace process and its terms of reference, destroy the solution represented by the establishment of two States and eliminate any opportunity of establishing an independent and viable Palestinian State.

5. To call upon the Security Council to assume its responsibilities and to take the necessary measures and activate the necessary mechanisms to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the two-State solution on the 1967 borders, to give effect to its resolutions and assume its responsibilities toward the occupied State of Palestine in order to bring Israel's occupation of the occupied Palestinian Arab territories to an end and achieve its withdrawal to the line of 4 June 1967, and to enforce international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

6. To call upon the international community to initiate serious negotiations having as their terms of reference the implementation of United Nations resolutions, including in particular the relevant Security Council resolutions, most notably resolution 242 (1967) and resolution 338 (1973), both of which mandate the end of the occupation and withdrawal by Israel to the line of 4 June 1967, including East Jerusalem (the capital of the State of Palestine), an end to settlement activity in the territory of the State of Palestine, and the release of all Palestinian and Arab prisoners, reaffirming international recognition of the elevation of the status of the State of Palestine and its accession to the international family as a non-member observer State at the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution A/Res/67/19.

7. To establish an Arab ministerial delegation headed by His Excellency the President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and having as its members the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the State of Palestine, with the participation of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, to be tasked with conducting consultations with the Security Council, the United States Administration, the Russian Federation, China and the European Union with a view to reaching agreement on mechanisms for initiating, within a specified time frame, serious negotiations, and to invite the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States to form a working group tasked with preparing the necessary executive measures for this activity.

8. To affirm the importance of action on behalf of the convening of an international conference on the Palestinian issue in all its aspects with a view to ending the Israeli occupation of the occupied Palestinian territories by resolving the final settlement issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict, chief among these being borders, security, settlement, Jerusalem, the refugees and water, in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy, the agreed terms of reference of the peace process, the Arab Peace Initiative, and General Assembly resolution 194 of 1948 in respect of the refugee issue.

9. To instruct the committee of the Arab Peace Initiative to reassess the Arab position as regards the failed history of the peace process in its various aspects and dimensions, including the utility of continued Arab commitment to the Arab Peace Initiative as a strategic option, and also to review:

- The utility of the function and role of the Quartet in the light of its failure to achieve any progress toward the realization of a just and comprehensive peace;

- Arab action in working within the international methodology and mechanisms that have been followed to date in addressing the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict, pressure toward changing that methodology, and the formation of new mechanisms for action with terms of reference based on international legitimacy, with a view to ending the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories,

the committee subsequently to submit a report and recommendations at a meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States at an emergency session, in preparation for its presentation at an extraordinary summit.

10. To express gratitude to the international parties that have supported the Arab Peace Initiative, and to request their continued support for the Palestinian issue, Arab rights, and pressure for efforts aimed at peace, and to reaffirm that Israel's continued rejection of the Arab Peace Initiative, based as it is on international legitimacy and its principles and authority, shows that Israel is not serious about achieving peace.

11. To affirm the importance of the role played by the ministerial committee of the Arab Peace Initiative and the importance of pursuing its efforts under the presidency of the State of Qatar during the 24th ordinary session of the Arab summit, in accordance with the policy framework based on the fact that the Arab Peace Initiative will not remain on the table much longer.

II. Developments in the Palestinian issue

1. To extend thanks to all States that voted on 29 November 2012 in favour of General Assembly resolution A/Res/67/19 upgrading the status of Palestine at the United Nations to that of a non-member observer State on the basis of borders at the line of 4 June 1967 and having East Jerusalem as its capital, to request those States that did not vote in favour of that resolution to change their position, to urge the Security Council to act promptly on the request before it for acceptance of the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations, and to entrust the Arab Group at the United Nations with the task of continuing to pursue the necessary legal measures in that connection in all relevant quarters.

2. To request the United States of America not to use its veto in the Security Council against the Arab resolution inviting the Member States of the United Nations to recognize and accept the accession of the State of Palestine to the international family at the United Nations, especially in view of the fact that that position is consistent with the statements made by the President of the United States, Mr. Obama, in his address of 19 May 2011, which referred to achieving peace on the basis of the two-State solution on the lines of 4 June 1967, with the State of Palestine having borders with Egypt, Jordan and Israel, and also the references to the establishment of the State of Palestine in his address to the General Assembly in September 2010.

3. To express gratitude to all States that have recently recognized the State of Palestine based on the borders of 4 June 1967 and having East Jerusalem as its capital, and States that have upgraded their diplomatic representation to Palestine, and to call upon States that have not yet recognized the State of Palestine to do so, thereby helping to strengthen the existing international consensus that it is essential

to end the occupation and establish an independent State of Palestine having East Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of resolutions of international legitimacy.

4. To call upon the United States of America and all the States of the European Union to recognize the State of Palestine within the borders of the line of 4 June 1967 and having East Jerusalem as its capital.

5. To support the efforts of the State of Palestine to attain to membership of the specialized international agencies and to accede to international charters and protocols.

6. To respect Palestinian international legitimacy under the Presidency of Mahmoud Abbas, to express appreciation for his efforts to achieve national reconciliation, to respect the lawful institutions of the State of Palestine, including the elected Palestinian Legislative Council, to commit to unity of Palestinian decision-making and representation in order to preserve gains already made and the rights of the Palestinian people, at risk as they are, and to affirm that Palestinian national reconciliation constitutes the only real guarantee on the road to preserving the Palestinian territories.

7. To welcome the signing of the Palestinian National Reconciliation Agreement on 4 May 2011, inasmuch as the higher interests of the Palestinian people will thereby be served, to express gratitude to the Arab Republic of Egypt for its unflagging care and constant efforts to bring about the agreement, and to call upon the Palestinian forces to give effect promptly to its provisions in order to deal with the challenges confronting the Palestinian issue.

8. To welcome the Doha Declaration and the agreement to establish an interim Government drawing upon all independent national vital forces in order to implement the Cairo agreement and working to organize the holding of presidential and legislative elections and elections for the National Council.

9. To salute in admiration and esteem the Palestinian people in their valiant struggle against the ongoing Israeli aggression against the occupied Palestinian territories; to support their steadfastness and struggle in confronting that aggression; to condemn vehemently the savage Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip, which killed and injured thousands of Palestinians, particularly civilians, including children and women, and devastated infrastructure and public and private institutions on a massive and comprehensive scale; to call for an end to Israeli aggression and the lifting of the unjust blockade; to hold Israel, as the occupying Power, legally and materially responsibility for the war crimes and the violations of international law and international humanitarian law that it committed; and to commend the role of the Arab Republic of Egypt in bringing about a truce in the Gaza Strip during the Israeli aggression against it beginning on 14 November 2012.

10. To request the international community to put pressure on Israel to lift its blockade of the Gaza Strip, open the crossings from and to the Strip, and activate the agreement on the crossings that was reached on 15 November 2005, especially now that the Strip has been effectively converted into one great prison, Israel having refused to open the crossings or to grant permission for the building of the port, the reconstruction of the airport or the establishment of a secure corridor between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and not allowing the entry of building materials for repairing the damage caused by the last Israeli war against the Strip, and to express

gratitude and esteem for the measures taken by the Arab Republic of Egypt at the Rafah crossing to ease the suffering of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip.

11. To work for the implementation of resolutions adopted at previous Arab summits on the ending of the Israeli blockade and reconstruction of the Gaza Strip, including in particular those adopted at the third Arab Development Summit (Riyadh, January 2013) and the 23rd Arab summit (Baghdad, March 2012); with reference to the outcomes of the Sharm el-Sheikh summit meeting on the reconstruction of Gaza (March 2009), to reaffirm the necessity for an early end to all forms of the Israeli blockade on the Gaza Strip, to invite all participants in the Sharm el-Sheikh conference on the reconstruction of Gaza to another meeting to fulfil the commitments they made there, in the framework of Arab support for the success of steps toward Palestinian reconciliation and its attainment as quickly as possible.

12. To affirm the illegitimacy and illegality of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, which represent a violation of international law, United Nations resolutions and the fourth Geneva Convention; to affirm that it is imperative for Israel to announce an immediate and total halt to its settlement policy and its implementation of the relevant international resolutions, especially Security Council resolutions 465 (1980) and 479 (1981), which declared that settlements are illegal, for existing settlements to be dismantled under international supervision, for the racial separation wall to be removed, for all Israeli measures to Judaize Jerusalem to be halted, for the economic and military blockade to be ended and for Israel to be made to assume responsibility for compensating the Palestinian people for the massive losses they have sustained as a result of that blockade, for military checkpoints between cities in the West Bank to be removed, and for the Gaza Strip crossings to be opened.

13. To affirm that the Arab Group in New York shall be mandated to pursue its efforts to secure the adoption of a binding Security Council resolution condemning Israel's expansionist plans and ordering a halt to all forms of settlement activity and the Israeli occupation authorities' recent plans aimed at building thousands of settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem; to affirm that the settlements are illegitimate and illegal; to request the international community to take the necessary measures to compel Israel to put a halt to settlement activity in the State of Palestine, to discontinue its destruction of the geographic, natural and demographic environment of the Palestinian territories, which are war crimes, to implement the relevant international resolutions, especially Security Council resolutions 465 (1980 and 497 (1981), and to dismantle all settlements that have been established on the land of the State of Palestine.

14. To commend the adoption by the United Nations Human Rights Council at its 22nd session of five resolutions condemning Israel, as the occupying Power, for its continuing violation of international law and the rights of the Palestinian people, and to request the Arab Group within the Human Rights Council to complete the legal steps required for the establishment of an international committee to hold Israel accountable for its crimes against the Palestinian people.

15. To affirm the failure and abdication of the United States Administration in the matter of compelling the Israeli Government to halt settlement activity and requiring it to announce immediately and clearly the borders of the two States on the basis of the line of 4 June 1967, and to affirm that security will ensue from a just and

comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, a full and comprehensive withdrawal from the occupied territories, and an end to any form of Israeli military presence in the Palestinian territories.

16. To invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations to endeavour urgently to take all necessary measures to secure the release, without delay, of detainees and children in Israeli prisons and to ensure that they enjoy international protection, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of October 2000 and other relevant United Nations resolutions, including in particular resolution 48/3 adopted by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women at its 48th session in March 2004, and to invite the Secretariat to hold an international conference on the suffering of Palestinian children as a result of the violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by Israel, the occupying Power.

17. To condemn Israel, the occupying Power, for rearresting prisoners who had been released under the recent prisoner exchange agreement, to call upon it to release them immediately, including hunger strikers, and to declare that Israel must bear full responsibility for the serious, life-threatening deterioration of their health.

18. To request the High Commissioner for Human Rights to pursue his communication with Israel, the occupying Power, in order to compel it to treat Palestinian and Arab prisoners as prisoners of war in accordance with the Geneva Convention, the fundamental principles of international law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant conventions, and to continue to make field visits to the occupied Palestinian territories to monitor and document the violations and dangerous practices to which they are exposed, including the martyrdom of a prisoner, Arafat Jaradat, who died under torture while in custody, and to request the United Nations, as a matter of urgency, to establish an independent commission of enquiry to investigate the circumstances of his death.

19. To express thanks to the Republic of Iraq for hosting the international conference of solidarity with Palestinian and Arab prisoners and detainees, pursuant to a resolution adopted at the Sert and Baghdad summits, to welcome the announcement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq that Iraq was contributing $2 million to the Arab Fund for the support of Palestinian and Arab prisoners and for their rehabilitation after their release from the prisons of the Israeli occupation, pursuant to the Baghdad announcement of an international conference of solidarity with Palestinian and Arab prisoners and detainees, the conference having been held on 11-12 December 2012, and to invite States, institutions and individuals to contribute to the Fund.

20. To express thanks to the Arab Republic of Egypt for its admirable efforts to conclude the prisoner exchange agreement, and to commend all parties and States that contributed to the conclusion of that agreement.

21. To demand that Israel, as the occupying Power, put an end to its policy of administrative detention, which is a violation of international law, international humanitarian law and the Geneva Convention, and to demand that the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva assume its legal and humanitarian responsibilities toward Palestinian and Arab detainees in Israeli prisons.

22. To invite the Arab Group in New York to pursue its efforts on behalf of a special session of the General Assembly convened to discuss the issue of Palestinian and Arab prisoners and detainees in the prisons of the Israeli occupation; and to

follow up the instructions to the Arab Group in New York to seek a General Assembly resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice in The Hague on the legal status of Palestinian and Arab detainees in the prisons of the Israeli occupation as prisoners of war under the relevant provisions of international law, and to communicate as required with States that support the Palestinian issue to adopt such a request for an advisory opinion.

23. To instruct the Arab Group in Geneva to pursue its efforts to seek a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Council convened to discuss the issue of prisoners with a view to a resolution requiring Israel, as the occupying Power, to apply all international human rights instruments and the fourth Geneva Convention and to sign the additional protocols, and to open the prisons and detention centres of the Israeli occupation to international committees competent to monitor and investigate whether prisoners and detainees in those prisons are being humanely treated, and establishing a fact-finding committee to determine to what extent international human rights law and international humanitarian law are being applied to prisoners and detainees in the prisons of the Israeli occupation.

24. To call upon all States and all relevant international organizations and other bodies to respond immediately to the finding of the International Court of Justice that the situation resulting from the construction of the racial separation wall should not be recognized, that no assistance for the building of it should be provided, that the part already built should be dismantled, and that reparation should be made for the damage caused by it; to call upon the Secretariat-General and Arab States to develop a plan of action aimed at impelling the international community to give effect to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 9 April 2004 and the General Assembly resolution of 20 July 2004 declaring the wall illegitimate; and to request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to set up a register of all damage caused by the construction of the wall, as provided for in the General Assembly resolution.

25. To call upon the Government of Switzerland to endeavour to reconvene the conference of the High Contracting Parties of the fourth Geneva Convention and to seek protection for Palestinian civilians in the occupied Palestinian territories, especially in the light of the continuing violation of the Geneva Conventions and the bases of international humanitarian law by Israeli forces.

26. To reaffirm the right of the Palestinian refugees to return, to reject attempts at resettlement in all forms, and to reject any manoeuvres aimed at circumventing or nullifying the right of return; to call upon the Secretariat-General and Member States to pursue and intensify their efforts in the international arena and at the United Nations to reaffirm that right in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy, including in particular Genera Assembly resolution 194 of 1984 and in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative; and to affirm Israel's legal, political and ethical responsibility for the creation and perpetuation of the Palestinian refugee problem.

27. To demand that all parties to the conflict in Syria desist from attacking Palestinian refugee camps and refrain from turning them into battlegrounds despite their neutrality since the beginning of the conflict and the fact that those camps represent places of refuge for Syrians fleeing from areas in their vicinity, and that Palestinian refugees be treated on a footing of equality with Syrian émigrés.

28. To affirm the importance of continuing to provide the necessary material assistance for the regular and emergency activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

29. To extend thanks to the Arab States that have supported the Palestinian economy and opened their markets to the free flow of Palestinian products created through the exemption of those products from customs duties; to call upon the other Arab States to give effect to resolutions that have been adopted in that connection; and to call upon the relevant authorities in the State of Palestine to provide the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States with periodic reports on difficulties impeding the flow of Palestinian goods and products to Arab States.

III. Israeli measures in Jerusalem

1. To affirm the Arab identity of Jerusalem and reject all illegitimate and unlawful Israeli measures designed to Judaize and annex the city and expel its inhabitants; to condemn the seizure of land and building of settlement units in East Jerusalem; to condemn Israeli excavations beneath and in the vicinity of al-Aqsa Mosque which are threatening its collapse; to call upon concerned international organizations and institutions, especially UNESCO, to assume their responsibilities for safeguarding the Muslim and Christian holy places; and to call upon Arab States to take swift action as a matter of necessity to thwart Israel's designs.

2. To affirm unswerving dedication to the establishment of an independent Palestinian State on all the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, having Jerusalem as its capital; to reject all illegitimate Israeli measures aimed at annexing and Judaizing the city; to condemn all official and unofficial Israeli programmes, plans and policies designed to proclaim it as a capital of the State of Israel; and to call upon the international community to apply the resolutions of international legitimacy in that connection.

3. To call upon the United States of America, the European Union and the United Nations to take immediate action to assume their responsibilities and put pressure on Israel to halt settlement activity in the city of Jerusalem immediately and engage in a serious negotiation process to restore rights and preserve security, peace and stability instead of declaring war on the peace process.

4. To condemn Israel's systematic, repeated and continuing attempts to attack the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque in an effort to seize control of it; to condemn Israel's protection of the extremist right in its repeated incursions into the courtyards of the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque with a view to implementing its plan of destroying the mosque and erecting their alleged temple in a dangerous racist precedent affecting the Islamic world in its entirety; to call upon the international community, the Security Council, the European Union and UNESCO to assume responsibility for preserving the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque, inasmuch as it is the most outstanding Islamic monument in occupied Palestine; and to instruct the Arab Group in New York to act without delay to make it clear to all that the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque is in great danger.

5. To condemn all forms of Judaization affecting the city of Jerusalem, including in particular the Israeli structural plan known as the Jerusalem Master Plan 2020, the aim of which is to ensure that Jerusalem is a unified capital for Israel and the implementation of which will feature the construction of more than 50,000

settlement units by 2020 in an effort to reduce the proportion of Arabs among the city's population and turn Palestinians into a minority within Jerusalem.

6. To condemn vigorously Israeli statements to the effect that the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque is an integral part of the territory of Israel and that Israeli law applies to it; to warn that Israel's plans to divide the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque between Muslims and Jews must be regarded as a dangerous escalation against the sanctity of the mosque and against Islamic holy places and Muslims; to warn of the outbreak of a religious conflict for which Israel will be entirely responsible; and to call upon the international community, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Quartet and UNESCO to take a firm stand in order to protect al-Aqsa Mosque from the Israeli plans.

7. To condemn the new settlement project known as the E1 project, which was approved after the General Assembly resolution upgrading the status of the State of Palestine to that of a non-member observer State and which features the construction of hundreds of new settlement units in the settlement of Maale Adumim, as it will mean the division of the West Bank into two separate parts and hence the end of the two-State solution and the establishment of an independent, geographically contiguous State of Palestine.

8. To welcome the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa, Emir of the State of Qatar, in addressing the Security Council for the purpose of seeking a resolution prescribing the establishment of an international committee to investigate all the measures taken by Israel since 1967 in Arab Jerusalem with a view to erasing its Islamic and Christian features; and to request the Secretariat-General to follow up the implementation of that initiative.

9. To extend thanks to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, for his continuing efforts to protect the holy places; and to commend the resolution of UNESCO confirming the right of Jordanian religious endowments to restore the Mughrabi Gate, which is an integral part of the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem.

10. To commend the efforts of the Jerusalem Treasury Agency, an arm of the Jerusalem Committee headed by His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco, which is concerned with funding the al-Aqsa Mosque compound restoration operation and projects in other sectors, including population, health, culture, social affairs, youth and sport, in addition to the repair and restoration of mosques and other historic buildings in the city.

11. To extend renewed thanks to the sister State of Qatar for hosting the International Conference on Jerusalem to consider the defence and protection of the city of Jerusalem, under the auspices of the League of Arab States pursuant to summit resolution 503 adopted at Sert at the 22nd ordinary session on 28 March 2010, held under the distinguished patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, and attended by His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine; to call upon the League of Arab States to follow up the implementation of the resolutions adopted at that conference in order to support the steadfastness and staunchness of the people of Jerusalem in confronting the dangers of Judaization in their city, the forced expulsion of its inhabitants, and the continuing, escalating measures to

destroy Islamic and Christian holy places and erase the city's history and human heritage.

12. To call upon the Vatican not to sign any agreement with the Israeli Government relating to issues of economic and financial property and real estate in East Jerusalem belonging to the Catholic Church or to Catholic institutions and congregations, and to conclude agreements in that connection only with the State of Palestine, inasmuch as Jerusalem is occupied territory that was occupied in 1967, and any agreement with Israel, the occupying Power, would be a flagrant breach of international law, international legitimacy and its resolutions; and to call upon the Vatican to abide by the agreement that it signed in 2000 with the State of Palestine.

13. To call for activation of summit resolution 503 adopted at Sert in 2010, on Jerusalem, which prescribed that the additional support for the Al-Aqsa Fund and the Jerusalem Fund provided for in a resolution adopted at the Beirut summit in 2002 should be increased to $500 million; and to request the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States to establish mechanisms to give effect to the Arab action plan to save Jerusalem.

IV. Support for the budget of the State of Palestine and the steadfastness of the Palestinian people

1. To extend thanks to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for providing the sum of 20 million US dollars and the State of Qatar for providing $9 million as their contributions to the Financial Safety Net that is to make $100 million available to the State of Palestine every month, pursuant to summit resolution 551, adopted at the Baghdad summit on 29 March 2012.

2. To call upon Arab States to fulfil their commitments with respect to the funding of the Financial Safety Net as quickly as possible, providing $100 million monthly for the State of Palestine, pursuant to summit resolution 550 adopted at the 23rd ordinary summit in Baghdad on 29 March 2012, as support for the Palestinian leadership in view of the financial pressures to which it is being subjected; to condemn Israel's repeated withholding of Palestinian funds from tax revenues, which are owed to the State of Palestine; and to call upon the international community to act immediately to compel Israel to desist from these measures and transfer those Palestinian funds to the State of Palestine.

3. To extend thanks to those Arab States that have met their commitments and paid their contributions, in whole or in part, to support the resources of the Al-Aqsa Fund and the Jerusalem Intifada Fund pursuant to resolutions adopted at the extraordinary summit in Cairo in 2000 and to provide additional support for those funds pursuant to resolution 14 adopted at the 14th ordinary summit in Beirut in 2002; and to call upon those Arab States that have not met their commitments in respect of such additional support to do so promptly.

4. To establish a delegation consisting of the Prime Minister of the State of Palestine, the Secretary-General, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar (Presidency of the summit), the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt (Presidency of the Ministerial Council) and any other ministers who wish to participate for the purpose of visiting a number of Arab capitals at the earliest possible opportunity to address the difficult financial crisis currently confronting the State of Palestine.

5. To call upon Arab States to support the budget of the State of Palestine for a term of one year beginning on 1 April 2013 in accordance with the mechanism agreed upon at the Beirut summit in 2002.

(Summit resolution 574, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Palestinian issue and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

■ **The Arab ministerial delegation to Washington**

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action,

In the light of the discussions held by Kings, Presidents and Emirs of Arab States on this subject,

Resolves

1. To dispatch at the end of next month a delegation of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, headed by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and having a membership comprising the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the State of Palestine, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for the purpose of engaging in consultations with the United States Administration on the failed history of the peace process in its various aspects and dimensions, and to present the Arab position on the international methodology and mechanisms that have been followed to date in addressing the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

2. To ask the head of the delegation to submit a report on this mission to the President of the summit and the Council of the League of Arab States at ministerial level.

(Summit resolution 575, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Palestinian issue and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

■ **Establishment of a fund for the support of Jerusalem**

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action,

Having heard remarks by His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, on the establishment of a fund for the support of Jerusalem and comments by Kings, Presidents and Emirs of Arab States thereon,

Resolves

1. To establish a fund designated Support for Jerusalem having financial resources in the amount of one billion United States dollars for the purpose of financing projects and programmes designed to preserve the Arab and Islamic identity of the noble city of Jerusalem, strengthen the steadfastness of its

inhabitants, and enable the Palestinian economy to develop its capacity and break its dependence on the Israeli economy and the policy of isolation and blockade.

2. To instruct the Islamic Development Bank to manage the said Fund.

(Summit resolution 576, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Palestinian issue and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

■ **Convening of a mini-summit aimed at achieving Palestinian national reconciliation**

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Reaffirming its previous resolutions on achieving Palestinian national reconciliation,

Having regard to the remarks by Arab leaders reaffirming the importance of timely action to achieve Palestinian national reconciliation,

Commending the estimable efforts of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the State of Qatar in that connection,

In the light of the discussions among Kings, Presidents and Emirs of Arab States on the subject,

Resolves

To convene an Arab mini-summit presided by the Arab Republic of Egypt and attended by the State of Qatar, the State of Palestine, the Secretary-General and any Member States that wish to participate for the purpose of taking timely action to realize Palestinian national reconciliation, inasmuch is that is the only real means of preserving Palestinian unity and dealing with the challenges confronting the Palestinian issue, in accordance with the Cairo agreement of 2011 and the Doha agreement of 2012.

(Summit resolution 577, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Palestinian issue and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

■ **The occupied Syrian Arab Golan**

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General, the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action, the resolutions of the Council of the League at ministerial level, the most recent of them being resolution 7593, adopted at the 139th ordinary session on 6 March 2013,

Reaffirming the resolutions of the Arab summit conferences, the most recent of them being resolution 552 of the 23rd ordinary session, adopted at Baghdad on 29 March 2012,

Resolves

1. To affirm solid support and backing from the Arab States for Syria's just demand and right to recover the entire occupied Syrian Golan up to the line of 4 June 1967, on the basis of the principles of the peace process and resolutions of international legitimacy and building on achievements within the framework of the 1991 Madrid peace conference;

2. To reaffirm all its summit resolutions, the most recent of them being resolution 552 of the 23rd ordinary session, adopted at Baghdad on 29 March 2012, and all the resolutions of the Council of the League at ministerial level, including in particular resolution 4126 of 13 February 1982 and subsequent resolutions, the most recent of them being resolution 7593 of the 139th ordinary session, adopted on 6 March 2013, stipulating the rejection of all measures taken by the Israeli occupation authorities aimed at changing the legal, natural and demographic status of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, most recently a bill adopted by the Israeli Knesset requiring the holding of a public referendum before withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and East Jerusalem; to consider Israeli measures designed to consolidate its control as illegal, null and void, and a violation of international agreements and the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, especially resolution 497 (1981) of the Security Council and resolution A/RES/53/99 of the General Assembly (5 December 2008), which affirm that Israel's decision of 14 December 1981 to annex the occupied Syrian Arab Golan is illegal, null and void, and without legal force and constitutes a grave violation of Security Council resolution 497 (1981) and resolution A/RES/64/21 of the General Assembly (2 December 2009), as well as resolutions A/RES/65/18 (25 November 2010), A/RES/65/106 (10 December 2010) and A/RES/66/19 (1 December 2011) of the General Assembly, resolution 13/5 (24 March 2010) of the Human Rights Council, and the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (A/66/400) on this matter, issued on 19 October 2011;

3. To reaffirm that the continued occupation of the Syrian Arab Golan since 1967 represents an ongoing threat to peace and security in the region and the world;

4. To condemn Israel for its practices in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, including the seizure of land and water resources, the building of a rock-fill dam near the town of Quneitra to steal water, the removal of 7 million m2 of water from Masada Lake and its diversion to the farms of settlers, the draining of the Sea of Galilee and Lake Hula, depriving Syrian farmers of their most important sources of water for the irrigation of their farms and watering of their livestock, the construction and expansion of settlements and transporting of settlers thereto, the exploitation of natural resources, and construction projects, the most recent being a publicity campaign for new settlement construction conducted in December 2010 by the so-called Golan Regional Council under the slogan "Come to the Golan" and the bringing of 3,000 new Israeli families to settle in the occupied Syrian Golan in the context of that project, in addition to the issue of a tender for the sale of ten zones in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan to establish vineyards and wineries, and the imposition of an economic boycott on and prohibiting the export of the agricultural produce of the Arab population;

5. To affirm the Arab position of full solidarity with Syria and Lebanon, standing with them to confront the continuing Israeli aggression and threats and considering any aggression against them as aggression against the Arab nation;

6. To support the steadfastness of the Arab inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan, standing side by side with them in their resistance to the Israeli occupation and its repressive practices, and their determination to hold on to their land and Syrian Arab identity; to affirm the need to apply the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949) to the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan; and to condemn, on the basis of the principles of international law and tenets of international legality, the Israeli occupation authorities for their gross violations of all the rights of the Syrian inhabitants, young and old, living under occupation in the Golan and the ensuing displacement and expulsion of thousands, the pillage of their lands, the separation of families and the consequences of this situation on the lives of children and their education, in addition to many other violations of children's rights in contravention of international obligations arising from the international Convention on the Rights of the Child;

7. To call upon the United Nations, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to ensure Israeli respect for the Fourth Geneva Convention and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to seek to facilitate visits by the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan to their families and relatives in their motherland of Syria via the Quneitra crossing under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross;

8. To condemn the practices and provocations of the Israeli occupation forces against the inhabitants of the Syrian village of Ghajar in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, with the aim of partitioning it, displacing its inhabitants and constructing a separation wall between the inhabitants and their lands and livelihood; to consider Israel's forcible transfer of the civilian population to the southern part of the village a violation of international humanitarian law, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention, and a crime against humanity; likewise to consider any partition of the village as designed to infringe Syrian sovereignty over it; to call upon the international community to assume its responsibilities to pressure Israel to stop it from partitioning the village and put an end to the humanitarian, social and economic suffering of its inhabitants labouring under the occupation; and to support Syria in reserving its right to take whatever measures are necessary to prevent partition of the village;

9. To condemn the massacres and appalling crimes committed by the Israeli occupation forces on 15 May 2011 (anniversary of the Palestinian *nakbah*) and 5 June 2011 (44th anniversary of the *naksah* of June 1967), including the use of live ammunition against peaceful, unarmed Syrian and Palestinian demonstrators who were on the Syrian side of the cease-fire line in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, killing 38 of them and wounding more than 350;

10. To condemn the aggressive and criminal practices of the Israeli occupation forces, including the massive arrest campaign targeting the people of the occupied village of Majdal Shams, expulsion operations in which dozens of residents have been forcibly removed from the Golan, the imposition of heavy monetary fines, the actual imprisonment of some people while others have been dragged through successive trials; to call upon all international institutions and other bodies to condemn these practices and to put pressure on Israel to halt those practices against the people of the occupied village of Majdal Shams.

11. To call upon the United Nations Secretariat-General, the Security Council, the Human Rights Council and civil society organizations operating in the area of

human rights and international humanitarian law to put pressure on Israel to release all Syrian prisoners and detainees from the population of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan in Israeli jails and to call upon international humanitarian organizations to prevail upon Israel to allow representatives of the Red Cross, accompanied by medical specialists, to visit those prisoners and detainees to examine their physical and psychological health, save lives and relieve the suffering caused by repressive Israeli practices and the inhumane conditions of detention under which they live inside Israeli prisons, as well as the policy of physical and mental subjugation practised by the Israeli authorities which deprives them of their most basic human and social rights, causing their health to deteriorate and putting their lives at risk; in particular, the recent arrest by the Israeli occupation authorities of numerous Syrian citizens on fabricated charges in an attempt to terrorize the Syrian residents of the Golan and consolidate their occupation of that integral part of Syria, which was a flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions, international humanitarian law and the most elementary principles of human rights;

12. To uphold the resolutions of international legitimacy requiring the non-recognition of any situation resulting from Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Arab lands, considering this to be illegal activity giving rise to neither right nor obligation and that the construction of settlements and housing of settlers therein represents a serious violation of the Geneva Conventions, a war crime under the First Protocol additional thereto and a violation of the principles of the peace process which require that all Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and the occupied Arab lands be terminated;

13. To urge the international community to uphold the resolutions of international legitimacy rejecting Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Syrian Arab Golan by condemning the practices of the Israeli government, which brought 3,000 new families to settle in the occupied Syrian Golan in December 2010 following a publicity campaign by the so-called Golan Regional Council, in accordance with its announcement on 31 December 2003 that it intended to establish nine new settlements, expand existing ones, double the number of settlers and allocate the appropriations necessary to implement this, contrary to the peaceful Arab and international approaches aimed at achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the Beirut Summit (2002);

14. To condemn the policy of the Israeli government which has wrecked the peace process and resulted in continued escalation of tension in the region and to call upon the international community to prevail upon Israel to apply the resolutions of the United Nations relating to full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Syrian Arab Golan and all occupied Arab territories to the line of 4 June 1967.

(Summit resolution 578, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Palestinian issue and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

■ **Solidarity with and support for Lebanon**

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General, the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action, the resolutions of the Council of the

League at ministerial level, the most recent of them being resolution 7593, adopted at the 139th ordinary session on 6 March 2013,

Reaffirming the resolutions of the Arab summit conferences, the most recent of them being the Baghdad summit (2012),

Taking note of recent domestic and international developments relating to Lebanon,

Resolves

1. To affirm full Arab solidarity with Lebanon and to provide political and economic support to the country and its government to safeguard Lebanese national unity, the security and stability of the country and its sovereignty over all its territory;

2. To salute the steadfastness of Lebanon, its army and its people, and their heroic resistance in the face of continuing Israeli aggression, in particular the aggression of July 2006, to ask God to have mercy on the souls of the Lebanese martyrs, and to consider the solidarity and unity of the Lebanese people in the face of aggression to be a guarantee of the future security and stability of Lebanon;

3. To commend the national role played by the Lebanese army in the south of the country and all Lebanese regions, to support the army's efforts to extend the sovereignty of the Lebanese State to its internationally recognized borders and preserve stability and civil peace, and to affirm the need to strengthen the capacities of the Lebanese army and security forces to enable them to perform the national tasks incumbent upon them;

4. To demand a halt to Israeli land, sea and air violations of Lebanese sovereignty, of which there have been over 10,000 since the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006) to the present time and to condemn them as constituting a gross violation of that resolution; to condemn the deployment of Israeli espionage networks and their commission of terrorist acts, which constitute aggression against Lebanese sovereignty and flagrant violations thereof, against international law and custom and United Nations resolutions, especially resolution 1701 (2006), and also endanger Lebanon's national security and the safety of its people; to condemn Israel's malevolent efforts to rend the Lebanese social fabric through agents, of whom there have been more than 150 to date; and to support the position of the Lebanese Government calling upon the international community to implement resolution 1701 (2006), which is based on resolutions 425 and 426, and bring a permanent halt to Israel's ongoing threats to Lebanon and its civilian facilities and infrastructure.

5. The Council further affirms:

- The need for Israel to withdraw from all Lebanese territory, including the Sheba farms and the Kafr Shuba hills, and from the Lebanese part of the village of Ghajar, pursuant to the relevant international resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 1701 (2006);
- The right of the Lebanese people, army and resistance to liberate or reclaim the Sheba farms, Kafr Shuba hills and the Lebanese part of the village of Ghajar, to defend Lebanon from any aggression by all available, lawful means

and to affirm the commitment of the Lebanese government to Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) in full;

- To demand that Israel hand over complete, accurate information and maps relating to the location of all unexploded ordnance, including cluster bombs dropped indiscriminately on populated civilian areas during its assault against Lebanon in the summer of 2006, which has resulted in the death and injury of more than 400 persons, including 47 martyrs and 353 injured and maimed; to demand that Israel hand over information relating to the dates when and places where cluster bombs were dropped by Israeli forces and the quantities and types used; and to call upon the international community and United Nations to continue to provide financial and technical support to Lebanon to clear the cluster bombs and dispose of the mines laid by Israel during its occupation of Lebanese territory;

- To take note of the evolution in Lebanese-Syrian relations through diplomatic representation between the two countries, and to support the effort of the Lebanese Government to arrive by means of those relations at a situation that will enshrine the deep, distinguished historical ties and common interests between the two friendly peoples within a framework of trust and mutual respect between them.

6. To hold that Israel must bear full responsibility for its acts of aggression, incursions and threats against Lebanon, especially the aggression to which Lebanon was subjected in the summer of 2006, with results that have continued to this day, and the intentional targeting of civilians and infrastructure, which constitutes a blatant and serious breach of international law, particularly of international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions (1949); to hold that Israel must also assume responsibility for compensating the Lebanese Republic and Lebanese citizens for the grievous direct and indirect losses suffered by the Lebanese people and economy as a result of Israeli acts of aggression; to hold that Israel's acts of aggression against Lebanon constitute war crimes, the perpetrators of which must be prosecuted before the competent international authorities; and, with reference to United Nations General Assembly resolutions A/RES/61/194 (20 December 2006), A/RES/62/188 (19 December 2007) and A/RES/63/211 (19 December 2008) on the environmental pollution caused during the July 2006 aggression, to hold that Israel must bear responsibility for the resulting damage and to demand it pay immediate and sufficient compensation to Lebanon and other States affected by that pollution;

7. To affirm Lebanon's right to its oil and gas resources located within its territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone that belongs to it as shown on the maps deposited by the Government of Lebanon with the United Nations Secretariat on 9 July 2010 and 11 October 2010, and as subsequently defined in Law No. 163 of 18 August 2011 (Delineation and declaration of the maritime regions of the Lebanese Republic);

8. To affirm Lebanon's rejection of the geographical coordinates deposited by the delegation of Israel with the United Nations which relate to the northern part of the territorial waters and exclusive economic zone which Israel claims belongs to it, inasmuch as Israel is clearly violating and encroaching on Lebanon's sovereign economic rights in its territorial waters and exclusive economic zone and seeking to amputate there from an area of more than 860 km^2;

9. To support the Lebanese Government's endeavour to strengthen Lebanon's Arab and international role, especially through effective participation in the United Nations, in order to defend its national rights, Arab rights and issues of justice and peace in the world, chief among these being the issue of Palestine and the legitimate national right of the Palestinian people to stand up to Israel and its aggressive practices, continued occupation of Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian territory and violations of international law, including international humanitarian law;

10. To support the position of the Lebanese Government of adherence to the provisions of the Constitution in terms of upholding the right of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and rejection of their resettlement; to appreciate and support the clear and unshakable position of the Palestinian people and leadership rejecting the idea of the resettlement of the Palestinian refugees in the host countries, especially Lebanon, in accordance with paragraph 4 of the Arab Peace Initiative, which stipulates the rejection of all forms of Palestinian patriation which conflict with the special circumstances of the Arab host countries; to caution that failure to resolve the issue of the refugees on the basis of a return to their homes, in accordance with the resolutions of international legitimacy and principles of international law, or attempts to resettle them, will destabilize the region and hinder the achievement of a just peace; to welcome the efforts of the Lebanese government to foster Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue in order to address all of the vital social and economic issues of Palestinian refugees in the camps, in collaboration with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and to address outstanding security issues in accordance with the resolutions of the Lebanese National Dialogue conference, especially those pertaining to issues of Palestinian weaponry in Lebanon; and to praise the efforts of the Lebanese Government in rebuilding the Nahr al-Bared camp, calling upon States and organisations to fulfil the commitments made at the Vienna International Conference for the Reconstruction of the Naher el-Bared Camp and to provide aid to that end;

11. To affirm the determination of the Lebanese Government to respect the resolutions of international legitimacy and uncover and reveal the truth about the assassination of the late Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and his associates, eschewing any politicization or revenge that would have a negative impact on the stability, unity or civil peace of Lebanon;

12. To support the Lebanese Government's efforts to follow up the case of the disappearance of Imam Musa al-Sadr and his companions, Sheikh Muhammad Yaqoub and journalist Abbas Badreddine with a view to bringing about their liberation and endeavouring to hold the senior members of the former regime accountable, thereby closing the file on that crime; to welcome the efforts of the State of Libya at this level and to urge it to pursue its investigations and continue its cooperation with the competent Lebanese authorities at all levels in preparation for uncovering the circumstances surrounding this national issue and securing the release of the imam and his two companions;

13. To support the efforts of the Lebanese Government and people in the matter of Syrians and Palestinian refugees in Syria who have fled to Lebanon as regards accommodating them and providing them with all possible humanitarian assistance despite limited resources; and to affirm the need to support Lebanon in that endeavour and share its burdens in order that it will be able to provide the people

concerned with the care, necessities of life and assistance that they require, especially in view of their growing numbers;

14. To support the Lebanese Government's efforts to make progress in implementing and developing the economic reform policy presented by Lebanon at the Paris III conference and designed to upgrade the infrastructure of the national economy, preserve its stability and foster opportunities for growth, in addition to helping to release the remaining donations and loans pledged by donor States and organizations to Lebanon and implementing a number of infrastructure projects;

15. To affirm the condemnation of international terrorism, in the fight against which the Arab States are actively engaged, and the importance and necessity of distinguishing between terrorism and legitimate resistance to Israeli occupation, which is a right affirmed by international charters and the principles of international law, and to affirm that resistance activity should not be considered a terrorist act and, consequently, resistance fighters should not be included on terrorist lists;

16. To commend and support the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States, in consultation with the Arab States, Lebanese constitutional institutions and the various political forces, to consolidate stability and promote sustainable economic growth in Lebanon in order to safeguard its unity, security and stability; and to commend the Baabda Declaration issued by the National Dialogue Committee on 11 June 2012 and the fundamental features of the nation that it enshrines.

