

GCC Concluding Statement

Statement of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) At the Conclusion of The Yemen Consultative Group Meeting

**Lancaster House, London
16 November 2006**

Through its decision to sponsor this Consultative Group Meeting, the Gulf Cooperation Council countries sought to express the utmost importance they attach to supporting economic development in Yemen, a country with which they share solid ties of history, culture, and common interests.

The idea for this meeting and GCC sponsorship of it was born at the joint meeting of the foreign ministers of the GCC and Yemen held last March in Riyadh. That step was taken in the context of the ongoing process of close cooperation between the two sides, which began in 2001 when the GCC heads of state invited Yemen to join a number of GCC institutions. It is a continuing process through which the two sides seek to help Yemen join more specialized GCC organizations and integrate the Yemeni economy into the economies of the region.

Preparations for this important conference were made in close cooperation between the GCC Secretariat, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation in Yemen, the World Bank, and the Department for International Development of the UK, in addition to

GCC ministries of finance, GCC development funds, the United Nations Development Program, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and the Islamic Development Bank.

As is quite clear by now, this conference has been a great success by all measures. I will point out just a few aspects of this success:

- 1. Pledges made by donors for Yemen's economic development plan in this conference have exceeded those pledged at any previous Consultative Group Meeting for Yemen. I would especially like to highlight the confidence expressed by GCC countries in Yemen, as GCC pledges exceeded 50% of total pledged amounts.**
- 2. The conference enabled donors to study the Yemeni government's report about the progress made in economic and social reform, good governance, as well as the future vision for Yemen as expressed in the Third Development Plan. The Public Investment Program for the period (2007-2010) is especially commendable because it succeeded to a great extent in matching the priorities of the investment program with the general economic framework and macroeconomic policies of Yemen.**
- 3. The strong statement made by President Ali Abedallah Saleh at the opening of this conference emphasized the great importance he attaches to economic reforms.**
- 4. This conference in which some 40 countries and international organizations participated has strengthened the ties between the Government of Yemen and the donors. As such, this conference represents a first step towards a long-term partnership between Yemen and the donors,**

especially the GCC countries. Through this partnership, donors will help fund development in Yemen in an efficient and transparent economic climate, in light of the economic reforms that Yemen has introduced started to implement.

- 5. The strong commitment expressed by the World Bank, the UN, and other international organization represented in this conference to assist Yemen in implementing the Public Investment Program and achieve the ambitious goals of the Third Development Plan.**
- 6. The rich debates in the four discussion panels yesterday enabled participants to dialogue about the challenges facing the Yemeni economy and the suitable solutions, including those challenges related to absorption capacity and project implementation mechanisms.**

The success of this conference certainly represents a qualitative leap in the value of joint work for the benefit of development in Yemen. We hope that this partnership will continue after the conference, through continuous evaluation of its results and support for the efforts of the Yemeni government to achieve its development goals. The GCC stands ready to assist in any way it can.