

# Arab League summit set for Algeria in November

Author:

AFP

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CAIRO: The Arab League will hold its first annual summit for three years in November in Algeria, the bloc said on Wednesday, after the pandemic forced the meetings' suspension.

The two-day summit is usually held in March and was originally slated for later this month, but will now be held in Algiers starting on November 1, the organization's chief Ahmed Aboul Gheit said.

The last summit was held in Tunis in March 2019.

A meeting of Arab League foreign ministers in Cairo on Wednesday discussed Russia's invasion of Ukraine, citing "the need to reach a diplomatic solution" in a final statement.

But Aboul Gheit warned that the war "must not let us forget the Arab crises that are not over."

Conflict and crises persist in several Arab countries.

Yemen has been mired in war since 2014. The UN has estimated the conflict killed 377,000 people by the end of 2021, both directly and indirectly through hunger and disease, while millions have been displaced.

Sudan is reeling after a military coup in October that derailed a fragile transition to civilian rule, following the 2019 toppling of longtime strongman Omar Al-Bashir.

Libya now finds itself with two rival prime ministers vying for power, in a standoff that threatens a return to violence after a year and a half of relative stability.

Arab countries are also divided over the issue of a return of Syria to the Arab League, following its suspension in 2011 after the brutal repression of peaceful protests spiralled into a complex civil war.

This year's summit is important for Algeria, which has been seeking to expand its political sphere of influence, against the backdrop of heightened tensions with Morocco.



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[Ahmed Aboul Gheit](#)

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## [Italian envoy lauds 'outstanding' UAE commitment to reducing emissions](#)

Wed, 2022-03-09 20:36

ROME: Italy's ambassador in Abu Dhabi has praised the UAE for its "outstanding" commitment in the reduction of CO2 emissions.

Speaking at a debate on "the global need to save energy" organized by the Italian Trade Commission at the Italian pavilion of Expo 2020 Dubai, Nicola Lener said "huge investments are planned" in the UAE to reduce polluting emissions and increase production of clean energy.

This “positive and consolidated attitude” opens the way to “many opportunities for greater cooperation with international investors and partners, including Italian firms, which can provide state-of-the-art and innovative technologies,” he added.

Lener explained to the audience the UAE’s goal of achieving 50 percent clean energy supply and reducing its carbon footprint by 70 percent by 2050.

The audience included Emirati and Italian players in the field of environmental defense and clean energy production, such as Enel.

“We aim to present all the Italian innovations applied to the energy sector,” said Amedeo Scarpa, director of the commission in Dubai.



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Dubai Supreme Council of Energy to slash 30% of carbon emissions by 2030  
UAE Barakah nuclear plant to reduce 22.5m tons of annual carbon emissions

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# Houthis accused of abusing women with moral policing

Wed, 2022-03-09 20:09

AL-MUKALLA: Yemen's information minister on Wednesday accused the Iran-backed Houthis of human rights abuses against women in areas under their control, described by one victim as "a hell," in the wake of a new report prepared by a prominent Yemeni rights organization exposing grave violations committed by the militias against females.

Muammar Al-Eryani said the Houthis have abducted and imprisoned women, raided their homes, restricted movement and expression, raped many of them inside their detention centers, and abducted their husbands.

Commemorating International Women's Day, Al-Eryani called on international rights groups and women advocacy organizations to name and shame the Houthis, and to push for the criminal prosecution of their leaders.

"The war triggered by the Houthi coup militia left unspeakable human tragedies for women. Thousands of them lost their husbands on battlefronts, thousands of women's relatives were abducted & forcibly disappeared, millions of women were displaced with their children in camps and abroad," Al-Eryani tweeted.

Mwatana, a local human rights organization, has issued a new report that highlights the violations committed by the Houthis against Yemeni women in Sanaa and other areas under their control.

It accused the Houthis of intensifying its crackdown on women by banning them from traveling without a male relative, expelling them from work, prohibiting them from integrating with men, and preventing them from obtaining contraception.

"Ansar Allah's dangerous and disgraceful efforts to restrict women's rights undermines the gains Yemeni women worked for decades to (achieve), and undermines their presence in public space," said Radhya Al-Mutawakel, chairperson of Mwatana for Human Rights, using the Houthi movement's official name.

"Ansar Allah should stop this ideological targeting of women, Yemeni women don't need guards of virtue; they need their rights respected, and accountability for all those who violate them."

Based on the accounts of many victims of the Houthi crackdown, the organization said that members of the militia insulted a group of women and briefly detained them for moving between cities without a male relative companion, known as a mahram.

"They referred to us as a 'prostitution cell.' There were seven armed men who verbally harassed us, put us under terrible psychological pressure for six

hours, took our passports, prevented us from getting out of the car, and searched our phones, computers and bags. It was a moment of hell," a woman, who preferred to remain anonymous, told the organization. She said the Houthis released them only after they had signed a written pledge that she and her friends would not travel without a mahram again.

The Houthis also raided several restaurants, cafes and parks in Sanaa and other areas under their control to impose gender segregation and detain female workers.

The organization said that in January last year 30 women lost their jobs in Sanaa after the Houthis raided their restaurant, abducted the owner and asked him to dismiss female workers who were allegedly "wearing make-up and talking to men."

The organization said the Houthis denied women access to reproductive health services, including contraceptive pills, without the permission of their husbands; and restricted the distribution of condoms on religious grounds, which forced many women into seeking abortions.