(Summit resolution 579, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Developments in the situation in Syria

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General and the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action,

Recalling resolution 554 of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level at its 23rd ordinary session in Baghdad on 29 March 2012, and resolutions of the Council at ministerial level and those of the ministerial committee on the situation in Syria, including in particular resolution 7438 of the Council of the League at ministerial level at its ordinary session on 12 November 2011, suspending the participation of delegations of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic at meetings of the Council of the League of Arab States and all its organizations and instrumentalities with effect as of 16 November 2011; resolution 7446 of 12 February 2012, resolution 7442 of 27 November 2011 and resolution 7510 of 22 July 2012, calling for an emergency meeting of the United Nations General Assembly to issue recommendations on collective action to deal with the deteriorating situation in Syria, including the cutting of all forms of diplomatic relations and communication with the Syrian regime; resolution 7572 of 12 November 2012 urging regional and international organizations to recognize the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces as the legitimate representative of the aspirations of the Syrian people and to strengthen relations with the Coalition as the legitimate representative and fundamental interlocutor with the League of Arab States; resolution 7523 adopted at the 138th ordinary session on 5 September 2012 calling for action to make all forms of support available to the

Syrian people to enable them to defend themselves; and resolution 7595 of the Council at ministerial level adopted at the 139th ordinary session on 6 March 2013,

Having reviewed the extremely grave situation currently prevailing in Syria as a result of the escalation of operations of violence and killing, which have spread to most of Syrian territory, and the continuing appalling violations of human rights by the Syrian regime, which has used heavy weapons, military aircraft and Scud missiles to bomb residential quarters and populated areas, and adopted a scorched earth policy, thereby markedly increasing the numbers of victims, causing human migration within Syria and sending thousands of Syrians fleeing to neighbouring States to escape the violence, which has not spared even children and women from horrendous massacres, with the result that the Syrian State is threatened with collapse and the security, safety and stability of the region has been put at risk,

Commending and welcoming the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, for the generosity of the State of Kuwait in hosting the international donors' conference for the Syrian people on 30 January 2013,

Confirming its refusal to provide the Syrian regime with lethal weapons used to bomb residential quarters and populated areas,

Emphasizing that a political solution should have priority and that the mission of Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States should be supported,

Confirming its unshakable position of preserving the unity, stability and territorial integrity of Syria,

Resolves

1. To take note of the announcement of the formation of an interim Syrian Government;

2. To welcome the occupation of the seat of the Syrian Arab Republic at the League of Arab States and its several organizations, councils and instrumentalities by the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces pending the holding of elections to determine the formation of a Government that will assume the responsibilities of power in Syria, deeming the Coalition to be the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people and its fundamental interlocutor with the League of Arab States, out of sympathy for the sacrifices of the Syrian people and in view of the exceptional circumstances that they are currently experiencing; [1]

3. To affirm the importance of efforts aimed at reaching a political solution as a priority for the Syrian crisis; and to affirm the right of every State to provide, at its discretion, all means of self-defence, including military supplies, in order to support the steadfastness of the Syrian people and the Free Syrian Army;

4. To commend the estimable efforts of the States bordering on Syria and other Arab States, and their role in providing for the immediate essential needs of Syrian emigrants; to affirm the need to support and back those States in bearing the burdens

[1] Taking into account the reservations of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the Republic of Iraq, and the abstention of the Lebanese Republic, as stated in the resolution of the Council at ministerial level adopted on 6 March 2013.

of acting as hosts; to work to continue providing all forms of support and assistance for the shelter and relief of emigrants in Lebanon in accordance with the relief plan prepared by the Lebanese Government; to continue to provide relief to emigrants in Jordan in accordance with the plans and appeals for relief approved by the Jordanian Government, and to do the same in the case of Iraq, in order to meet the essential needs of these suffering people;

5. To call for the convening of an international conference in the framework of the United Nations on reconstruction in Syria and the rehabilitation of its basic infrastructure in all sectors that have been damaged as a result of the widespread destruction, proceeding as follows:

(a) Calling upon Member States to participate actively in the conference and to provide all the resources needed for reconstruction;

(b) Instructing the Arab Group in New York to follow up this matter with the United Nations in order to determine a time and place for the convening of the conference;

(c) The Secretariat-General to follow up the matter and present it to the Council of the League of Arab States at ministerial level at its next session;

6. To urge regional and international organizations to recognize the Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces as the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people.

(Summit resolution 580, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Follow-up on implementation of the resolutions of the Arab Summit at its twenty-third ordinary session (Baghdad, 29 March 2012)

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the report of the Secretariat-General on follow-up on implementation of the Arab Summit at its 23rd ordinary session (Baghdad, 29 March 2012), the report of the Economic and Social Council (resolution 1944, 91st ordinary session, 14 February 2013) and the report and recommendations of the meeting of senior members of the Economic and Social Council held in preparation for the 24th ordinary session of the Arab Summit,

Having heard the explanatory remarks of the Secretariat-General,

In the light of the discussion,

Resolves

To take note of the measures taken by the Arab States, the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States, the specialized Arab ministerial councils and Joint Arab Action institutions to follow up implementation of the economic and social resolutions adopted at the Arab Summit at its 23rd ordinary session (Baghdad, 29 March 2012) and invites them to continue to do so.

(Summit resolution 581, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Difficulties hindering satisfaction of the remaining requirements for the executive programme of the Declaration of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) pursuant to paragraph 7 of summit resolution 29, third ordinary session – 22 January 2013, adopted at the Third Arab Economic and Social Development Summit (Riyadh, January 2013)[2]

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General (Economic Sector), the report of the Economic and Social Council (resolution 1945, 91st ordinary session – 14 February 2013), paragraph 7 of summit resolution 29, third ordinary session – 22 January 2013) adopted at the Third Arab Economic and Social Development Summit (Riyadh, January 2013) and the report and recommendations of the meeting of senior members of the Economic and Social Council held in preparation for the 24th ordinary session of the Arab Summit,

Having heard the explanatory remarks of the Secretariat-General,

In the light of the discussion,

Resolves

I. Liberation of trade in goods

(a) Arab rules of origin

1. To approve the detailed rules of origin for Arab goods that have been agreed upon by the Saudi-Moroccan working group and have secured approval ratings of 80 per cent or more among GAFTA Member States;

2. To call upon those Member States where approval ratings for the detailed rules of origin agreed upon by the Saudi-Moroccan working group are below 80 per cent to consider enhancing their negotiating tracks in the framework of the Technical Committee on Arab Rules of Origin before the end of 2013;

3. To ask the Technical Committee on Arab Rules of Origin to complete its consideration of those detailed rules that have not been agreed upon by the Saudi-Moroccan working group and submit those rules and the negotiating tracks of the States to the Economic and Social Council at its next session so that it can take the necessary definitive action in the matter.

[2] The Tunisian Republic expresses reservations about submitting the above resolution to the Arab Summit because it does not appear on the agenda; it also has reservations about the content and merit of this resolution.
The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria expresses reservations about submitting the above resolution to the Arab Summit on the grounds that it is not on the agenda of the Summit, and also in the light of its comments on the content of the resolution.
The Arab Republic of Egypt has reservations about the inclusion of the matter among the difficulties hindering the inception of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area at the Arab Summit on the grounds that it is not on the agenda of the Summit, and also on the grounds of the merits of the part of the content relating to the rules of origin.

(b) Non-tariff restrictions

1. To affirm that GAFTA Member States shall provide the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States periodically with country reports featuring greater transparency in respect of the following:

(a) A summary of all the obstacles they face in applying the provisions of the executive programme of the GAFTA Declaration with any of the GAFTA Member States, indicating the names of those States, in order to enable the Economic and Social Council to consider them and take appropriate decisions in respect of them;

(b) A summary of non-tariff restrictions in accordance with the classification adopted by the Economic and Social Council, together with a list of States practising such restrictions and documents relating thereto.

2. To request GAFTA Member States to provide the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States with their proposals on how to deal with Member States that do not comply with resolutions of the Economic and Social Council concerning the removal of non-tariff restrictions;

3. To declare that a clear mechanism shall be established to deal with trade restrictive measures, including a graduated system of penalties which may be applied to States that take measures at variance with the provisions of GAFTA, and which Member States may apply as necessary;

4. To declare that trade legislation and measures relating to the smooth flow of trade exchanges shall be transparent and clear and shall not contain any measures of such a nature as to restrict trade between Member States;

5. To invite the private sector to participate actively in discovering trade restrictive measures that may be taken by any Member State;

6. To declare that no GAFTA Member State shall enact legislation or statutes serving to promote the application of non-tariff restrictions.

II. Liberation of trade in services

To declare that a time schedule shall be established for the completion of negotiations relating to service sectors on which States wish to negotiate, with a view to making progress in freeing such trade in the framework of a liberation agreement on trade in services between Arab States, the said time schedule shall be prepared before the end of 2013.

(Summit resolution 582, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Investment in the agriculture sector and Arab food security

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered

– the memorandum of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development,

– the study on the establishment of an Arab funding mechanism for agricultural development and Arab food security,

– paragraph 6, on the Arab emergency food security programme, of summit resolution 29, 3rd ordinary session, part III, 22 January 2013, adopted at the third ordinary session of the Arab Social and Economic Development Summit,

– resolution 1944 of the Economic and Social Council, 91st ordinary session, 14 February 2013,

– the report and recommendations of the meeting of senior members of the Economic and Social Council held in preparation for the 24th ordinary session of the Arab Summit,

Having heard the explanatory remarks of the Secretariat-General,

In the light of the discussion,

Resolves

1. To advise Arab funding bodies to increase the proportion of their funding portfolios allocated to Arab agriculture and food security activities, and to instruct the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development to follow up this matter;

2. To invite Arab States to prepare a propitious climate for investment in the agriculture sector.

(Summit resolution 583, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Plan of action to promote literacy among women in the Arab region: a developmental approach

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General, resolution 1944 of the Economic and Social Council, adopted at its 91st ordinary session on 14 February 2013, resolution 690 of the Council of Arab Ministers of Economic Affairs, adopted at its 31st ordinary session, the Plan of Action to Promote Literacy among Women in the Arab Region: a developmental approach, and the report and recommendations of the meeting of senior members of the Economic and Social Council held in preparation for the 24th ordinary session of the Arab Summit,

Affirming the need to eliminate illiteracy among women and upgrade their level of education and training, qualitatively and qualitatively, to enable them to achieve self-reliance and participate in political, economic and social life,

In the light of the discussion,

Resolves

To approve the Plan of Action to Promote Literacy among Women in the Arab Region: a developmental approach, presented below, as a reference on which Member States can draw when preparing their own executive action plans to promote literacy among women.

(Summit resolution 584, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Arab Women Association **League of Arab States Secretariat-General** **World Bank**

Plan of Action to Promote Literacy among Women in the Arab Region: a developmental approach

Plan of Action for the Promotion of Literacy among Women in the Arab Region: a developmental approach

Published by the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt

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Direct questions to: Status of Women Directorate
Woman.unit@las.int

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Deposit No. 5531 (2011)
ISBN: 978-050177-7

Working group on the preparation of the Plan of Action

Lead expert Dr. Yasir Muhammad Jadullah
Professor of Economics, Helwan University and strategic planning consultant, Arab Republic of Egypt

Arab experts

Dr. Mona Mu'tamin, educational specialist and strategic planning consultant, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Professor Ghadah al-Jabi, literacy and adult education specialist, Syrian Arab Republic

Professor Zahi Azar
Arab Network for Popular Education, Lebanese Republic

Secretariat-General

Professor Hana' Sarur, Director, Status of Women Directorate

Dr. Ghadah Ibrahim, Director, Education, Training and Employment Observatory, Council of Ministers Data Centre, Arab Republic of Egypt

Professor Nawal Bulsanam, Status of Women Directorate

Professor May Ali Ahmad, Status of Women Directorate

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General introduction

The idea of an Arab literacy and adult education strategy was originally mooted in 1976 and was followed by the Strategy on Adult Education in the Arab Region, published in 2000. This idea is based on a definition of the nature of illiteracy as a many-faceted social phenomenon, rather than an educational phenomenon alone. This is a highly important view of the matter, not only conceptually but also practically, for the inadequacy that has afflicted literacy activity has been caused by the assumption that literacy promotion is a second-degree educational process that is an aspect of general education, is applied to a public that is diverse in terms of age, experience and category, is voluntary in most cases, takes place in people's spare time, and is taught by teachers who in most cases do not work exclusively with illiterate students.

In the concept of the Strategy, social lag is the cause of illiteracy as much as it is the result of it. This means that while illiteracy in the case of individuals is simply the inability to read and write, in the social structure it is also cultural illiteracy, that is, the inability to comprehend and keep pace with a society that is evolving scientifically and technologically. These two types of illiteracy, cultural and individual, however diverse their manifestations, are born of social lag. It follows that the promotion of literacy, in the fullest sense, means confronting that lag fundamentally, where it is located. Action to give effect to the idea of a confrontation must take a comprehensive national form with clearly defined beginnings and endings, and this mandatory social approach is a fundamental preparatory feature of the management of such a confrontation.

There have been many comprehensive and sectoral literacy campaigns, serious programmes aimed at broadening community development by fostering the education of children and adults through various means and approaches. At the same time, the Arab developmental effort that has been under way since the mid-1970s has been accompanied by an advance toward an aspiration to comprehensive development, with attempts along similar lines in various regions of the world. One of the most important of these attempts has been Paolo Freire's efforts to link literacy with awareness and self-realization as a means to liberation from dependence, first at the level of the individual, and then at the level of the group and of society. A mass education movement appeared in Latin America, in Tanzania, in Africa, there have been active efforts to promote literacy for development, and in Asia literacy has been promoted by reviving traditional methods.

There is an increasing international realization of the important of literacy as a means of overcoming many of the problems confronting humanity, and the international community has set out to formulate a comprehensive vision to meet society's basic educational needs. This vision was adopted at the Jomtien Conference in Thailand in 1990, and was reaffirmed by the international conference on Education for All in Dakar in 2000. The Arab regional conference on Education for All (assessment to the year 2000), held in Cairo, gave high priority to national, regional and international mobilization to promote literacy as part of the Arab effort to attain the objectives of education for all, and particular concentration, within that priority, to education for girls and women. We may note at this point that the issue of girls' and women's education has been a prominent theme in the extensive

discussions at the international conferences which have been held during the United Nations Decade for Women (1975-1985) and subsequently.

Literacy and education for all are effective means of coping with the negative effects that accrue from illiteracy, such as poverty, malnutrition, disease, socio-economic marginalization and gender discrimination. Literacy and basic education are an indispensable stage in the broader process of education for sustainable human development. There can be no doubt that for Arab women, literacy is a sine qua non for awareness of their rights, and consequently it is education that will enable them to exercise those rights and perform their duties appropriately. Education is the fundamental means of enhancing the status of women and developing their capacity to assume the functions of the family, both sets of responsibilities being intertwined.

It is generally agreed that women, as an active force in society, have a fundamental role in environmental protection. By virtue of their responsibilities both within the family and outside it, women are more aware of imbalance, and consequently education enhances their ability to protect the environment and participate to a greater extent in developing production quantitatively and qualitatively. Research has shown conclusively that there is a strong relationship between level of education and productivity, and it has also shown that greater participation by women in the world of work is closely bound up with higher levels of education, which thus implies a more effective contribution by women to economic and social development. In fact, women's education and cultural advancement and their contribution to development clearly affect their participation in the task of attaining a balance between population growth and development potential.

In this context, we may note that illiterate Arab people do not live in a single world; they live in a plurality of worlds, depending on natural and geographic environments which are affected by different historical, social, economic and cultural circumstances. Accordingly, a knowledge of the dimensions and characteristics of these environments that differentiate illiterate people and affect their mental, psychological and social makeup becomes essential for identifying their qualitative needs and meeting the corresponding requirements in designing literacy programmes that are functional, appropriate and effective. This is clearly apparent with respect to the world of Bedouin and rural people, who together account for over 60 per cent of the inhabitants of the greater Arab region. Illiteracy is widespread in that rural world, where nearly 70 per cent of illiterate Arab people live. There is also a world of urban workers and craftsmen, who are divided into two distinct groups: on the one hand, industrial workers and artisans, who are much more aware than farm workers and are more strongly motivated to learn and upgrade their educational level, and on the other hand, workers who hold marginal jobs and occupy the lowest rungs on the social ladder.

In semi-desert and rural working environments, Arab women constitute a society of their own, owing to the fact that they are subject to a culture, traditions and social mores that concentrate on their segregation or household duties and services and agricultural tasks that isolate them from knowledge and education, and consequently illiteracy is rampant within that society of women. There can be no doubt that illiteracy in the Arab region contributes to educational wastage: some children do not attend school, while others drop out, and there is a lack of awareness of the negative consequences of dropping out on development. Furthermore, the

outcomes of the Arab system of education are not all they should be in terms of quality, as is clearly apparent from the gap between the results aimed at and the results actually attained.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States, as represented by the Status of Women Directorate, an arm of the Social Affairs Sector, has decided to undertake a study of the issue of illiteracy among women in the Arab Region with a view to preparing an Arab plan with input from a group of Arab experts—representing the various agencies concerned—in the fields of education, teaching and economics, as a concrete reflection of the growing concern to empower Arab women and upgrade their status, close the gender gap and achieve equality between them and men. The plan is structured around a group of main lines of emphasis, and its aim is not only to reduce illiteracy rates among women in the Arab region, but also to build women's capacities and put them to use by providing opportunities for training and productive employment, or helping women set up their own small or micro-businesses. Poor and marginalized women in the 15-45 age bracket are specifically targeted, for it is people in that age bracket who are most productive.

Illiteracy and poverty are the two sides of the same coin in many of our Arab societies. Illiteracy continues to be prevalent among poor groups, which suffer from exclusion, working and living in difficult economic and social circumstances. A developmental approach, using economic empowerment in promoting literacy among women, is considered to be an effective weapon not only against functional illiteracy in women, but also a means of providing them with training opportunities and jobs and helping them to set up small or micro business enterprises of their own.

The Plan draws upon an array of international and Arab regional authorities that have concentrated on this issue. It uses a planning method based on an appropriate diagnosis of the present situation and an analysis of statistical data relating to poverty, basic education and unemployment among Arab women. This is followed by the structuring of a logical framework for the proposed plan, containing quantitative, attainable, logical, clearly defined goals, each of which is subdivided into a number of objectives that can be translated into activities with time frames and indicators of success and failure.

Part I
The issue of illiteracy among women in the Arab region: theoretical framework

1.1 Preface

Part I will focus on presenting the theoretical framework of the issue of illiteracy among women in the Arab region. It will begin by explaining a number of different concepts of illiteracy and ways of measuring it at the international level, and will indicate the most important starting-points and references underpinning the importance of preparing an Arab plan for the promotion of literacy among women. The most important Arab experiences in this field will, of course, be analysed, compared and criticized, and a number of successful, prize-winning experiments in various countries will be reviewed, with the aim of acquainting the reader with the most important lessons that have been learned from them. This will be followed by a survey of the present situation of illiteracy in the Arab States, featuring analysis of recent statistical data on illiteracy rates and some socio-economic indicators of the situation, with a view to enabling the working group tasked with preparing the plan to have at its disposal a comprehensive picture of the situation in the Arab States, with which the plan is concerned. In the light of the foregoing, a fourfold analysis will be used to identify weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats and generate a four-quadrant matrix of the current situation.

1.2 Illiteracy: concept and quantification

There can be no doubt that concepts of illiteracy vary widely, not only from one country to another but also from one period of time and another within the borders of the same country. The concept of literacy is no longer limited to an individual's acquisition of the basic cognitive skills of education, but has expanded to include the community level, and is bound up to a noteworthy degree with economic and social development. It is most important to note that the definition of the concepts of literacy and their evolution are directly reflected in the policies followed by the international community and the mechanisms used implement them. It may seem difficult to enumerate those various concepts; however, it is important in this context to note the root technical term and the way it has evolved over time, points of difference and agreement concerning it, and then to explain the concept that appears to be best suited to scientific, social, economic and cultural change at all levels.

1.2.1 The evolving concept of illiteracy

The original term in the English language is "illiteracy", and it is the opposite of "literacy", which is the status of an educated person, or one who possesses knowledge capacities indicating that he is well educated. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was generally agreed that the term "illiteracy" meant an inability to read and write. Without going into the original term in various languages, it may seem important to note that since the mid-1980s, researchers in various fields and areas of specialization have been investigating the term and its meaning from various angles, and their work has given rise to heated discussion. However, four fundamental concepts of literacy eventually emerged. The first indicates that it is an independent set of skills; the second focuses on its fields of

application and practice and a situational definition; the third views it as a learning process, while the fourth is characterized by a focus on content.

Concerning literacy as the acquisition of a set of skills, we may note here that those skills are represented by the cognitive skills of reading and writing, and thinking about the method followed to impart those skills has evolved from a phonetic method of learning spelling, the words of the language and reading to a method focusing on educational methods—not exclusively verbal methods—of influencing the learning faculties of human beings with a view to enabling them to acquire a critical framework for analytic thought. Undoubtedly, the concentration on the teaching of writing as a basis for combating illiteracy that was in vogue in the 1970s led to a reduced capacity for improving an individual's thought faculties, as Scribner and Cole showed in 1977. Subsequently, attention turned to the idea that mathematical skills should be regarded as skills which must be added to those previously acquired in making an individual literate and even conferring the capacity to handle and explain numerical, quantitative and statistical data by means and methods suited to various circumstances. As time went on, knowledge and data utilization skills appeared, and in that connection, there has been a good deal of noteworthy activity on the part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) through its publications covering that aspect.

The concept featuring fields of application and practices and definition of the illiteracy situation, for its part, focuses, in the nature of the case, on how the set of cognitive, reading, writing, mathematical and scientific skills are applied in various possible ways in the circumstances and the environment in which the illiterate individual lives (that is, how to enable him to turn that knowledge and those skills to account). A good deal of effort has been expended in this framework, some of it focused on what is known as functional illiteracy as a result of research on the effect of literacy on socio-economic development. Investigators have turned their attention to the variety of methods used to combat functional illiteracy, depending on the social and cultural circumstances of the individual concerned, i.e. the need for a link between literacy and the social context rather than viewing each of them in isolation, as some have done. There are other opinions about the need for a link between the literacy of an individual and the requirements of his day-to-day life, as though one were to take the daily events of an individual's life and convert them into written matter constituting one aspect of the interaction between students and teachers.

In the view of literacy as a learning process, literacy is seen as an active learning process and not merely a result of a concentrated, limited teaching activity on the part of teachers without active participation by the illiterate individual. Researchers in the field of adult education consider that the accumulated personal experiences of individuals represent a fundamental factor in the learning process. A number of new terms have made their appearance, such as cooperative learning, distributed learning and practice societies, so as to shift the emphasis to more social practices. Paolo Freire (1993) pointed out it was essential to take the actual circumstances of the illiterate individual in the framework of the learning process itself into account in order to deal with his social situation.

As regards the content factor in the teaching process, its focus is quite clearly on the quality of the texts used. This may serve to integrate literacy into a

framework of open socio-political practices, and here it is important to ask whether the texts studied by the adult learners are appropriate for their lives or not.

We may thus say that the concept of literacy has changed and evolved over time. In the 1950s and 1960s, efforts were concentrated on the campaigns of UNESCO to promote the learning of a large number of skills, including reading and writing, which were regarded as a human right and would help the individual to improve his lot. By the early 1970s, UNESCO had adopted a functional literacy programme aimed at imparting functional literacy through direct experience and work-directed learning. In 1974, the UNESCO General Conference approved the following definition of functional literacy: "A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community's development." At the same time, the qualitative aspect should not be neglected, as Paulo Freire noted, inasmuch as literacy goes beyond the process of learning the skills of reading, writing and calculation, contributing to the liberation and promotion of human beings.

Early in the 1980s, the international agenda changed: international organizations began to devote less attention to literacy programmes and more to primary education. By the end of the decade, the concept of literacy had expanded beyond reading, writing and calculation to encompass higher levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in an effort to realize its objectives. Since the middle of the twentieth century, then, the concept of literacy has evolved to denote a functional activity and an ongoing process that takes environments and societies that are conducive to learning into account. UNESCO has developed a comprehensive concept of literacy that contains a set of technical skills relating to reading, writing and calculation along with the capacity to respond to economic, social and political change, and the progress of information and communication technologies.[3]

When we look at concepts of illiteracy in the Arab States, it is apparent that they focus on the ability to read and write, as is the case in Algeria (2000), Bahrain (2001), Mauritania (2000) and Egypt (2005), the last-named country having added failure to complete primary education. In Iraq and the Sudan (2000), an illiterate person is one who is unable to read a letter or newspaper easily or with difficulty. In Jordan (2003), an illiterate person is one who is 15 years of age or older and is unable to read or write in any language. The same situation is found in Tunisia (2004), which adds "in at least one language". The definition used in Saudi Arabia (2000) is the same as its Jordanian counterpart, with the addition of a reference to a blind person who is unable to read or write Braille symbols. In Kuwait (2005), the definition is broader: it includes every person who is unable to read a simple statement relating to his daily life and understanding, which requires a set of reading and writing skills and experience that include basic arithmetic. A similar definition is used in Palestine (2004), while in Oman (2003), the definition is not very different, even though it specifies that a holder of a university degree of any kind is deemed to be literate. In the Syrian Arab Republic (2004), a person, man or woman, who can read and write in the Arabic language is deemed to be literate.

3 For more detailed information, see the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report*, 2006, pp. 148-159.

It is thus clearly apparent that most Arab States focus exclusively on basic literacy (the ability to read and write), regardless of what language the individual knows.

The present plan adopts the broad concept of literacy, using the developmental approach rather than restricting itself to basic literacy, and that approach is the foundation-stone on which the plan is constructed. In addition, the plan targets women in low-income, marginalized groups in the 15-45 age bracket, for it is people in that age bracket who are most productive. It is this procedural definition of literacy that is most consistent with the objectives of the plan and the programmes and projects that it contains. Its components are outlined below:

- Basic skills (reading, writing, calculation), which are known as basic literacy;
- Ability to apply basic skills in the framework of the social environment in which the illiterate individual lives, which is known as functional literacy;
- Ability to go on learning and respond to social, political and economic change, which is known as cultural literacy;
- Ability to handle information technology and use a computer, which is known as information literacy.

1.2.2 Measures of illiteracy or literacy

Literacy and illiteracy may be regarded as mutually complementary. It may be important to note that most measurement approaches rely on sample surveys, which concentrate on questionnaires directed at families or something similar. Differences in literacy or illiteracy rates may be ascribed to differing definitions of a literate or illiterate individual. Since the 1980s, the issue of the goodness of the available statistics on literacy has been increasingly discussed. The various measures that are used contain estimates of literacy skills in many areas. Illiteracy has come to be viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon rather than merely a dichotomous one (reading and writing). There is much evidence indicating that the methods commonly used to estimate literacy tend to overestimate actual illiteracy levels. For example, the International Adult Literacy Survey (IASL), conducted in 20 developed countries found a high adult literacy rate, while at the same time, a relatively low rate was found according to an estimate based on the dichotomous variable.

It is unquestionably essential for country surveys to provide accurate, uniform data and estimates for decision-makers in order to enable them to develop the sound policies needed to deal with any problems or obstacles. Otherwise, the results of sloppy policies will not be the desired ones, and the resources will have been expended in vain.

Despite the volume of criticism that has been directed against reliance on the use of the dichotomous variable to estimate literacy, most of the statistics published by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIC) have used a data enumeration concept based on that approach. This may be attributable to the fact that there are a small number of States that use surveys of that kind (with illiteracy viewed as a multidimensional phenomenon), since the dichotomous variable is usually incorporated in the enumeration or surveys, which are conducted on a broad scale, owing to the fact that they are low-cost and easily administered. It is also clear that

in the multidimensional estimate method, those dimensions and the relationships among them may be understood in different ways over time and in different cultures when compared by means of the dichotomous variable (reading and writing). However, despite the fact that a number of improvements have been introduced into the use of statistics which rely on the dichotomous variable, data obtained from direct questions about literacy provide better indicators than their counterparts, as the latter are, in most cases, built on mere hypotheses. For a more meaningful comparison at the international level, United Nations population data are used.

There are a number of possible sources from which literacy data can be obtained: administrative reports, country census reports, and the results of family surveys. In the case of administrative reports, it is clear that their level of goodness and their utility to States will depend on the quality of their statistics-gathering systems and the nature and comprehensiveness of the sources available to them. UIC gathers administrative reports on education basically because it considers that that procedure represents the most effective use of its resources for continuing estimation purposes. Moreover, administrative reports constitute the basis on which most countries manage their progress toward the objectives of education for all. The administrative report system is regarded as a good one and of great value from a national standpoint as support for the effective domestic management of the system itself, since it can be used to estimate or encourage change. The sole exception has to do with data on literacy and educational progress: those data are gathered directly through communication with individuals. As a rule, administrative reports do not provide the necessary information about the environment or the families of individuals, but only basic data about the child's age and sex and sometimes his or her place of birth. Surveys based on administrative reports do have some advantages: they are economic in nature, and may provide information at regular periodic intervals. Administrative systems usually update their records every year, and consequently these surveys do provide useful data on the education system.

National census data, for their part, cover the entire country and are limited to one question and one individual respondent, rather than every family member. These data are regarded as a fundamental source that the State uses to determine actual illiteracy numbers and some demographic information about the illiterate population.

National family surveys, on the other hand, provide much data about individuals, and afford a means of linking the characteristics of individuals or families with the outcomes. In general, these surveys are a fruitful resource. They are conducted only occasionally. They usually contain functional experiments: for example, instead of asking, "Can the head of the family read and write a sentence?" the question will be, "Can you read this sentence?" In addition, these surveys gather information about a number of relevant subjects, usually with some connection with illiteracy and the learning process, such as social, economic or health issues.

Generally speaking, linking these data and their administrative counterparts helps produce a more useful analysis is such areas as children not attending school or the effects of periods of exclusion or poverty. Such analyses are indisputably useful to States as an aid to decision-making and programme management. Accordingly, cooperation and coordination between institutions on the various types of data gathered are indispensable, inasmuch as where reliable census data are not available, UIC data can be used for calculation purposes after they have been

weighted by means of a multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS). These surveys have been designed in response to the World Summit for Children, to measure progress toward an internationally agreed set of mid-century objectives. The first MICS round was conducted in 1995 in more than 60 countries, while the second round was conducted in 2000 (approximately 65 surveys). The result has been a wealth of data for assessing the situation of children and women. The third MICS round, which is currently under way, focuses on providing an assessment tool for the World Summit for Children, the Millennium Development Goals and other basic international associations.

National survey questionnaires on families can be used on request, in accordance with the needs of individual countries. They comprise three questionnaires: one for the family, one for women in the 15-49 age bracket and one for children under the age of 5 (completed with the mother or person responsible for the child's care). These surveys cover the same subjects in successive periods, and all of them contain a self-report question on literacy. In addition, there is a direct assessment in the questionnaire for women, the respondent being asked about reading a simple sentence. The survey clearly defines the family, the sample, the design of the questions and how the survey is conducted. The problem of definition appears to be more complex in analysis across different countries. The issue of an appropriate context for the sample appears in the matter of the number and distribution found in the samples used to survey families across a number of States, and there are also a number of bias problems in literacy.

1.3 Referentials and starting-points

International and regional agreements, covenants and treaties and national constitutions and laws are referentials and basic sources for States that are parties to them, not only in the framework of their international obligations but also because they represent a sine qua non for growth and reform that will meet the country's needs in terms of development and political, economic, social and cultural reform, and as a means of keeping pace with rapid change and progress in the twenty-first century. These agreements and covenants represent an excellent entry point for following up the gains that States have made in the various area of human development, inasmuch as education is a very good indicator for that purpose. In the following sections we shall look at these referentials, which represent the starting-points for this Arab plan. A study of the reasons why they have not been implemented or have failed, wholly or in part, is not necessary, as that would take us outside the aim of this plan; we shall need only those referentials in so far as they are relevant for our present purpose.

1.3.1 International referentials

There are a number of international referentials that have sought to support the right to education and literacy for women and endeavoured to support the trend to link the issues of literacy, sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and the empowerment of women. The most important of these are listed below.

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976)**, which refers to making technical and vocational education generally available and making higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of capacity).

- **The international initiative known as the Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All (2000-2015).**

  Half of the six goals of the Dakar Framework for Action emphasize the need for energetic action on behalf of girls and women. The fourth goal, for example, focuses on the importance of achieving a 50 per cent reduction in illiteracy rates by 2015 (relative to 2000), especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults, who have not received adequate attention hitherto. The third goal, for its part, emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the learning needs of young people and adults are met in a framework of continuing education throughout their lives. The fifth goal states clearly that it is important to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

- **United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012)**

  The aim of the Decade was to develop literate environments and societies in order to achieve the goals of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy.

- **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

  Three of the Millennium Development Goals (out of a total of eight) affirm that it is of the utmost importance to ensure the education of girls and strengthen the values of education, and affirm that education is linked to the issue of poverty eradication. The first MDG deals with the need to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living on $1.25 a day, address the issue of poverty by achieving full, productive, decent employment for all, especially women and young people, and halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. The second goal emphasizes the importance of achieving universal primary education and ensuring that all children can complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015, and raising literacy rates for women and men between the ages of 15 and 24. The third goal supplements the second, as it has to do with promoting gender equality and empowering women by eliminating all forms of gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and at all levels by 2015.

- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

  Article 10 of the Convention deals with education, prescribing that all States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education, in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas, and the same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women.

- **Beijing Platform for Action**

  One of the main lines of emphasis of the Beijing Platform for Action deals with the education and training of women. It states that education is a human right and an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality, development and peace. Moreover, it argues, non-discriminatory education benefits both girls and boys, and

thus contributes to more equal relationships between women and men. The Platform for Action urges States to strive to attain the goals of ensuring equal access to education and literacy among women by ensuring that women have access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education, and by overhauling education and training curricula to eliminate discrimination. The necessary resources for these reforms should be made available. The Platform for Action emphasizes the importance of strengthening the right to lifelong education and training for girls and women.

- **Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century**

The title of this report is *Learning: the Treasure Within*. The report states that a comprehensive view of education means enabling every individual in society to discover the treasure that is within him or her. Chapter 4 of the report deals with the Four Pillars of Education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and live with others, and learning to be. Chapter 5, for its part, focuses on learning throughout life. The ninth section of that chapter points to the need to educate girls and women in order to achieve equality, arguing that it is the duty of society to provide them with access to education, to build bridges as soon as possible to span the gap between them and men, and to open up opportunities for them in the various fields of employment.

1.3.2 Arab referentials

- **Arab Plan of Action for the Advancement of women**

The Arab Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2005 appeared in 1995. It contains objectives, policies and measures aimed at enabling women to exercise their rights fully and assume their responsibilities in the development of society, in the context of the Beijing Platform for Action, which targeted elimination of the remaining obstacles to the integration of women into the sustainable development process. The Plan describes education as fundamental and vital to its implementation, and states that every effort should be made to ensure that women have equal access to education and can benefit from education and literacy and vocational training programmes, which will empower them. The Plan also sets forth practical measures and orientations on three main levels: Governments, international and regional organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

- **Arab Strategy on Adult Education in the Arab World**

This Strategy was published by the Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ALECSO) at Tunis in 2000. The Strategy as a whole emphasizes the principles of respect for the human individual and his or her values through the values of continuing education and sustainable education, and the principles of partnership and integration between formal and non-formal education in order to attack the root sources of illiteracy and stem the flow of new illiterates, in a broad vision of the concept of adult education. The first of its main lines of emphasis deals with faith in the philosophy of education throughout life, self-learning, and continuing receptiveness to education as a means of meeting evolving needs and change. Individuals and society will then be able to develop their capacities to the fullest. The second main line of emphasis deals with the importance of escaping from the problem of illiteracy and providing basic education for all,

both children and adults, and making post-literacy programmes available. The third main line of emphasis focuses on all adults, but states that priority should be given to the most disadvantaged groups in society, especially women, young people, workers, farmers, and persons with a physical or mental disability.

- **Arab Plan for Adult Education**

This Plan was published by the Education Programmes Directorate of ALECSO at Tunis in 2001. Its general objectives are the need to meet the needs of students, giving priority to those with special needs, whether they are creative, gifted, women, children or elderly persons. The Plan also sets out a research chart on adult education operations showing that women occupy a low rank in the education system compared to men; this indicates that it is important to develop education programmes for women and design programmes aimed at lowering the incidence of poverty among them. It also includes a chart showing education programmes, focusing on the need to ensure that all children of compulsory school age do attend primary school and the need to eradicate illiteracy, especially among women.

- **Arab Strategy for the Advancement of Women**

The Strategy was one of the outcomes of the second Conference on Arab Women, held in 2002. The main goal identified in the Strategy is the building of an Arab society that is developed and capable of confronting the challenges of the third millennium by strengthening joint Arab cooperation and coordination to promote the advancement of Arab women, build their capacities, enable them to participate fully and actively in the comprehensive development process, and make use of their input. Foremost among the objectives of the Strategy, perhaps, is action to enhance the capacities of Arab women in the field of education by promoting literacy and upgrading education and training for women quantitatively and qualitatively to give them self-reliance and meet current and future job market requirements, and also to encourage women to enter areas of specialization in the sciences of the future.

- **Resolution 356 of the Khartoum summit (2006)**

This resolution affirmed the importance of following up the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and called upon ministerial councils, specialized Arab agencies and Arab organizations to endeavour to implement the contents of the Arab Declaration on the Millennium Development Goals and coordinate their efforts to that end with those of the Council of Arab Ministers of Social Affairs.

