

LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

Headquarters: PO Box 7153, Riyadh-11462, Saudi Arabia.

Website: <http://www.GCC-SG.org>

Secretary-General: Abdul Rahman bin Hamad Al-Attiyah.

Publications. *Attaawun* (quarterly, in Arabic); *GCC Economic Bulletin* (annual); *Statistical Bulletin* (annual); *Legal Bulletin* (quarterly, in Arabic).

Further Reading

Twinam, J. W., *The Gulf, Co-operation and the Council: an American Perspective*. Washington, 1992

LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

Origin. The League of Arab States is a voluntary association of sovereign Arab states, established by a Pact signed in Cairo on 22 March 1945 by the representatives of Egypt, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Yemen. It seeks to promote closer ties among member states and to co-ordinate their economic, cultural and security policies with a view to developing collective co-operation, protecting national security and maintaining the independence and sovereignty of member states, in order to enhance the potential for joint Arab action across all fields.

Members. Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Republic of Yemen. Libya left the League of Arab States in Oct. 2002, citing its 'inefficiency' in dealing with the stand-off between Iraq and the USA and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Joint Action. In the political field, the League is entrusted with defending the supreme interests and national causes of the Arab world through the implementation of joint action plans at regional and international levels, and with examining any disputes that may arise between member states with a view to settling them by peaceful means. The Joint Defence and Economic Co-operation Treaty signed in 1950 provided for the establishment of a Joint Defence Council as well as an Economic Council (renamed the Economic and Social Council in 1977). Economic, social and cultural activities constitute principal and vital elements of the joint action initiative.

Arab Common Market. An Arab Common Market came into operation on 1 Jan. 1965. The agreement, reached on 13 Aug. 1964, provided for the abolition of customs duties on agricultural products and natural resources within five years, by reducing tariffs at an annual rate of 20%. Customs duties on industrial products were to be reduced by 10% annually. However, it never became reality although it has remained the ambition of many people throughout the Arab world for many years since.

Organization. The machinery of the League consists of a Council, 11 specialized ministerial committees entrusted with drawing up common policies for the regulation and advancement of co-operation in their fields (information, internal affairs, justice, housing, transport, social affairs, youth and sports, health, environment, telecommunications and electricity), and a permanent secretariat.

The League is considered to be a regional organization within the framework of the United Nations at which its Secretary-General is an observer. It has permanent delegations in New York and Geneva for the UN, in Addis Ababa for the Organization of African Unity (OAU), as well as offices in Athens, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, London, Madrid, Moscow, New Delhi, Paris, Rome, Vienna and Washington, D.C.

Headquarters: Al Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt.

Website: <http://www.arableagueonline.org>

Secretary-General: Amre Moussa (Egypt).

Further Reading

Clements, F. A., *Arab Regional Organizations* [Bibliography]. Oxford and New Brunswick (NJ), 1992

Gomaa, A. M., *The Foundation of the League of Arab States*. London, 1977