"I came to the health center to pick up my contraceptive pills. They refused to give them to me and asked me to bring my husband so he could give his approval. This is a significant burden," a 37-year-old housewife from Hajjah province told the organization.

As part of the continuing morality campaigns, the Houthis have banned singing at weddings and public places, abducted women who wear tight clothes in public places and harassed singers, artists and actresses.

The Houthis are still holding Entesar Al-Hammadi, a Yemeni actress, who was abducted from a street in Sanaa early last year, for allegedly violating Islamic dress codes.



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Yemeni women's living conditions difficult under Houthis Poor economy and war forcing Yemeni women to break with tradition and become breadwinners

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## [Lebanon's president honors military women](#)

Author:

Tue, 2022-03-08 23:40

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Michel Aoun celebrated female army soldiers and officers on International Women's Day as a delegation visited him at the Baabda Palace.

"I can see the fruits of the efforts made to integrate women into this military institution; something that was impossible in the past," Aoun said.

He added: "The number of women in the army is steadily increasing in a patriarchal society that was not ready to believe women can succeed in a field previously reserved for men."

Aoun called for further efforts to make sure women enjoy the same rights as men. "Today, women practice various functions in society; they are doctors, scientists, judges and so on. But they are yet to attain their full rights in one field: Politics, and having equal representation in Parliament. We strive to achieve this."

The commander of the Presidential Guard Brigade, Brig. Gen. Bassam Al-Helou, who accompanied the delegation, said: "These female soldiers are the elite members of the Lebanese Army, and they work in all departments of the Presidential Guard Brigade and the Presidency's Directorate-General."

Lebanon's sixth official periodic report was presented before the UNHCR follow-up committee in February to discuss the extent to which the country has implemented the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

It revealed notable progress in integrating women into institutions, especially in the military. A Gender Department was also established for the first time in the army.

The report read: "A remarkable increase in women's enrolment in army ranks was recorded over the past year. In 2022, 51 female officers out of 110 cadets will graduate from the Military College, and their number will increase to 55 out of 108 cadets in 2023, a number of whom will join the naval and air forces."

Minister of State for Administrative Reform Najla Riachi said on Tuesday: "Despite the positive breakthroughs women have achieved in assuming leadership positions in the political arena, progress in this field is still limited. Serious consideration must be given to the reasons that still, unfortunately, impede the achievement of complete equality between women and men."

Riachi added: "We must overcome such obstacles, in compliance with the preamble of the constitution, which stipulates that all citizens are equal in rights and duties without discrimination. This is crucial if we are to meet the fifth goal of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030, which Lebanon pledged to implement."

## **FASTFACT**

Lebanon's sixth official periodic report was presented before the UNHCR follow-up committee in February to discuss the extent to which the country has implemented the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

International Women's Day in Lebanon was overshadowed by growing crises over food security, and medicine and fuel shortages. Still, Lebanese officials, including Prime Minister Najib Mikati, Interior Minister Bassam Mawlawi and Environment Minister Nasser Yassin celebrated Lebanese women on Tuesday.

National Commission for Lebanese Women head Claudine Aoun said: "With the support of civil society institutions and international organizations, the commission is following up on the government's implementation of a national action plan we had drawn up, despite the difficulties it faces at the financial, health and supply levels."

Meanwhile, the National Federation of Employees' and Workers' Unions was explicit in pinpointing the obstacles still facing Lebanese women in light of the economic crisis.

It warned that Lebanese women are subjected to the "worst forms of exploitation" as a result of the crisis and financial collapse, and that the state and ministries were failing to provide women with any support or social security.

"Today, some Lebanese women work more and get paid less, while others have been pushed into unemployment."



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Gas queues in Lebanon as fears mount over food security  
State losing stature, crime rising as economic gloom envelops Lebanon

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# Israel says it is prepared to host up to 25,000 Ukrainians temporarily

Author:

Reuters

ID:

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JERUSALEM: Israel said on Tuesday it was ready to take in up to 5,000 Ukrainians fleeing Russia's invasion and allow 20,000 other Ukrainians who arrived prior to the fighting to remain temporarily.

The policy was outlined by Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked at a news conference, in which she also said Israel was bracing for the possible influx of tens of thousands of Ukrainians whose Jewish heritage affords them immigrant status under Israeli law.

"Israel will host temporarily about 20,000 Ukrainian citizens who resided, most of them illegally, in Israel before the fighting broke out," Shaked said, in a reference to visitors and workers, such as caregivers for the elderly, who overstayed their visas.

"In addition, if, God forbid, the battles don't end within a reasonable time, we will allow them to work in Israel," she said.

Shaked said the up to 5,000 Ukrainian citizens allowed in to escape the current fighting would receive a three-month visa and be allowed to seek employment if the situation did not change in Ukraine.

The European Union said on Tuesday its member states had so far taken in two million refugees fleeing the Russian invasion and expected millions more to follow.

Israel has been engaged in diplomatic efforts to try to end the war in Ukraine. Last week, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett held talks in Moscow with Russian President Vladimir Putin and spoke by phone with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

Putin and Bennett discussed the conflict in Ukraine again, by telephone, on Tuesday.

In a readout of the call, the Kremlin said Putin had told Bennett about Moscow's assessment of the third round of talks between Russian and Ukrainian officials that took place on Monday.



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Israeli PM vows more Ukraine talks, even if prospects 'not great'  
Israeli PM Bennett meets Putin in Moscow to discuss Ukraine crisis