- **Plan for the Development of Education in the Arab World**

The Plan for the Development of Education in the Arab World was published in 2008 in response to the League of Arab States report on the development of education in the Arab region, which had been submitted to the Riyadh summit in 2007. The report asserted that there was a danger threatening the Arab nation as a result of its failure to realize people's aspirations in the field of education. Education, it said, was the foundation-stone in the preparation and formation of human capital, building up its capacities, and meeting national, regional and international needs. The Plan, for its part, noted the high level of illiteracy among women compared to their male counterparts in the Arab countries (46.5 per cent for women, 25.1 per cent for men). The Plan stressed the objective of gradually

eradicating the problem of illiteracy in all its aspects in order to achieve the MDGs, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to enable all active inhabitants of both sexes in the Arab countries to contribute effectively to development efforts. Under the Plan, adult education is viewed as an essential complement to formal education and its role in society and an integral part of efforts to achieve sustainable development. At the same time, civil society organizations should have a broader role as partners in the delivery of literacy and basic education programmes.

- **Arab Economic and Social Development Summit**

The resolutions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit, held in Kuwait in January 2009, reaffirmed the resolutions of the Arab Summits held in Khartoum in 2006, Riyadh in 2007 and Damascus in 2008 in respect of the development of education in the Arab region. Specifically, they affirmed the importance of developing education in the Arab region as a fundamental component of comprehensive development in the Arab States and a means of raising the standard of living of their people. They emphasized the need to devote attention to the task of implementing the objectives, means and programmes set forth in the Plan for the Development of Education in the Arab World. The resolutions also called on the Arab States to implement the Plan over the period 2009-2019, and on every Arab State to increase the budget of its Ministry of Education and allocate the necessary resources for that purpose. One noteworthy aspect of that Summit was the emphasis placed on the importance and role of establishing social partnerships in executing economic and social development programmes, and the growing role of Arab civil society organizations in the various areas of public life; the resolutions reflect the importance of encouraging them and supporting their efforts at the regional and international levels in pursuit of the economic and social development objectives of the Arab States.

1.3.3 National referentials

The great majority of national laws and other statutory instruments in the Arab world have affirmed the right to compulsory, free education for all citizens and equality in basic education. As regards informal education, the Arab countries have developed policies and programmes that are contributing to the eradication of illiteracy through a variety of institutional measures and the establishment of administrative and technical structures that meet the needs and attain the goals of the country concerned in the domain of literacy.

1.4 Critical analysis of Arab experiences in women's literacy from a comparative standpoint

This critical analysis of Arab experiences in women's literacy from a comparative standpoint will consider three levels, each of which will be analysed using two criteria:

Criterion 1: Male and female illiteracy rates in the Arab States, i.e. total illiteracy rates, not differentiated by gender.

Criterion 2: Female illiteracy rates.

Level I (low illiteracy rates): under 14.85 per cent illiteracy for males and under 19.4 per cent for females.

Level II (moderate illiteracy rates): between 14.85 per cent and 27.49 per cent for males and between 19.4 per cent and 35.8 per cent for females.

Level III (high illiteracy rates): over 27.49 per cent for males and over 35.8 per cent for females.

This division is based on the computation of averages and deviations from averages for total illiteracy rates and illiteracy rates among women in particular. Since the Plan focuses on the promotion of literacy among women, illiteracy rates for females in the Arab States have been taken into account in defining the three levels. It is noteworthy that the Gulf States and a number of other **Arab States have made significant progress toward basic literacy and are currently en route toward the attainment of mathematical literacy (numeracy) and cultural literacy**. In the paragraphs below, each level will be analysed separately.

1.4.1 Level 1 (low illiteracy rates)

There are two factors that explain the low illiteracy rates in some Arab countries. The first is that those States enjoy natural resources that have helped them provide educational services, and the second is their low population density, which has contributed significantly to that situation. In addition, they have taken the issue of illiteracy seriously and have devoted substantial efforts to the task of eradicating it. There are a number of lessons that can be learned from these experiences:

- Action to foster an atmosphere conducive to girls' education through awareness programmes aimed at the national society;
- Action to promote the dissemination of educational, health-related, environmental, population and legal concepts through communication with society, with action to ensure participation by women in building and developing that society, and using various cultural and popular means of communication to that end;
- Importance of achieving a match between learning and the acquisition of life skills;
- A unified conceptual framework for community associations' vision of programmes and a working method through action to explain concepts and objectives;
- Information technology and computers should be harnessed in the service of broader literacy action, as should various types of informal education, as they have a role to play in fostering the spread of knowledge in all forms and at all levels.

Table 1 below shows the most important aspects of the experiences of Arab States with low illiteracy rates.

Table 1
Most important aspects of the experiences of Arab States in promoting literacy (low illiteracy rates)

State	*Summary of experience*
Kuwait	* Illiteracy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 9.9% in 2002-2002, with 8.5% among males and 12.3% among females (Kuwaiti nationals and foreign residents) * Efforts have concentrated on basic literacy, but there is a trend in the direction of numeracy and cultural literacy. We may say that the phenomenon of illiteracy has begun to recede, owing to the country's meticulous commitment to providing basic education and its successful efforts to prevent students from dropping out. The impact of the positive changes observable in the 1980s and 1990s will undoubtedly be felt in the future. Kuwait's draft educational development plan does not contain a quantitative literacy target. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 93.1% for females and 95.2% for males during the period 1999-2007, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
United Arab Emirates	* The Ministry of Education is responsible for promoting literacy, but it opens the door to participation by all official and non-official sectors in providing the necessary requirements. * The experience of the UAE features the principle of continuous learning. Literacy centres have been opened throughout the country, and all the facilities of day schools are available for evening courses. * The Ministry has organized an awareness campaign with participation by the full range of media and the Ministry of Religious Endowments and Islamic Affairs. * Owing to these efforts and the cooperation of civil society institutions, the literacy rate for women was 93% in 2005, compared to 90% for men in that year. It is noteworthy that indicators for the 15-24 age bracket show higher literacy rates among women than among men. * The experience of the UAE includes other activities as well, including: - The Bedouin settlement project, which began in cooperation with the Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education (ANLAE). The Zibyaniyah Association for the Advancement of Women provides education, awareness promotion and training for women under the project. – The defence project among members of the armed forces, and an education project for police officers. – Union of Women centres for women's education, and skills upgrading centres are being opened. – Literacy centres in workplaces and remote areas. * In 2000, the UAE won the ALECSO prize in recognition of its efforts to promote literacy. * The literacy rate for the 15-and-over age bracket is 91.5% among women and 89.5% among men, according to the Human Development Report 2009.

State	*Summary of experience*
Qatar	* Statistics for 2000-2001 show that illiteracy in the 10-45 age bracket was 8.05%, with women accounting for 69% of all illiterate persons. Literacy among men has increased steadily, probably because of job requirements and prospects for advancement at work; in any case, most persons attending literacy courses are in the 20-29 age bracket. *The main problems that literacy programmes have encountered are that illiterate people are not required to attend courses, the fact that literacy centres do not cover all parts of the country, high failure and dropout rates, especially among women, owing to marriage, and the lack of outreach to encourage women to attend literacy courses, aggravated by the fact that most of the courses are given in the evening. * Future projections on illiteracy in the 10-and-over age bracket indicate that their numbers will have declined by 2015, but that women, who accounted for 69% of all illiterate persons in 2000, will account for 72% of the total by that date, because first-degree literacy programmes tend to focus primarily on men. * In 2010 the State of Qatar launched a programme aimed at achieving literacy and equal access to basic education and continuing education for all adults. The programme features the following measures and actions: – Enactment of legislation making literacy courses compulsory; – Action to foster outreach to women to encourage them to attend literacy and adult education courses; – Development of productivity projects featuring a mix of education, training and production * Literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket is 90.4% for women and 93.8% for men, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Palestine	The Israeli occupation is still the main obstacle to development of the educational development process, and women's education in particular. The educational establishment and its various components have been repeatedly targeted by the occupation and its violence: schools and educational institutions have frequently had to endure incursions by the occupation forces, and many students and teachers have died as martyrs in consequence. * Literacy among adults in the 15-and-over age bracket is 93.3%, with 97.9% of men and 92.6% of women able to read and write in 2011. * The Ministry of Education and community institutions have organized literacy programmes which in 2001-2002 were attended by approximately 1,684 students, 71% of whom were women in the centres run by community institutions. * Literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket is 90.3% for women and 97.2% for men, according to the Human Development Report 2009.

State	*Summary of experience*
Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	* Great importance has been attached to education at all levels in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. In recent decades, education policies have emphasized access to education for all individuals in society who are of school age. Jordan has followed the principle of sustainable education in the hope of preventing people who have acquired literacy skills from lapsing into illiteracy. The Ministry of Education has established centres for night courses and summer courses, a home study programme, a cultural reinforcement programme for dropouts, and a project aimed at eradicating child labour in order to provide access to continuing education for all and enable those who wish to prepare for a general secondary certificate. They can then pursue their education and training to higher levels, depending on their circumstances, preferences, interests and abilities. * As a result of these policies, Jordan has earned an advanced position in the area of universal education and literacy, with education services being available to school-age children in all parts of the Kingdom, including cities, rural areas and semi-desert regions. * Jordan has also achieved general equality in education at all levels. These results would not have been achieved had it not been for the mutual support provided by all the agencies involved in the education process, including official institutions and private and volunteer community associations, which have joined forces to plan, organize and evaluate education programmes. * Jordan has begun to apply an "educational development for the knowledge economy" project, the objectives of which reflect, in general, Jordan's commitment to attaining the MDGs relating to education for all, and also its determination to attain the six Dakar goals. The project focuses on access to education throughout life, and in addition it seeks to enhance the quality of life and facilitate more widespread access to electronic learning. * Jordan conducted a comprehensive evaluation study on the literacy programme for 2006-2007 in cooperation with the UNESCO office in Amman in an effort to determine the current situation and identify the programme's main strengths and weaknesses, with a view to reinforcing the former and correcting the latter in the future. Jordan won the ALECSO prize for literacy research in 2008. * The Ministry of Education has adopted a project aimed at eradicating illiteracy of all kinds in the 15-and-over age bracket, men and women alike. Illiteracy among women in that bracket has declined from 85.4% in 1961 to 48.3% in 1979, 21% in 1994, 16.5% in 2000 and finally to 10.3% in 2010, according to the yearly statistics used and published by the Department of Statistics, which are population and housing census data and labour and unemployment survey data from Jordan. * Jordan's strategic plan aims to reduce illiteracy among women in the 15-and-over age bracket from 10.8% in 2009 to 8.2% by 2015. This will represent a 50% reduction from the situation as it stood in 2000. The plan also targets legal and mathematical illiteracy. * Literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket is 87.3% for women and 95.2% for men, according to the Human Development Report 2009.

State	*Summary of experience*
Kingdom of Bahrain	* In Bahrain, the Ministry of Education has been responsible for organizing and administering literacy activities and programmes for adults of both sexes since the 1973-1974 school year. * The Ministry's efforts in its literacy programmes for adults have focused on basic literacy. As a result, that phenomenon has receded: illiteracy in the 10-44 age bracket is 2.7%, at 1.4% for men and 4% for women, according to 2001 statistics. * Legislation in the form of the Education Act (Law No. 27 of 2005) has helped dry up the sources of illiteracy by prescribing compulsory school attendance for children between 6 and 15 years of age. * Bahrain is committed to the MDGs relating to education for all, and is endeavouring to halve its illiteracy rates by 2015. To that end, it has provided male and female students who enrol in literacy programmes with many facilities, such as transport to and from education centres and care centres for the children of women students while their mothers are attending courses. * Literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket is 90.4% for women and 96.6% for men, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Lebanese Republic	* Statistics for 2009 indicate that illiteracy in the 15-45 age bracket was 7.9% overall, with 5.6% among men and 10.2% among women. There were significant regional differences. Literacy programmes currently under way focus on literacy among conscripts and regular soldiers. * The national literacy programme still has problems relating to funding and human resources. Moreover, courses are not well attended, and many students drop out. * The National Literacy and Adult Education Commission has developed a long-term plan for reducing the illiteracy rate to 5.8% by 2015. However, the plan does not contain clearly defined programmes that can be implemented and followed up in pursuit of that target. * Despite literacy actions to date, illiteracy has tended and continues to tend to be concentrated in regions occupied by the Israeli entity. * Literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket is 91.8% for women and 93.4% for men, according to the Human Development Report 2009.

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1.4.2 Level 2 (moderate illiteracy rates)

There are a number of lessons that can be learned from the experiences of States that make up level 2:

- Action to encourage education in the workplace;
- Focus on students' acquisition of essential life skills in a framework of continuing education;
- A serious effort to ensure that educational institutions are characterized by a student-friendly environment;
- Action to develop a visual, print and auditory media discourse on women's education and its impacts on their exercise of their rights, their performance of their duties, and their contribution to economic and social development;
- Action to disseminate and strengthen the concepts of voluntary work and emphasis on its importance in extending social participation;
- Action to strengthen the issue of women's acculturation in all its aspects;
- A literacy certificate should be viewed as a fundamental document for purposes of appointment and career advancement;
- Action to make more general use of pioneering experimental projects designed to promote education among rural women and to take advantage of mechanisms that have been used to coordinate and integrate governmental efforts and those of community organizations in that connection.

Table 2 below shows the most important aspects of the experiences of Arab States with moderate illiteracy rates.

Table 2
Most important aspects of the experiences of Arab States in promoting literacy (moderate illiteracy rates)

State	*Summary of experience*
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	* In 2001, there were a total of 833 454 illiterate individuals in the Kingdom, of whom 78.7% were women. This total corresponds to 18.65% of the 15-and-over age bracket. * The illiteracy situation in Saudi Arabia may be summarized as follows: – Disparity between men and women; – Dispersal of the population in remote regions makes it difficult to provide education services. * A number of sectors and institutions participate in the literacy effort, which includes education programmes for the nomadic Bedouin and sustainable development for adults. * The participation of society, especially the private sector, is slight, and it is difficult for a dispersed population in remote areas to reach literacy centres. * The Saudi draft plan has not defined a quantitative objective in the field of literacy. However, there is a set of tasks and programmes specifying time frames, financial requirements and executing agencies. These include: – Support and encouragement for voluntary social forces; – More far-reaching summer campaigns focusing on adult education; – Development of specialized programmes in technical and vocational education matching the needs of adults; – Designing of specialized radio and television programmes dealing with adult education. * In 1999, Saudi Arabia was awarded a prize by the International Council for Adult Education, and subsequently it won the UNESCO Prize for its achievements in the field of literacy and adult education. * There is a disparity between men and women as well as a dispersed population living in remote regions. There were a total of 833 454 illiterate persons in 2001, 78.7% of whom were women. Illiteracy rates for the 15-and-over age bracket are 20.6% among women and 9.9% among men. * Literacy rates in the 15-and-over age bracket were 79.4% for women and 89.1% for men over the period 1999-2007, according to the Human Development Report 2009.

State	*Summary of experience*
State of Libya	* In Libya, literacy and adult education are an integral part of the public education system. * Literacy action, which began in the 1970s, has featured a number of intensive campaigns that made half a million Libyans literate in less than four years between 1971 and 1975. These were followed by what was termed permanence and consolidation work, with its own structures, organizations, objectives, mechanisms and statutory instruments. * A literacy campaign has been organized at schools, productive and service facilities and population centres in villages and rural areas. * A literacy certificate has become a condition for obtaining work or promotion or for obtaining a licence to undertake any kind of economic activity. As of the end of 1975, literacy schools for boys had been established, known as "evening schools". * A number of centres for women have been opened where women mentors teach girls reading, writing, arithmetic and some vocational skills. * Significant numbers of adult education schools have been established as an advanced education stage. Literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket is 68.4% for women and 94.5% for men, according to the Human Development Report 2009. *In the 1998-1999 school y ear, 576 676 girl pupils were enrolled, representing 47.2% of a total enrolment of 1 160 315 pupils. In 2005-2006, 532 264 girl pupils were enrolled, representing 48.9% of a total of 1 088 120 pupils of both sexes. * At the intermediate education level (i.e. general and specialized secondary schools), 201 979 women students were enrolled in the 2005-2006 school year, representing 57.9% of a total enrolment of 348 872 students of both sexes. In the 1998-1999 academic year, some 83 640 women students were enrolled at Libyan universities, representing 51% of a total enrolment of 165 447 students of both sexes. Since that time, the number of women students has increased to 135 230, representing 58% of a total enrolment of 231 762 students of both sexes. * The illiteracy rate was 12.2% in 2008, according to a national survey on family health conducted in that year. The rate for men was found to be lower than the corresponding rate for women, at 7% for the former and 17.5% for the latter. * Participation by women in the workforce has increased steadily, from 14.5% in 1984, according to the 1984 census, to 18% in 1995 according to the census conducted in that year, and subsequently to 29.5% according to the 2006 census. * Most of the female workforce is concentrated in administration and community-owned activities via the public service sector and the State sector, especially education and health. This situation is attributable to the fact that the education and health sectors provide many job openings, especially for women. * The number of women running their own business enterprises is still small, despite the fact that numerous incentive measures have been devised to encourage women to go into business for themselves, including reserving 20% of all partnership and individual business licences for women and easy access to funding. * In general, the challenge of increasing participation by women in economic activity and activating their role in achieving growth calls for greater efforts on the part of all institutions and individuals in society and from women themselves in order to consolidate their presence and build their capacities.

State	Summary of experience
Sultanate of Oman	* Illiteracy in Oman is 3.5% in the 15-44 age bracket, according to statistical data from the general population, housing and institutional census conducted in 2010. * The illiteracy rate declined markedly between the 2003 census and the census conducted in 2010, from 17.7% in the former year to 12.2% in the latter. This is a modest rate for a State with living conditions like those found in Oman. * The total number of illiterate individuals in the 15-44 age bracket was 35 731 in 2010. Of these, 76.6% were women. * The illiteracy situation in Oman is marked not only by a disparity between men and women, but also by a very great disparity between geographic regions and between urban and rural areas. * The main factor contributing to this relatively high level of illiteracy is that most pupils leave school during the primary education stage, notably in the fourth and fifth grades. * To address this danger, the current functional literacy system devotes three years to literacy training, which brings the newly literate individual to the equivalent of the sixth grade, so that he or she can pursue his or her education in the seventh grade of adult education. * In 2010-2011, there were 162 literacy centres with 992 branches. The courses they offered were attended by 10 595 students, 95% of them women. * The sources of illiteracy have been dried up, as in the 2010-2011 school year, 95.9% of all children who had reached school attendance age were enrolled in the first grade. Access to education is available to all children of school age. According to statistics from the 2009-2010 school year, the dropout rate in that year was 0.8%. * The fact that so few men attend these programmes is attributable to the fact that few of the centres are open to men, for the following reasons: – The lower illiteracy rate among men, and – Men are unwilling to attend because they are busy working to earn a living. * The fact that so many women attend literacy programmes is attributable to the following factors: – The centres use women graduates with a general education certificate and provide training programmes for them, and – Women are highly receptive to the idea of attending literacy courses. * In 2010, literacy in the 15-and-over age bracket was 80.6% for women and 91.1% for men, according to statistical data from the general population, housing and institutional census conducted in 2010. * Oman has prepared a draft plan aimed at reducing illiteracy rates, by 2015, to half the levels observed in 2003. In that year, illiteracy in the 15-44 age bracket stood at 9.1%, while by 2010 it had declined to 3.5% of all Omanis in that age bracket, according to the census conducted in that year.

State	Summary of experience

* A number of programmes have been formulated with a view to attaining these targets. The main ones are outlined below.

  – A programme aimed at enlisting the media in the literacy and adult education effort as a means of forming a supportive public opinion, and using radio as a means of adult education in the 2005-2006 school year;

  – Programmes aimed at human resource development in the field of literacy and adult education. These programmes are subdivided into a number of branches:

  – An educational supervision diploma programme for literacy and adult education supervisors at Sultan Qaboos University;

  – An academic skills development programme for literacy teachers, which was applied in the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years. This programme is aimed at organizing enrichment training workshops in the subject field of literacy training;

  – A programme for new literacy teachers aimed at providing new literacy teachers with training in the various educational and academic aspects of the field for a two-week period before they begin teaching every year;

  – An educational portfolio programme for male and female teachers of literacy classes, aimed at upgrading their professional level and developing their educational skills.

* A programme aimed at enlisting graduates with general diploma certificates to teach literacy classes. This programme seeks to make creative use of these graduates as literacy teachers after they have received specialized training in teaching literacy classes. This experiment has created a large influx and a noteworthy increase in numbers of students and branch centres.

* The Educated Village programme. This programme, which began in September of the 2004-2005 school year, is aimed at enabling people who live in villages, both men and women, to become literate, raise their social, economic and environmental awareness level, and enhance their spirit of cooperation and social participation through voluntary work, with particular attention to women in an effort to upgrade their competence and promote their community participation.

* The Cooperative Schools programme. This programme, which was first applied in the 2003-2004 school year, is aimed at making creative use of governmental schools by having them adopt literacy departments (either inside the school or outside it). The schools provide oversight for the administration of these departments or support in the form of such items as equipment. The regular teaching or administrative staff also provide teacher training.

* The Al-Batinah Region project (“A south without illiteracy”) is a pioneering project in the field of basic and cultural literacy. It is aimed at eradicating illiteracy among all the residents of that region by means of a comprehensive national campaign there. The project got under way in the 2006-2007 school year.

* The Life Skills Guides for Adults programme. These are a series of four publications that are distributed to women students. They are used for training in the fields of health and nutrition, safety and security in the home, home economics and handicrafts. These guides are designed to meet the needs of women in matters relating to social and economic life and to help them keep pace with innovations through literacy courses.

State	Summary of experience
	* The Read! Guides for Adults programme. These are a series of 10 publications that are distributed to women and men students after they have become literate, at the end of their third year of courses. The guides cover various fields of life, and are designed to increase the students' vocabulary and enhance their general knowledge. They will thus be a fertile source of information that will keep the recipients from lapsing into illiteracy. * Media messages on literacy (clips). These are media messages on educational opportunities, and are designed to encourage illiterate people to enrol in literacy courses. * A project aimed at enlisting Omani women's associations in literacy programmes. The project is designed to promote partnership between various governmental and community institutions concerned with literacy. The promotion of literacy is deemed to be a national duty, and Omani women's associations, which cover the entire country, are a useful means of contributing to the effort. The associations are encouraged to open literacy courses (either within the association itself or outside it) and supervise their administration. Alternatively, members of the association may teach courses themselves, or work to heighten community awareness and encourage people to cooperate in confronting the problem of illiteracy. This project got under way in the 2009-2010 school year. * A literacy project aimed at Ministry of Education employees who are illiterate. These persons take literacy training over a period of one complete school year at their place of work. This project got under way in the 2010-2011 school year. * In the framework of the Ministry's literacy programme development plan, a number of future-oriented programmes have been developed, including programmes dealing with development of a structured literacy regime, a literacy curriculum preparation document, literacy curriculum development, and action to broaden existing programmes, including the Literate Forces programme and the Cooperative Schools programme.
Syrian Arab Republic	* In 2000-2001, the illiteracy rate for the 15-and-over age bracket was 17.8%. Women accounted for 66% of all illiterate persons in that age bracket. Most illiterate persons, men and women, lived in the northeastern governorates. * The field of education, including informal education, constitutes one of the main foundation-stones of the national reality. The law affirms that education is a right guaranteed by the State, that it is free at all levels, and that it is compulsory up to the ninth grade, i.e. the basic education level. * The Literacy Act of 1972 targeted all citizens, both men and women without discrimination. Under the Act, every literate person who is over 18 years of age is required to contribute to the literacy effort. * Important recommendations have emerged from conferences on educational development. These have emphasized that everything required for the preparation of a national literacy plan should be made available. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of the necessary resources owing to allocations to defend the Syrian Golan, occupied as it is by the Israeli entity, which also falsifies facts and distorts curricula. * A National Commission on Education for All has been established. Its terms of reference include the National Strategy on the Advancement of Women, 2000-2005 as one of its major tools for drying up the sources of illiteracy, especially among women.

State	Summary of experience
	* The tenth Five-Year Plan on economic and social development, 2006-2010, includes action to upgrade the educational process quantitatively and qualitatively among its targets. * A number of important decisions have been issued by the High Council on Illiteracy, including the following: – Creation of a literacy fund; – Establishment of literacy committees in the several governorates and regions; – Identification of the tasks of official agencies, community organizations and professional associations; – Allowance of two hours of paid work time to enable illiterate employees, both male and female, to study at the basic and follow-up stages; – Giving governors the power to divide the study course into two stages to enable learning to continue during agricultural seasons; – Requiring the Ministry of Defence not to discharge conscripts who are doing their national service before they are literate. * The Ministry of Culture, in cooperation with community organizations, especially the General Women's Union, has executed a number of experimental literacy projects for rural women, in coordination with Arab and international organizations. * The Ministry of Culture, the General Women's Union, the Teachers' Association and the Literacy Directorate within the Ministry have all won cash prizes and recognition from UNESCO, ALECSO and the International Council for Adult Education. * The Woman and Education Symposium was held in Damascus in February 2003. under the patronage of Asma al-Assad, the wife of the President of the Republic. The holding of the Symposium coincided with the ratification of the internal charter of the Arab Women Organization. The outcomes of the Symposium provided a significant stimulus to action at the level of the entire Arab world. * Attention has been focused largely on the northeastern governorates, and four governorates are now illiteracy-free. Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 76% for females and 88.7% for males during the period 1999-2007, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Union of the Comoros	* The country comprises four volcanic islands and has a population of 752 438, according to statistics from 2005. It is one of the world's most densely populated States, with 33% of Comorians living in urban areas and 67% in rural areas. The population is young and characterized by a high growth rate of 3.02%. * The people of the Comoros are among the poorest in Africa. Approximately 70% per cent of them work in agriculture. The country relies heavily on foreign aid.

State	*Summary of experience*
	* The United Nations report for 2003 states that illiteracy among people in the 15-and-over age bracket was 44%. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket is 69.8% for females and 80.3% for males, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Tunisian Republic	* Reports from 1999 indicate that there were over two million illiterate persons in the 10-and-over age bracket, representing 27% of the population. Illiteracy rates were 17.7% for men and 36.3% for women. * The disparity between women and men corresponds to a disparity between urban and rural areas, with illiteracy rates of 19% for the former and 40.8% for the latter. The illiteracy rate for women, in particular, is 35.2%. * It is noteworthy that illiteracy rates increase with age, at 9.1% for persons in the 10-29 age bracket, 27.9% for persons in the 30-49 age bracket, and 74.2% for persons in the 50-and-over age bracket. * Tunisia adopted a national literacy plan in 1992 following the Jomtien Conference, but it yielded little in terms of quantitative results. It was followed by a comprehensive review and the preparation of a new national plan covering the period 2002-2010. * The difficulties that made the quantitative targets of the 1992 plan unattainable are largely attributable to inadequate financial resources. The plan relied basically on voluntary work, and there were few incentives for illiterate persons and other participants. Few organizations and associations specializing in literacy and adult education contributed to the effort, and to make matters worse the plan did not have enough qualified personnel to execute literacy and adult education programmes at the central and local levels. * The national adult education plan for the period 2002-2010 was aimed at a reduction in the total illiteracy rate from 27% to approximately 10% by 2010, taking into account the fact that that rate was down to 20% in 2004 and 16% in 2006. In quantitative terms, this meant a reduction of more than one million in the total number of illiterate persons in the country, not taking into account the natural increase in the numbers of illiterate persons between 1999 and 2010. * The main focus initially was on literacy in the 10-29 age bracket by 2006, with particular emphasis on girls, women and rural areas, especially in the ten provinces in which literacy rates were below average, and, within those provinces, in the 85 administrative districts that are considered disadvantaged from the standpoint of development. * These objectives and priorities were met through the establishment of new literacy and adult education centres, supplying them with teachers and trainers, providing incentives for societies and associations that were active in the field of literacy and adult education, developing curricula and using remote teaching methods (television), and conducting studies aimed at broadening basic vocational skills training activities, in cooperation with the relevant sectors and associations. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 69% for females and 86.4% for males, according to the Human Development Report 2009.

State	Summary of experience
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	* Official statistics indicate that the illiteracy rate was 85% at the time of independence in 1962, and that it had declined to 47.2% by 1982, decreasing gradually thereafter to 22% in 2008 (according to the general population and housing survey conducted by the National Office of Statistics). Illiteracy is particularly prevalent among women in the over-60 age bracket, mainly in rural areas. * It is noteworthy that these positive results are basically attributable to the attention that the Algerian State has devoted to the issue through a series of formal programmes and the human and material resources that it has allocated with a view to achieving successful outcomes to its literacy efforts throughout the country. * Literacy promotion began immediately after independence, with the enlistment of waves of volunteers, beginning in 1962, to contribute to literacy activities. This led to the launching of a national campaign in 1963 in which all primary teachers participated, along with volunteers from other sectors. That campaign was followed by the establishment of the National Literacy Centre in 1964, with the basic mission of eliminating illiteracy scientifically to ensure that every citizen could be educated and contribute to the economic and social development of the country. A project featuring television literacy lessons was initiated in January 1969. * Two four-year literacy plans were implemented between 1970 and 1977, and during the period 1980-1990, literacy activities were supported through the training of large numbers of teachers, while a number of study institutions and school cafeterias were built and equipped. Early in the 1990s, when the Associations Act was promulgated, much awareness activity on the importance of literacy was undertaken, with the participation of the Algerian Literacy Association ("Read!"), among others. * The National Literacy and Adult Education Office was established in 1995, replacing the National Literacy Centre. The Office is present, through its branch operations, in all the provinces of the country, and it also cooperates with provincial and local associations. * The numbers of persons enrolled in literacy courses has increased year by year. At the beginning of the 1979-1980 school year there were 25 904 persons enrolled, while by 2011-2012 that number had grown to an estimated 1 620 000 persons taught by 26 000 literacy teachers. * The illiteracy rate is expected to decline substantially in the years ahead, thanks to the National Literacy Strategy 2007-2015, which aims at the eradication of illiteracy by 2016, especially among the 15-49 age bracket, with particular focus on women and rural areas as well. The Strategy has been given a budget of 50 billion Algerian dinars. A number of ministries and national agencies concerned with literacy and adult education and various community organizations active in that field will contribute to the implementation of the Strategy, with the Ministry of Education having ultimate responsibility. * We may note here that the right to education is guaranteed under Algerian law, notably the Constitution, article 53 of which provides that education shall be free and compulsory, and the National Education Act, promulgated in January 2008, which reaffirms the constitutional principles relating to education's being free of charge at all levels, compulsory for all girls and boys between the ages of six and sixteen years, complete and democratic, and incorporating a gender perspective through universal access to basic education and guaranteed access, regardless of the circumstances of individual students,

State	Summary of experience
	to education beyond the basic level. * The State sees to it that children with special needs are able to enjoy their right to education, which is made available to them in specialized institutions managed by the Ministry of National Solidarity and the Family. * The State also attaches great importance to school social services with a view to ensuring that pupils are able to pursue their studies, eliminating any disparities arising from social, economic or geographic factors, and easing the burden borne by families. Those services include health care, school meals, school transport, and study grants from which three million pupils from low-income families are currently benefiting, in addition to free school supplies.
Republic of Iraq	* Particular attention was devoted to counting illiterate persons in the 15-45 age bracket under the general population census of 1977, which found 1 535 937 illiterate women and 676 693 illiterate men. * Preparations for a comprehensive national literacy campaign got under way in 1976 with a conference on compulsory literacy in Baghdad. A National Comprehensive Compulsory Literacy Act was promulgated in 1978. * The Compulsory Education Act, for its part, was promulgated in 1976. The Act provides that education at the primary level shall be free and compulsory for all children (boys and girls) who have reached the age of six years. * Popular schools were established, and measures were taken to accommodate children between 11 and 14 years of age in schools for adolescents. A total of 1 968 102 students, male and female, took part in the campaign on 1 July 1979. * As a result of the campaign, 2 128 009 citizens, both men and women, had been accommodated and graduated from the basic and supplementary stages as of the end of 1985, out of a total of 2 212 630 citizens, both men and women, who were required by law to take courses. * The remaining numbers of illiterate persons were accommodated in literacy centres under a plan aimed at liquidating pockets of illiteracy left behind from the comprehensive national literacy campaign; the plan ran from 1 October 1985 to 1 March 1987. However, the foreign occupation of Iraq, which continues to this day, has inevitably had implications for the promotion of literacy. * In the framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012), the UNESCO Office for Iraq launched a project entitled LIFE (“literacy initiative for empowerment”) with the aim of cutting the illiteracy rate in half by 2015. The illiteracy rate in Iraq is estimated at 18% to 20%, with women in rural areas being particularly affected: the rate for women in the 15-24 age bracket was approximately 50% in 2000. * A national literacy campaign entitled “Read!” was launched in Baghdad in 2010, with support from the Council of Baghdad Governorate. One hundred and thirteen civil society organizations took part in the campaign, and 1 644 men and women teachers volunteered. These teachers were graduates in educational fields of specialization who had not found employment in Government-run educational institutions. The campaign targeted underprivileged urban areas in Baghdad. More than 400 literacy centres were opened in cooperation with educational directorates, and 38 000 men and women students signed up for classes, with the latter outnumbering the former.

State	*Summary of experience*
	* The Compulsory Literacy and Adult Education Act was promulgated in September 2011. Under the Act, an illiterate person is defined as any man or woman 15 years of age or older who is not able to read and write and has not attained the appropriate cultural level. * The Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009 states that the adult literacy rate for the 15-and-over age bracket was 64% for women and 84% for men during the period 2000-2006.

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1.4.3 Level 3 (high illiteracy rates)

The main lessons that can be learned from the experiences of States with high illiteracy rates are as follows:

- Closing the gender gap in education, beginning with the literacy stage;
- Meeting the challenge of educational wastage in the form of children who do not attend school at the basic education level and the dropout phenomenon at the basic level and in vocational education;
- Enactment of legislation expressly dealing with literacy and adult education providing for serious accountability or activation of the existing situation;
- Consideration of past experience with literacy and adult education, bound up as it is with the formal primary education structure, and action to create fresh solutions;
- Reliance on literacy and adult education teachers with academic qualifications in that field to teach literacy classes, rather than volunteers;
- Special attention to a partnership with the private sector;
- Establishment of a special fund to support literacy among girls and women, and action to follow up their education, in view of the high cost of education and widespread poverty;
- Multiplicity of actors working in the field of literacy with no coordination among them;
- A continuing effort to train women to run small business enterprises and establish women's cooperatives.

Table 3 below shows the most important aspects of the experiences of Arab States with high illiteracy rates.

Table 3
Most important aspects of the experiences of Arab States in promoting literacy (high illiteracy rates)

State	*Summary of experience*
Arab Republic of Egypt	* Statistical indicators show that by 2006, illiteracy rates for the 10-and-over age bracket had fallen to 29.6%. * Illiteracy among women declined from 50% in 1996 to 7.73% in 2006. * The target group is increasing steadily in numbers owing to continuing rapid population growth. * Difficulties confronting action to promote literacy relate mainly to the factors listed below: – A lack of reliable periodic statistics on the distribution of illiterate persons by age bracket, sex, social situation and economic level; – Literacy programmes have not been well attended; – High dropout rates, and the fact that not all the competent agencies have assumed their responsibilities relating to literacy; – The Literacy Act of 1991 has not been enforced. * The basic objective of Egypt's plan is to achieve a 50% reduction in illiteracy among adults (15-and-over age bracket) by 2015, i.e. to reduce the illiteracy rate for that group to 15% by that date, within a framework of priority to younger age groups, girls and women, rural areas, and disadvantaged urban areas, subject to the general principles of compulsory courses for the 15-35 age bracket and preference to the 36-60 age bracket. * The basic literacy programme aims at making 9 993 265 people literate by 2015. * In addition to the basic programme, there is a remedial programme designed to provide access to education for 2 498 316 persons who have dropped out of literacy classes or lapsed into illiteracy. Persons in these two categories are estimated to account for 25% of the target population. * Al the objectives specified above have been translated into programmes with estimated costs. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 57.8% for females and 74.6% for males during the period 1999-2007, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Republic of the Sudan	* The number of illiterate persons in the 10-and-over age bracket is estimated to be over 10 800 000, representing 47.3% of all persons in that age bracket. Most of them are women. This estimated total my be inflated as a result of significant migration flows and refugee flows into many regions of the Sudan, as a result of which reliable statistical data on literacy among different population groups and the distribution of those groups are not available.

State	Summary of experience
	* A mere 3.75% of the members of the target age group have attended literacy classes. A comprehensive resistance approach has been followed in addressing the problem of illiteracy, with concentration on programmes directed specifically at low-income remote areas and cultural upgrading programmes such as the productive family, life skills, empowerment of women and community participation programmes. * However, there are obstacles in the form of inadequate funding, the sheer scale of the problem, especially among women, very slow growth in literacy rates, high non-attendance rates for the primary education level, and the prevalence of the dropout phenomenon. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 51.8% for females and 71.1% for males, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Islamic Republic of Mauritania	* By 1975, the proportion of the population working as nomadic herders had declined to 27%, and in recent years it has declined to very low levels. This situation has led to the appearance of poverty-stricken shantytowns around the cities and large rural centres. * In 1978, the population in the 15-45 age bracket was approximately 89 000 people. The statistical data and projections used in the drafting of the literacy and access to education project indicated that there were approximately 437 325 illiterate persons in 1981. * Literacy promotion began in Mauritania following independence in 1966, with the establishment of an Adult Education Directorate within the Ministry of National Education. * The President proclaimed that 1985 was the year of the beginning of literacy. A Secretariat of State for Literacy was established in 1986, a Secretary of State (Minister of State) was appointed to head it, and preparations for a literacy campaign got under way. A draft executive order was prepared establishing a National Literacy Council headed by the Minister of Information, and practical field work on a comprehensive national literacy campaign was initiated. * In Mauritania, the concept of literacy is deeper than the traditional one; it is connected to the idea of building the individual as both an instrument of development and its ultimate goal, while literacy activity is connected to economic activities in various environments, social issues, and action to heighten the awareness of individuals and groups about health and nutrition. * The literacy campaign plan targeted Mauritanian citizens who were beyond primary school attendance age (in the 10-40 age bracket) but were still illiterate, with special preference given to certain age groups. * Responsibility for the field work was divided between the Literacy Directorate and the Directorate for Semi-arid Regions. * The Secretariat of State for Literacy works in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education to meet the need for teachers in the field who perform supervisory tasks and collect statistics on a full-time basis, and teachers to staff experimental centres. These are centres that operate with one full-time teacher for six hours, with three shifts daily. As a rule, women attend them to practise sewing, or typing in the case of those who are particularly good at reading and writing. * The Secretariat also cooperates with the country's mass education structures (the organizational framework of the

State	Summary of experience
	Mauritanian people), using volunteers from among its staff to engage in extension work consisting of literacy activities in rural area. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 48.3% for females and 73.3% for males, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Kingdom of Morocco	* Literacy work began with independence. The first literacy campaign, which was organized in 1956, reached 100 000 people; it was followed by a second, which reached 200 000 people. * With the adoption of the Arab Literacy Strategy in 1976, Morocco began to adopt a cultural concept of literacy under the responsibility of the Ministry of Traditional Industry and Social Affairs. * Since 1982, the Ministry has initiated a number of important measures aimed at broadening the scope of its literacy work preparatory to announcing a comprehensive campaign. Late in 1982, a campaign to promote literacy among women workers in carpet factories was launched, with approximately 49 000 girls attending education and employment centres. * The main fields of activity aimed expressly at women include child raising, home management, nutrition, cooperation within the family, outside the family and at school. * The Moroccan experience is constantly escalating, although the effort is not commensurate with the scale of the problem. * Analysis of the data relating to literacy campaigns shows clearly that acceptance among women, depending on circumstances, is growing significantly. In 1984, for example, 46.3% attended literacy courses, compared to 38.1% in 1982. In 2008-2009, a total of 656 088 persons attended literacy classes, compared to approximately 286 425 in 2002-2003. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 43.2% for females and 68.7% for males, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Republic of Yemen	* Yemen is striving to promote literacy among those of its citizens who are illiterate by various means: 1. Establishment of a Literacy and Adult Education Agency in 1990; 2. Opening and expansion of a number of literacy centres; 3. Preparation and adoption of a national literacy strategy in 1998; 4. Incorporation of literacy programmes into the framework of the annual plan of the Ministry of Education. This has enabled the Literacy and Adult Education Agency to train significant numbers of teachers and guidance personnel for literacy programmes; 5. Review and overhaul of the literacy and adult education strategy and its integration into the framework of medium-term outcomes beginning in 2006.

