

## S P E E C H

by

**PRESIDENT ANWAR EL SADAT**

**to heads of delegations in the Conference of the Federation  
of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture**

May 20, 1976

It gives me great pleasure to meet you, you who represent our nation and a principal and important sector in our economic life. The world of today does not respect slogans any more. . . The world of today only respects action, work and production, and measures and evaluates each people and each nation by what its citizens can realise in all fields, especially the economic field.

The epoch has gone when political slogans were reigning supreme. However, in the wake of World War II, and after our Arab countries had obtained their independence, the concept of real independence as applied in the world of today has become economic independence. Therefore, there is no room now for slogans, but only for action and work.

On October 6 our Arab nation had taken a magnificent step that made up for centuries and generations of defeat, regained its standing and forced the whole world to respect it through the heroic performance of its sons, and the Arabs' use of their effective weapons such as petroleum. Our Arab nation had restored its position in the world after such a long lethargy, thus forcing the big powers to acknowledge it as the sixth power in the world.

Our responsibility is to preserve and safeguard what we achieved by our magnificent performance with our blood, weapons and the use of petroleum. Our responsibility is to preserve this position, and even to gain a new position amidst the world powers, not as the sixth power, but even more advanced.

Today our nation has its own constituents, foremost among which is that we had found ourselves as an Arab nation. Before the October War we were all disunited, dispersed, divided amongst ourselves and always conflicting. Slogans were blowing in the Arab atmosphere and dividing brothers, thus causing rupture and disintegration in the Arab world.

After October we found ourselves, and ever since I have been calling my Arab brothers to put aside all these slogans and only adhere to one slogan, one philosophy and one target, namely that we are all Arabs. Let us give up all the slogans used for causing division amongst us, such as saying this one is reactionary and this one progressive and imperialist. All these terms are alien to our society, and when we put them aside during the October War, we succeeded in accomplishing the miracle. Though some amongst us still do not feel or appreciate the importance of this stage until today, the hands of the clock will never go back. I am really optimistic and say that we shall never go backward.

Certainly, what is painful and really distresses us are the events taking place in Lebanon. You must have heard me when I predicted all these happenings more than a year ago. At that time, I said that « fire was still under the ashes », but nobody heeded or listened to me. Our hearts are bleeding over the events of Lebanon. However, I reiterate that the solution of the whole question is principally in the hands of the Lebanese leaders themselves, and they must confront the situation with courage, clearness and frankness.

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The time for courtesy which ruined us as Arabs, has passed, and we must now confront the bare facts with absolute frankness.

On May 1st, Egypt declared that we are opposing the division of Lebanon under any slogan, and we shall not stand with our arms folded. We are also definitely against causing any harm to the Palestinian resistance. Our brothers, the Lebanese leaders, have to bear the responsibility and the trust put in them. They must be frank with the people, their nation, and first and foremost with themselves. I cannot imagine that this painful haemorrhage could continue for more than one year and four months now. We are ready to do our utmost, but as you know there are some parties interfering in Lebanon's affairs. This interference would have been of no importance had the Lebanese leaders borne their responsibility with truthfulness and honesty.

I seize this opportunity to send, through you, our greetings to your peoples, and in your name I express to the delegate of Lebanon our wholehearted concern over the happenings in Lebanon, and our readiness to take part in any solution.

We have endeavoured to mobilise an Arab effort, but our efforts did not bear fruit. We have asked the Lebanese leaders to shoulder the responsibility with truthfulness and honesty, but a dialogue is still going on, and escape from facts is continuing side by side with pretexts for the events taking place and the blood being shed in Lebanon. I entrust the Lebanese delegate to convey to the Lebanese people our utmost concern and readiness, as an Arab nation, to act as one rank. But before we act, the leaders of Lebanon must, first of all, shoulder their full responsibility.

I thank God. I am always, and shall ever be optimistic, though we meet many obstacles in several parts of our Arab nation. However, we shall overcome all these obstacles, God willing, especially

since we had found ourselves after October 6, and shall never go backward.

I congratulate you on the Silver Jubilee of your conference, and promise you that you will always find, in Alexandria, unity, fraternity, rejection of spite and open hearts, so that we may be able to build up, as a great nation, the magnificent glory we began on October 6.

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