

The address of His Excellency Ambassador Ahmed Rashid Khattabi, Assistant Secretary-General and head of the Media and Communication Sector, at the Opening Session of the International Arab Media Dialogue Forum

11 December 2025

Tripoli, Libya

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful,

Your Excellency Mr. Walid Ammar Al-Lafi, Minister of State for Communication and Political Affairs,

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

It is my honour, here in this historic Mediterranean city, to extend my sincere gratitude to the State of Libya for its generous hospitality and exemplary organisation of the International Arab Media Dialogue Forum. This forum is part of the follow-up to the implementation of the executive plan for the Arab Media Strategy, adopted by the Council of Arab Information Ministers, which focuses on achieving three principal objectives:

- \* Advancing the Palestinian cause
- \* Combating extremism and terrorism
- \* Bolstering the foundations of Arab identity

While dialogue has become an appealing concept among intellectual, political, diplomatic, and media circles, its credibility fundamentally depends on mutual trust and respect. Dialogue rooted in superiority, arrogance, or intolerance is futile, and denying difference can be even more complex than disagreement itself.

The Arab world, which throughout history has offered exemplary models of dialogue—including the Andalusian cultural heritage as a unique space for peaceful coexistence among religions and cultures—is called upon to engage in a proactive dialogue with the West. Such dialogue must be free from the remnants, wounds, and divisions of the past, and aim to dispel stereotypes,

prejudices, “Orientalist” projections, and extremist currents that deliberately seek to undermine our spiritual values and distort our social fabric.

It is undeniable that the media bears a fundamental responsibility in conveying a positive and dignified image of the Arab character to international public opinion. This requires the dissemination of media content grounded in an open and modern vision, committed to Arab issues—beginning with the Palestinian cause, which is witnessing a surge of international solidarity amid the wave of recognitions of the State of Palestine, the tragic humanitarian consequences of the deadly Israeli war on the Gaza Strip, and the escalating hostile incursions in the West Bank.

Central to this vision is the crucial role of media outlets and digital platforms in presenting realistic approaches to complex issues such as terrorism, extremism, and migration. These issues have increasingly been exploited as electoral tools by populist forces seeking to diminish Arab cultural identity and violate the sanctity of religious symbols, in contravention of international law, particularly the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Over 20 years ago, the League of Arab States took the initiative to join the United Nations Alliance of Civilisations’ Group of Friends and has since been keen to develop phased plans, including the preparation of a draft unified strategic plan for 2026–2031.

The plan addresses vital areas including media, migration, youth, women, and sustainable development, with openness to all partners. It reflects the League of Arab States’ commitment to promoting a culture of peace and tolerance, rejecting hatred and exclusion, and aligning with the charters and declarations of the United Nations, including the Cascais Declaration. Concluded during the Group’s 20th session in Portugal in November 2024, with participation from 131 countries and 29 regional organisations, this declaration called for dialogue among cultures and civilisations, respect for pluralism, and the sustainability of peace, envisioning a better future for rising generations.

Finally, it must be affirmed that any meaningful dialogue requires a coherent and unified Arab media discourse that adheres to professional standards, including the use of foreign languages and modern communication tools. This is essential to ensure the dissemination of such discourse in service of collective Arab interests and to foster closer engagement with the global community. We look forward to constructive discussions within the forum’s themes, culminating in practical recommendations for adoption by the Council of Arab Information Ministers.

Peace and God's mercy be upon you.