State	Summary of experience
	* A total of 156 898 persons attended literacy and adult education classes in the 2009-2010 school year, of whom 150 905 were women and 5 993 men. * Between the 2003-2004 and 2008-2009 school years, approximately 421 499 persons, men and women, became literate as a result of literacy programmes. Women predominated, with 404 185 out of that total, i.e. 95.9% of all newly literate persons during that period. * In the 2002-2003 school year, a total of 100 289 male and female students were enrolled in literacy classes. Women predominated, with 84 833 of that number, i.e. 84.6%, while men accounted for the remaining 15.4%. * The number of illiterate persons who enrolled in literacy and adult education classes in the 2007-2008 school year approached 166 910, all governorates combined; of these, 157 330 were women. The effort was supported by the Islamic Bank and the Basic Education Development Project. * The ninth consultative meeting of literacy and adult education leaders in the governorates was held in Sanaa in 2010, under the watchword "Expanding literacy and adult education programmes and activities, and enlisting more partners". Furthermore, Yemen has made progress in the area of girls' education through a series of literacy programmes supported by UNICEF. * Literacy for the 15-and-over age bracket was 77% for males and 40.5% for females, according to the Human Development Report 2009.
Republic of Somalia	* A "campaign to strengthen the Arabic language" was announced in September 1980. The announcement set forth the campaign's working principles and objectives, and the slogan was "Teach and learn". * The campaign was divided into a series of five-year plans for implementation. Six committees were established to assume responsibility for the work of implementation, while the functions of teaching and funding were assigned to the various relevant ministries, institutions, organizations and other bodies. * By March 1986, four stages of the first five-year plan had been implemented, with 762 264 male and female students having learned Arabic. These included organized workers, other employed persons and members of the general public. Under the campaign's new five-year plan, in the framework of the comprehensive State plan for the period 1987-1990, priority was given to strengthening the Arabic language. * The campaign aimed at strengthening the Arabic language was accompanied by an organized media campaign, which included the broadcasting of practice exercises for the lessons taught in the classes. * The Human Development Report 2009 does not indicate literacy rates for Somalia.
Republic of Djibouti	* The number of illiterate persons in the 15-45 age bracket was estimated at approximately 31 822 in 1980. * The country's literacy and extension of primary education plan shows that illiteracy rates have been declining by an

State	Summary of experience
	estimated 2.58% per year. Assuming that the decline continues steadily, illiteracy will have been reduced to 37.1% by 1995, according to those estimates. * There is a certain amount of community activity in the city of Djibouti and a number of centres in the various governorates. * The Women's Union has been active in promoting literacy among women since the early 1980s with assistance from the Arab States and their relevant organizations, and has achieved some success. * In 1988, literacy promotion was recognized as a political issue calling for a broad-scale mass effort. A campaign was launched under the watchword, "A call to all those who can teach to participate voluntarily, and a call to all those who are illiterate to enrol in the campaign." * The Arab Fund for Literacy and Adult Education has adopted a project designed to support literacy promotion in the Republic of Djibouti. * The Ministry of the Status of Women and Social Affairs works to develop the role of women in society and to develop literacy programmes in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, with support from the Islamic Development Bank. Some 9 000 women have benefited from the project in the course of three years. * The Human Development Report 2009 does not indicate literacy rates for Djibouti.

Sources:

* UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States, 2004, *A Comparative Analysis of National Plans of Action for Education for All in the Arab States, an official working document*, Arab regional conference on education for all. What next, after the national plan? UNEDBAS, pp. 48-55.

* Hawa, Ahmad Yusuf, 2004, Address by the Minister of the Status of Women and Social Affairs, Djibouti, p. 3.

* El-Safi, Hashem Abuzeid, 1989, *Illiteracy in the Arab World*, Arab Thought Forum, Amman, pp. 155-186.

* Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), 2004, Beirut and Arab Republic of Egypt, Replies from Arab States to a questionnaire on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, Ten Years after Beijing: A Call for Peace, United Nations, ESCWA, pp. 5-6.

* National Data Centre, 2007-2008, *Education indicators in Yemen*, High Council on Education Planning, Republic of Yemen, p. 128.

* Central Bureau of General Mobilization and Statistics, *The situation of women and men in Egypt*, 2011.

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In general, a number of shared lessons may be derived from these experiences, which will help us develop a plan of action for literacy promotion among women in the Arab region. These lessons are summarized below:

- Enactment of legislation expressly dealing with literacy and adult education providing for serious accountability or activation of the existing situation, and treating the issue as an important one that is directly linked to the human, social and economic development of the Arab peoples;
- Importance of achieving a match between learning and the acquisition of life skills by linking literacy promotion to productive work;
- Information technology and computers should be harnessed in the service of broader literacy action, as should various types of informal education, as they have a role to play in fostering the spread of knowledge in all forms and at all levels.
- Action to encourage education in the workplace and action to strengthen the issue of women's acculturation in all its aspects;
- Closing the gender gap in education, beginning with the literacy stage, continuing the learning process, and creating opportunities for productive employment and small business management;
- A prerequisite for the task of changing the social role of women is greater progress for women in the field of education, to enable them to contribute more effectively to comprehensive development.

It is essential to bear the following questions in mind in planning for the promotion of literacy among women in the Arab region. These questions were asked in the context of the sixth Conference on Adult Education held in Belém, Brazil, in 2009, at the third Round Table on "Literacy as a key competence for lifelong learning":

- How has the understanding of adult literacy as a key competence evolved?
- What efforts have been made so far to integrate literacy into a lifelong learning perspective?
- What balance can be achieved between social and economic rationales for literacy?
- How can literacy be embedded in development strategies, especially in view of the fact that there are a number of programmes in various Arab States dedicated to the task of following up data on the civilization of the age?
- What national strategies have been undertaken to ensure that literacy interventions reach highly disadvantaged and excluded populations?

Table 4 below presents a summary analysis of the present situation as regards the reasons for success or failure in the experiences of the Arab States.

Table 4
Literacy promotion in the Arab States: main reasons for success/failure

Reasons for success	*Reasons for failure*
* Viewing literacy promotion as a fundamental pillar enabling young and old to benefit from access to education at all stages in a continuous circle, and as an essential element for building people's capacities for dealing with challenges.	* Assigning greater importance to formal education, and limiting budgetary allocations at the national level for literacy, with a resultant negative impact on literacy among women in particular, in view of the high rate of illiteracy among them.
* Political will and resolve to develop and activate national strategies and plans.	* High population growth rates, implying an increasing volume of educational needs.
* Constitutional and legislative provisions enshrining the principle of gender equality and women's rights and role in the building and progress of society have been a useful aid to the creation of an appropriate environment for national action aimed at supporting women's issues, beginning with literacy, and giving priority to investment in lifelong learning for women.	* Lack of awareness of the concerns and needs of illiterate women, with the result that curricula do not meet those concerns and needs.
	* Absence of the necessary effort to strengthen women's life skills through linkage between literacy and occupational capacity-building.
	* Shortages of teaching personnel with academic qualifications in informal education to assume responsibility for supervising and planning action in that field.
* Literacy programmes that meet students' needs, enabling all participants to acquire lasting functional skills and preparing them for lifelong learning.	* Inadequate educational resources in the Arab world, including books and specialized support programmes in informal education.
	* At present, literacy textbooks and programmes are written and compiled by persons who do not possess skills in the field of informal education.
	* Departments and agencies concerned with illiterate and quasi-illiterate people function in isolation from each other, leading to dispersion of efforts, waste of resources and weak results in terms of attaining objectives.
* Action to foster capacity-building measures as a means of supporting constructive, ongoing participation by civil society organizations and community organizations in a framework of policy and programme development, implementation and assessment.	* Widespread social traditions, customs and concepts that are erroneous and impede the women's education movement and focus exclusively on their reproductive role.
	* In some societies, women are not adequately aware of their rights and duties.
	* Early marriage, which adversely affects young women's education.
* Improved levels of training, capacity-building, working conditions and professional preparation for teachers in the field of literacy and adult education, which entails partnership with institutions of higher education and links between teachers and civil society organizations.	* Economic circumstances which impel families to dispense with their daughters' education so that they can work in the home.
	* An inadequate pool of educational grants and financial assistance to low-income families.
	* Limited presence of educational institutions in rural areas.

Reasons for success	*Reasons for failure*
* Representation and participation by all parties active in this field is a useful aid to meeting the needs of all students, especially the weakest among them.	* Arab women in Bedouin and rural areas face numerous challenges and difficulties, depending on their age and situation within the complex social environment. Girls in those areas are denied most of their fundamental rights, including in particular the right to education and knowledge and in remote areas are victims of exclusion.
* Active women's and family organizations that play an advisory, executive and coordination role are a useful factor in activating implementation efforts.	* The social characteristics of the inhabitants of shantytowns are undeveloped, with, e.g. low educational and skills levels, which make it very difficult for them to find employment. This situation impacts their entire lives. Women in these settlements live in a state of constant deprivation, and among other things they are not aware of their rights.
* Literacy and adult education are regarded as the key to helping people, especially in dealing with crises of various kinds (food, fuel, financing, climate, disputes), and helping them build a sustainable future and work for equality and justice between men and women.	* Conflicts, wars and foreign occupation in some Arab States have contributed to social, political and economic stability and loss of material and human resources.
* The women teachers at continuing education centres are hired through the Continuing Education Directorate of the Ministry of Education to work full time in formal schools in the morning and in literacy and continuing education centres in the evening. They also provide support services such as communications and care centres for the children of women taking classes, as is the case in Bahrain.	* These events have adversely impacted efforts to set national priorities, destroying school buildings and education systems and causing human losses. The result has been the creation of a climate of fear and insecurity in the region. This was noted in the outcome document of the Conference of the Arab States held in preparation for the sixth Conference on Adult Education (Tunis, 2009) on the theme "Investing in Adult Learning: Building Knowledge and Learning Societies in the Arab Region". * The illiteracy rate in the occupied Palestinian territories is low, owing to the people's strong determination to acquire an education, which is seen as the fundamental starting-point for steadfastness and the liberation of their land. However, the Israeli occupation authorities apply many forms of violence, especially against girls, women and teachers, and seek to falsify facts and distort curricula.

Sources:

* Yusuf, Abdullah Abdulwahid, 2009, *Summary of the background paper on education and adult education in the Arab States*, p. 11.

* Ghada Al-Jabi, 2006, *Critical and analytic report on national strategies for the advancement of women in the Syrian Arab Republic*, General Union of Syrian Women and United Nations Development Fund for Women, Damascus, pp. 155-157.

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1.5 Analysis of the main successful literacy experiences world-wide and lessons learned

Literacy promotion in countries in various parts of the world has scored some marked successes, which have been highly useful as examples for many other countries, as in the case of Cuba in the 1960s. A leading country today is Brazil, which provides instruction in the basics of reading and arithmetic to approximately 8 million students over 15 years of age. India, for its part, is reorganizing and expanding its national literacy campaign, which has been allocated a budget of USD 12 billion. The campaign features not only instruction in the basics of reading and arithmetic, but also post-literacy continuing education courses, combined with an effort to produce literacy materials in local languages. The Islamic Republic of Iran has made use of the learning centres of local communities, working in the framework of the "Literacy Organization", which is a Government agency. More than 3 million illiterate persons attended basic education courses between 2000 and 2006.

The successful literacy efforts of a number of countries in various parts of the world, including Arab countries, were rewarded with UNESCO cash prizes or honourable mentions in view of their distinguished achievements and innovation in the area of literacy promotion on the occasion of the eighth International Literacy Day. Table 5 below presents a summary of these prize-winning experimental efforts between 2007 and 2010, especially those targeting illiteracy among women.

Table 5
Some pioneering experiments in various countries that have won UNESCO prizes

Year	*Country*	*Summary of experience*
2007	People's Republic of China	**Community Education Administration Centre** The Centre operates in remote, rural and mountainous areas in autonomous regions. Illiteracy rates among women who belong to ethnic minorities are high. UNESCO awarded the prize because for more than 10 years the Centre has organized simultaneously literacy training for women and a programme aimed at the elimination of poverty through education, as well as a comprehensive system of education in rural areas covering various areas of production, education, and skills and technology training, together with creative activities designed to meet the needs of women in the community using a variety of flexible educational methods.
	Senegal	**Non-governmental organization – TOSTAN** * This organization works mainly in rural areas providing, in particular, literacy and life skills for women and empowerment of women and local communities, dealing with reproductive health issues, human rights, and community development. * The organization has developed a comprehensive innovative programme for adults addressing all eight MDGs, with a special focus on literacy in rural areas, including prisons in Senegal.
	Nigeria	**Non-governmental organization – Family Re-orientation Education and Empowerment (FREE)** FREE has devoted its efforts to the establishment of an effective local community development network, with particular emphasis on women and girl children. It has strengthened recognition of literacy for socio-economic development in rural areas. It has devised a systematic and effective strategy, beginning with preliminary field studies to identify target groups, strengths and weaknesses and special needs, and it has organized a number of awareness campaigns of various kinds.

Year	*Country*	*Summary of experience*
2008	Brazil	**City of Curitiba, “Learning to read and write in good health”** This programme has succeeded in promoting literacy as a precondition for health development and combating disease. It is the result of close cooperation between two municipal sectors, Education and Health.
	South Africa	**Non-governmental organization – “Operation Upgrade”** The prize was awarded in recognition of the Kwanibela Project, under which the NGO has been conducting its activities for 40 years, focusing in particular on rural women’s education.
	Ethiopia	**Adult and Non-formal Education Association Programme** The title of the programme is “Literacy Plus”, and it goes beyond literacy for rural women to include small business management, conflict resolution and disease prevention.
2009	Burkina Faso	**Tin Tua Association programme for literacy and non-formal education** This programme was organized in eastern Burkina Faso. The name of the organization means “let’s help ourselves develop”.
	India	**The Khabar Lahariya (“new waves”) programme of the NGO Nirantar** The scene of this project is northern India. The NGO started a fortnightly newspaper in rural areas, produced and marketed entirely by low-caste women and distributed to more than 20 000 people who have recently learned to read and write.
	Philippines	**Municipal Literacy Coordinating Council, Village of Agoo** The Council has implemented a Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning Programme which provides a broad spectrum of the inhabitants, including some of the neediest groups, with education and training opportunities. The coordination activities undertaken by the municipal authorities have been a key factor in raising literacy levels and sustaining lifelong learning in the region, which includes 47 villages. The programme focuses on the principle of “all for all in the Philippines”.

Year	*Country*	*Summary of experience*
2010[4]	Republic of Cape Verde	**Adult Education and Training Programme** This programme was developed by the Directorate-General for Literacy and Adult Education in the Republic of Cape Verde. It was awarded the prize in recognition of its utility and flexibility, the priority it assigns to women, and the impact it has had on illiteracy in Cape Verde: the rate declined from 60% in 1974 to 20% in 2005, and the decline is continuing.
	Nepal	**Non-Formal Education Centre (NFEC)** NFEC was recognized for the great effectiveness of the National Literacy Campaign that it organized. The campaign featured an integrated programme based on a set of subjects including the environment, maternal and child health, developing women's capacities and income generation.
	Arab Republic of Egypt	**"Females for Families" programme** This programme was developed in the town of Abu-Ashur in Egypt's Ismailia Governorate. It takes an innovative approach to solving social problems by training village girls to become development facilitators in their local communities. The programme helps build women's leadership skills. The project emphasizes the impact of the family, as the basic unit of society, on literacy programmes.
	Colombia	**Virtual Assisted Literacy Programme** This programme was developed by the North Catholic University Foundation. It uses electronic learning to enhance technological skills and create jobs and thereby prevent exclusion.

Sources:

* UNESCO, The Winners of the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010.

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[4] The focus in this year was on highlighting the pivotal role of literacy in the empowerment of women.

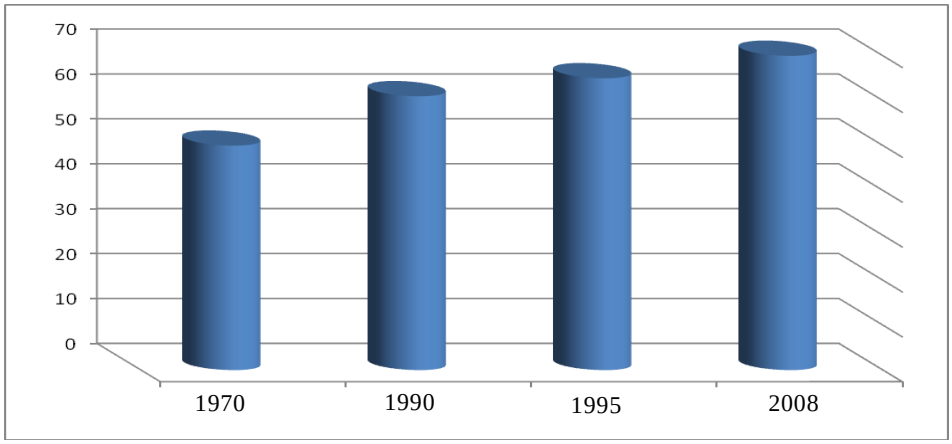
This survey of successful experience in literacy promotion in various parts of the world clearly shows the importance of reliance on the bases on which that experience has been built. Some of the most important of these are summarized below:

- Preparation of a national literacy plan, with particular attention to literacy among women, featuring clearly defined time periods, ensuring that it is provided with everything it needs in order to be successful, and treating the literacy and adult education process as an integral part of the national education and development plan within a framework of lifelong education;
- Adoption of a social contract based on the importance of participation, belonging, and collective responsibility, as well as the principle of integrated action in three sectors: governmental, community and private; the key idea is that responsibility for the eradication of illiteracy is viewed as a collective one.
- Material and moral support for non-governmental organizations and community and neighbourhood institutions and affirmation of their role in meeting the basic needs of local communities and promoting awareness of the link between illiteracy and poverty;
- Integration of environmental, health, population and legal issues into literacy and adult education programmes, to ensure that they are consistent with various environments, highlight the link between those issues and an enhanced awareness of the life of the individual, and tie literacy closely to development requirements;
- Information about job market needs and, in the framework of that information, small business start-ups by students in literacy programmes and newly literate persons who have completed the programmes;
- Focus on learners' acquisition of essential life skills in a framework of continuing education, with particular attention to literacy and vocational skills for rural women;
- Development of capacity-building programmes for civil society organizations that are partners in learning and adult education programmes, with a focus on following up learners' progress and providing a variety of printed matter and reading materials in housing complexes as a means of preventing people from lapsing into illiteracy;
- Adoption of a far-sighted policy of using information and communication technology in learning and adult education;
- Close relations between the Arab Network for Literacy and Adult Education and official agencies and community organizations concerned with literacy and adult education, expansion of the membership of all NGOs and community associations in the Network, and close relations between the Network, the International Council for Adult Education, and all concerned Arab, regional and international organizations;
- It is particularly important to make use of and implement the outcomes of the International Non-Governmental Organization Forum and the sixth International Conference on Adult Education (Brazil, 2009) in view of their importance for literacy and adult education.

1.6 Evolution of illiteracy statistics and economic and social changes in the Arab States

Despite the efforts of Arab Governments and the accompanying institutional framework, the numbers of illiterate persons continue to increase in many Arab States, notably those characterized by high population densities. Furthermore, dropout rates and relapse rates for women students attending literacy classes tend to be very high (in some regions, as many as two thirds of them do not finish), and this situation suggests that particular attention should be paid not only to literacy among women, but also to the continuing education system itself, in order to prevent those who have taken literacy classes from relapsing into illiteracy. In addition, the curricula that women are invited to take in these classes should include the teaching of relevant life skills that will be of practical use to them and skills that will enable them to enter the job market. In this section of the Plan, we shall seek to analyse illiteracy numbers for women in the Arab States in an effort to determine the present situation through a set of indicators that will alert decision-makers to those regions where it is most serious and those where it is more satisfactory. Figure 1 below presents the evolving illiteracy situation in terms of absolute numbers for the Arab region as a whole between 1970 and 2008.

Fig. 1
Change over time in illiteracy in the Arab States (absolute numbers)



Source: Magin, S., 2010, Illiteracy in the Arab Region: A Meta Study, http:www.gial.edu/GIALens/issues.htm, p. 2.

As will be seen, there were 50 million illiterate persons in 1970, of whom 73.5 per cent were in the 15-and-over age bracket. By 1990 that number had increased to 61 million, and the trend continued thereafter to 65 million in 1995, and finally, in 2008, there were nearly 70 million illiterate persons in the Arab region, of whom 40 per cent were above 15 years of age. It is thus clear that the alarm bell is ringing as regards the future of socio-economic development in the Arab world. A breakdown of the available statistics by gender shows that the illiteracy rate among women in the 15-and-over age bracket declined from 64.9 per cent in 1980 to 51.9 per cent in 1990 and then to 40.2 per cent by 2000. This shows that illiteracy is concentrated mainly among women, making the matter all the more alarming.[5]

[5] UNESCO Institute for Education, 2003, *Literacy Report for the CONFINTEA V Mid-Term Review Conference*, Bangkok, p.10.

Table 6 below shows change over time in numbers of illiterate persons for the Arab States during the period 2000-2005. As will be seen, the numbers of illiterate women in the 15-and-over age bracket increased in States in which illiteracy increased at above-average rates (Iraq, Kuwait, Mauritania, Yemen, Egypt, Syria and Morocco). The States in which illiteracy among women increased the most rapidly were Iraq, with 2.4 per cent, owing to the political instability that beset Iraq during that period. Morocco, for its part, recorded the lowest rate in that group, 0.51 per cent. However, these findings must not be taken to indicate that those States are characterized by high rates of illiteracy among women, because there are other countervailing determining factors: the basic literacy situation in those States before the years under review, total population and the male-female ratio, the development planning priorities of those States, and others. Moreover, growth rates in general have not exceeded 2.5 per cent during this six-year period. As will be seen from the table, Yemen leads the group of States in which illiteracy increased faster than average. Women accounted for 72 per cent of the total illiterate population between 2000-2006, compared to 66 per cent during the 1985-1996 period, and the educational situation of Yemeni women is expected to deteriorate further, so that they will account for 75 per cent of that population by 2015, according to estimates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. We may note here that there are some discrepancies in total numbers of illiterate persons and illiteracy rates when the situation for the Arab States is considered in detail, although they do not alter the picture significantly when the different methods of calculation used by the various national agencies are taken into consideration. Even so, the statistical data in Table 6 should be regarded with some caution.

Table 6
Statistics on the evolving literacy situation in Arab States (2000-2006) and anticipated situation in 2015

Category	*State*	*Illiterate women 15 and over*		*Growth rate, 2000-2005 (%)*	*Women over 15 as % of total illiterate population*			*Literacy rate, women over 15*		*Literacy rate, men over 15*	
		2000	*2005*		*1985-1994*	*2000-2006*	*2015*	*2000-2006*	*2015*	*2000-2006*	*2015*
Illiteracy growth rate above average	Iraq	5070	5 854	2.4	ND	*69	ND	*64	ND	*84	ND
	Kuwait	103	114	1.69	*48	*50	48	91	95	*95	96
	Mauritania	530	585	1.65	ND	59	57	47	55	63	66
	Yemen	3 525	3 730	0.94	*66	72	75	39	55	76	85
	Egypt	12 253	12 741	0.65	*62	71	70	60	68	83	86
	Syria	1 879	1 944	0.57	ND	69	70	76	82	89	92
	Morocco	6 286	6 482	0.51	*62	66	67	42	51	68	74
Illiteracy growth rate average	Saudi Arabia	1 723	1 712	0.11-	*59	58	60	78	85	89	92
	Sudan	5 019	4 979	0.13-	ND	*63	ND	*52	ND	*52	ND
	Algeria	4 211	4 091	0.48-	*64	68	68	65	74	84	88
Illiteracy growth rate below average	Qatar	21	20	0.81-	*30	28	30	90	93	90	93
	Oman	246	234	0.83-	ND	60	62	76	84	89	93
	Lebanon	246	233	0.9-	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Tunisia	1 307	1 224	1.09-	ND	69	71	68	76	86	90
	Libya	533	497	1.17-	73	78	80	78	84	94	97
	Bahrain	32	29	1.64-	*56	49	94	86	90	90	93
	Djibouti	91	80	2.15-	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Jordan	220	193	2.18-	ND	74	73	89	93	96	98
Not classified	Palestine	ND	ND	ND	ND	78	76	88	93	96	98
	United Arab Emirates	117	117	0	*31	31	39	89	92	90	95

Sources:

- Data on illiterate women in 2000 and 2005 are taken from Hammoud, H.R., *Illiteracy in the Arab World*, background paper prepared for the Education for Global Monitoring Report 2006, *Literacy for Life*, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, p. 26.
- Growth rates were calculated by the working group using the formula n*Ln(X2005/X2000/1, where X indicates numbers of illiterate women. States with growth rates greater than Mean + 0.5* Standard Deviation were classified as having above-average growth rates, while States with growth rates less than Mean – 0.5* Standard Deviation were classified as having below-average growth rates. States with growth rates between those values were classified as having average growth rates. The State of Palestine is not taken into account here because the necessary statistical data are not available
- Data on illiterate women over 15 years of age as a percentage of the total illiterate population during the periods 1994-1985 and 2000-2006 and projected 2015 and literacy rates for women and men are based on the *Education for All Monitoring Report 2009*, p. 268.
- ND indicates that data are not available. The figures for 2015 are projections by UIC, based on a global age-specific literacy projections model. See the *Education for All Monitoring Report 2009*.
- A minus sign indicates negative growth, i.e. a decline in illiteracy.
- An asterisk indicates that the data are taken from statements originating from the State concerned as reproduced in the *Education for All Monitoring Report 2009*.
- The data on numbers of illiterate women in Bahrain in 2000 are from Central Statistics Bureau figures indicating that there were 21 885 illiterate Bahraini women in 2001.

Turning to the group of States with average illiteracy growth rates, it will be seen that the group consists of three States: Saudi Arabia, the Sudan and Algeria. As will be seen, there has been some improvement in their illiteracy rates, albeit very slight: in Saudi Arabia, illiteracy levels declined by 0.11 per cent between 2000 and 2005, while the corresponding figures for the Sudan and Algeria were 0.13 per cent and 0.48 per cent respectively over that period. These are level 2 States with moderate illiteracy rates, except the Sudan, which belongs to the level 3 group. As the table shows, women accounted for 58 per cent of the total illiterate population in Saudi Arabia over the period 2000-2006, compared to a projected 60 per cent in 2015, while for the Sudan, the corresponding figure was 63 per cent over the period 2000-2006.

The States with below-average growth in illiteracy rates are Qatar, the Sultanate of Oman, Lebanon, Tunisia, Libya, Bahrain, Djibouti and Jordan. As will be seen, the literacy situation in those States improved during the period 2000-2005. Jordan scored the best results in terms of women's education, with a 2.18 per cent decline in illiteracy during that period.

Palestine and the United Arab Emirates were not assigned to any category, owing to the absence of data in the case of the former, but it is noteworthy that literacy among women there was 88% during the period 2000-2006, compared to a projected 93 per cent by 2015. In the case of the United Arab Emirates, there was no change in the situation between 2000 and 2005, with literacy among women at 89 per cent during the period 2000-2006, compared to a projected 92 per cent by 2015. It is thus apparent why both Palestine and the United Arab Emirates belong to the level 1 group of States with low illiteracy rates. Literacy rates for men are presented in order to make it clear that those rates are better than the corresponding rates for women, and this explains why it is important, indeed, essential, to develop an independent plan to reduce illiteracy among women and upgrade gender equality.

Turning now to an analysis of socio-economic indicators relating to the situation of the Arab States, Table 7 presents a picture of the States classified as States with diversified economies, States with mixed oil economies, States with oil-based economies, and States with primary-product-exporting economies. This has been done in order to clarify the figures for population and gross domestic product (GDP), GDP per capita, per capita consumer spending and average spending on education as a percentage of GDP in each State. As will be seen, Egypt heads the list in terms of GDP for 2008 (443.1 billion USD), but not in terms of GDP per capita, owing to its large population of 81.7 million people in that year. It is clearly apparent that GDP per capita is highest in States with oil-based economies, beginning with Qatar, where the figure was 115 976 USD in 2008, up from 53 078 USD in 2005, while GDP per capita is lowest in States that rely on primary product exporting, such as Mauritania, where GDP was 1 939 USD in 2008, compared to 619 USD in 2005.

GDP per capita cannot be relied on as an indicator reflecting the situation in the Arab States, as we shall se when we come to discuss Gini coefficient across those States. As a rule, an average value is misleading: the numbers do not reflect the case for every individual in every State; they may reflect the case for a limited proportion, indicating deterioration of the situation. Per capita private consumption expenditure gives an idea that is closer to the reality of a knowledge of marginal propensity to consume, and hence marginal propensity to save, i.e. trends toward

investment, and hence an injection of increased production. We find that the case in Egypt reflects a marginal propensity to consume of approximately 72 per cent in 2005, that is, the individual spends 72 cents out of every dollar he has. This is a large value, but the corresponding figures for Jordan and Lebanon, at approximately 82 per cent in 2005, are even larger. However, these figures must be taken with caution, as they express averages.

The last column in Table 7 presents average spending on education as a percentage of GDP during the period 1995-2003. Libya (1985-1994) has the highest value, with 8.4 per cent, followed by Tunisia with approximately 6.8 per cent between 1995 and 2003. It is noteworthy that these percentage values remain relatively constant over time, displaying no essential variability. The lowest value is found for the United Arab Emirates, at approximately 1.7 per cent for the period 1995-2003. However, GDP figures for the two States must be taken into account, and we see from the table that the UAE had a GDP of $186.2 billion in 2008, compared to $90.6 billion for Libya. It is important to note that these percentage values appear to be commensurate, to a certain extent, with the situation in other States. In China, for example, spending on education accounted for 2.3 per cent of GDP during the period 1995-2003, in Korea, 3.9 per cent, in Malaysia, 6.2 per cent and in Mexico, 5 per cent. Caution is required, however, because of different GDP figures across States. Our concern here is to discover why Korea has progressed so spectacularly to become a knowledge-based economy, whereas nothing of the sort has happened in any Arab State, despite the fact that five decades ago, Korea was in a much worse condition that we are now.

Table 7
GDP, per capita GDP and spending on education in the Arab States

Type of economy	*State*	*Population, 2008 (millions) (IMF estimate)*	*GDP, 2008 (USD) (IMF estimate)*	*Per capita GDP, 2008 (USD) (IMF estimate)*	*Real per capita GDP, 2005 (USD)*	*Real per capita private consumption expenditure, 2005 (USD)*	*Real average public spending for education as % of GDP, 2005*
Diversified	Egypt	81.7	443.1	5 424	1 254.9	897.2	5.6
	Jordan	6.2	30.3	4 887	2 311.1	1 885.6	6.4
	Lebanon	3.9	45.8	11 744	5 653.9	4 655.6	2.9
	Morocco	34.3	138.2	4 029	1 895.7	1 073.6	5.9
	Syria	19.7	92.8	4 711	1 528.5	1 039.7	3.2
	Tunisia	10.3	83.1	8 068	2 895.5	1 830	6.8
	Total	156.1	833.3	5 338	1 711	1 165.5	5.1
Mixed oil	Algeria	33.7	241.1	7 154	3 125.7	1 056.1	6.1
	Libya	6.1	90.6	14 852	6 788.3	2 199	*8.4
	Total	39.8	331.7	8 313	3 714.8	1 239.9	6.1
Oil	Bahrain	0.7	26.5	37 324	19 228.6	6 990	3.6
	Kuwait	2.6	141	54 231	28 906.2	8 722.1	6.3
	Oman	3.3	67.7	20 515	12 333.6	4 331.6	3.9
	Qatar	0.8	95.1	115 976	53 078.8	9 672.5	*4
	Saudi Arabia	28.1	600	21 352	13 651	3 612.8	6.3
	UAE	4.6	186.2	40 478	32 581.2	15 792.4	1.7
	Total	40.2	1 116.5	27 774	23 413.5	5 777.1	4.4
Primary product exporting	Djibouti	0.5	1.9	3 800	885	752.5	5.7
	Mauritania	3.3	6.4	1 939	619	417	ND
	Sudan	40.2	89.3	2 221	936.6	714.5	ND
	Yemen	23	55.2	2 400	794.6	500.7	5.8
	Total	67.1	152.8	2 277	870.3	625.6	5.7
Total, Arab States		**303.3**	**2 434**	**8 026**	**4 509.1**	**1 628.1**	**5.3**

Sources:

- •International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2008 and CIA World Factbook.
- •League of Arab States et al., 2007, p. 237 and p. 239.
- •World Bank, 2008.

An asterisk (*) indicates that the data refer to the period 1984-1994. ND indicates that data are not available.

In 2008, the estimated population of Bahrain (Bahrainis and non-Bahrainis) was 1 103 496, including 541 587 Bahrainis and 561 909 non-Bahrainis; the corresponding figures for 2011 were: total, 1 195 020; Bahrainis, 584 688; non-Bahrainis, 610 332. Source: Central Bureau of Statistics.

Table 8 will convey a better understanding of the economic situation inside the Arab States. The table presents workforce size, unemployment rate, anticipated job opportunities to 2020, and percentage of domestic resources available to development and investment during the period 1970-2007. As will be seen, Egypt comes first in terms of workforce size, with 22.5 million workers in 2005, as might be expected, owing to its very large population. Bahrain, at the other extreme, had only 300,000 workers.

Table 8
Workforce, unemployment rate and anticipated job opportunities to 2020 in the Arab States

State	*Workforce, 2005 (millions)*	*Unemployment rate, 2005 (%)*	*Anticipated job opportunities, 2015 (millions)*	*Anticipated job opportunities, 2020 (millions)*	*Domestic resources available for growth and investment, 1970-2007 (%)*
Egypt	22.5	10.7	6.25	9.59	32
Jordan	1.9	14.8	0.97	1.51	23
Lebanon	1.4	8.2	0.44	0.68	6
Morocco	11.3	15.7	2.53	3.87	38
Syria	7.4	8.08	3.07	4.75	33
Tunisia	3.8	14.2	0.9	1.38	38
Algeria	13.2	15.3	4.26	6.55	52
Libya	2.3	17.2	0.66	1.01	58
Bahrain	0.3	3.4	0.1	0.15	46
Kuwait	1.5	1.7	0.89	1.38	59
Oman	0.9	7.6	0.35	0.53	58
Qatar	0.5	2	0.09	0.14	77
Saudi Arabia	7.8	6.1	5.63	8.85	64
United Arab Emirates	2.7	2.3	0.67	1.03	65
Djibouti	0.4	50	0.05	0.08	30
Mauritania	1.4	22	0.33	0.5	30
Sudan	15.1	18.5	3.69	5.65	20
Yemen	5.9	16.3	2.11	3.26	29
Total	**5.6**	**13**	**1.8**	**2.8**	**42.1**

Sources: United Nations Development Programme & League of Arab States, 2009, *Development Challenges for the Arab Region: A Human Development Approach*, Vol. 1, pp. 67-77.

For further details on the calculations used to estimate job opportunities in 2015 and 2020, the reader is invited to consult the same source.

As will be seen, unemployment rates in 2005 were very high in some countries, including Djibouti (50 per cent), Mauritania (22 per cent) and the Sudan (18.5 per cent), while they were very low in others: Kuwait (1.7 per cent), Qatar (2 per cent) and Bahrain (3.4 per cent), perhaps because of the high income and small populations that characterize the latter States. This is unquestionably an important point in favour of open markets and more extensive opportunities for exchanges of the human element. However, the average unemployment rate for the

region as a whole is 13 per cent. In a study conducted jointly by the United Nations Development Programme and the League of Arab States, a number of projections on job opportunities were prepared: as will be seen from the table, the average for the region was 1.8 million new jobs in 2015, and 2.8 million new jobs in 2020. This represents an opportunity for increasing output and giving new impetus to economic growth in the Arab countries. It may be that the availability of domestic resources for growth and investment will spark a trend toward new job creation to take advantage of those resources: the average figure for the period 1970-2007 was 42.1 per cent, with a maximum of 77 per cent in Qatar and a minimum of 6 per cent in Lebanon. This reflects the fact that the Arab countries do have material resources, beginning with their human resources, a situation that points to the need for putting those resources to good use.

The poverty indicators that conclude this analysis paint a very gloomy picture, calling for a mobilization of efforts to improve the situation, as will be seen from table 9.

Table 9
Numbers of people living in poverty, incidence of poverty and Gini coefficient in a sample from the Arab States

State	*Number of people living in poverty (millions)*	*Incidence of poverty (%)*				*Gini coefficient*
		Urban areas	*Rural areas*	*Total*	*Year*	
Egypt	13.7	10.1	26.8	19.6	2005	32.1
Jordan	0.7	12.9	18.7	14.2	2002	36
Lebanon	0.3	ND	ND	7.97	2005	ND
Morocco	5.6	12	27.2	19	1999	39.5
Syria	2.1	8.7	14.18	11.39	2004	37.4
Tunisia	0.4	1.7	8.3	4.1	2000	41
Algeria	3.8	10.3	14.7	12.1	2000	ND
Mauritania	1.3	ND	ND	46	2000	ND
Yemen	6.8	20.7	40.09	34.78	2006	36.6
General average	3.85	10.9	21.4	18.8		37.1

Sources: United Nations Development Programme & League of Arab States, 2009, *Development Challenges for the Arab Region*: *A Human Development Approach*, Vol. 1, pp. 63 and 73.

