Aboul Gheit's address at AIM Congress

7 April 2025

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished Guests,

I am pleased to join you today for the opening of the 14th Annual Investment Meeting (AIM Congress). Allow me, at the outset, to express my sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to the United Arab Emirates for its gracious hospitality and organisation of this important forum, which convenes a distinguished host of policymakers, business leaders, investors, and experts to engage in substantive dialogue on advancing economic cooperation and enhancing the investment landscape in support of national economies—particularly in navigating the challenges and constraints impeding sustainable development.

We are, without doubt, living through an extraordinary juncture in modern global history—one marked by volatility, uncertainty, and a profound ambiguity surrounding the trajectory of the international order, its governing norms, and the dynamics between its principal actors. It is a critical and complex moment, reminiscent of past global upheavals, which we hope has yielded sufficient historical insight to prevent the recurrence of devastating tragedies, and instead steer humanity towards a more inclusive and prosperous future for all.

Our region, though deeply rooted in its own strategic context, is far from insulated from global transformations. It is facing a turbulent period of accelerated change and recurrent crises, requiring foresight, wisdom, and a resolute commitment to identifying, safeguarding, and advancing national interests through intensified Arab coordination and solidarity. The ongoing massacre being perpetrated by the Israeli occupation in Gaza stands as a harrowing and disgraceful manifestation of the moral dissonance afflicting parts of the global order. It exposes an egregious double standard whereby Israel is afforded impunity as it engages in mass civilian killings, sieges, systematic destruction, and the use of starvation as a weapon—all in blatant violation of international law and signed agreements, yet without consequence or accountability.

For the Arab world, the Palestinian cause remains the cause of a people and a homeland—a people subjected to displacement and dispossession, and a land systematically seized and colonised. This cause will persist until justice is achieved through the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. Our collective responsibility compels us to fortify the steadfastness of the Palestinian people, reinforce their resilience, and preserve the tenets of their legitimate and just cause.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The cornerstone of the Arab region’s ability to integrate into the global economic landscape lies in its strategic utilisation of its demographic wealth and geographic advantage. With one of the youngest populations globally, the Arab world stands at a decisive crossroads: either to invest meaningfully in youth development—empowering them through education, innovation, and employment—or to risk a demographic dividend becoming a liability that stifles growth, deters investment, and fuels instability, as is evident in certain contexts. Neglecting this imperative risks breeding environments vulnerable to religious and political extremism.

Therefore, it is no longer possible to speak of the future of investment in the Arab region without recognising its intrinsic connection to stability and sustainable development. Investment today transcends the traditional boundaries of economic activity; it has become a cornerstone for achieving security, resilience, and regional integration, particularly in areas grappling with humanitarian challenges and protracted crises. I do not exaggerate when I affirm that advancing investment in the Arab region is both a collective responsibility and a strategic imperative—indeed, a necessity for survival. There exists no alternative but to channel investment as the principal engine for job creation, especially to meet the pressing demands of our region’s burgeoning youth population. Without this, economic recovery will remain elusive, and lasting stability unattainable.

The League of Arab States remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing Arab economic integration, empowering the private sector’s role in development, and fostering sustainable investments that yield tangible benefits for Arab societies.

It is worth acknowledging that numerous Arab countries have already made commendable progress in reforming their investment climates by adopting modern legislative and regulatory frameworks that facilitate capital flows and strengthen transparency. These efforts reflect a strategic vision that places investment at the heart of infrastructure development and the advancement of critical sectors such as energy, technology, and healthcare. Undoubtedly, this summit serves as a vital platform to explore innovative frameworks for cooperation and to catalyse joint investment initiatives aligned with global shifts in green economies, advanced technologies, manufacturing industries, and other key sectors of priority.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The magnitude and complexity of the challenges facing Arab economies today necessitate the articulation of a new paradigm—one rooted in solidarity, complementarity, and regional integration, rather than rivalry or isolation. The global economic landscape is rapidly transforming with the emergence of new investment hubs, digital ecosystems, and waves of technological innovation. It is imperative that we position ourselves not as passive recipients of these changes, but as active contributors and shapers of this evolving order.

In this context, I take this opportunity to highlight that the League of Arab States is currently finalising a comprehensive draft for a new Arab Investment Agreement, designed to bolster intra-Arab investments and align more closely with contemporary global standards and the dynamics of modern economic governance.

In this spirit, I remain hopeful that this year’s summit will yield actionable recommendations that will drive forward Arab and international investment and bring us closer to the sustainable development that our peoples justly aspire to.

In conclusion, I reiterate my appreciation to the United Arab Emirates for hosting this pivotal economic gathering, and to all those whose efforts contributed to the success of this congress. I wish you fruitful deliberations and outcomes that will pave the way for a prosperous shared economic future.

May the peace, mercy, and blessings of God be upon you.