

**Consultative Group Meeting
Quotes of the Opening Statement of
His Excellency the President of the Republic of Yemen
London 15-16 November 2006**

“We, in the Republic of Yemen, are looking forward for positive and effective results and true partnership with our brothers in the Arab region, specifically with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as we are all considered one territory. We are also looking forward to the help of our friends from the United States of America, European Commission, and International Organizations, to work hand in hand in fighting poverty and addressing unemployment. Since 22 May, 1990, the Republic of Yemen has opted to for multi-party democracy, freedom of expression and press, respect of human rights and women participation as women now have become minister, an ambassador, a voter as well as a candidate. They have reached leading positions in state and international organizations.”

The President singled out two Yemeni prominent women among the participants at the meeting; UN Assistant General Secretary and Minister of Human Rights. “ We are pressing ahead with supporting women and giving them more opportunities to become real partners with men.”

“Dear brothers

Presidential and Local Elections were held on the 20th of September in a competitive environment and with the participation of all political parties in Yemen, that was reported in the Arab and international media. There was real and honest competition with the testimony of international observers. The election was not a Third World drama as some tried to depict it. We are proud of such contention in the midst of difficult and emerging democracy. Non-democracy is even more difficult. The advantage of democracy is that it exposes what is under the table.”

The President assured that the Republic of Yemen would keep up the path of democracy, partisan pluralism, respect of human rights and press freedom.

“There is the election of governors and district directors coming soon. There are also amendments to the election Law of Local Councils. General Secretaries of Local Councils have been elected at district and governorate level in order to strengthen partnership with the people as their authority and source of power. This is in the core of our domestic and external policy.

The beginning had been difficult six years ago as we faced resistance to the election of Local Councils but we decided to go through this experience and if it succeeded

we would pursue the same path but if it failed, we would start looking for other alternatives.

Fortunately, the experience was a success and encouraged us to go forward in introducing more amendments to Local Council Law. We are now anticipating election of heads of district units.”

“ We started reforms in earlier times without any pressure as we believed that it was our responsibility to do so and we will give a clear picture to our neighbors specially countries of GCC on what has been achieved in this regard hoping they give us a hand.”

He pointed out that deficiencies have been addressed through the financial, administrative and judiciary reforms.

“We have made good progress in this regard as judiciary now is totally independent. There was a number of measures as well as issuance of new legislation, including anti-corruption law, Procurement and Tendering, and Financial Disclosure Bill. They are currently being debated by parliament. In addition, there will be amendments to the Law of Control and Auditing to make the Central Organization for Control and Auditing an independent Agency. A Board will be formed to implement the Law of Financial Disclosure Bill and will be represented by honest and competent Staff. This is to assure our brothers in the countries of GCC and friends from donor countries, Funds and Organization of our serious commitment to reforms.”

“There is also the Law of Procurement and Tendering which is currently debated in the parliament and an independent Technical, Administrative and Economic Board will be formed. Anti-corruption is on the way to be issued and will be implemented through an independent committee represented by competent cadre not necessarily from the Ruling Party only but from all active political forces that are known for their integrity.

We assure you of our commitment to pursue reforms.

The President hoped that the meeting would produce better results than the previous meeting in Paris which Yemen has benefited 20% in pledges.

He recommended the participants to set mechanisms to supervise the implementation of strategic projects and the money that will be given by donors. “We do not want any of this money to go through the treasury.”

“The projects before you are well studied and you can go through them thoroughly and send them to tender committees and find the best way of implementing them. But what is important is to observe concrete results and get help from our brothers

because Yemen, with population of 21 million inhabitants, being out of the gulf borders is not in favor of the whole region.”

He also shed the light into the poverty and its implications on the security and stability as poor youth are dragged into terrorism.

“The security of the countries of GCC and Arab region is the security of Yemen. We are one part that can’t be divided.”

He expressed his gratitude to United Kingdom for scaling up its support to Yemen.

“Poverty is an epidemic and a fertile environment for mobilizing terrorists who explode themselves. We, in Yemen, have suffered from terrorism as all countries have. Recently there were two incidents during the presidential and local election last September targeting oil refineries in Marib and Hadramout. But because of the attentive security men, those attempts were aborted and the country was saved from an environmental and economic catastrophe. Therefore, we hope that we complement each other to safeguard security and stability in the region. Together we can be a massive power and a heavy number that will not be taken lightly.”

“When we talk about nuclear energy, we do not intend to be a nuclear country but using nuclear energy economically for peaceful purposes. We can establish such projects in the United Arabs of Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, or even in Yemen. We can establish a company or joint venture from which we all benefit and cut down our dependency on others and reduce the economic waste in the field of energy production.”

We welcome investments from the gulf countries and any other country around the world.