As will be seen from the statistical data shown in the table, the largest numbers of people living in poverty are found in Egypt, where there were approximately 13.7 million low-income people in 2005, compared to 0.3 million in Lebanon. The incidence of poverty in Egypt is greater in rural areas, as the figures show, with 26.8 per cent of rural residents living in poverty compared to 10.1 per cent in urban areas. The Gini coefficient, which measures the degree of evenness in distribution, is 32.1 per cent, which is a very large value, indicating a highly unequal distribution of people living in poverty. The average value for the Gini coefficient is approximately 37.1 per cent, clearly reflecting a problem in evenness of distribution in the Arab countries. Moreover, the balance is tilted toward rural areas, with an

average incidence of poverty of 21.4 per cent, compared to 10.9 per cent in urban areas. Morocco heads the list in terms of incidence of poverty in rural areas, with 27.2 per cent, compared to 12 per cent in the country's urban areas in 1999.

Illiteracy and poverty are two sides of the same coin in many Arab societies. Illiteracy is prevalent among low-income groups, which suffer from exclusion and work and live in difficult economic and social circumstances, and consequently economic empowerment is an effective developmental means of promoting literacy among women. Not only do they acquire basic literacy, they also find that they have training opportunities and job opportunities available to them, and they learn how to start their own small or micro businesses. The economic empowerment approach has been notably successful in the regions in which it has been applied, as for example Egypt, the Sudan and Yemen as well as a number of Latin American countries, where programmes of this kind have met with great popularity and acceptance among women, to such an extent that there are now very few dropouts from literacy classes that are accompanied by economic empowerment programmes. Despite the excellent track record of this approach, however, it is still being applied only on a limited scale in the Arab countries, by civil society organizations or governmental agencies targeting small number or social groups of women, and consequently it has not achieved the success that is observable elsewhere. Accordingly, there is clearly a need for a matrix showing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, based on the foregoing analysis and study.

1.7 SWOT analysis of the current status of the issue of illiteracy among women in the Arab region

Up to this point we have analysed the various experiences of the Arab countries, the factors that have led to their success or failure, the lessons that can be learned from them, and some successful experiences in other countries in various parts of the world which can serve as guides to future action. We can now proceed to an analysis of the current situation of illiteracy among women in the Arab region using a four-element technique known as SWOT analysis, i.e. an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

1.7.1 Strengths

In the discussion below, we shall look at the most important strengths in terms of available literacy programmes, facilities and teachers or participants in the educational process, the education policies followed, and motivation to attend the programmes.

- **Curricula and textbooks used in literacy programmes**: curricula include useful educational material containing much functional expertise, couched in simple, clear language, expressions and words. Study units contain appropriate headings, and students of both sexes enjoy applying the activities given in the books.

- **Buildings, facilities and equipment available for literacy programmes**: classrooms are suitable, with generally acceptable lighting and ventilation and enough seats to accommodate the numbers of students. The chalkboards in the classrooms are adequate, and the books are distributed to the students at the beginning of the school year, while in some countries school supplies such as notebooks, pens and pencil sharpeners are also distributed to them.

- **Teachers**: amicable relations between teachers and students are the rule in literacy centres and classes. They treat each other with courtesy, decorum and respect. Teachers keep track of students' attendance and absence, and explain to them what the objectives of the class period are. Classes begin and end on time, and the students are given opportunities to participate. Teachers enrich the class material by presenting illustrative examples that are suited to the various environments and backgrounds of the students.

- **Educational policies**:

– Students and teachers, as well as the planners and developers of literacy programmes, are aware of the importance of adopting effective educational policies in order to develop literacy programmes in all their aspects. They are also aware of the importance of material and moral motivation for both parties, and the effect of such motivation on students' attendance and teachers' professional development.

– In the Arab countries, a good deal of attention is paid to movements elsewhere in the world that seek to promote adult education and integrate it into the mainstream of economic and social development.

– Throughout the Arab region, a great deal of effort has been devoted to the promotion of literacy since the mid-twentieth century. General strategies and adult education plans have been developed, along with more specific literacy programmes. These have included the 2000 Strategy on Adult Education in the Arab Region, the 2001 Arab Plan for Adult Education, the 2002 document Towards a Strategy for Post-Literacy Development, and the 2000 Procedural Orientations on Adult Education Policies in the Arab States (as discussed earlier).

– Numerous Arab conferences on literacy and adult education have been organized under the aegis of Joint Arab Action, beginning in the 1950s and continuing to the present day.

- **Motives for students to enrol in literacy programmes**: there is a very large measure of agreement among all parties concerned with the promotion of literacy, including students, teachers, technical supervisors and administrators of non-formal education programmes in the field on the main reasons why students enrol in literacy programmes; they share a common understanding and a common language with respect to the issue. All parties also agree that in the Arab States, women are markedly more willing to enrol in literacy and adult education courses than men.

- **Organization of literacy programmes and the services connected with them**:

– Educational institutions that provide literacy and adult education programmes in the Arab region are typically the result of long accumulated experiences and expertise in the field. They thus constitute an ample store of knowledge that can be used to advantage and built upon, a repository of high organizational capacities and specific working procedures, and an exceptional geographically dispersed institutional foundation with a variety of programmes at its disposal and a stock of cases and outstanding success stories from which lessons can be learned.

– There are many specialized Arab programmes designed to develop basic skills for adults through in-service training programmes and media programmes aimed at expanding the scope of literacy and adult education programmes. Some Arab countries have developed diversified projects, and these have had a positive impact with respect to life skills training in health, nutrition and the like.

1.7.2 Weaknesses

- Curricula and textbooks used in literacy programmes: Surveys on the situation of literacy and adult education curricula in the Arab countries have found that the stamp of tradition continues to mark their content and learning and teaching methods. Furthermore, adult students are taught and learn in an atmosphere untouched by modern theories of learning, featuring the same methods and learning procedures (pedagogy) as are used with children, despite the differences in their characteristics and needs. In addition, the curricula currently in use in literacy and adult education programmes are antiquated and fail to meet the needs of students generally. Some of the books are unsuitable and in need of comprehensive overhaul and updating. As a rule, educational materials for literacy classes (including curricula, books and teachers' guides) are written by the light of guesswork and intuition, rather than being based on field studies in education that take the nature and needs of ordinary illiterate people into account, and not applying the best Arab and international practices. They fail to consider the difficulty of some subjects, such as mathematics for elderly people, or the fact that the way the material is presented in the books used is not appropriate for the target groups and does not stimulate them to continue learning. Moreover, the number of study days and classes is sometimes not commensurate with the length of the programme, while curricula lack materials that are relevant for the actual lives of adult students. Educational materials are frequently not up to date, especially in computer courses, and the content of some of the books used does not match the level of the class in which they are used. There are few activities to accompany the programme, and those few are seldom relevant for the environment of the students or suited to their interests and aspirations; on the contrary, the activities in the books used lack diversity, and in some cases are not applicable, or are inappropriately presented. In addition, the books used in literacy classes are often poorly printed, with small print which is not easy for elderly people to read, and they contain few pictures, illustrations or useful explanatory diagrams.

- Buildings, facilities and equipment available for literacy programmes: studies have shown that literacy centres lack satisfactory drinking water and sanitation. Prayer rooms are often not available, and heating arrangements in winter are frequently inadequate. Teaching aids are not available for teachers' use, and it is common for seats to be too small for the comfort of students, most of whom are adults, whereas literacy classes are often given in ordinary school classrooms designed for children. On top of all this, it is frequently difficult to arrange transport for students to and from literacy and adult education centres.

- Human resources working in literacy programmes: Many teachers, both men and women, working in literacy centres are not adequately qualified to perform

their tasks effectively; they are unquestionably weak in terms of their level of skills and teaching experience. Some of them are also lacking in desire and zeal for their work, or are lazy. They may lack the necessary specialized training in fields relating to the science and strategies of adult education, with the result that they do not possess the necessary learning or understanding of methods of working with adult students (andragogy). Many teachers still use traditional teaching methods (book, blackboard, face-to-face meeting) rather than modern techniques in the field of literacy, such as audio-visual methods, computers, projectors, teaching kits and video films, even though the Arab States have introduced these technologies as teaching methods. Teachers tend not to rely on diversified evaluation methods, and fail to take individual differences between students into account. Furthermore, teachers who work in literacy programmes are poorly paid, and this situation leads to high turnover and instability. Those who do stay cannot dedicate themselves fully to their work because they are busy with other activities.

- **Education policies:**

– Current literacy policies are based on the concept of basic literacy (i.e. liberation from ignorance of basic reading and writing skills and some mathematical operations), without concern for functional literacy or cultural literacy, vocational skills upgrading, economic empowerment, or participation in development efforts in general and at the expense of other aspects of adult education, such as continuing education, qualification, free study and the like;

– Policies are deficient in a number of important respects in the field of literacy: they provide low material incentives for persons working in literacy programmes, they are not consistent with a high standing of living and rising levels of necessities of life, they offer little in the way of incentives for students to enrol for literacy programmes and pursue their education successfully, such as incentives in cash or in kind and nourishing meals. Literacy centres do not participate very extensively in celebrating important relevant occasions, such as Arab Literacy Day or World Literacy Day. Outstanding teachers and students at literacy centres are not honoured for their efforts. There may be more than one level in a single class, a situation that adversely affects the teaching and learning process, and literacy classes may be scheduled at times that are not convenient in terms of the circumstances of some students.

- **Reasons for attending literacy classes, motivation and zeal**: enthusiasm among some students attending literacy classes is sometimes noticeably lacking, they are not committed to attend regularly, they have little confidence in what they are doing and fear failure. As a result, they derive limited benefit from the service. Some literacy centres have found that students are not eager to sign up for their programmes or benefit from their services. This situation calls for change and renewal in the way those services are presented. A number of students of both sexes begin to take classes at literacy centres, but then abandon them at times of seasonal tasks such as farming, harvesting and olive-picking, or in winter or the holy month of Ramadan. Classes at the centre may coincide with times when other tasks must be performed, or may conflict with work in the home in the case of many students, who have work of their own to do, and hence cannot devote their attention exclusively to study on many days.

Moreover, students who attend literacy classes are sometimes viewed in a negative light by other members of society, a phenomenon that makes men less willing to enrol than women. Studies have shown that the main reasons for dropping out are: classes are not suited to the work or family situation; personal enthusiasm for study is slight; students are reluctant to advertise themselves as illiterate before their peers; students do not perceive that the classes have practical relevance for their lives; there is little encouragement; marriage; and certain circumstances that are prevalent within literacy classes, such as a lack of uniformity among students. In addition, some individuals take literacy classes more than once, others relapse into illiteracy, and some illiterate persons are not motivated to take classes in the first place.

• **Qualitative excellence in literacy institutions and centres**:

– The question of how successful literacy institutions and centres have been in attaining their objectives has been addressed by a number of field studies. These have found that the objectives of literacy programmes are not clearly defined for students, while curriculum objectives are frequently not attained. Vocational programmes are lacking. Programmes do not cover all the needs of the students, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up tools are weak, there are no educational accountability systems, and scientific research findings are not well applied to the goals of development. These factors undoubtedly detract from the qualitative excellence of literacy and adult education institutions and reduce the potential benefits of their programmes.

– There are clear disparities in the field of literacy over the Arab region as a whole in such matters as the responsible administrative agency, funding sources and governing legislation, and this situation makes it difficult to plan for development goals for the region or to prepare regional strategies, procedural plans and policies for literacy and adult education programmes. Another aspect of differences in practice between countries is identification of the target age bracket within the illiterate population, which means differences in statistics, with the result that comparisons are not accurate. The low end of the target group may be anywhere from the ages of 10 to 18 years, while the upper end may be between the ages of 35 and 45 years.

– As regards the way literacy programmes are organized and delivered, a number of challenges should be noted. The time allotted is not commensurate with the anticipated success as set forth in the procedural plans of some of these programmes, which are concerned exclusively with achieving the literacy of the numbers targeted. They are characterized by traditionalism and routine in procedures, which are long and complex, especially in the case of Government-run institutions, an appropriate teaching/learning environment, one that is safe and supportive of free expression about knowledge and previous experience, is likely to be lacking. This is not conducive to the effective use of students' capacities in developing the service provided in some community-based centres.

1.7.3 Opportunities

The main opportunities that can be used advantageously to activate the promotion of literacy are outlined below.

- Greater attention by decision-makers at the political level to the tasks of attaining the MDGs and developing strategies based on modern techniques, such as awareness campaigns using the media, including television, radio, electronic and print media, and publishing brochures and leaflets with a view to heightening awareness about health, environmental protection and the like.

- Expansion of the use of information and communication technologies in many Arab States through the introduction of audio-visual and computer-based technologies, teaching kits and video films as teaching/learning aids, as those media offer considerable potential for effective use in formal and non-formal education programmes, chief among them literacy programmes.

- Introduction by many Arab States of a system of space-based broadcasting serving educational aims, the preparation of educational series and dramas presenting literacy lessons, action to encourage distance learning (tape recordings with accompanying printed material), and establishment of community viewing centres that receive educational channels dedicated to literacy programming.

- Arab societies desire to rid themselves of the problem of illiteracy, and there is a high degree of social readiness to contribute to the good work. There is a trend in the Arab countries toward decentralization and greater community participation. There are social capabilities that can be harnessed for the purpose, especially in a framework of combating and eliminating illiteracy.

- Civil society organizations, in all their range and variety, including popular organizations, community associations, women's associations, professional and trade associations, charitable associations and others, play an important role in addressing the phenomenon of illiteracy in most Arab countries, opening literacy centres and classes, taking an interest in life skills development, and seeking to serve the cause of women, encouraging them to shoulder a larger role in their programmes and activities, helping them become aware of their personal and professional rights, enhancing their awareness of health issues, promoting their training and occupational skills development, and enabling them to keep pace with the flow of contemporary events by upgrading their knowledge and skills. These organizations are also concerned to respond to girls and women who are eager to learn a specific craft or line of work, and to help empower them economically and enhance their awareness of their lives. This has prompted, in some Arab States, the formation of effective partnerships between ministries of education and these community institutions, along with cooperation between ministries and other institutions to open literacy classes. Some States have even used religion to assist their literacy efforts and spur motivation to learn among illiterate people, both men and women.

- Universities and research centres in some Arab countries are studying trends or initiating special programmes for advanced studies in the field of literacy. Students can be encouraged to enrol in these programmes and conduct scientific studies and research in specialized fields with a view to bolstering literacy programmes both quantitatively and qualitatively. In addition, university students often volunteer for literacy work through their institutions.

• Specialized educational organizations are taking a growing interest in the issue of literacy in general, and women's literacy in particular. Foremost among these organizations are the Arab Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). They have given this issue a place on their ladder of priorities, and treat it as a main theme in their work plans. They are interested in developing literacy promotion efforts in general, and they have earmarked prizes designed to encourage pioneering initiatives in that connection and strengthen the scientific methodology and serious research that is currently being conducted in the framework of the assessment, monitoring and development of programmes relating to literacy. These organizations have also organized national, regional and international forums, workshops and conferences aimed at understanding the illiteracy situation and programmes and efforts aimed at eradicating the phenomenon in the Arab region, and identifying the best Arab and international practices in that area with a view to turning them to account. The organizations in question have also funded a number of exceptional experiments and innovations in the field of literacy and adult education that have been applied in some of the Arab States.

1.7.4 Threats

The main threats faced by efforts in the field of literacy promotion are summarized below.

• **Growing demand for programmes**:

– As we have seen, many reports and studies, both regional and conducted within individual Arab countries, have shown that illiteracy rates in general are rising among inhabitants of semi-arid and rural regions, while they are declining in urban areas. Moreover, it appears that illiteracy rates for women are higher that the corresponding rates for men in the Arab countries, and that the absolute numbers of illiterate persons, both men and women, are growing steadily. Despite the efforts that the Arab countries have devoted to literacy, statistics indicate that the illiterate population increased from 50 million in 1970 to 70 million in 2005, even though illiteracy rates have displayed a tendency to decline gradually (from 73 per cent in 1970 to 35.6 per cent in 2005 for the 15-and-over age bracket, which is double the rate for the world as a whole, and higher than the rate of 23.4 per cent observed in the least developed countries). The illiteracy rate for women in the Arab countries is higher than the corresponding rate for men, at 46.5 per cent for the former and 25.1 per cent for the latter (*Education, higher education and scientific research in the Arab world: an action plan document, 2007*);

– The Arab States have striven increasingly to extend and universalize basic education, increase enrolment rates for their various education programmes and reduce dropout rates. Yet student dropouts, both male and female, still represent an ongoing, swelling tributary to the pool of illiterate people in the Arab States. It follows that a serious effort to address this phenomenon by drying up its sources is essential. Legislation making school attendance compulsory must be enforced, school dropouts must be followed up by the administrative authorities in individual school districts, social awareness of the

importance of education in general and girls' education in particular must be heightened in rural and remote areas, and all other appropriate means must be used as well;

– The alarming increase in social exclusion is a result of the concentration of literacy and adult education programmes in urban areas, the capitals of governorates and other cities, and certain rural areas, while more remote rural areas and semi-arid regions are, for the most part, still not covered. Unless the people who live in these areas are accommodated and included, the areas in question may ultimately become marginalized and culturally isolated, a situation that may jeopardize social cohesion at some future time.

• **Intercommunication and coordination**

– Despite the fact that there are numerous institutions and civil society organization that share the objectives of promoting literacy in general and literacy among women in particular, there is clearly a very low level of interconnection and coordination among them, on the one hand, and between them and the relevant Government agencies on the other. This inevitably entails waste of effort, time and money, and in some cases overlapping and duplication of effort, with the result that there is little in the way of exchanges of experience and expertise and an absence of consultative planning or a shared vision aimed at enhancing the quality of literacy programmes in the comprehensive, integrated sense;

– There is a tendency for civil society organizations working in the field of illiteracy and adult education generally and literacy among women in particular to diversify their focus and working methods instead of specializing, and this may cause dispersal of their efforts and the ensuing effects;

– There are no effective systems of communication and interconnection between civil society organizations operating in this field, and consequently they have to resort to a variety of methods to disseminate information, conduct studies or execute, follow up and evaluate literacy programmes. The difficulty of communication is particularly clear in the case of centres run by institutions and agencies that do not belong to Ministries of Education.

• **Information and knowledge management**

– There is no strong, reliable information structure and there are no modern comprehensive, advanced information management systems to impel the various community institutions to provide the necessary data on the literacy, adult education and informal education programmes, services and activities that they deliver for various target groups in the Arab countries. Consequently, it is essential to focus on that information, which we need for purposes of the planning, execution, following up and assessment of literacy programmes, especially such information as is currently unavailable, including both information relating to Ministries of Education and information relating to civil society organizations. This will be a useful contribution to the task of developing and upgrading those programmes through feedback;

– Research and observation methods are little used by these organizations, and as a result many of them, inevitably, do not make use of the information and knowledge available from national studies, facts and figures to strengthen their

case and justify their programme planning, follow-up and assessment in accordance with the actual needs of their target population groups in various regions.

• **Media and awareness**

– Some educational institutions, centres and civil society organizations offering literacy and adult education programmes and services suffer from a lack of organized information in the field of their activities, performance and initiatives, and consequently are unable to use television—which is present in every home—effectively as a medium of information. Furthermore, there is not enough social awareness of the importance and the value of the programmes and activities available through these institutions in the framework of sustainable education, and their positive impact on many groups in society, especially women.

• **Funding and financial resources**

– Government funding for action to address the problem of illiteracy is quite clearly in decline in the various Arab countries, and less and less publicity is being devoted to the issue, in contrast to the increase in funding for basic education (although the latter type of education, important as it is, still suffers from clearly inadequate funding for its programmes and its quantitative and qualitative development). If the situation continues unchanged, with inadequate material resources for literacy programmes, it is to be feared that the numbers of illiterate persons of both sexes will increase to the point that the phenomenon cannot be eradicated, nor its effects overcome, despite all literacy efforts.

– At the same time, many educational institutions, centres and civil society organizations that offer literacy and adult education programmes and services suffer from inadequate funding and financial support that is not sufficient to cover their activities, or support that is not stable or permanent. The result is that their work is often interrupted or the delivery of their planned activities and programmes delayed.

Figure 2 below is a four-quadrant analysis matrix in the form of a set of specific points.

Fig. 2
The issue of illiteracy among women in the Arab region: four-quadrant analysis matrix

	Strengths	*Weaknesses*
Internal environment	* Women markedly more willing than men to enrol in literacy programmes * Shared understanding among all parties concerned of the main motives prompting students to enrol in literacy programmes * Curricula contain useful material and functional expertise, and the language used in textbooks is simple and clear. Students enjoy applying the activities contained in them * Classrooms adequately lighted and ventilated and blackboards are suitable; enough seats for all students; books distributed to students at beginning of school year * Amicable relations between teachers and students in literacy centres and classes; teachers explain class objectives to students; classes begin and end on time; students given opportunities to participate in classes; teachers enrich the material with appropriate examples, having regard to students' various environments and backgrounds * Interest on the part of Arab States in monitoring literacy and adult education trends throughout the world and incorporating promising innovations into socio-economic development tracks * Significant efforts in the context of the Joint Arab Action since the mid-twentieth century to develop literacy and adult education strategies and plans and organize conferences on the subject * Institutions offering literacy programmes have acquired, owing to their accumulated expertise and experience, a large stock of knowledge that can be used as a foundation, a high level of	* Current literacy policies focus on the concept of basic literacy to the neglect of functional and cultural literacy and the economic and political empowerment of women * Clear disparities in literacy promotion between the several Arab States: administrative agency responsible, funding sources, organizing legislation, target age bracket * Concern of some programmes with target numbers; traditionalism in performance * Reluctance of men to enrol at literacy centres compared with women; others tend to take a negative view of those who enrol * Students tend to stop attending at certain times of year, as for agricultural work, harvesting and olive-picking, in winter, and in the holy month of Ramadan * Adult learners are taught and learn with the same strategies and methods as children (pedagogy), despite the fact that the two groups have different characteristics and needs * Literacy programmes tend to be stamped with traditionalism do not meet students' needs, and lack teaching materials linked to the reality of their lives. Development and modernization needed. * Shortage of accompanying activities that are linked to the students' environment and suited to their inclinations and preferences * Literacy centres lack sanitary facilities, necessary equipment and educational technology; seats are frequently too small for adult students, as many centres are opened in regular school classrooms for children; it is difficult to arrange transport for students to and from centres * Many teachers working in literacy centres are not fully qualified for effective performance of their tasks; they are clearly weak in terms of their level of education and teaching experience. Many of them are in

	Strengths	*Weaknesses*
	organizational capacities, and a geographically dispersed institutional base distinguished by a multiplicity of programmes and success stories from which lessons can be learned * Arab programmes specializing in basic skills development for adults and life skills training through in-service training, media programmes or literacy and adult education programmes	need of specialized training programmes in the science of adult education and learning strategies to obtain an understanding of methods of working with adult students (andragogy) * Teachers tend to continue to use traditional teaching methods in literacy classes, instead of modern techniques * Teachers in literacy programmes are not paid at a level appropriate to a high standard of living; few incentives for students to enrol and continue learning successfully

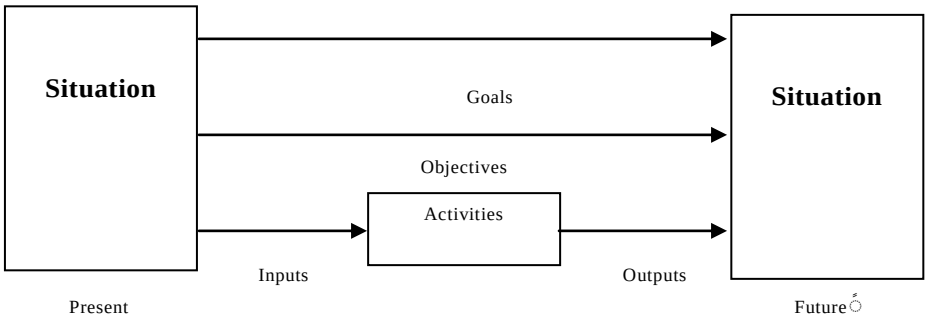
	Opportunities	*Threats*
External environment	* Decision-makers at the political level showing increased interest in achieving MDGs * Arab States making greater use of ICTs, beginning with computers, as teaching and learning tools, and their potential can be harnessed for the benefit of literacy * Introduction by some Arab States of a system of space-based broadcasting serving educational aims; preparation of educational series and dramas presenting literacy lessons, action to encourage distance learning, and establishment of community viewing centres that receive educational channels dedicated to literacy programming * Arab societies desire to rid themselves of the problem of illiteracy, and there is a high degree of social readiness to contribute to the good work. There is a trend in the Arab countries toward decentralization * Civil society organizations in all their range and variety play an important role in addressing the phenomenon of illiteracy, opening literacy centres and classes, promoting life skills development and the empowerment of women	* Clear increase in numbers of illiterate men and women * High illiteracy rates for women, especially in rural and semi-arid regions * Student dropouts from schools of the formal education system still represent a swelling tributary to the pool of illiteracy * An alarming increase in social exclusion as a result of the concentration of literacy and adult education programmes in urban areas and the capitals of governorates, while more remote rural areas and semi-arid regions are, for the most part, still not covered * Low level of interconnection and coordination among institutions, resulting in waste of effort, time and money, and overlapping and duplication of effort * No effective systems of communication between civil society organizations operating in the field of literacy * No comprehensive, advanced information management systems on literacy programmes, services and activities * No programme monitoring and assessment systems; scientific research and observation methods little used * Lack of organized information on the activities, performance and initiatives of literacy institutions; not enough social awareness of the

	Opportunities	*Threats*
	* Universities and research centres in some Arab countries are studying trends or initiating academic programmes in the field of literacy; university students often volunteer for literacy work * Specialized educational organizations are taking a growing interest in the issue of literacy. Foremost among these organizations are ALECSO, ISESCO and UNESCO, which have placed this issue among their priorities and established prizes designed to encourage pioneering initiatives in that field and strengthen its scientific methodology. They have also organized national, regional and international forums, workshops and conferences, and have also funded a number of exceptional experiments and innovations in that framework	importance and the value of these programmes and activities and their positive impact on many groups in society, especially women * Government funding for action to address the problem of illiteracy is in decline in the various Arab countries, and less and less publicity is being devoted to the issue, in contrast to the increase in funding for basic education * Many centres and civil society organizations that offer literacy programmes suffer from funding that is not sufficient to cover their activities, or support that is not stable or permanent. The result is that their work is often interrupted or the execution of their planned activities and programmes delayed

Part II
Strategic planning for literacy among women in the Arab region

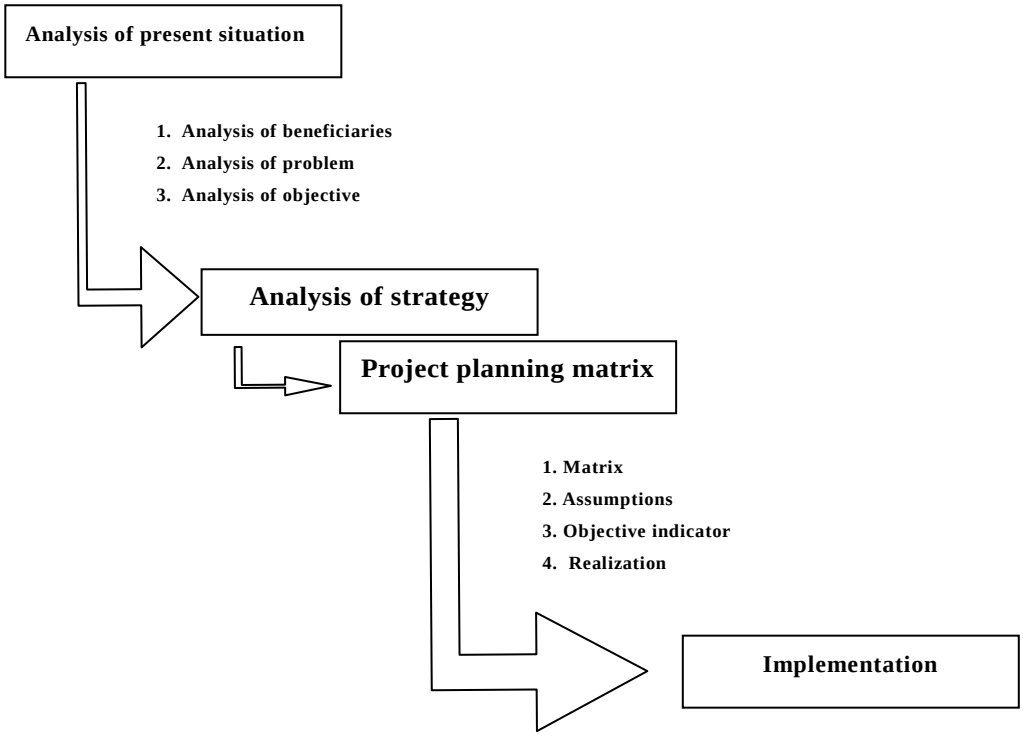
2.1 Methodology

The Logical Framework Method (LFM) will be used here. LFM is a scientific method that has come gradually into use over a long period of time. It is now used by many international institutions that grant loans for the management of various projects. It assists the planning process by providing guidance on the conversion of an idea into an actual plan that has been minutely studied. LFM focuses on an orderly analysis of the existing situation, especially any pivotal problems, and outlines various alternatives for dealing with those problems. LFM is an analytic tool for objective-directed planning and management. It is based on a concept the gist of which is that activities and the use of inputs and stocks do not represent the final procedures for success, but rather contribute to the attainment of the main direct objectives.



LFM is a helpful means of obtaining a view of the future situation via a sequence of events, based on a cause-and-effect relationship, in five areas: goal or goals, objectives, outputs, activities and inputs. To sum up, we may say that the LFM approach helps to establish a logical sequence of events in which, if inputs are available, activities will take place; if activities take place, outputs will be produced; where outputs are produced, immediate objectives are achieved. By this means, the method contributes, in the long run, to attainment of the goal or goals.

LFM is useful in analysing the external factors that may affect achievement of the objectives. It is also useful in formulating a way of observing how they evolve. It can be used whenever the need arises. An LFM analysis comprises four basic steps, each of which has a set of activities that must be executed, as will be seen from the diagram below.



Now that the present situation has been analysed in the preceding part, the strategic planning phase will begin in this part with a presentation of the problem tree obtained from the analysis of the present situation. This will be followed by a presentation of the main themes, which are based on the Arab Plan for the Promotion of Literacy among Women, and finally we shall look at the vision, mission, and activities.

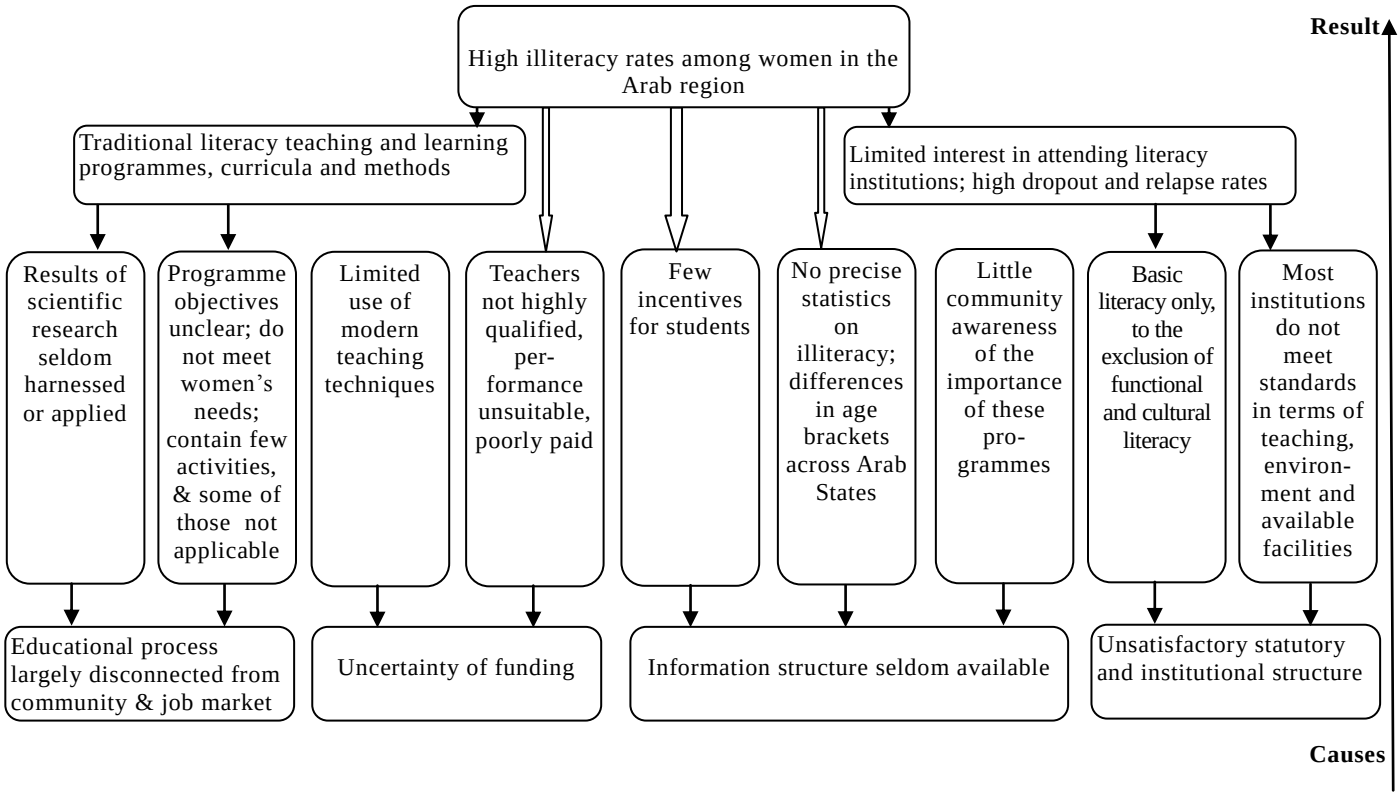
2.2 Problem tree and objectives

The problem tree can be constructed by moving the problems up or down the tree as the situation requires. The tree must terminate with one main problem and a series of lower-ranking problems branching off from the main problem. The problem tree is constructed by choosing a problem from a list and linking that problem with the basic problem by using a cause-and-effect relationship. This gives us:

- If the problem is a cause of the main problem, it is placed lower down the tree.
- If the problem is a result of the main problem, it is placed higher up the tree.
- If it is neither a cause nor a result, it is placed at the same level.

Here we propose the problem tree shown below (Fig. 3) for the issue of illiteracy among women in the Arab region, constructed on the basis of the discussion in Parts I and II above.

Fig. 3
Literacy among women in the Arab region: problem tree



The proposed problem tree shows clearly that the problem which is apparent for all to see in the Arab world is high illiteracy rates among women there. This represents the obvious or superficial phenomenon, but it has underlying causes, such as antiquated, traditional programmes and teaching and learning methods in the field of literacy and adult education, reluctance to enrol at literacy and adult education institutions, and high dropout and relapse rates. Investigation of those causes shows that they represent the results of other, secondary causes. In the case of the antiquated traditional programmes and teaching and learning methods, it is clear that the underlying causes are the fact that the results of scientific research are seldom harnessed or applied, the fact that programme objectives are unclear and do not meet women's needs, while programmes are not well presented, there are few activities, and some of those are not applicable, and it is relatively difficult to follow up and assess literacy programmes. These in turn can be traced to the fact that the educational process is largely disconnected from the community, the job market and scientific research. Moreover, there is a third reason why the results of scientific research are little used and programme objectives are unclear, and that is the limited use of modern teaching techniques, which in turn is attributable to the uncertainty and instability of funding.

As regards the limited interest in attending literacy and adult education institutions and high dropout and relapse rates, the tree shows clearly that these phenomena are attributable to the low quality level of those institutions, the fact that they are substandard in terms of environmental and health conditions and are not

coordinated with each other. Accordingly, those institutions should be supported by neutral agencies in order to guarantee quality in their teaching, capacities, resources and the like. Another factor is their focus on basic literacy only, to the exclusion of cultural literacy. Both of these factors, in their turn, are traceable to the fact that a statutory and institutional structure appropriate for making education compulsory is frequently lacking, while students' reluctance to attend literacy and adult education institutions is traceable to the lack of community awareness of the importance of these programmes, and that in turn is due to the absence of an appropriate, strong information structure, which in turn is the result of the absence of reliable statistics on illiteracy and differences in the target age bracket across the Arab States. The unreliability and instability of funding is also due to the fact that state-of-the-art teaching techniques are little used, as we have seen earlier, the fact that teachers are not adequately trained and qualified to carry out their tasks effectively and are poorly paid, and the fact that the incentives available to students are also inadequate. For all these reasons, illiteracy levels among women in the Arab region tend to be high.

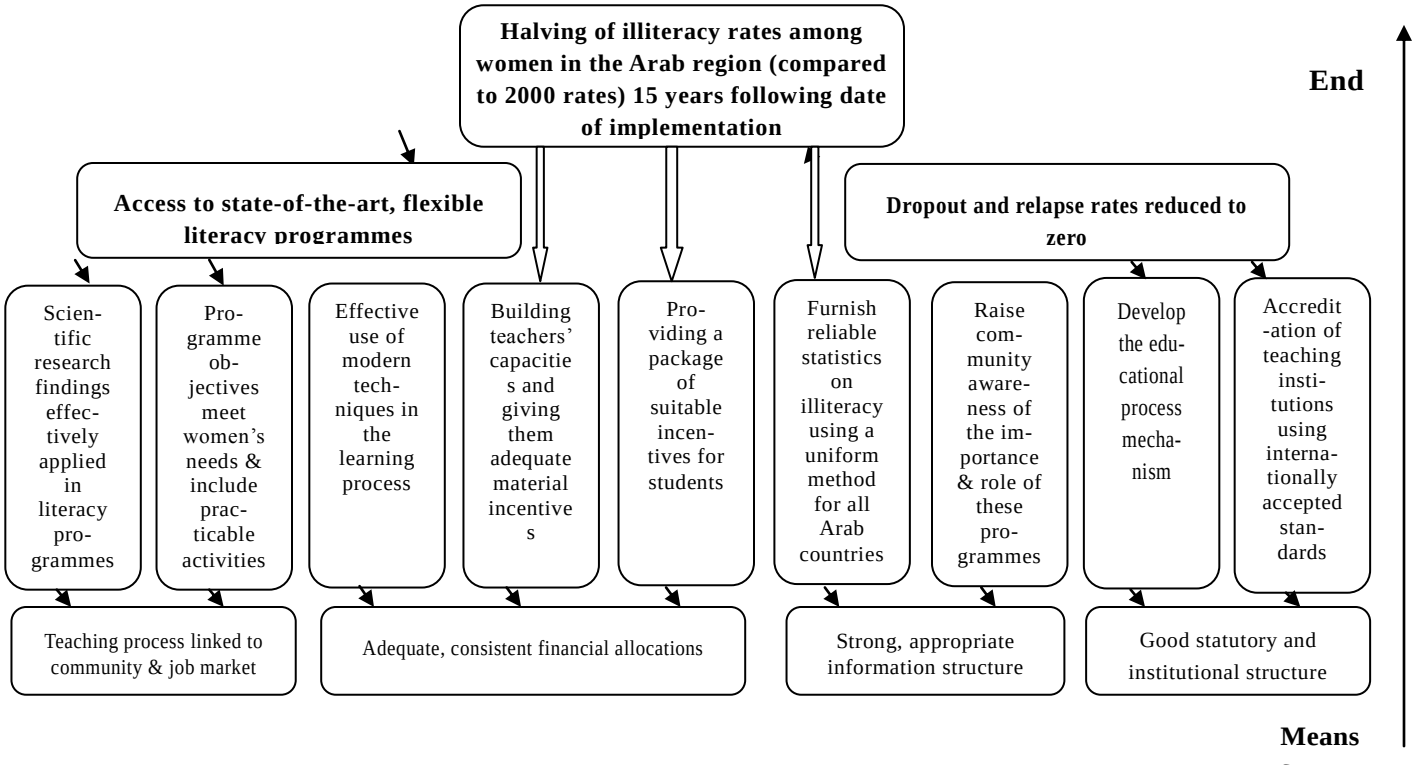
We thus see that the true fundamental causes underlying the high illiteracy rates for women in the Arab region are as follows:

- Disconnect between the educational process and the community and job market;
- The uncertainty of funding;
- The absence of an appropriate, strong information structure;
- The absence of an appropriate statutory and institutional structure for making education compulsory.

Objectives analysis and problems analysis undoubtedly influence each other. The more information available to an individual about the position of the problem, the better able he is to formulate clearly defined objectives. In this way, the problems tree is turned into an objectives tree, and usually it is not necessary to reorder the positions of the objectives when constructing the tree. It can thus be said that that an objectives tree is in effect an explanatory "ends and means" diagram. The summit of the tree is the end which it is desired to attain, and the lower levels are means needed to arrive at that end. From the objectives tree, we can see that there are some specific means that may be appropriate and others that may be outside the scope of the problem. These means thus furnish a basis for the development of activities that will address the problems that were originally discussed and were used to construct the problem tree.

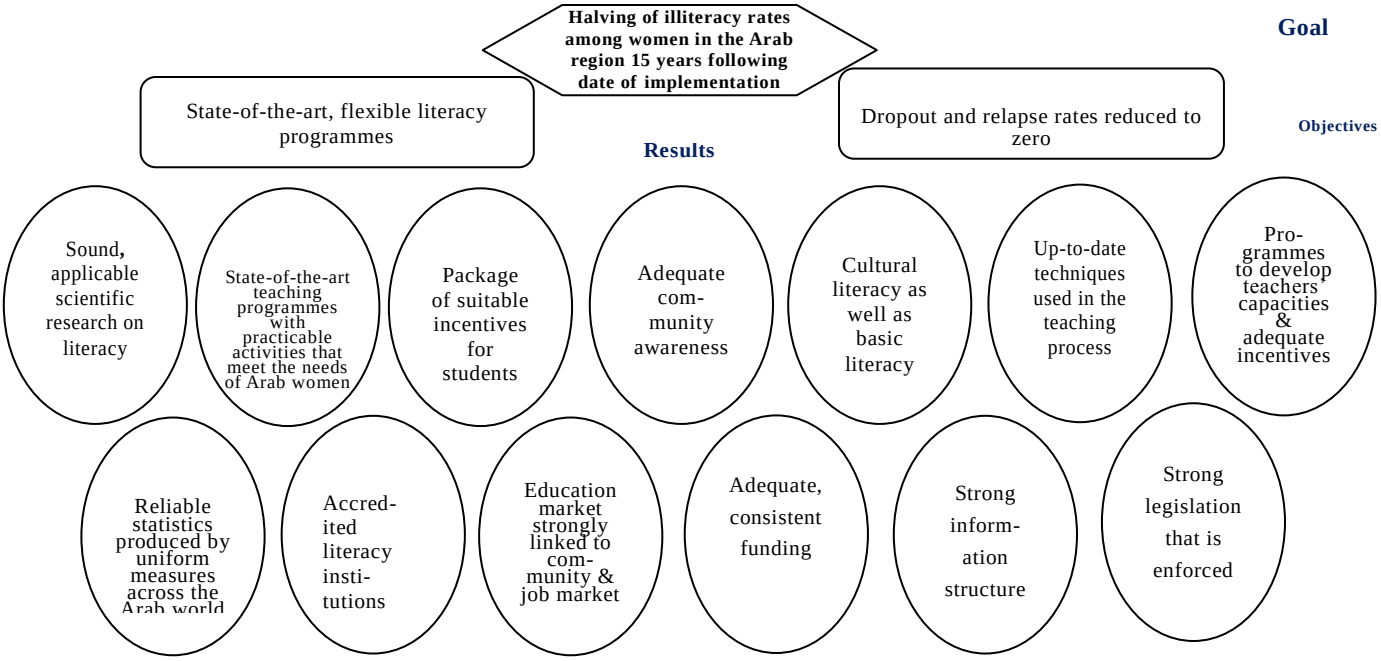
Fig. 4 presents an objectives tree constructed from the problems tree by means of a positive formulation procedure, as explained above.

Fig. 4
Literacy among women in the Arab region: objectives tree



On the basis of the foregoing discussion, we can now clarify the strategic objective, goals and expected results of the plan. This gives us Figure 5.

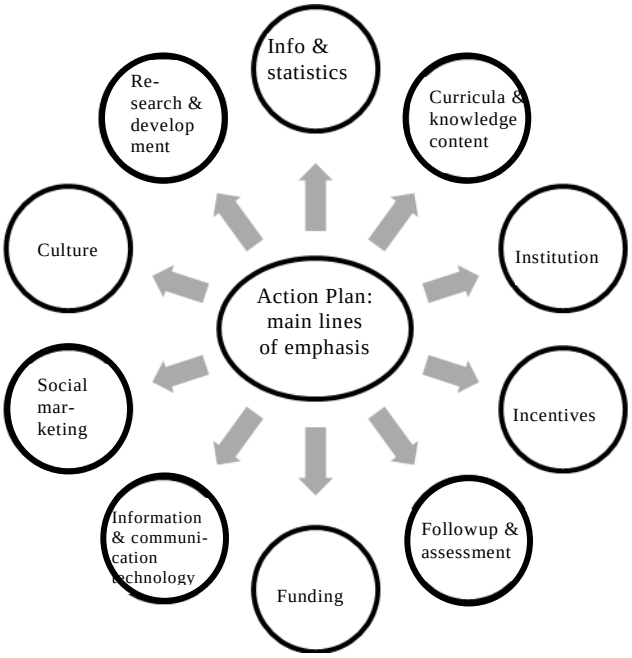
Fig. 5
Goals, objectives and expected results of the Action Plan



2.3 Main lines of emphasis of the action plan

The Action Plan for the Promotion of Literacy among women is structured around a set of main lines of emphasis, and these in turn are integrated with the content of the 2008 Plan for the Development of Education in the Arab World in order to ensure a measure of coordination, integration and mutual benefit at all future implementation stages, with each plan serving the other. The Plan includes all the main lines of emphasis set forth in Figure 6 below.

Fig. 6
Main lines of emphasis of the Action Plan for the Promotion of Literacy among Women



2.3.1 Main line of emphasis 1: information and statistics

The twin problems of conflicting information and insufficient, poor-quality data on illiteracy together constitute one of the most important challenges tending to cripple any programme or project aimed at promoting literacy in the Arab region. Despite some efforts to unify concepts and measurement methods, little has been achieved in the way of concrete results. The objective of this main line of emphasis represents not only action to unify the concept of illiteracy and the methods used to measure it, but also the importance of creating dynamic data bases at the level of individual illiterate women, with a view to:

- Counting and registering illiterate women;
- Monitoring women attending literacy classes in order to go after those who drop out or attract women who do not wish to attend them;
- Seeing to it that women who graduate from adult education courses are followed up and encouraged to enrol in continuing education programmes in order to ensure that they do not relapse into illiteracy;
- Monitoring and evaluating literacy efforts.

In addition, it is clearly important for Ministries of Education to develop national and regional web sites, as these are potentially a valuable source of technical capabilities. They could contain various initiatives originated by national institutions working in the field of informal education in general and literacy programmes in particular. Information and communication technology could be used effectively to built professional networks linking these assorted institutions and enabling them to exchange expertise and experience and encouraging positive dialogue.

2.3.2 Main line of emphasis 2: curricula and the learning content of literacy programmes

- Development of adult education methods in the light of the psychological characteristics of every age group.
- Action to link women's literacy programmes with certain other issues of concern to women, in a framework of placing the concept of literacy within a broader context. At present, it is limited to basic literacy, but this would tie it in with cultural literacy and other life skills for women by developing educational specifications expressly for the purpose. Examples might include:

– Incorporation of reproductive health matters in the learning content of literacy programmes;

– Expanded use of computers in the teaching process with a view to promoting computer literacy at the same time;

– Addition of English-language materials that would enable women to interact easily with daily life.

- Drying up the sources of persistent illiteracy by putting in place mechanisms to ensure that all children attend primary school and complete the basic education level without dropping out, one of those mechanisms to include a means of counting girls who drop out before obtaining their basic education certificate and reporting on them.
- Development of an educational curriculum in accordance with a comprehensive, integrated vision that would include functional and cultural aspects while also including the various components of literacy programmes.
- Proceed by gradual, systematic, well-thought-out steps toward the preparation of textbooks, beginning with planning, followed by the drafting of the text, then revision, and finally publication. Books should include explanatory illustrations and drawings. The next stage should be a small-scale trial and assessment before adoption in final form, so that the content can be amended in the light of the results of the trial run.
- Authors of textbooks should adhere to a set of qualitative criteria, of which the most important are suitability, consistency, a step-by-step approach, balance, functionality and flexibility.
- It is important to strike a balance among the subjects that are essential for illiterate students, both men and women. One example taken from a number of relevant studies might be 33 per cent Arabic language, 27 per cent mathematics and calculation, 20 per cent general culture and 20 per cent an optional subject related to the country concerned. It is essential to bear in mind that books on

general culture should not account for more than one quarter of all the books used in literacy classes so as not to disturb the balance among the various subjects.

- Literacy teaching should rely on the formative evaluation system and study methods featuring discussion, inquiry, dialogue and inference and on group work within the class.
- Television and radio programmes and compact discs can serve as teaching aids, with particular attention to incorporating a variety of vocational materials into the course of study; within the school building or literacy centre, while vocational training shops can be used to teach basic electrical, mechanical, carpentry, ironworking and other skills. Similarly, training in handicrafts, traditional crafts, home economics and food preparation should be included.
- Flexible curricula should be designed for the benefit of illiterate women with special needs or learning difficulties in order to help them acquire literacy skills, with attention to their particular situations, circumstances, capacities and learning rates. Curricula should include practical life experiences that will enable them to master useful living skills and prepare them for future vocations that are suited to their capacities.
- Extracurricular activities should be used in literacy programmes, especially activities aimed at promoting students' growth in terms of their cultural, health, social, national and personal development. Seminars, lectures and television programmes can be used for this purpose.
- The target age group should be borne in mind in designing curricula and teaching aids, taking into account the local environmental circumstances of women students. Curricula and teaching aids should be tried experimentally before being generally applied.
- The traditional teaching methods that are used, within narrow limits, in primary classes in the formal school system should not be adopted. It is preferable to try to use what is known as active and interactive learning between women students and women teachers.
- Literacy classes should be open to women whose husbands are working abroad and women in rural areas to whom public education services are not available. They should be accompanied by intensive awareness programmes adapted to the needs of rural women.

2.3.3 Main line of emphasis 3: incentives

As we have seen, it is very difficult to attract women into literacy classes for a number of reasons, including social barriers and a cultural heritage that tends to keep them away. In addition, there are economic obstacles arising for the most part from the fact that many illiterate women, especially in disadvantaged regions, have to work to add to the family's income and consequently do not have time for study. Over and above all this, their work is exhausting and does not permit them to attend literacy classes. Consequently, it is important to devise a system of incentives to encourage women to enrol and remain in literacy classes. For example, programmes should feature a parallel design that will enable women to acquire the life skills that they need, including the following:

- Linkage of literacy training for women with economic empowerment by having women enrol in vocational training programmes alongside literacy programmes and helping them start and run business ventures of their own or find employment.
- Enrolment of women in programmes aimed at heightening their health awareness and teaching them how to care for their families and children.
- Providing some of the services that women need.
- Providing material incentives for women who complete literacy programmes.
- Civil society institutions should be used to support women with small businesses that empower them economically and socially and make them active members of society.
- Establishment of small day care facilities in places where they are most needed to look after the children of illiterate women while they are attended literacy classes, as a means of helping them learn and preventing them from dropping out.
- Action to include learners at literacy centres in the school meals projects that are applied in some Arab States, especially in marginalized regions where the need for encouragement to enrol and remain in literacy programmes is greatest.

2.3.4 Main line of emphasis 4: information and communication technology (ICT)

The ICT revolution and the results that have flowed from it should unquestionably be used in all areas of life, literacy programmes included, where ICTs have many and varied applications. Literacy programmes can be presented through the use of audiovisual films; computers are a valuable teaching and learning tool; the Internet can be used for distance learning and open learning; the Internet is a means of reaching a specific stratum of women for whom it is difficult to attend regular classes, either because of time constraints, because they cannot easily travel or leave the house, or because they move frequently or are distant from the place where the classes are given. Literacy classes can also be broadcast via television and radio. Depending on where the teaching takes place, consultative and cooperative learning techniques and active and interactive learning methods can also be used; these are distinguished by their flexibility and variety.

2.3.5 Main line of emphasis 5: research and development (R&D)

R&D is unquestionably one of the foundation-stones of the plan. Without it, there would be no innovation, with all that that implies in terms of continuing development in literacy programmes and their attendant benefits. R&D affords a means of enhancing the effectiveness of those programmes, to say nothing of the effort to harness the findings of scientific research to serve the desired purpose, and the effort to link research and application and take advantage of feedback from practical application in the continued development of programmes from a scientific standpoint, programmes that will serve the environment and meet its requirements. Women represent a majority of illiterate adults in the world in general and in the Arab countries in particular, and consequently planners and drafters of literacy policies must take that issue into account. To begin with, they should undertake comprehensive surveys of the needs of the population of illiterate girls and women before starting to

construct teaching programmes in order to ensure that such programmes are maximally attuned to learners' needs and serve their preferences and interests. The principle of comprehensive, permanent evaluation, internal and external, should be used as a fundamental starting-point for renewal, development, better feedback, and productivity in general.

2.3.6 Main line of emphasis 6: social culture

This is one of the most important main lines of emphasis, representing a long-term achievement for the development and construction of new social values with respect to the importance of girls' education and work. It is supported by another main line of emphasis, No. 7, social marketing, through media plans designed to reach all groups in society and eliminate negative ideas about women and broaden their role in society beyond their traditional one in the home to a more effective and positive role in the building of society as a whole. It is clearly essential to develop awareness-generating cultural programmes for broadcast via the media in order to define the roles of various institutions and associations in the field of informal education generally and literacy in particular, and to disseminate knowledge about literacy programmes and activities and the groups targeted for its services. Another important aspect is the production of publications and televisions and radio programming to combat various social ills such as smoking, narcotics and the like, and the organization of fact-finding cultural excursions to relevant places, sites and institutions to explore their most prominent features and distinctive characteristics.

2.3.7 Main line of emphasis 7: social marketing

Society's acceptance of the idea of adult education, especially for girls and women, will be difficult almost to the point of being impossible in some economically disadvantaged, marginalized communities. Accordingly, it will be necessary to develop a social marketing plan aimed at selling the idea of education for girls and women and training that will equip them with skills and qualifications to obtain jobs suited to the communities in which they live. Social acceptance of that idea is a fundamental element that must be addressed. Before it will be feasible even to attempt to begin executing literacy programmes, it will be necessary to secure greater acceptance of those programmes by women themselves and to reduce dropout rates; indeed, opposition and hostility to them on the part of the members of the communities concerned will have to be overcome.

It should be feasible to expand the work of community vocational centres so that, in addition to helping women acquire literacy skills, they train them in light industries and help them market their products in order to better themselves and their families economically and socially, thereby integrating them into all aspects and areas of the comprehensive development process. It shold also be feasible to design education programmes to upgrade the skills of children who have dropped out and are working and to prepare them for life more adequately. To ensure the permanence of these programmes, they could be embedded within the activities and programmes of the relevant institutions. They might include culture programmes for dropouts and projects aimed at abolishing child labour. It is essential to create larger roles for civil society institutions as strategic partners in the process of preparing, executing and following up literacy programmes by building up national capacities within the various bodies operating in the field of literacy, whether governmental, community-based or private, and endowing them with knowledge, skills and directions relating to

the several fields involved. These include literacy programme planning, production of teaching materials, curriculum development, and development of learning and teaching methods and strategies, besides mechanisms for harnessing ICTs in the teaching process efficiently and effectively.

2.3.8 Main line of emphasis 8: institutional development

Unquestionably, the institutional structure responsible for administering and running literacy programmes plays an effective and influential role in the success of those programmes and the attainment of their objectives by establishing bases, rules and criteria to control the quality of literacy programmes. It is quite likely that poor coordination between institutions working in the field of literacy, and the very clear absence of coordination between formal and information education running on parallel tracks may be chief among the handicaps that are weakening the literacy effort. Another has been a focus on dealing exclusively with the phenomenon of illiteracy with respect to its educational aspect, ignoring the true causes underlying its existence and prevalence, and a lack of concern with blocking up the sources of illiteracy in the form of children who drop out of school or never enrol. Clearly, then, it is essential to achieve full coordination between the basic education system and its non-formal counterpart in order to address the real reasons why children drop out of school or never enrol, as only thus will it be feasible to deal with the issue of illiteracy in the Arab world. In the following pages we shall consider some points that should be the focus of our attention when plans in the Arab countries are entering the implementation stage.

- On the one hand, the assistance of women teachers specializing in adult education should be enlisted, and less reliance placed on the efforts of unskilled volunteers. On the other hand, it is essential to devote some attention to the periodic training of women teachers in state-of-the-art teaching methods, which will make literacy classes attractive to women.
- Broader channels should be opened up between formal education and adult education, as this will facilitate enrolment by adults in parallel education, thereby ensuring lifelong learning.
- A clear-cut administrative system (possibly a central administrative agency) should be designed in order to determine the responsibility and powers of every agency or ministry, thereby enabling continuous monitoring and periodic assessment of their performance in executing programmes. The system’s work should be based on a clear vision and long-term plan that is not affected by changes of leadership.
- Legislation should be enacted or ministerial orders issued with a view to strengthening, assisting and facilitating the task of the administrative system.
- An institutional structure for adult education should be established, one that is flexible and capable of adjustment, to give effect to the principle of lifelong learning.
- Adult education and literacy administrative structures should be linked to high-level agencies operating in the various State sectors.
- Greater powers and flexibility should be given to agencies exercising direct oversight of literacy and adult education in the Arab States.

- Partnership with civil society organizations should be expanded and greater reliance placed on them in delivering literacy programmes. Those organizations should be licensed to deliver literacy programmes by the proposed central administrative agency. They would have a fundamental role to play in formulating curricula, working in concert with the local community.
- Communication among Ministries of Education, universities, institutions and other organizations that deliver literacy programmes should be fostered.
- For purposes of measuring the effectiveness of those programmes, a neutral assessment body would be indispensable. It would evaluate the results of programmes and projects aimed at promoting literacy, and also the performance of the agencies delivering those programmes and projects. Assessment findings would be used as the basis of recommendations which would be submitted to the central administrative agency, which in turn would take decisions as to whether community associations working in the field should be in or out, or whether the activities of some of them should be corrected if necessary.

2.3.9 Main line of emphasis 9: funding

Funding policies relating to the planning, delivery, follow-up and evaluation of literacy programmes in the Arab world are confronted with serious challenges. Allocations for literacy and adult education programmes in the general budgets of Arab States are inadequate. At the country level, Government funding for action to address the problem of illiteracy is quite clearly in decline, and less and less publicity is being devoted to the issue, in contrast to the increase in funding for basic education (although the latter type of education, important as it is, still suffers from clearly inadequate funding for its programmes and its quantitative and qualitative development). If the situation continues unchanged, with inadequate material resources for literacy programmes, it is to be feared that the numbers of illiterate persons of both sexes will increase to the point that the phenomenon cannot be eradicated, nor its effects overcome, despite all literacy efforts. At the same time, many educational institutions, centres and civil society organizations that offer literacy and adult education programmes and services suffer from inadequate funding and financial support that is not sufficient to cover their activities, or support that is not stable or permanent. The result is that their work is often interrupted or the delivery of their planned activities and programmes delayed.

The only way to overcome the problem of inadequate funding for literacy and adult education programmes in the Arab region is through innovative thinking and a cooperative effort to create non-traditional, alternative ways of mustering funding, taking advantage of the best contemporary practices, experiences and trends within the Arab region and internationally.

The building of effective partnerships among all institutions concerned with the planning, delivery, follow-up, assessment and development of literacy programmes is perhaps the most vitally necessary contribution to the task of addressing the issue of inadequate funding. Effective contributions from all parties in proportion to their capacities, expertise and resources will help close the financial gap and reduce the cost of delivering and administering programmes and projects. The idea of partnership reflects the idea of integration among all parties in an effort to realize a general benefit for the population targeted by literacy and adult education programmes, and emphasizes the fact that literacy is a means to an end, namely the preparation of

individuals to contribute to and participate in sustainable development. Contributions from all parties may include various aspects, such as counting the target groups, identifying needs, planning, heightening awareness, mustering and managing resources, developing curricula and learning sources, individual and institutional capacity-building, sustainable vocational development of learners, networking and building partnerships, performing follow-up and assessment work, documenting, publishing and circulating initiatives and success stories, conducting research, and organizing workshops, seminars and conferences on literacy, especially among women.

One of the most promising proposed funding sources is to be found in the outcomes of the sixth International Conference on Adult Education, held in Belém, Brazil from 1-4 December 2009:

- Application of the recommendation of the fifth International Conference on Adult Education that at least 6 per cent of gross domestic product should be allocated for education, and that allocations for adult education and learning should be increased;
- Expanding existing educational resources and budgets across all Government departments to meet the objectives of an integrated adult learning and education strategy;
- Creating incentives to promote new sources of funding, e.g. from the private sector, non-governmental organizations, communities and individuals, without prejudicing the principles of equity and inclusiveness;
- Prioritizing investment in lifelong learning for women and rural populations;
- In support of these strategies, the Conference called upon international development partners to meet their commitment to filling the financial gaps preventing the achievement of the Education for All Goals, in particular Goals 3 and 4 (youth and adult learning, adult literacy), increase funds for adult literacy, learning and education in dedicated programmes, with the possibility of debt swap or cancellation, establish a transnational fund for literacy and adult education, and incorporate adult literacy into the Fast-Track Initiative in the area of Education for All.

2.3.10 Main line of emphasis 10: follow-up and evaluation

Follow-up and evaluation are tools that enable us to determine and measure the performance of the projects, programmes and policies contained in the Arab Plan of Action for the Promotion of Literacy among Women. Follow-up will be useful as an "analysis and continuing data-gathering process for assessing the extent of progress made in the performance of projects, programmes and policies, and comparing it with expected performance." Follow-up provides organized, immediate data about the progress of the work (during execution), the internal processes of the programme, project or policy, and the main obstacles, if any, to implementation of the planned activities. Evaluation, for its part, will be useful as an "organized, objective effort to measure the results of projects, programmes and policies for the purpose of assessing and measuring their consistency, adequacy, effectiveness and appropriateness, and also their effects." It also includes periodic objective reviews of the Plan of Action, to determine to what extent the objectives have been attained and the outcomes are congruent with the content of the Plan. Evaluation provides us with data about the

programme as a whole during its successive stages: before, during and after its implementation, although it focuses basically on outcomes after the completion of the programme or project. It also provides data that are useful in the accountability process and are useful in learning about success stories and mistakes. In general, we may say that it is important to enable newly literate persons to retain the reading and writing skills they have acquired by creating follow-up programmes that strengthen those skills and ensure their permanence, such as travelling libraries, teaching kits and the like.

2.4 Structure of the draft plan: vision, mission, goal, objectives and activities

2.4.1 Vision formulated in the Plan

"An Arab society in which women in the 15-45 age bracket are basically literate, possess a high degree of cultural and functional literacy and participate effectively in sustainable development."

2.4.2 Mission formulated in the Plan

"The cultural, social, political and economic empowerment of Arab women throughout the Arab region, such that they are healthily integrated into society and make a distinctive contribution in all its areas."

2.4.3 Goal of the Plan

Reduction of illiteracy rates among women in the 15-45 age bracket in the Arab region to half of what they were in 2000 within 15 years after the beginning of implementation.

Achievement indicators

- A significant reduction in illiteracy rates among women in the Arab States (to half the values observed in 2000, within 15 years after the year in which implementation of the plan begins, with a 15% reduction at the end of every five-year period) as determined by a uniform measure of illiteracy agreed upon by all the Arab States.
- An increase in the absolute numbers of women who have become functionally, basically and culturally literate (10% reduction, compared to the numbers observed in 2000, at the end of every five-year period).
- A significant reduction in illiteracy rates at the beginning of implementation of the Plan (down by 10% in the first year of the target period).
- A signification fraction (10%) of newly literate women occupying jobs, reflecting a similar reduction in the unemployment rate for this group.
- Establishment of an appropriate number of small or micro business ventures managed by newly literate women (15% increase in absolute numbers of small business ventures compared to the values observed for 2000).

2.4.4 Objectives of the Plan

– State-of-the-art, flexible literacy programmes

– Dropout and relapse rates reduced to zero

Achievement indicators

– A 15% increase in the proportion of productive families, compared to the figure observed for 2000, by the end of the first five years of implementation of the Plan, in terms of numbers of small and mid-sized business ventures.

– A significant increase in enrolment in these programmes (a 15% increase in average enrolment rates during the first five years of the Plan), and a decline in dropout and relapse rates to half the values observed for 2000 after the first five years of implementation of the Plan.

2.4.5 Expected results

Expected results of the first objective
(state-of-the-art, flexible literacy programmes)

– Sound, applicable scientific research on literacy

– State-of-the-art teaching programmes with practicable activities that meet the needs of Arab women

– State-of-the-art programmes to develop teachers' capacities and adequate incentives for them

– Up-to-date techniques used in the teaching process

– Strong partnerships between the teaching process, the community and the job market

– Adequate, consistent funding

Expected results of the second objective
(dropout and relapse rates reduced to zero)

– A package of suitable incentives for students

– An appropriate level of community awareness

– Basic, cultural and functional literacy

– Reliable illiteracy statistics produced by uniform measures across the Arab world

– Accredited literacy institutions

– Strong information structure

– Strong legislation on literacy, with enforcement

2.4.6 Activities under the plan

2.4.6.1 Critical activities: sound, applicable scientific research on literacy

- Development of a research agenda for research centres and institutions working in the field of education, psychology and the social sciences with a view to the preparation of training programmes that take the issue of illiteracy among women into account and accommodate its requirements from a realistic standpoint
- Action to lay the groundwork needed to direct scientific research toward the vital problems confronting illiterate women, especially in rural areas, and how to deal with them and their needs in order to enable them to overcome their illiteracy and lead healthy lives
- Adoption of rules requiring students in higher education to undertake scientific research on the issue of women's illiteracy and how to deal with it, with applicability to various social strata and ages within the 15-45 age bracket. The research should include a field component and case studies. This should be made a requirement for obtaining a degree in science.
- Enlisting the participation of students in faculties of education, sociology, economics and development by steering their graduation research projects toward the problems of teaching and training illiterate women.

2.4.6.2 Critical activities: state-of-the-art, flexible teaching programmes with practicable activities that meet the needs of Arab women

- Observation of the main economic, social, cultural and environmental problems experienced by illiterate Arab women and the difficulties they encounter as a result of their illiteracy, and the negative effects resulting from that situation
- Identification of the main areas of illiterate Arab women's need for assistance in becoming effectively integrated into their environment and becoming socially and economically empowered

2.4.6.3 Critical activities: state-of-the-art capacity-building programmes for teachers capacities and adequate incentives for them

- Preparation of a case study of the present situation of literacy teachers in order to determine their professional preparedness, capabilities, scientific ability and adaptability, and how to create incentives for them
- Development of previously prepared training programme packages in the light of teachers' current situation and scientific, technological and social change
- Introduction of a system of material and moral incentives for literacy teachers based on reward and punishment
- Establishment of specialized national centres to produce trained cadres to work in the field of the advancement of women at State level

2.4.6.4 Critical activities: effective use of modern technologies in the teaching process

- Preparation of a permanent plan for training cadres in the use of modern technologies in the teaching process
- Establishment or (where they already exist) development of technological institutes in the Arab States to turn out technical cadres in the field of information technology and its various applications, especially in this field

2.4.6.5 Critical activities: creation of strong relationships among the education market, society and the job market

- Establishment of an effective partnership between civil society, as represented by the private and community sectors, and educational institutions that will afford a means of translating into reality the community's need for jobs and the accompanying skills, thereby empowering women after they have become literate (in accordance with the law, not personal efforts)
- Development of flexible curricula tailored to changes in the job market, with not less than 25% of total course time set aside for field visits to enable students to learn about the job market and its needs
- Creation of an appropriate mechanism to help women start small and mid-sized business ventures by developing their skills and encouraging the relevant institutions to grant them loans. The means to this end will be an integrated programme linking graduation from literacy classes, vocational training and funding in a series of complementary interrelated steps, or, alternatively, making jobs available to women after they have graduated and completed a vocational skills development programme
- Creation of dynamic data bases at individual level on members of the target population who enrol in literacy classes, graduates of literacy and adult education programmes, and job openings
- Organization of permanent exhibitions to market the products of women's work, such as handicrafts and food products

2.4.6.6 Critical activities: adequate, consistent funding

- Establishment of a mechanism for the allocation of funds from the budget of each State to finance literacy programmes and the accompanying proposed incentive programmes in part
- Drafting of proposals for submission to donor State agencies to provide additional funding for these programmes
- Establishment of local funds to support women's literacy, especially in States with high illiteracy rates

2.4.6.7 Critical activities: adequate incentive package for students

– A scientific study on the psychological characteristics of students in the 15-45 age bracket in an effort to identify the underlying causes of their low status, and the factors that attract them into or deter them from enrolling in skills upgrading programmes (it will be important to take differences in age into account by subdividing the target group into a number of different age groups and considering each group)

– Establishment of a system of material and moral incentives tied to performance and excellence, and also bound up with the vital needs of Arab women and availability of data and training programmes, in an effort to enable women to meet their needs, including needs relating to their health and the health of their children and families and also the health of the environment and the like

– A yearly cash award from one Arab State to the most creative initiative in the field of literacy

2.4.6.8 Critical activities: heightening social awareness of the importance of these programmes

– Preparation of a media marketing plan to sell the idea of the importance of these programmes and their influential role in the lives of newly literate women

– Preparation of a plan for educational conferences and forums on the issue of illiteracy in each of the Arab States, although some of these activities will take place at the local level (media and marketing intensity will vary depending on the level of illiteracy among women in each State)

2.4.6.9 Critical activities: development of the teaching process mechanism

– Development of programmes and content (objectives, curricula, courses and the like) in the light of research on the needs and problems of illiterate women, labour market requirements, and the ambient community, with previous activities included

– Development of a valid evaluation system the reflects the graduate’s ability to handle matters relating to daily life and culture rather than reading and writing exclusively

– Self-learning opportunities and training for women in the target population in a framework of continuing education

2.4.6.10 Critical activities: production of accurate statistics on illiteracy by means of a uniform measurement method across the Arab States

- Creation of data bases on illiteracy in the Arab States, preparation of the necessary measurements and publication of periodic reports, or perhaps activation of the existing situation, working through ALECSO and taking advantage of data already available in that organization's Observatory of Education
- Training a group of Arab cadres in using various indicators to measure illiteracy, and action to unify measurement of the phenomenon throughout the Arab region, with internationally agreed criteria

2.4.6.11 Critical activities: accreditation of literacy institutions

- Research aimed at diagnosing the present situation of literacy and adult education institutions and investigation of the gap between reality and ideal with a view to their national and international accreditation on the basis of the educational, environmental and health conditions prevailing in them
- Preparation of a project aimed at enabling these institutions to qualify for accreditation and continuing development

2.4.6.12 Critical activities: a strong information structure

- Creation of a substructure for the use of new teaching and education technologies, including workshops, presentation equipment, computing equipment and Internet communication networks (especially in those States that are still in the early stages of using new technologies; those that have made some progress in this respect are in need of continuing development). Electronic education undoubtedly affords environments that are to some extent free from the hazards besetting students and protect them from the expected confinement in group learning environments
- Creation of an integrated information system serving women and all indicators and data pertaining to them, including illiteracy, with constant inputting of fresh data; possibly closely linked with the above-mentioned Arab Observatory of Education within ALECSO

2.4.6.13 Critical activities: enactment or enforcement of legislation on literacy

- Drafting of legislation that can be enacted by the Parliaments of all Arab States making literacy and adult education compulsory, or enforcing legislation already on the books in some States

Table 10 below presents a detailed analysis of the components of the project in the form of a planning matrix covering the entire proposed Plan of Action for the Promotion of Literacy among Women in the Arab Region, while Table 11 presents a detailed plan for execution of the project.

Table 10
Matrix presentation of the Plan of Action for the Promotion of Literacy among Women in the Arab Region

Description of activity	*Indicator*	*Means of realization*	*Assumption or hazard*
Goal of the Plan: to reduce illiteracy rates among women in the Arab Region within 15 years following the year in which implementation begins (14-45 age bracket)	* A significant reduction in illiteracy rates among women in the Arab States (to half the values observed in 2000, within 15 years after the year in which implementation of the plan begins, with a 15% reduction at the end of every five-year period) as determined by a uniform measure of illiteracy agreed upon by all the Arab States. * An increase in the absolute numbers of women who have become functionally, basically and culturally literate (10% reduction, compared to the numbers observed in 2000, at the end of every five-year period). * A significant reduction in illiteracy rates at the beginning of implementation of the Plan (down by 10% in the first year of the target period). * A signification fraction (10%) of newly literate women occupying jobs, reflecting a similar reduction in the unemployment rate for this group. * Establishment of an appropriate number of small or micro business ventures managed by newly literate women (15% increase in absolute numbers of small business ventures compared to the values observed for 2000).	* Monthly and annual reports * Reports on field visits to study some experiences and comparison of results actually achieved with the contents of the plan * Monthly, quarterly, semiannual and annual performance monitoring reports	* Decline in the numbers of women wishing to enrol in functional, basic and cultural literacy programmes, or opposition from their husbands to their enrolment * Interruption in the continued flow of adequate financial resources aimed at reducing illiteracy rates
Inputs: 1. Human resources 2. Financial & material resources 3. Knowledge & technology 4. Other	* Proportion of women enrolling in literacy classes * Numbers of teachers and facilitators * Numbers of supervisors * Supporters and strategic partners * Learning resources and teaching materials * Curricula and textbooks * Centres, classrooms and equipment available for literacy programmes: desks, learning resources, teaching materials, computers, heaters, etc. * Incentives (in kind and in cash) for teachers, facilitators and students * Commitment of decision-makers to literacy	* Monthly and annual reports * Reports on field visits to study some experiences and comparison of results actually achieved with the contents of the plan * Monthly, quarterly, semiannual and annual performance monitoring reports	* Lack of adequate material and financial resources * Insufficient numbers of qualified human resources * Inability to adapt adequately to new technologies * Shortcomings in programmes and curricula

Description of activity	*Indicator*	*Means of realization*	*Assumption or hazard*
Objectives: 1. Access to state-of-the-art, flexible literacy programmes 2. Dropout and relapse rates reduced to zero	1. A 15% increase in the proportion of productive families, compared to the figure observed for 2000, by the end of the first five years of implementation of the Plan, in terms of small and mid-sized business ventures. 2. A significant increase in enrolment in these programmes (a 15% increase in average enrolment rates during the first five years of the Plan), and a decline in dropout and relapse rates to half the values observed for 2000 after the first five years of implementation of the Plan.	* Semiannual and annual surveys and questionnaires * Performance monitoring reports * Government records * Publications and journals	* Inability to adapt adequately to new technologies * Intensive reliance on foreign expertise with the subsequent risk of falling into technological dependence
Results/outcomes			
1.1 Sound, applicable scientific research on literacy	1.1 Flexible teaching programmes that take women's needs into account	1.1 Survey to ascertain the views of the target group	1.1 A certain amount of bias on the part of the persons who prepare these programmes, which may result in some departure from the ideal of neutrality
1.2 State-of-the-art teaching programmes with feasible activities that meet the needs of Arab women	1.2 Programme objectives reflect the needs of women in the home and in their interaction with husbands and children and self-improvement potential; presentation of programmes is stimulating and attractive and women are satisfied with them; potential for convenient application of activities in their daily lives	1.2 Surveys to ascertain the views of the community	1.2 Failure to attain these objectives, which might result in failure of the programmes
1.3 State-of-the-art programmes to develop teachers' capacities and adequate incentives	1.3 Competent teachers capable of both teaching and learning with an appropriate practical and educational background; an appropriate, satisfactory level of compensation aligned with the general price level in each country	1.3 Periodic testing to confirm teachers' quality of performance; questionnaires to determine whether incentives are commensurate with teachers' needs	1.3 Opposition and resistance by teachers to change and testing and possible resultant criticism, which are unwelcome to most

Description of activity	*Indicator*	*Means of realization*	*Assumption or hazard*
1.4 Up-to-date techniques used in the teaching process	1.4 Availability of adequate numbers of intelligent classrooms containing modern presentation tools (data show, computers, Internet connection, comfortable, well-designed seats)	1.4 Field visits, periodic statistical reports and measurement of feedback	1.4 Suboptimal use of such classrooms, with the cost of equipping them not justified by level of benefit; possible lack of adequately skilled maintenance personnel
1.5 Education market strongly linked to community and job market	1.5 Representatives of various strata in the community representing the job market, scientific research, civil society organizations and other stakeholders in the educational process contribute to an appropriate degree in choice of programmes, curriculum and course design, etc.	1.5 Survey to ascertain the views of various strata in the community about teaching programmes and whether they conform to the aims of each of those strata	1.5 Inadequate cooperation among the various social strata, with the result that the desired strong links and adequate contributions fail to materialize
1.6 Adequate, consistent funding	1.6 Governments of Arab States provide adequate budget allocations on a regular basis to enable the eradication of this dangerous social scourge	1.6 Actual monetary allocations in the budget of each State	1.6 Allocations eliminated or reduced for various reasons during a particular period, with resultant negative impacts on planned actions
2.1 Package of suitable incentives for students	2.1 Availability of an integrated package of moral and material incentives for persons participating in literacy programmes, such as prizes for outstanding women students, good job openings for them, assistance in starting small business ventures, adequately supervised child care while they are attending classes	2.1 Budget allocations adequate to reward excellence; statistics on small business start-ups to which graduate women have contributed; number of job offers they have received; numbers of children accompanying their mothers to classes and facilities available for them	2.1 A non-negligible percentage of women unwilling to participate in programmes despite the availability of incentives package; or today's incentive may be tomorrow's disincentive, implying the need for some sort of dynamic which would be difficult to control

Description of activity	*Indicator*	*Means of realization*	*Assumption or hazard*
2.2 Adequate community awareness	2.2 A high percentage of women enrol in these programmes, with support and encouragement from their husbands; the family devotes part of its time to study and learning	2.2 Periodic reports and statistical data, and adequate budgetary allocations for media campaigns	2.2 Places where it is difficult to achieve a satisfactory level of community awareness of the importance of these programmes, i.e. perhaps remote rural areas, which account for the greater part of the population of illiterate women; possible budget limitations reducing the reach of media campaigns
2.3 Basic, functional and cultural literacy	2.3 Reduction in relapse rates, and an adequate minimum awareness of the community and its problems and how women graduates from literacy programmes can contribute to the work of solving those problems	2.3 Periodic reports and statistical data	2.3 In the future, illiteracy will be mathematical illiteracy and it will be essential to know how to use a computer and the Internet, and this may raise illiteracy levels once again
2.4 Reliable statistics on illiteracy produced by uniform measures across the Arab world	2.4 A statistical measure based on a precise scientific method appropriate for each Arab State and which those States agree to use to measure illiteracy rates, and an Executive Office entrusted with the task or activation of the existing situation, which will gather and prepare the statistical data and publish them annually	2.4 The materialization of this Executive Office in fact, or the activation of the currently existing situation, and publication of the annual reports	2.4 Lack of agreement on a single measure and various points of view depending on socio-economic development indicators in the several States; difficulty in establishing a single Arab Executive Office to carry out the task

Description of activity	*Indicator*	*Means of realization*	*Assumption or hazard*
2.5 Accredited literacy institutions	2.5 Accreditation of those institutions by quality control and accreditation bodies in the Arab States or at the international level	2.5 National and international certificates of accreditation and attesting the quality of graduates; participation of a proportion of them in the job market	2.5 Institutions awarded accreditation only for a limited period of time instead of permanently because of year-to-year changes in quality requirements and criteria in response to the evolving world situation in respect of literacy training
2.6 A strong information structure	2.6 Timely availability of the desired data on appropriate satisfactory performance	2.6 Periodic reports and statistical data	2.6 Much time and effort may be needed to create such an information structure, especially in Arab States where the process of establishing an adequate information structure is still in the early stages
2.7 Strong laws on literacy that are enforced	2.7 Vigorous enforcement of literacy laws and dissuasive penalties for contravention	2.7 Numbers of contraventions of the laws and penalties imposed	2.7 Inconsistency between enforcement agencies and long times required for cases to work their way through the courts

Table 11

Matrix presentation of activities, implementation and follow-up action under the Plan of Action for Promotion of Literacy among Women in the Arab Region

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
1.1 Sound, applicable scientific research on literacy	1.1.1 Development of a research agenda for research centres and institutions working in the field of education, with a view to the preparation of training programmes that take the issue of illiteracy among women into account and accommodate its requirements from a realistic standpoint	1.1.1 Six months	* Research institutions working in the field of education studies in the Arab States * The public and community sectors * National Councils for the Advancement of Women (or the like) in the Arab States * Arab experts on education, with participation by the target group	* AGFUND (an Arab Gulf programme that supports United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) projects * Helen Keller International	* Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Ministries of Social Affairs and Solidarity *Civil society organizations * Elements of the target group * Audio-visual and print media outlets
	1.1.2 Action to lay the groundwork needed to direct scientific research toward the vital problems confronting illiterate women, especially in rural areas, and how to deal with them and their needs in order to enable them to overcome their illiteracy and lead healthy lives	1.1.2 Three months			
	1.1.3 Adoption of rules requiring students in higher education to undertake scientific research on the issue of women's illiteracy and how to deal with it, with applicability to various social strata and ages within the 15-45 age bracket. The research should include a field component and case studies. This should be made a requirement for obtaining a degree in science.	1.1.3 Three months			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
	1.1.4 Enlisting the participation of students in faculties of education, sociology, economics and development by steering their graduation research projects toward the problems of teaching and training illiterate women.	1.1.4 Three months			
1.2 State-of-the-art teaching programmes with practicable activities that meet the needs of Arab women	1.2.1 Observation of the main economic, social, cultural and environmental problems experienced by illiterate Arab women and the difficulties they encounter as a result of their illiteracy, and the negative effects resulting from that situation	1.2.1 Six months	* Teaching and research institutions working in the field of education research * Civil society institutions interested in women's issues and literacy * Elements of the target group	* Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) * Some civil society institutions * UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women)	* National Councils for the Advancement of Women (or the like) in the Arab States * Educational organizations specializing in the issue of literacy
	1.2.2 Identification of the main areas of illiterate Arab women's need for assistance in becoming effectively integrated into their environment and becoming socially and economically empowered	1.2.2 Three months			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
1.3 State-of-the-art programmes to develop teachers' capacities and adequate incentives	1.3.1 Preparation of a case study of the present situation of literacy teachers in order to determine their professional preparedness, capabilities, scientific ability and adaptability, and how to create incentives for them	1.3.1 Six months	* Teaching and research institutions working in the field of education research	* Allocations from the budgets of the Governments of Arab States * International Labour Organization * Arab Labour Organization * International Council for Adult Education	* Bodies responsible for ensuring teaching quality and accreditation * The target group (teachers) * Educational organizations specializing in the issue of literacy * International auditors from international institutions
	1.3.2 Development of previously prepared training programme packages in the light of teachers' current situation and scientific, technological and social change	1.3.2 Three months	* Ministries of Education in the Arab States		
	1.3.3 Introduction of a system of material and moral incentives for literacy teachers based on reward and punishment[6]	1.3.3 Three months	* Ministries of Planning and Development		
	1.3.4 Establishment of specialized national centres to produce trained cadres to work in the field of the advancement of women at State level	1.3.4 Three months	* Ministries of Finance * The target group (teachers)		

[6] An example of an incentive model proposed by Prof. Zahi Azar, President of the Arab Network for Popular Education and a member of the working group on the Plan:
* Monthly compensation for women trainers (750)
* Monthly compensation for women coordinators and group leaders (approximately 180 000)
* A yearly amount for any civil society organization that signs a partnership agreement with the project (approximately 500 associations or groups)
* 100 yearly cash prizes for outstanding women students
* Certificates of graduation in the fields of education and development for women trainers who have completed their training
* Training certificates for women coordinators who have completed their training
* Graduation certificates for women students who have successfully completed their courses
* Publication of the work of trainers and coordinators who have demonstrated excellence
* Publication and distribution of work by women students.

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
1.4 Up-to-date techniques used in the teaching process	1.4.1 Preparation of a permanent plan for training cadres in the use of modern technologies in the teaching process 1.4.2 Establishment or (where they already exist) development of technological institutes in the Arab States to turn out technical cadres in the field of information technology and its various applications, especially in this field	1.4.1 Three months 1.4.2 Three months	* Teaching and research institutions working in the field of education research * Ministries responsible for ITC * A group of educational experts and experts in information technology * Teaching and research institutions working in the field of education research * The public, private and community sectors * Some information technology and data base systems experts	* Arab Fund for Literacy and Adult Education * Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African and Arab Countries * World Bank * Islamic Development Bank * Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development in Kuwait * World Bank * Islamic Development Bank	* Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Bodies responsible for ensuring teaching quality and accreditation * The private and community sectors * Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Ministries of Labour and related issues * Auditors from international institutions * Civil society institutions * Women’s unions and organizations and local communities
1.5 Strong partnerships between the education market, the community and the job market	1.5.1 Establishment of an effective partnership between civil society as represented by the private and community sectors, and educational institutions that will afford a means of translating into reality the community’s need for jobs and the accompanying skills, thereby empowering women after they have become literate	1.5.1 Six months			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
	1.5.2 Development of curricula tailored to changes in the job market, with not less than 25% of total course time set aside for field visits to enable students to learn about the job market and its needs	1.5.2 Six months			
	1.5.3 Action to help women start small and mid-sized business ventures by developing their skills and encouraging the relevant institutions to grant them loans. The means to this end will be an integrated programme linking graduation from literacy classes, vocational training and funding in a series of complementary interrelated steps, or, alternatively, making jobs available to women after they have graduated and completed a vocational skills development programme	1.5.3 One year			
	1.5.4 Creation of dynamic data bases at individual level on members of the target population who enrol in literacy classes, graduates of literacy and adult education programmes, and job openings	1.5.4 One year			
	1.5.5 Organization of permanent exhibitions to market the products of women’s work, such as handicrafts and food products	1.5.5 Three months			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
1.6 Adequate, consistent funding	1.6.1 Drafting of proposals for an allocation under the budget of each Arab State to fund literacy & adult education programmes and the associated proposed incentives programmes in part	1.6.1 Three months	* Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Teaching and research institutions working in the field of education research in the Arab States * Experts who specialize in writing proposals for submission to international donor agencies and who possess sufficient expertise in economic and financial aspects	* Allocation under the Government budgets of the Arab States * Arab Fund for Literacy and Adult Education	* Ministries responsible for finance and planning in the Arab States * Experts specializing in the field of review and assessment of proposals submitted to international donor agencies
	1.6.2 Drafting of proposals for submission to donor State agencies to provide additional funding for these programmes	1.6.2 Three months			
	1.6.3 Establishment of local funds to support women's literacy, especially in States with high illiteracy rates	1.6.3 Three months			
2.1 Suitable package of incentives for students	2.1.1 A scientific study on the psychological characteristics of students in the 15-45 age bracket in an effort to identify the underlying causes of their low status, and the factors that attract them into or deter them from enrolling in skills upgrading programmes	2.1.1 Three months	* Research institutions and centres working in the field of psychological and social research in the Arab States * The target group * Specialists in the field of performance measurement systems and how they are bound up with incentives	* United Nations Development Programme * United Nations Population Fund	* Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Educational institutions working in the field of education studies in the Arab States * A number of auditors from international institutions * A number of civil society institutions
	2.1.2 Establishment of a system of material and moral incentives tied to performance and excellence, and also bound up with the vital needs of Arab women and availability of data and training programmes, in an effort to enable women to meet their needs, including needs relating to their health and the health of their children and families and also the health of the environment and the like	2.1.2 Three months			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
2.2 Adequate community awareness	2.2.1 Preparation of a media marketing plan to sell the idea of the importance of these programmes and their influential role in the lives of newly literate women	2.2.1 Three months	* Research institutions working in the field of education research in the Arab States * Agencies responsible for audio-visual and print media * A number of interested civil society institutions and volunteers * A number of media and marketing experts	* World Bank * USAID * United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	* Ministries with responsibility for media affairs in the Arab States * Educational institutions working in the field of education research in the Arab States * A number of interested civil society institutions and volunteers * A number of media and marketing experts
	2.2.2 Preparation of a plan for educational conferences and forums on the issue of illiteracy in each of the Arab States, although some of these activities will take place at the local level (media and marketing intensity will vary depending on the level of illiteracy among women in each State)	2.2.2 Three months			
2.3 Develop-ment of the teaching process mechanism	2.3.1 Development of programmes and content (objectives, curricula, courses and the like) in the light of research on the needs and problems of illiterate women, labour market requirements, and the ambient community, with previous activities included	2.3.1 Six months	* Research and teaching institutions working in the field of education research in the Arab States * A number of experts in the field of curriculum development and educational and scientific measurement and evaluation * A number of civil society institutions	* Arab Fund for Literacy and Adult Education * Arab Fund for Economic and Social Develop-ment in Kuwait	* Bodies responsible for ensuring teaching quality and accreditation * Educational organizations specializing in the issue of literacy * A number of experts and international auditors in the field of curriculum development and educational and scientific measurement and evaluation
	2.3.2 Development of a valid evaluation system the reflects the graduate's ability to handle matters relating to daily life and culture rather than reading and writing exclusively	2.3.2 Three months			
	2.3.3 Self-learning opportunities and training for women in the target population in a framework of continuing education	2.3.3 Three months			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
2.4 Reliable statistics produced by uniform measures across the Arab States	2.4.1 Creation of data bases on illiteracy in the Arab States, preparation of the necessary measurements and publication of periodic reports, or perhaps activation of the existing situation, working through ALECSO and taking advantage of data already available in that organization's Observatory of Education	2.4.1 One year	* Research and teaching institutions working in the field of education research in the Arab States * Experts in information systems and statistics and the preparation of international statistical reports * Agencies responsible for data gathering and analysis in the Arab States	* An Arab fund to be established expressly for the purpose, with all Arab States contributing	* Educational institutions specializing in the issue of literacy * A number of international auditors in the field of data analysis and statistical programmes
	2.4.2 Training a group of Arab cadres in using various indicators to measure illiteracy, and action to unify measurement of the phenomenon throughout the Arab region, with internationally agreed criteria	2.4.2 One year			
2.5 Accredited literacy institutions	2.5.1 Research aimed at diagnosing the present situation of literacy and adult education institutions and investigation of the gap between reality and ideal with a view to their national and international accreditation on the basis of the educational, environmental and health conditions prevailing in them; research aimed at learning about their present roles with a view to preparing for a redistribution of roles and ultimately integration and serial cooperation among these institutions to avoid overlapping and duplication of effort. The outcome of this activity will be the	2.5.1 Six months	* Research institutions, centres and institutes working in the field of education research in the Arab States * A number of experts specializing in the field of teaching institution quality	* World Bank * Budget allocations from the Governments of the Arab States	* Bodies responsible for ensuring teaching quality and accreditation * Ministries of Education in the Arab States * International institutions that have a set of international recognition and accreditation criteria

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
	establishment of a new institutional conception (which may turn out to be the same as the existing one), its objectives, and the form of cooperation with other institutions				
	2.5.2 Preparation of a project aimed at qualifying these institutions for accreditation and continuing development	2.5.2 One year			
2.6 A strong information structure	2.6.1 Creation of infrastructure for the use of new teaching and education technologies, including workshops, presentation equipment, computing equipment and Internet communication networks (especially in those States that are still in the early stages of using new technologies; those that have made some progress in this respect are in need of continuing development)	2.6.1 One to three years, depending on the situation in each State	* A number of institutions specializing in the field of basic information and information technology infrastructure in the private and community sectors * A group of educational experts and experts in basic information and information technology infrastructure * Research and teaching institutions working in the field of education research in the Arab States	* UNDP * A number of civil society institutions * USAID * World Bank	* Ministries with responsibility for communications and information technology * Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Bodies responsible for ensuring teaching quality and accreditation
	* 2.6.2 Creation of an integrated information system serving women and all indicators and data pertaining to them, including illiteracy, with constant inputting of fresh data; possibly closely linked with the above-mentioned Arab Observatory of Education within ALECSO	2.6.2 One year			

Result/Outcome	*Activity*	*Implementation time*	*Executing agency*	*Potential funding source*	*Monitoring and assessment agency*
2.7 Strong laws on literacy that are enforced	2.7.1 Drafting of legislation that can be enacted by the Parliaments of all Arab States making literacy and adult education compulsory, or enforcing legislation already on the books in some States	2.7.1 Six months	* Ministries of Education in the Arab States * Ministries of Justice and Legislation in the Arab States * A number of legal experts	* Budget allocations from the Governments of the Arab States	* Legislative Councils and Parliaments in the Arab States * A number of civil society institutions

2.4.7 Mechanisms and safeguards for implementation of the plan and its requirements

We propose the establishment of an Executive Office to administer the Plan of Action. It would be charged with the task of supervising the work of implementation, follow-up and evaluation, and providing Arab States with technical support in amending or preparing their own plans, subject always to conformity with the general framework of the present 15-year plan aimed at attaining the objectives set forth above in the discussion of the objectives tree. The Executive Office would perform its tasks working in effective, positive cooperation with the relevant agencies in the several Arab States. The proposed tasks of the Executive Office are outlined below.

- Preparation of proposals for the funding of plans from various international and governmental agencies, monitoring implementation, and training Arab States in the necessary capabilities;
- Continuing development of the Plan in the light of events;
- Training a group of human resources from the Arab States in the concept of strategic planning, and preparing and/or developing specific plans for each of them with a view to serving the objectives of implementation plans at the level of the several individual States;
- Recruiting the necessary administrative staff for the Executive Office;
- Recruiting the necessary educational staff for the Executive Office;
- Information about the objectives and aspects of the project;
- Determination of criteria for the selection of partners;
- Determination of criteria for the selection of women trainers and coordinators;
- Signing memorandums of understanding with all partners;
- Founding and launching a research and publication centre for the project;
- Founding and launching networking and interconnection platforms: web site, publication design and the desired documents
- Adoption of a system for observing activities and statistics under the Plan
- Preparation of a coordinator’s training kit
- Preparation of a training guide for students
- Preparation of periodic reports and the final report on the project
- Publication of concluding documents
- General assessment of the project
- Documentation for all work undertaken under the project at the League of Arab States.
- Conducting impact assessment studies.

Human resources required to staff the Executive Office:

- Director of the Executive Office

- Deputy Director
- Executive Secretary (2)
- Director of the Research and Publication Centre
- Research personnel under contract (15)
- Director of the interaction and networking programmes
- Personnel under contract (2)
- Persons in charge of trainer training (6)
- Persons in charge of coordinator training (8)
- Trainers under contract (10)
- Educational facility for each country (to be determined)
- Financial Director
- Assistant Financial Director
- Executive Secretary to the Financial Director
- Office facilities (3)

Annex

Plan of Action for the Promotion of Literacy among Women in the Arab Region: a developmental approach

Monitoring and assessment model in every Arab State that submits a proposal to begin implementation

Programme/Project:
Objective:
Time period covered in report:
Resource person in charge of preparing report:
Ministry/institution/agency:
State:

Symbol for action or activity	*Actions/ activities*	*Participating agency*	*Success indicators*	*Baseline indicator*	*Current value of indicator*	*Financial cost and source*	*Achievements connected with action/activity*	*Sources used to verify achievements*	*Actual/ planned outcome (%)*	*Difficulties & obstacles*	*Proposed alternative approaches*
Enter for every action/ activity according to content of literacy action plan implementation document	List in full under every programme/ project and every objective according to content of literacy action plan implementation document	Entry should clearly identify agencies that cooperated with the Ministry/ institution/ agency in carrying out the action (assisting implementation agencies)	Entry should include particulars of every action to help identify realizations connected with action/ activity in accordance with these indicators (quantitative and qualitative). Performance indicators here are indicators relating to outputs in the form of results and services resulting from realization of actions/ activities within a development input	Entry should show the quantitative or qualitative value of the indicator immediately before actions/ activities under the implementation plan were initiated (2010 and possibly earlier, depending on availability of data). The value may be the result of efforts in the same year, or the cumulative result of efforts up to the year selected as the base year.	Show the quantitative or qualitative value reached by the indicator in the year in which the form is completed, as a result of the application of activities contained in the implementation action plan for every programme/ project and every objective.	Entry should indicate the monetary value of every action/ activity and the funding source: general budget or donor organization or agency (must be identified).	Represents the essence of the form and the reason why it was designed. All achievements by the Ministry, institution or agency in connection with every action/activity contributing to attainment of a designated objective in the literacy action plan implementation document should be indicated.	Sources that can be used to verify achievements may include annual reports, documents, printed materials, official statistics, findings of field surveys, research and studies, and project and programme progress reports.	For every action/activity, the entry should show the percentage value of what has actually been achieved compared to the intended realization as set forth in the plan.	Difficulties and obstacles (if any) encountered by the Ministry/ institution/ agency during implementation of every action/ activity	Alternative approaches proposed by the Ministry/ institution/ agency for addressing difficulties and obstacles encountered during implementation of every action/activity (if any)

Plan of Action for the Promotion of Literacy among Women in the Arab Region

Project Card

in every Arab State that submits a proposal to begin implementation

Name of Ministry/institution/agency						
Name of programme/project						
Project objectives	* * *					
Project justifications	* * *					
Project execution time						
Agency responsible for execution	* Within Ministry/institution/agency					
	* External to Ministry/institution/agency (domestic/Arab/international)					
	Cost of every activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	- Activity 1 - Activity 2 - Activity 3 - Activity 4 - Activity 5					
	Total cost of programme/project					
Groups targeted under the programme/project						
Site of programme/project (locations where implementation takes place)						
Main elements (programme/project activities)	Period of implementation					Responsibility for implementation
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
- Activity 1 - Activity 2 - Activity 3 - Activity 4 - Activity 5						
Remarks						

List of the main technical terms used

Technical term	Definition
Strategic planning	A method of balancing resources and uses and crafting future scenarios based on what has been realized in the past and what it is desired to realize in the future
Vision	A dream shared by all stakeholders
Mission	What is required in order to realize the shared dream or vision
Goal	Strategic or long-term objectives
Objective	Aims which it is desired to attain in the short or medium term, and the attainment of which will lead to the goal in the long term
Referentials	Frameworks that have been agreed by a majority, and have become binding upon all
Main lines of emphasis of the Plan	The basic structural elements comprising the Plan of Action, which are addressed through the proposed projects and activities

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Construction of a new additional annex to the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States in Cairo

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having regard to efforts to develop and modernize the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States,

Taking into account the new responsibilities being assumed by the Secretariat-General within this framework,

With a view to keeping pace with scientific and technological change, and being determined to modernize and develop the tools and means available to Joint Arab Action and to enable the Secretariat-General to discharge its new responsibilities adequately,

Having heard the remarks of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, concerning the funding of the construction of an annex to the Headquarters of the League of Arab States, and the remarks of His Excellency, President Mohamed Morsi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, concerning the offer of a plot of land suitable for the construction of the additional annex,

Resolves

1. To express its thanks and appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, for his generous initiative in offering to provide funding for the construction of the new additional annex to the Secretariat-General of the League of Arb States on the plot of land to be made available by the Arab Republic of Egypt for that purpose in Cairo.

2. To express its thanks and appreciation to His Excellency, President Mohamed Morsi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for Egypt's willingness to make available a plot of land suitable for the construction of the new additional annex to the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States in Cairo.

3. To allocate an additional sum in the budget of the Secretariat-General for the current year, 2013, for the necessary renovations at the Headquarters of the League of Arab States in Tahrir Square.

4. Requests the Secretary-General to communicate with the competent agencies in the State of Qatar and the Arab Republic of Egypt in order to coordinate with them in the matter of the construction of the additional annex.

(Summit resolution 585, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Budget of the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General concerning its activities and programmes and the monetary obligations resulting from the development of its systems, structures and working tools and the entitlements of those employed there, and the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action,

Resolves

To approve the budget of the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States, amounting to 66 295 221 United States dollars, instead of 61 295 221 United States dollars (an increase of 5 million dollars) for the coming year, 2014.

(Summit resolution 586, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Establishment of a pension fund for personnel of the Secretariat-General

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having regard to the generous initiative of His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, concerning the establishment of a pension fund for personnel of the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States, and in the framework of the development and modernization of the systems of the Secretariat-General and its enhanced functional performance,

Resolves

1. To assent to the establishment of a pension fund for employees of the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States;

2. To commend the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, in the matter of the establishment of a pension fund for employees of the Secretariat-General, and to express thanks to His Highness for providing the sum of $10 million as a founding grant to initiate the activity of the fund;

3. To instruct the Secretariat-General to take the necessary measures to implement the activity of the fund, and to submit a report thereon to the Council of the League at its next session.

(Summit resolution 587, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Venue and date of the twenty-fifth ordinary session of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Recalling article 3 of the annex on the regular convening of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level, which stipulates that the Council of the League shall meet regularly at summit level in ordinary session once in March of every year,

Pursuant to article 4, paragraph (a) of the annex on the regular convening of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level, which stipulates that ordinary sessions of the Council at summit level shall be convened at League headquarters in Cairo but that the State which holds the summit presidency may move to host it, if it so wishes,

Having regard to the fact that both the State of Palestine and the United Republic of Comoros have waived their turns to act as President of the Summit at

the 25th and 26th sessions, whereas Kuwait has agreed to host the next Summit (the 25th),

Resolves

To welcome the State of Kuwait as President and host of the meeting of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level at its twenty-fifth ordinary session during March 2014 in Kuwait.

(Summit resolution 588, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

Expression of thanks and appreciation to the State of Qatar for hosting the twenty-fourth ordinary session in Doha

The Council of the League of Arab States at summit level,

Having considered the memorandum of the Secretariat-General and the report of the Secretary-General on Joint Arab Action,

Appreciating the generosity of the State of Qatar in hosting the work of the twenty-fourth ordinary session of the Council of the League at summit level for its estimable efforts in preparing and organizing the work of the session,

Resolves

1. To extend its gratitude and utmost appreciation to His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, for his efforts in making the summit a success and his admirable management of its work and for his generous initiative in supporting the development of the Secretariat-General and enhancing its functional performance, and to affirm its full confidence in his ability to steer the Joint Arab Action, impel its progress toward new horizons, and consolidate Arab solidarity for the benefit of the Arab nation, including in particular its support for the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and the preservation of the Arab identity of the holy city of Jerusalem;

2. To express its gratitude to the State of Qatar, its people and its Government, for their warm welcome and generous hospitality and for their admirable organization of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level and the preparatory Councils that preceded it, and also for providing all the facilities and arrangements needed to ensure that the session was held under ideal conditions and was crowned by its attainment of the desired outcomes.

(Summit resolution 589, 24th ordinary session – 26 March 2013)

The Doha Declaration

We, the leaders of the Arab States, assembled at the 24th session of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level in Doha, the capital of the State of Qatar, on 14 Jumada II AH 1434/26 March AD 2013, having devoted our efforts to an exploration of the present Arab situation and future horizons,

Reaffirming our adherence to the Charter of the League of Arab States and the treaties and agreements supplementing it, which refer to the firm, manifold ties linking all the Arab countries, and our determination to strengthen and consolidate those ties and ensure that they serve to benefit all the Arab countries, advance their interests, secure their future, realize their hopes and aspirations, and respond to Arab public opinion in all of them,

Aware of the articles of the Charter providing for preservation of the independence and sovereignty of the Arab States from any aggression by all possible means, and for the promotion, in general, of the affairs and interests of the Arab States and the establishment of close cooperation in economic and commercial matters, trade, agriculture, industry, social and health affairs, and all other forms of cooperation as stated in the Charter,

Drawing upon our values, our culture, and our commitment to the principles enunciated in the Charter of the United Nations to pursue the stability of international peace and security and the spread of a culture of dialogue between civilizations,

Recalling the Treaty of Joint Defence and Economic Cooperation among the members of the League of Arab States, which affirmed the desire of those States for lasting security, peace and stability and their commitment to the provision of assistance to any State or States subjected to aggression and to taking immediate measures, jointly or severally, using all the means at their disposal, including the use of armed force, to repel such aggression and restore security and peace,

Expressing our profound dismay at the formidable challenges confronting the Arab world, which are having far-reaching impacts on its security and safety and the stability and sovereignty of its States, and the armed conflicts and disturbances that some Arab States are currently experiencing, which may sweep away their stability and territorial integrity and jeopardize the gains that they have achieved,

Affirming the importance of implementing the resolutions adopted by the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level at its previous session and at the third Arab Economic and Social Development Summit concerning the strengthening of Arab solidarity, increasing and intensifying cooperation between Member States, achieving sustainable development, and tackling poverty, ignorance and unemployment,

We call for continued reforms that will ensure political and social stability, greater popular participation in the machinery and institutions of government, consolidation of the rights of citizens, preservation of their dignity, establishment of the bases of good governance, the rule of law and the propagation of equality and justice among all citizens, the realization of social justice, and escape from the stereotyped thinking that uses yesterday’s means to address tomorrow’s issues, looking to a future with new concepts and innovative solutions that will protect the security of the Arab nation, increase its vigour, and enable it to transcend its present

situation and look to future horizons with a confidence befitting the stature of the Arab nation and its role in and contribution to human civilization.

Having subjected the present Arab situation to in-depth examination and a comprehensive assessment and having reviewed the new challenges confronting the Arab States in an effort to provide answers to the numerous questions concerning the most advantageous ways to emerge from the crises and conflicts currently besetting the Arab region and identify the available choices for realizing the hopes of Arab citizens, including a secure future for their families and children, promoting a spirit of hope in Arab young people, instilling in them pride in their identity and the culture to which they belong, paving the way for their assumption of responsibilities and participation in decision-making, promoting higher Arab interests, and strengthening the course of our collective action, we declare our determination to devote our utmost efforts to the task of maintaining the independence and sovereignty of our States, ensuring the prosperity of our citizens and guaranteeing their honour and dignity. To that end,

- We welcome the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, in the matter of the establishment of a fund to support Jerusalem and its endowment with financial resources in the amount of 1 billion United States dollars to finance projects and programmes that will preserve the Arab and Islamic identity of the holy city of Jerusalem, strengthen the steadfastness of its people, and enable the Palestinian economy to develop its own capabilities, break its dependence on the Israeli economy, and confront the Israeli policy of isolation and blockade, and we also welcome His Highness's announcement that the State of Qatar will contribute one quarter of a billion dollars to the fund.

- We call upon the international community to act immediately to lay the foundations of a just, comprehensive peace and bring about Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, to the line of 4 June 1967, and from those Lebanese territories that are still occupied in the south of the country.

- We affirm that the State of Palestine is a full, fundamental partner in the peace process, the foundations of which are the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy, the Arab Peace Initiative, a two-State solution based on the line of 4 June 1967, a halt to all settlement activity, and the resumption of serious negotiations to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict through the creation of an independent, sovereign State of Palestine having East Jerusalem as its capital, as a single, indivisible geographic entity.

- We call upon the Security Council to take the necessary measures to ensure the acceptance of the State of Palestine as a full Member State of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and organizations.

- We commend the role being played by the Arab Peace Initiative Committee, with the State of Qatar as its President, and its prompt representations to the permanent members of the Security Council and the European Union in an effort to reach a solution through the launching of serious negotiations within a time frame having starting and completion dates and proceeding in accordance with specified mechanisms leading to the establishment of a just, comprehensive peace in the region.

- We express our total rejection of Israel's intention to declare itself a Jewish State and all unilateral Israeli measures aimed at altering the demographic and geographic status of the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, and the imposition of a new reality on the ground. We affirm the illegitimacy and illegality of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, which violate international law, United Nations resolutions and the fourth Geneva Convention. We call upon the international community to give effect to international resolutions, including in particular Security Council resolutions 465 (1980) and 497 (1981), which determine that settlement activity is illegal and that existing settlements must be dismantled, and to act to bring about the removal of the racial separation wall, an immediate halt to all Israeli Judaization measures in Jerusalem and the lifting of the economic and military blockade, to require Israel to bear responsibility for paying compensation to the Palestinian people for all the losses they have sustained as a result of that blockade, and to demand an end to the unjust blockade of Gaza and the opening of the crossing-points to enable the free movement of people and goods to and from the West Bank.

- We salute the steadfast Palestinian people, who command our admiration and esteem as they confront the practices of the Israeli occupying power, and we support their courageous resistance in the Gaza Strip in turning back aggression. We express our full solidarity with Palestinian prisoners and detainees, and we affirm that Israel must bear full responsibility for any risks to the health and lives of prisoners on hunger strike. We demand the immediate release of all Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including political leaders, legislators and children, and the provision of the necessary international protection for them in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 of October 2000 and other relevant international resolutions.

- We appeal to the Palestinian leadership and all groups and national forces to acknowledge the necessity of restoring national unity, preserving the gains achieved by the Palestinian people, continuing their resistance to the Israeli occupation and establishing an independent, sovereign Palestinian State having East Jerusalem as its capital. We call upon them to implement the Cairo Agreement signed on 4 May 2011 and the Doha Declaration of 6 February 2012. We express our thanks to the Arab Republic of Egypt and the State of Qatar for their tireless efforts to bring about Palestinian national reconciliation, and we urge them to pursue their efforts on behalf of national reconciliation for the sake of the best interests of the Palestinian people.

- We express our full commitment to the reconstruction of Gaza, an end to the suffering of its people, and a life of dignity for them. We call upon the international community to act quickly to put an end to the blockade on the Gaza Strip and to open the crossings from and to the Strip.

- We affirm our full support and backing for the just, legitimate rights of the Syrian people in the matter of the full recovery of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan to the line of 4 June 1967, pursuant to the resolutions of international legitimacy in the matter. We express our rejection of all measures taken by the Israeli occupation authorities to alter the legal, natural and demographic status of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, deeming such measures to constitute a violation and breach of international law, the Charter of the United Nations,

and United Nations resolutions determining Israel's decision to annex the occupied Syrian Arab Golan to be unlawful, null and void and of no legal effect, inasmuch as it constitutes a grave violation of Security Council resolution 496 (1981). We affirm our support for the steadfastness of the Arab residents of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, and we stand side by side with them in facing the Israeli occupation and its repressive practices. We support their resolute adherence to their land and their Syrian Arab identity.

- We reaffirm our full solidarity with and political and economic backing for Lebanon, and support it and its Government in preserving its national unity, security, stability, and sovereignty over all its territory. We commend the national role being played by the Lebanese Army in the southern part of the country in enforcing the sovereignty of the Lebanese State up to its internationally recognized borders and maintaining stability and civil peace. We affirm the necessity of strengthening the capacities of the Lebanese security forces to enable them to carry out the national tasks for which they are responsible.

- We express our full support for the right of Lebanon, Government, people and resistance, to liberate or recover the Lebanese Shebaa Farms and Kafr Shuba hills and the Lebanese territory in Ghajar village, to defend Lebanon in the face of any aggression by all available legitimate means, and to affirm its Government's commitment to Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), including all its paragraphs with their contents.

- We condemn in the strongest terms the grave military escalation that the forces of the Syrian regime are inflicting upon the Syrian people, and the continued operations of violence and mass killing that it is carrying out against civilian residents in the greater part of Syrian territory. We strongly denounce the Syrian regime's use of heavy weaponry, military aircraft and Scud missiles to bombard residential districts and regions and its application of a scorched-earth policy, which has resulted in terrible numbers of victims and driven large numbers of Syrians from their neighbourhoods, towns and villages and turned them into emigrants and refugees.

- We welcome the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces as the occupant of the seat of the Syrian Arab Republic at the League of Arab States and its several organizations, councils and instrumentalities pending the holding of elections to determine the formation of a Government that will assume the responsibilities of office in Syria. We regard the Coalition as the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people and its fundamental interlocutor with the League of Arab States, having regard to the sacrifices of the Syrian people and the exceptional circumstances currently prevailing in the country.

- We affirm the importance of efforts aimed at reaching a political solution to the Syrian crisis as a priority matter. We affirm the right of every State wishing to do so to provide all means of self-defence, including military means, to support the steadfastness of the Syrian people and the Free Syrian Army.

- We commend the admirable efforts of Syria's neighbouring States and other Arab States and their role in providing for the immediate needs of these emigrants. We affirm the necessity of supporting and assisting those States in

bearing the burdens incumbent upon them as host countries, and of endeavouring to continue providing all forms of support and assistance for the shelter and relief of these emigrants in Lebanon in accordance with the relief plan prepared by the Lebanese Government, in Jordan in accordance with relief plans and appeals adopted by the Jordanian Government, and in Iraq, in order to meet the essential needs of these victims.

- We commend the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait, in generously proposing that the international donors' conference for the Syrian people should be hosted by the State of Kuwait on 30 January 2013.

- We call for the convening of an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations on the reconstruction of Syria and the rehabilitation of the infrastructure in all sectors that have sustained damage as a result of the widespread destruction that has occurred.

- We urge States and regional and international organizations to recognize the National Coalition for Syrian and Revolutionary Forces as a legitimate representative of the aspirations of the Syrian people and their hope for freedom, justice, and the laying of the foundations of good governance. We call upon all regional and international institutions to extend all forms of backing and support to enable the Syrian people to defend themselves and to continue their struggle to establish a State of justice and the rule of law.

- We affirm our full solidarity with the sister State of Libya in exercising its right to preserve its sovereignty, independence and territorial unity. We express our rejection of any form of foreign intervention in its internal affairs and the jeopardizing of its independence. We welcome the outcome of the elections of the National General Congress held in July 2012, and we declare our support for the efforts of the Government to achieve national reconciliation, complete the building of State institutions, and speedily make good all the economic, social and human damage resulting from the policies of the former regime.

- We call for effective cooperation with the Government of Libya for recovery of the plundered funds that were smuggled out of the country and the surrender of the wanted persons to justice on charges of felonies and financial offences against the Libyan people so that they may stand trial before Libyan courts, with all legal safeguards for accused persons.

- We affirm our support for the national dialogue for which His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, king of Bahrain, has called with a view to realizing harmony, national agreement and a convergence of views and standpoints that will serve the best interests of the country, further the hopes and aspirations of the Bahraini people for peace and justice and impel the process of reform and national development in a context of national unity.

- We undertake to endeavour to preserve the unity of Yemen and maintain respect for its sovereignty and national independence. We affirm our rejection of any interference in its internal affairs. We express our support for the fraternal Yemeni people in their aspirations to freedom, democracy and social justice and the achievement of the comprehensive development for which they are striving. We welcome the beginning of a comprehensive national dialogue in Yemen on 18 March 2013, and we call upon all parties in the country to

participate in that dialogue, deeming it to be the ideal option for traversing the current difficulties. It is essential to respect the bases and criteria set forth in the Gulf Initiative and its implementation mechanisms. We call upon Member States to provide all forms of material support to fund development projects and programmes in order to enable Yemen to realize and expedite the development process.

- We condemn the Iranian Government's continued consolidation of its occupation of three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates and its violation of the sovereignty of that State, which threatens security and stability in the region and will endanger international security and peace. We affirm the inalienable right of the United Arab Emirates to full sovereignty over the three islands, Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, and our support for all peaceful measures taken by the United Arab Emirates to restore its sovereignty over those three islands.

- We proclaim our solidarity with the Republic of the Sudan, and we welcome the signing by the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, on 8 March 2013, of the Implementation Matrix for the nine cooperation agreements between them which were signed on 27 September 2012. We affirm the importance of establishing brotherly cooperative relations between the two States based on shared interests, reciprocal security and good-neighbourliness, as such relations will promote stability in the region. We appreciate the efforts of the Sudanese Government to support and consolidate Arab-African relations.

- We welcome the efforts of the State of Qatar and the Republic of the Sudan on behalf of an international donors' conference for the reconstruction of Darfur, to be held in Doha on 7-8 April 2013. We call upon Member States and Arab monetary funds to participate effectively in the work of the conference, and to pledge substantial amounts to support the work of the Sudanese Government in the reconstruction of Darfur.

- We welcome the success achieved by the Republic of Somalia and the progress it has made in respect of the political process, the election of the Head of State and the Speaker of Parliament, the confidence of Parliament that has been won by the Prime Minister, and the rebuilding of the State and its institutions. We welcome the steady improvement in the security situation. We express our esteem for the role played by the African Union mission to Somalia and its cooperation with Somali Government forces to restore security and establish stability.

- We call upon Member States and the States of the world to provide Somalia with all forms of political, material and financial support and technical assistance to enable it to continue making political progress and strengthening security, and to support it in building State institutions and pursuing reconstruction.

- We urge Member States and the States of the world to strengthen their presence in Somalia by reopening their diplomatic missions in Mogadishu in order to express their support, awaken hope and confidence in the hearts of the Somali people, and support national unity.

- We affirm our heartfelt desire for the national unity, territorial integrity and national sovereignty of the United Republic of Comoros. We express our esteem for the joint efforts of the League of Arab States, the African Union, the United Nations and neighbouring States to bring about implementation of the Framework Agreement for Reconciliation, and call upon them to continue their efforts to that end.

- We affirm the identity of the island of Mayotte and reject the French occupation of it. We demand that France pursue dialogue with the Government of Comoros to reach a solution that will ensure the restoration of the island of Mayotte to Comorian sovereignty.

- We welcome the efforts and initiatives undertaken by the State of Qatar and the League of Arab States to give effect to the outcomes and commitments of the Arab Conference for the Support of Investment and Development in the United Republic of Comoros. We call upon Member States and Arab investment and financing institutions to provide funding for development projects in the Comoros, in accordance with the outcomes of the meeting of the Arab Committee for the Support of Investment and Development in the Comoros that was held in Doha on 14 March 2013.

- We welcome the agreement signed between the Republic of Djibouti and the State of Eritrea on 6 June 2010, which was reached under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar. We support the implementation of that agreement and compliance with its provisions. We reaffirm that it is essential to respect the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Djibouti and reject aggression against it. We urge respect for the principles of good-neighbourliness and non-violation of the borders between the two countries as they stood at the time of their independence.

- We affirm the necessity of making the Middle East a region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and, as a matter of urgency, putting a definitive stop to the arms race that the region is currently witnessing. We affirm our adherence to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, deeming it to be a vital cornerstone of the proliferation prevention system, which relies on the importance of honouring commitments that have been agreed upon in the implementation monitoring process. We call for the convening of an international conference to establish a region free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East at the earliest possible time, and for action to set a definite date for that conference. We affirm the importance of consultations under the auspices of the United Nations and a clearly specified agenda, with the participation of those States that state officially that they will attend the conference. We emphasize that delay in organizing the conference beyond 2012 will represent a violation of the entire proliferation prevention system and will damage the credibility of the Treaty.

- We proclaim our rejection of attempts to place responsibility for the failure of the organizers of the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction upon the Arab States. We affirm that the postponement of the conference is due to Israel’s refusal to comply with the will of the international community and

its desire to have a monopoly of nuclear weapons in the region. We reaffirm our determination to ensure the security of the Arab region by all legitimate means.

- We condemn the terrorist attacks and political assassinations to which Arab States have been subjected. We affirm our absolute rejection of any attempt to harm any Arab State, and we reject all forms of blackmail on the part of terrorist groups by threatening or killing hostages or demanding ransom money to finance their crimes. We call for the continuation and intensification of programmes aimed at heightening awareness of the dangers of terrorism, ensuring the rectification of aberrant fatwas, and uncovering attempts to spread fear on the part of misguided groups operating outside the law.

- We affirm the importance of international cooperation and the coordination of efforts with the States of the world and international institutions and organizations to contain terrorism, stop terrorist operations, work for the creation of institutional frameworks and mechanisms and develop the necessary programmes to broaden the scope of international anti-terrorism cooperation and enlarge its areas of action.

- We affirm continued action to pursue dialogue between cultures and civilizations in greater depth, deeming them to be tributaries of human civilization. We proclaim our rejection of the assertions of extremists as expressed in certain quarters in various cultures. We declare our continued support for all efforts and initiatives seeking the unity of human civilization in its various aspects, which we consider represents shared values that have contributed to the shaping of all humanity. We reject all attempts to disparage Arab and Islamic civilization, and we call for action to propagate awareness of the outstanding role that that civilization has played and its extensive contribution to the rise of human civilization and the elevation of its noble values. In this connection, we commend the initiative of the Guardian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, King of Saudi Arabia, in establishing the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, and the Centre's efforts to promote contact between the adherents of different religions and cultures and to support a culture of cooperation and coexistence among all peoples.

- We express our strong indignation at the deteriorating situation of the Muslim Rohingya minority in Myanmar, who have been described by the United Nations as one of the most persecuted peoples in the world. We appeal to the international community to intervene quickly with the Government of the Republic of Myanmar to ensure that the members of the Muslim Rohingya minority are enabled to enjoy the legitimate rights of full citizenship of which they have been deprived, and to provide them with humanitarian assistance.

- We affirm our commitment to Arab solidarity in practice and approach, and our support for endeavours to end inter-Arab differences, whatever their nature, the redoubling of efforts to intensify our mutual support and assistance and unity of positions, and action to achieve integration among our States in all fields as well as a deeper shared responsibility among us in that connection.

- We affirm the necessity of providing all forms of support and backing for Member States undergoing far-reaching changes in the economic and political

situations, along with action to help them recover stability, re-establish security, enforce the law, and rebuild State institutions and systems of governance that reflect the aspirations and hopes of the Arab people for a better present and a brighter future.

- We call upon all political and social forces, authorities and leading personalities in Member States that have experienced and are still experiencing widespread social movements to activate national dialogue, ensure that the best interests of the country prevail, and reach the necessary mutual understanding in order to bring about the change to which the Arab peoples aspire by firmly establishing the rule of law and good governance, guaranteeing popular participation in decision-making, and achieving social justice, equity and equality.

- We renew our commitment to the fundamental principles and human values of human rights in all their comprehensive and integral aspects, our attachment to the principles and provisions of the Arab Charter on Human Rights and the various international charters and conventions that our States have ratified, and our respect for freedom of thought and expression, the independence of the judiciary, greater popular participation, and a more active role for community organizations and civil society institutions. We call for the convening of a conference of civil society organizations in the Member States in Doha on the development of a system of human rights in the League of Arab States.

- We affirm our continued action and further efforts to provide an appropriate environment for preservation of the dignity of Arab citizens and their right to a secure and decent life. We understand that progress and advancement are contingent on human well-being, the preservation of human dignity, the safeguarding of human rights, and the protection of human capacities, attainments and security.

- We call for collective action to ensure the allocation of the necessary resources to eradicate poverty in Member States, and to provide material facilities and financial assistance for the least developed Arab States in order to support their efforts to reduce poverty and minimize its social and political effects. We call for action to reform income distribution systems in every Arab country pursuant to the principle of social justice in income distribution and equality in the distribution of wealth, depending on the situation of each State. We call for the adoption of a mode of directing resources appropriately toward sectors in which low-income people work, especially agricultural production in smallholdings and small and mid-sized business enterprises, to ensure that low-income people will benefit directly, and with a view to rapid progress toward a more just and more equal society characterized by civil peace, political stability, social cohesion, safety and security.

- We emphasize the necessity of joint socio-economic action, holding that to be the mainstay of Joint Arab Action in all its political, social, economic and informational aspects and as such serving to further the course of comprehensive Arab reform, strengthen Joint Arab Action, enhance its efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness, empower Arab individuals, release their capacities and innovative potential, make them participants in the development process, enable them to enjoy its fruits, and broaden their range

of choices, thereby enhancing prospects for the success of development programmes and plans.

- We call for a greater degree of Arab integration through completion of the Greater Arab Free Trade Area, the timely reduction of obstacles to the realization of that aim, and initiation of the following stage of economic integration, namely a customs union leading to an Arab common market. We call for action to increase links among the productive structures in the Arab region through joint Arab economic action, which will gradually make Arab economies competitive in world markets and further develop them, in particular by enhancing their productivity and converting them into knowledge economies.

- We emphasize the importance of carrying out a comprehensive reform in public policies, specifically, economic, social, financial and trade policies, with a view to achieving political and social stability and making progress along the various tracks in the development process, including economic growth, the attainment of poverty reduction objectives, continued infrastructure development, more active trade relations between Arab States, a larger share of world trade for the Arab countries, and the creation of suitable, decent, well-paid jobs for those seeking work.

- We affirm the importance of in-depth institutional reform at the national and regional levels and reliance on shared interests in institutional reform at the Arab level as preparation for policies supporting political stability and social cohesion, while the construction of governance management systems will promote positive interaction between citizens and State and eliminate the phenomena of administrative and financial corruption by enshrining the values of transparency, activating accountability mechanisms and enhancing administrative quality. The outcome will be consolidation of the rule of law and the strengthening of social justice and equality, enabling the Arab region to move beyond its present situation toward future horizons with confidence and determination.

- Action to develop the League of Arab States and the entire Joint Arab Action system along lines such that it will be able to confront the challenges which are making change in the situation of the Arab world inevitable, and will enable it to contribute effectively to the delineation of a brighter future for the Arab peoples. We affirm the necessity of supporting it and providing it with all the resources needed to enhance its performance and develop its methods of operation in keeping with contemporary reality and the demands of regional and international change.

- We express our deep concern with the situation of Arab women, and we call with determination for action to give effect to the principle of equality and justice in society and the enforcement of provisions of Arab legislation and statutory instruments enshrining women’s rights. We call for the enactment of legislation that will permit the empowerment of women and guarantee their rights in all areas, and the elimination of all obstacles and barriers that prevent women from contributing to public life, as well as the adoption of regulations and laws that will guarantee effective participation by women in political, legislative and executive institutions.

- We affirm the importance of Arab cooperation in the various areas of child welfare in order to raise the general level of children's well-being quantitatively and qualitatively. We call upon the Joint Arab Action institutions to devote greater attention to the task of improving children's living conditions in general, and to concern themselves with issues and problems affecting children. We affirm the importance of serious research on children's issues and futures, and of an in-depth effort to prepare a viable plan for Arab cooperation in the various aspects of children's welfare and problems through the creation of appropriate institutional mechanisms and frameworks aimed at addressing the issues affecting children, with action to eliminate the barriers currently impeding work at the Arab level. That effort should include the provision of the necessary resources and the ability to intervene to protect children in regions affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts and to enhance the general level of their lives and well-being. This will also serve to also improve children's daily lives and safeguard their rights, their lives and their human existence.

- We call for further development of school curricula, the improvement and scientific and technological upgrading of educational institutions, and action to unify curricula throughout the Arab region. We also urge that the necessary attention be paid to the task of improving the teaching of the Arabic language, inasmuch as it is a gage of the Arab identity and a vessel for Arab thought and culture. We affirm our determination to increase spending on scientific and technical research, establish technology in our States, encourage scientists and researchers, build more scientific research institutions, and forge closer links between universities, institutes and other educational institutions in the Arab world

- We affirm our intent and determination to give effect to the lofty principles enunciated in this declaration in pursuit of political stability and security and success in overcoming the challenges currently confronting the Arab world, looking to the future with hope and determination to achieve comprehensive Arab advancement and social and economic progress on all fronts. We offer our sincere esteem and gratitude to His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, for his competence in managing the work of the summit, his perceptive management of its discussions, his determination to activate Arab solidarity, and his tireless efforts to achieve comprehensive progress and development in the Arab region and his invaluable contributions to that end.

- We express our heartfelt thanks to the State of Qatar and its welcoming people for their generous reception and hospitality, and to the Government of the State and institutions of the State of Qatar for their judicious organization of the work of the Arab summit at its twenty-fourth ordinary session, and for their admirable preparation for that session. We also express our satisfaction at the sustained efforts of the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States aimed at ensuring the success of the work of the summit.

Doha, State of Qatar
14 Jumada II AH 1434/26 March AD 2013

Address by His Highness, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, at the opening meeting

In the name of God compassionate and merciful.

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Mr. Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of the State of Qatar, its Government and its people. I hope you will enjoy your stay among your people and your brothers in Doha. I am also pleased to extend my sincere thanks to His Excellency, Mr. Jalal Talabani, President of the fraternal Republic of Iraq, for his estimable efforts during his Presidency of the previous session of this summit. I pray Almighty God will shortly restore him to health.

In addition, it gives me great pleasure to express my profound esteem for Mr. Nabil al-Arabi and the personnel of the Secretariat-General for their past and continuing efforts to enhance the role of the League of Arab States.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

The issue of Palestine is the foremost issue of the Arabs. It is the key to peace, security and stability in the Middle East. Peace will be attainable only when a just, lasting and comprehensive solution is found, one that fully satisfies the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, chief among them being the establishment of an independent State having East Jerusalem as its capital.

Israel must realize that force does not make security, that it is peace alone that will bring about security for all, and that its lawless practices or aggression against the sanctity of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque, its Judaization of the city of East Jerusalem, its continued settlement activity and its detention of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, all these practices and policies will lead only to the spread of tension in the region, greater despair and frustration among the Palestinian people, and further obstacles in the path of the faltering peace process.

Aware as we are of the danger of the continuation of this situation and its repercussions, and in order to set the Palestinian house in order, we propose the convening of an Arab mini-summit in Cairo at the earliest possible opportunity, with the Arab Republic of Egypt as President, to be attended by any Arab States that so wish, together with the leaders of Fatah and Hamas. This summit must not end before agreement has been reached on Palestinian national reconciliation in accordance with a number of practical steps within a specified time frame and based on the Cairo Agreement of 2011 and the Doha Agreement of 2012, and its tasks will consist of:

1. Forming a transitional Government of independent persons to oversee legislative and presidential elections;

2. Settling on a date for the holding of those elections within a specified period of time. Anyone who delays or obstructs the proceedings will have to answer to God, the nation and history.

Brothers,

The place from which the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, made his night journey was blessed by God. It was the first of the two *qiblas* and the third of the two Holy Places. Today it is in grave danger which can be warded off only if all of us make a serious effort.

Palestinian, Arab and Islamic rights in Jerusalem are non-negotiable. Israel must realize that fact, and the Arab States must begin to move quickly and seriously on this issue. It is most unfortunate that as yet the resolution on Jerusalem adopted at the Sert summit has not been implemented. I therefore call upon this summit to reach agreement—if we are serious about defending the Arab character of Jerusalem—and to rescue what can be rescued by establishing a fund for the support of Jerusalem with a capital of one billion dollars, immediately following the conclusion of this summit.

I hereby announce, on behalf of the State of Qatar, that we shall contribute one quarter of a billion dollars, provided the remainder of the total is made up by those Arab States that are in a position to contribute. I propose that the Islamic Development Bank should be entrusted with the task of managing the fund.

While on this subject, I cannot refrain from referring to the blockade that has been imposed on the Gaza Strip. I must emphasize that it is essential for us to cooperate and act to enable our brothers there to overcome that blockade. We must activate all resolutions relating to the reconstruction of the Strip.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

We welcome the participation of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces and the interim Syrian Government at our summit. There can be no doubt that they deserve such representation, thanks to the popular legitimacy they have acquired within the country, and the widespread support they have attracted abroad, and thanks also to their historic role in leading a revolution and preparing to build a new Syria.

The dangerous and tragic situation in Syria has evolved catastrophically in the course of the past two years, spawning horrors and crimes that make the blood run cold. And for some time now, there has been nothing but silence about those horrors and crimes and about the suffering of the Syrian people, both within the country and in the refugee camps.

Since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, our position—the State of Qatar is not alone in this—has been based on three vital requirements, namely:

1. An immediate halt to the killing and violence against civilians, and preservation of the unity of the land and people of Syria;

2. Compliance with the will of the Syrian people in the matter of the transfer of power;

3. Support for Arab and international efforts and political solutions that comply with the will of the Syrian people and their legitimate aspirations.

The Syrian people are heirs to an ancient civilization and culture, one that is deeply and authentically Arab. They deserve to live in freedom, dignity and security,

with just governance, united as they are by their membership of the Arab nation, without repression, exclusion or marginalization.

It may be important for us to affirm constantly our desire for the unity of Syria, both land and people. That is an ethical and historical responsibility which we all bear and which none of us can renounce.

We also affirm a national unity that accommodates all without exception, and the establishment of a regime with no isolation, no restriction and no discrimination among its citizens, a nation for all and with all.

It is deplorable that the Syrian regime is entering into a military confrontation with its own people, refusing all calls for serious reform and Arab political initiatives, to the point that the situation has become a catastrophe. The great Syrian people can no longer accept anything short of a peaceful transfer of power, pursuant to the League of Arab States resolution of 22 July 2012.

History will bear witness as to who stood with the Syrian people in their hour of trial, and who abandoned them.

We reiterate our request to the Security Council, urging it to stand with right and justice and respond to the voice of the conscience of humanity against the oppression and coercion of peoples with a resolution calling for an immediate halt to the bloodletting in Syria and action to ensure that those responsible for crimes against the Syrian people answer to international justice.

We hereby renew our commitment to continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people, and we urge all States of the world to do the same. We affirm that it is vital to convene an international conference under United Nations auspices on the reconstruction of Syria immediately upon the transfer of power in accordance with the will of the Syrian people. I reiterate that we are in favour of a political solution that will spare bloodshed and save lives, on condition, however, that the hands of the clock are not turned back.

I see, in the near future, the great country of Syria rising from the rubble to rebuild its glory anew.

As God says in the Koran, “And be not dismayed, neither be ye grieved, for ye shall be superior to the unbelievers if ye believe. If a wound hath happened unto you in war, a like wound hath already happened unto the unbelieving people; and we cause these days of different success interchangeably to succeed each other among men, that God may know those who believe and may take martyrs from among you. God loveth not the workers of iniquity.”

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

The historic change that our Arab nation is currently experiencing calls for new thinking, new approaches, and a genuine will to change that draws upon the aspirations of our peoples and responds to their legitimate ambitions. In systems of governance, there can be no substitute for reform and no place for coercion, repression, despotism or corruption.

When I say “reform”, I mean well-though-out reform based on a vision, thought and will, not reform consisting of slogans and false promises.

Reform will confer stability on systems of governance, it will bring peoples tranquillity in the present and in the future, it will raise productivity and development rates, and it will enable us to provide our States and peoples with a life of dignity and security and earn the respect of the world. We shall become an effective, influential power among the nations.

Given our human and national responsibility, we must stand by the side of our sister States of the Arab Spring as they pass through the difficult transitional stage that any popular revolution must follow. No one should wager on a state of anarchy and instability in those States in order to make people frightened of change. We say to the political and social forces in those States that they should realize that the success of the experiment is the responsibility of all of us, and that it is essential, as a matter of urgency, for rivalry to be responsible and subject to the primary need for the experiment to be successful. This national responsibility is also an Arab responsibility.

The road to reform and political transition is a long and hard one, and it is unjustifiable and premature to fear the obstacles and setbacks which regimes that plunge into change have faced and are facing.

Arab economic support is wanted for some of these States, but it is a more pressing matter for States undergoing revolutions. Those States are now passing through a transitional stage that makes support essential. I am referring to the Arab Republic of Egypt in particular, with its dense population and its economic situation. No one can forget the sacrifices that Egypt has made, or the major role it has played in addressing Arab issues and its sister Arab States. Accordingly, providing the Arab Republic of Egypt with support in these circumstances is a duty incumbent upon us all.

We are following the positive developments that are occurring in Somalia with great hope. We affirm our support and backing for that sister country as it traverses the trying situation currently besetting it.

The Republic of Comoros is a promising Arab State that needs more of our attention and economic support, so that we can turn it into a model of what Arab cooperation can do. The Arab Committee for the Support of Investment and Development in the Comoros has unquestionably done a fine job and should be encouraged.

As regards Darfur, we note with a good deal of satisfaction the clear improvement that has been evident in the region since the signing of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and the establishment of a regional authority, despite a number of security lapses in some limited areas and outbreaks of tribal conflicts from time to time.

We believe that the International Conference for Reconstruction and Development in Darfur, which will be held in Doha on 7-8 April of this year, will enable Darfur to move into a new phase of development, stability and peace.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

The rapid economic changes that we are witnessing today impel us to consolidate and activate cooperation among ourselves to support economic and social development efforts in our Arab countries, for such cooperation contains

strategic aspects, given world-wide trends toward the emergence of large economic blocs.

Achieving the economic, social and political development of our Arab peoples is undoubtedly the ideal road to follow and the foundation-stone of the advancement of our Arab nation, both now and in the future. Accordingly, integrated Arab cooperation must become a subject of consensus that is unaffected by transient political disagreements.

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellences,

All of us aspire to a better present and brighter future for our people, and we all believe that the road leading there is the road of the reform, development and modernization of our societies. Starting from that shared position, we support the development of the League of Arab States along lines appropriate for the current stage of our regional and international environment with a view to strengthening its capacities for dealing with the imperatives of that stage while still adhering to the principles and objectives on which the League is based.

However, the process of reforming and developing the League must draw in the first place upon the aspirations of the Arab peoples and must satisfy their legitimate demands for freedom, social justice, and genuine Arab solidarity.

The reform process calls for the setting of clear priorities in the League's plan of action and the development of specific executive programmes to realize those priorities, with the participation of all Member States. Bureaucracy and obsolete working methods are to be abandoned in favour of new mechanisms that will strengthen the action of the League and enhance the criteria of efficiency and transparency in the selection of a qualified functional cadre for action within the League. Even more important, the majority principle must be adopted in decision-making, rather than consensus. The League must no longer be fettered by this impediment to its effectiveness.

In recognition of the hard work of the personnel of the Secretariat-General of the League of Arab States in carrying out their tasks, and in order to ensure that they can enjoy a life of dignity after spending many long years in the service of the League, I think that now is the time to establish a pension fund for them. I should like to announce that the State of Qatar is prepared to contribute $10 million to get the fund started.

The challenges confronting us and the responsibility that we bear are great and heavy, and require us to put forth a correspondingly great effort. We must take up the challenges and strive for the advancement of our Arab nation by strengthening a spirit of brotherhood and solidarity, for those are the most powerful weapons at our disposal. We must also strive for cooperation and integration and support the development of Joint Arab Action. It is essential to avoid whatever does not serve our regional interests. We must see existing differences for what they really are and rise above them, giving the best Arab interests priority over everything else. We must make frank and open dialogue our preferred method of resolving our differences, for if we allow them to continue and grow, we shall promote only the interests of those who wish harm to this great nation.

In conclusion, I say again, welcome to Doha. I hope that our efforts will be crowned with all success, and that our resolutions and action will be of benefit to our Arab nation.

Peace and the mercy and blessings of God be upon you all.

Address by His Excellency, Dr. Nabil Al-Arabi, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, at the opening meeting

In the name of God compassionate and merciful.

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Mr. Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to offer His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar my sincere congratulations on the holding of this session of the Arab Summit in Doha under his distinguished presidency for the second time, following the Doha Summit in 2009. I hope that the occasion of this Summit, for which you have selected the watchword, "The Arab nation: present situation and future horizons", will carry the Arab peoples' hope that a brighter future is still possible, and that all of us, peoples and Governments, will be equal to the historic responsibilities laid upon us, despite the daunting challenges and the uncertainty of our surroundings during the difficult transitional stage which many Arab States are currently traversing and which places fresh responsibilities upon the League of Arab Stats and all the working mechanisms of the Arab system.

I should also like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to His Excellency, Mr. Jalal Talabani for his masterful Presidency of the work of the Baghdad Summit, with the hope that he will soon be restored to health. Thanks also to the people and Government of the sister country of Iraq for assuming the responsibilities of managing the Arab Summit so competently during the previous session.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

Since the earlier Doha Summit of 2009, the Arab region has experienced manifold significant changes that have had far-reaching repercussions for the situation of the region as a whole, not only at present but also in the future. Some of the "Arab Spring countries" have been able to begin making progress; they have taken steps, albeit haltingly at times, but steps none the less, toward realization of their peoples' aspirations to comprehensive reform and peaceful democratic change, shouldering the burden of building new State institutions capable of ensuring fundamental freedoms, equal rights, respect for human rights, social justice and good governance for their citizens. This situation places heavy responsibilities upon the League of Arab States, which must provide effective backing and support in all forms for the process of change that is occurring in these States, to help them through the difficulties of this transitional period as quickly as possible and with minimal economic losses or costs. At this point, I should like to emphasize that the security and stability of any Arab State directly affect the future security and stability of all the Arab States and of the region as a whole.

In that connection, I should like to emphasize the fact that it is essential for the League of Arab States to play a positive, non-traditional role in helping the Arab States concerned to make their way through the transitional period. This role is part and parcel of the League's functions and responsibilities vis-à-vis its Member States: the Charter of the League states, in its article 2, I quote, "The purpose of the League is to draw closer the relations between Member States and coordinate their political activities with the aim of realizing close collaboration among them, to

safeguard their independence and sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries.”

In this context, the League is fully determined to continue supporting the reconstruction process under way in many Arab States in order to realize their peoples’ aspirations to freedom and democratic change. A propos of that, I hail the people of Tunisia for their achievements on the road to democratic reconstruction, despite various difficulties, tensions and obstacles. The same may be said of the Arab Republic of Egypt, which is currently preparing to hold parliamentary elections, which we must hope will be the subject of agreement and be crowned with success, with the result that Egypt, beloved as it is by all the Arab States, will be able to overcome the difficulties and problems confronting it before long. I call upon all to contribute to the task of providing the necessary support. Furthermore, I welcome the opening of a comprehensive national dialogue in Yemen; we hope that it will attain its goal of implementing the provisions of the Gulf Initiative and its executive mechanisms. In addition, I salute the State of Libya, which has succeeded in holding, for the first time, democratic elections to the National General Congress and forming a transitional Government to manage the responsibilities of the present stage, chief among them being the restoration of security and stability and the drafting of a new Constitution for the country. The League is also pursuing, in cooperation with the State of Qatar and the African Union, its efforts to support the process of achieving stability, peace and development in the Republic of the Sudan. At this point, I call upon Member States to participate effectively in and make significant monetary pledges to the International Donors’ Conference for the Reconstruction of Darfur, which is to be held in Doha on the 7th and 8th of next month. I may also mention support for the political development process currently under way in the Comoros, which warrants our salutations, and the success that has recently been achieved in Somalia in the form of transitional measures, parliamentary elections, and a new President of the country. It is incumbent upon all of us to support and promote the process of reconstruction and the rebuilding of State institutions in Somalia.

At the same time, the League of Arab States is continuing its support for the United Arab Emirates in its efforts to find a peaceful, just solution to its three islands that are under occupation through bilateral negotiations or by bringing the matter before the International Court of Justice. The League calls upon the Iranian Government to accede to this Arab objective, which conforms to international legitimacy, in order to build trust and bolster security and stability in the Gulf region.

Mr. President,

The Palestine issue is still the heart of the conflict in the region, and the key to that issue must always be an end to Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian Arab lands that were occupied in 1967. Arab diplomatic efforts on the international scene must be redoubled to reaffirm that priority, for it is no longer acceptable to enter into sterile negotiations or initiatives aimed at discussing partial, minor issues so as to waste time and consolidate settlements and the occupation, without dealing seriously with the essence and heart of the conflict, namely ending the Israeli occupation. This point has been affirmed by all referentials that have been agreed upon as the bases for achieving a comprehensive, just peace in the region, chief among them being Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and other relevant

United Nations resolutions. In the absence of an independent Palestinian State within the 1967 borders, having East Jerusalem as its capital, this region will not be blessed with any peace, security or stability.

At the Beirut Summit in 2002, the Arab side launched the Arab Peace Initiative, which to date has found no attentive ears from the Israeli side; on the contrary, the Israeli occupation authorities have pursued settlement operations and the confiscation of Palestinian lands in the West Bank, and have maintained their unlawful blockade of the Gaza Strip. Israel has imposed its own logic in managing the conflict, while simultaneously taking unilateral steps to impose geographic and demographic facts on Palestinian lands in order to destroy the two-State solution, to the point that some have begun to call on the Arab side to recognize that situation as a reality that cannot be ignored, as though the Arab and Palestinian side were always asked to recognize Israel's facts on the ground and renounce their legitimate historical rights.

In that connection, I should like to commend the important historic success achieved by the State of Palestine at the United Nations General Assembly last November, when it was recognized, with the support of a majority of the Member States, as a non-member observer State at the United Nations. This achievement must be used as a basis for winning international recognition of Palestine as a State with a full complement of attributes that is languishing under occupation.

I should also like to note that at this moment, on the threshold of the launch of a new initiative by the United States Administration in the region, we express our hope that that promised new initiative will take a fresh course, not merely follow in the footsteps of previous initiatives over many long years, initiatives that were not worthy of being taken seriously, as the Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs noted on 17 November 2002. This means that we must be alert to the danger of falling again into the same mistakes as in the past, and must hold fast to the Arab position calling for new mechanisms and methods for negotiations under the direct supervision of the Security Council in order to move onward from "conflict management" to "conflict resolution" within a clearly defined, obligatory time frame.

It is also crucial to emphasize, in this context, that Palestinian national reconciliation is essential, and that the agreements and memorandums of understanding that were signed in Cairo and Doha must be implemented in order to restore Palestinian national unity and the unity of the institutions of the prospective Palestinian State. It is the League of Arab States that is responsible for seeing to it that this reconciliation is brought about, and it is also responsible for ensuring that Member States make good on the financial pledges they made at the Arab Summit for the support of the State of Palestine, the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, and Jerusalem, working through the Arab financial safety net which the previous Summit, at Baghdad, decided to establish. At this point, I should like to express my strong support for the proposal of His Highness, the Emir of the State of Qatar, for the convening of a mini-summit to provide direct oversight of the work of reconciliation, and also his initiative concerning the establishment of a dedicated fund for the support of Jerusalem and the development of the Palestinian economy.

Mr. President,

All of us here realize the grave repercussions that will ensue if the bloody crisis in Syria continues, or should I rather speak of the terrible human tragedy that

the Syrian people are enduring. If this bleeding wound in the body of the Syrian people and Syrian institutions, and in the body of the Arab region, is not staunched, the future, security and stability of this sister country will be in terrible danger, and the neighbouring States and the region as a whole will not be spared.

The League of Arab States has stood by the side of the peaceful intifada of the Syrian people since its outbreak, and during the recent period has tried many initiatives, but none of them has succeeded in bringing about the desired political settlement. The Syrian regime must bear primary responsibility for the growth of the crisis to its present dangerous extent, owing to its persistent attempt to impose a military solution, to the point that it is now using heavy weapons, including aircraft, artillery and missiles against its own people, against innocent Syrian citizens.

Responsibility for this failure to impose a political solution to the crisis must lie basically with the Security Council, because of its failure to adopt a binding resolution for a halt to the bloodshed. I therefore call again for support for Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States, in his effort to reach international and regional agreement on the elements of a plan for a solution based on the outcome of the International Working Group meeting last June in Geneva.

In this context, I should like to emphasize that, despite the current elusiveness of a solution, the option of a political settlement to the Syrian crisis is the option that must be selected. Any steps toward a political solution must have priority in our efforts. I may note in passing that it is essential to preserve the unity of the Syrian opposition, gathered today under the umbrella of the National Coalition, as the Ministerial Council of the League affirmed at its meeting of March 6 of this year in Cairo, which declared the Coalition to be the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people, with its legitimate aspirations to freedom and democratic change and its attachment to Syrian unity in terms of land and people and to equal rights for all Syrian citizens, regardless of social situation or political affiliation.

In this framework, I should like to welcome, on behalf of the League of Arab States, Sheikh Ahmad Mouath al-Khatib, President of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, who is attending the Summit meeting today in his capacity as the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people following the Coalition’s success in beginning to form an interim Government. To the Prime Minister of that Government, Mr. Ghassan Hitto, we wish all success with the difficult tasks awaiting him during this crucial transition period in the history of Syria.

Furthermore, the League and its relevant institutions are pursuing their efforts to contribute to the work of providing humanitarian assistance and relief for the Syrian people and Syrians who have left their homes in search of safety within the country and in neighbouring States. In view of the dangerous situation, Arab States in a position to do so should assume greater responsibility for providing the necessary resources to fund essential emergency relief activities for the Syrian people. In that connection, I should like to recall the pledges that were announced by the Arab States at the donors’ conference in the State of Kuwait last January, which was held under the auspices of His Highness the Emir of Kuwait.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

The turmoil and far-reaching changes that the Arab region is currently experiencing call for greater attention to social and development matters. Poverty, unemployment, marginalization, education, health, the empowerment of women and youth, these are some of the reasons why I stress the urgency of assigning high priority to Arab socio-economic development action in the framework of the League, and to cooperation with all partners, most notably civil society organizations, the private sector, the United Nations, and other international and regional partners. The Arab Development Summit was held in Riyadh last January, under the distinguished patronage of the Guardian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia, to establish a mechanism for convening the Arab Development Summit on a periodic basis. This is a significant achievement which must be strengthened and activated, so that it will yield benefits for ordinary Arabs and for the Joint Arab Action institutions operating in various fields of sustainable development.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

In the course of the past decade, the League has made great strides toward strengthening the frameworks of cooperation with States and regional and international groupings that play an effective and influential role on the international political scene, including in particular the African Union, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the South American and Pacific States. The League has also organized Arab cooperation forums with Russia, China, India, Turkey, Japan and other international groupings and entities. This joint Arab action is attracting increasing attention on the international scene.

In this context, I should like to salute the State of Kuwait for offering to host the third Arab-African Summit, which is to be held next November. I should also like to salute the generosity of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in offering to host the fifth Arab-African Summit in 2016.

At this point, I should like to take up an important aspect of the League's work in the international arena, and that is the effort that the Arab States have pursued over the past four decades to address the unsatisfactory situation resulting from the fact that Israel is alone in possessing nuclear weapons. For a long time now, the Arab States have actively sought in various international forums to bring about the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as one of the most important elements of regional security.

Their efforts, however, have led to a dead end, owing to the inability of the international community to implement the commitments that were assumed in 2010. That failure is due to Israel's refusal to go that route, and to the support of certain international forces for Israel, bringing international progress along these lines to a halt. Consequently, the conference that was supposed to be convened in December 2012 was postponed. Our task is now to make every effort to ensure that that conference is convened at the earliest possible opportunity.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

I should now like to turn to my final topic, which has to do with the development of the League and its constituent bodies and working mechanisms. It is important for the League to play an effective role in addressing the challenges and

changes currently confronting the Arab world. As you know, a high-level independent commission made up of prominent Arab experts, headed by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, has been formed to consider this matter. The Committee has submitted a number of clearly defined proposals for development of the League and its working mechanisms.

In fact, a beginning has been made on the work of implementing a number of those proposals which fall within the frame of reference for the Secretary-General that emerged from the last Summit in Baghdad. These include the restructuring of the sectors and directorates of the Secretariat-General, the reclassification of posts and definition of their responsibilities and the qualifications required of incumbents, and upgrading the Class II level to leadership rank. It has been decided to proceed with some of the proposals in an effort to attract competent personnel from the Member States and to improve the functional performance of human resources at the Secretariat-General. In this context, two women delegates to the Secretary-General have been appointed, one for civil society affairs and the second for humanitarian relief affairs. Development and reform are an ongoing process that entails financial burdens, and I extend to His Highness, the Emir of the State of Qatar, my sincere thanks and gratitude for his generous initiative in establishing a pension fund for Secretariat-General personnel.

Majesties, Highnesses, Excellencies,

There can be no doubt that the task of realizing the shared aspirations of the League will require reforms in greater depth, so that the League will be able to assume an effective role in many areas, of which the following are perhaps the most important: maintaining the peace and stability of the Arab countries, protecting the rights of Arab citizens, and forming a genuine Arab economic bloc, including the execution of joint large-scale projects. The experience of the past two years has shown that it is essential to develop the League's capacity to help Member States confronted with serious internal challenges to respond to those challenges without jeopardizing their independence or the security and safety of their peoples. The League has been compelled, under the pressure of circumstances, to try to deal with challenges for which it was not prepared. It has done its utmost, but wisdom dictates that we should put the lessons of this experience to good use and prepare the League in advance, to ensure that it is in a position to address these challenges when they occur, and to help Member States avoid falling into these crises and deal with them in good time, thereby enabling us to escape the evils of turmoil and internecine strife.

The League must assume its responsibilities in the matter of the protection of the rights of Arab citizens, in accordance with the provisions of the Arab Charter on Human Rights and other regional and international charters to which the Arab States have acceded, for they have become a fundamental part of the international system under which we live. It would be wise for the Arab world to have a credible framework for the protection of its citizens' rights, instead of leaving the door open for outside intervention on the pretext of stopping human rights violations or calling those responsible for the violations to account or punishing them. Accordingly, the League would be well advised to lose no time in establishing the Arab Court of Human Rights, which would serve to protect Arab citizens' rights after all domestic remedies had been exhausted. At this point, I should like to welcome the initiative of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, king of Bahrain, concerning the

establishment of an Arab Court of Human Rights, which represents a quantum shift in the joint Arab effort in the area of human rights.

The formation of a genuine Arab economic bloc, for its part, is a matter requiring in-depth reform of the Joint Arab Action system in socio-economic spheres, extending to the role and powers of the Economic and Social Council, the specialized Ministerial Councils and the specialized organizations and centres of the League. All of these together should constitute a single integrated system. This idea has been before us for many years, and now is the time to take a decision to settle the matter once and for all.

Last but not least, it has become necessary to conduct a comprehensive review of the Charter of the League, which was drafted at the end of the Second World War, when the international and regional situations were quite different from what they now are. It is important for the League to be able to perform the functions dictated by the challenges of today's world and the present international and regional situations. The review should include the priorities and fundamental operating principles of the Joint Arab Action system, amendments relating to the action of the various bodies and councils of the League, support for the role of the Secretary-General in activating Joint Arab Action, and provision for a mechanism for periodic review and development of the Charter.

In conclusion, I should like to extend, once again, my thanks and esteem to His Highness the Emir of the State of Qatar for his generosity in hosting this Summit and his excellent management of its work. I wish him all continued success.

Peace and the mercy of God be upon you.

List of names of Arab leaders and heads of delegations participating in the 24th ordinary session of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level

(listed alphabetically by Member State)

- His Excellency Abdelmalek Sellal, Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
- is Majesty King Hamad bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain
- His Excellency President Dr. Iklil Dhanin of the United Republic of Comoros
- His Excellency President Ismail Omar Guelleh of the Republic of Djibouti
- His Excellency President Mohamed Morsi of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- His Excellency Dr. Khudayr Musa Jafar al-Khuzai, Vice-President of the Republic of Iraq
- His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn al-Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait
- His Excellency President Michel Sleiman of the Lebanese Republic
- His Excellency Ali Zeidan, Head of the Interim Government of the State of Libya
- His Excellency President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania
- His Excellency Dr. Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco
- His Excellency Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al-Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers of the Sultanate of Oman
- His Excellency President Mahmoud Abbas of the State of Palestine
- His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar
- His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, representing the Guardian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia
- His Excellency President Prof. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of the Republic of Somalia
- His Excellency President Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir of the Republic of the Sudan
- Mr. Ahmad Mouath al-Khatib, President of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces
- His Excellency President Mohamed Moncef Marzouki of the Republic of Tunisia

- His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai, Vice-President of the Council of State and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates
- His Excellency President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi of the Republic of Yemen

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