

'Wars end when diplomacy wins'

Security issues, strategies top the second day agenda at IISS Manama Dialogue

● **Dr Al Zayani cautioned against external powers using regional proxies**

● **Warns that differences between the countries in the region can provide incentives for others to "get inside and advance their interests."**

Staff Reporter
TDT | Manama

Wars end when diplomacy wins and wars begin when diplomacy fails, observed Foreign Affairs Minister Dr Abdullatif Al Zayani. The minister was speaking on the second day of IISS Manama Dialogue being held at The Ritz Carlton Bahrain when he made this remark.

The veteran diplomat said he is confident that right diplomatic initiatives can solve all conflicts and security crises across the globe, "provided there are united efforts among nations and institutions in this regard".

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From left, Dr Al Zayani, Mr Haavisto, ISS Director-General and Chief Executive Dr John Chipman and Mr Linder at the panel discussion.

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DR ABDULLATIF AL ZAYANI



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deliver peace goals."

The three Cs

Dr Al Zayani highlighted "the three Cs" that constitute the basic pillars of diplomatic initiatives. "Consistency, Cohesion

and Connectivity. By Consistency, I mean respecting international laws, resolving disputes under the framework of international laws and refraining from the internal affairs of others.

"Cohesion is the call for unity. United efforts are vital to the success of all diplomatic missions. We are stronger when we are together. Connectivity is all about building partnerships as well as building a network of resilience and deterrence."

Dr Al Zayani also cautioned against external powers using regional proxies to sell their interests. "Left unchecked, extra-regional conflicts can create a vicious cycle leading to a highly dangerous situation."

"Owing to the geo-strategic importance of the Middle East, it is very much likely that the focus of external powers and their direct interference in the affairs of the region will continue in the foreseeable future." He warned that the differences between the countries in the region can provide incentives for others to "get inside and advance their interests by providing direct supports".

Dr Al Zayani highlighted the peace initiatives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa including the visit of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Kingdom.

External forces crucial to ME security

The Foreign Minister opined that external forces have an important role in enhancing the security of the Middle East. "By continuing to press for a solution

to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in accordance with the principle of the two-state solution, or by supporting the Abraham Accords, there is room for the countries of the region to play a principled and constructive role in helping to face international challenges."

Diplomacy is the way

The Foreign Minister stressed that diplomacy is the only way to achieve our goals in a sustainable manner and that the countries of the region and other countries must realize the need to reach peaceful and political solutions to all regional issues and conflicts.

He added that the values of dialogue, coexistence, mutual respect and cooperation have continuously strengthened the foreign policies of the Kingdom of Bahrain because the Kingdom believes that this constructive approach is the best way to ensure peace, security and stability in our region and the world at large.

The panel discussion, where Dr Al Zayani spoke, was held under the theme 'The Impact of Conflicts Outside the Region'. Pekka Haavisto, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland, and Tobias Linder, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, also took part in the discussion.

AI to be driving force of defence modernisation

Staff Reporter
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Artificial Intelligence (AI) will be the core driving force behind the defence modernisation programmes across the world, opined subject experts who took part in a panel discussion at Manama Dialogue yesterday.

Michael Kurilla, Commander of the US Central Command, said data governance, data management and data infrastructure will change substantially in the defence sector fueled by AI. "AI has totally changed the way defence data is organised, labelled and processed. Humans enabled by AI will make things much



A screen grab of the panel discussion

easier and the process will take very less time."

Major-General Mohammed Salahedin Hasan, Egypt's assistant minister of defence for international relations, said like any other sector the defence sector is also witnessing a digital revolution. "AI, digital data management and increased collectivity with automation techniques will control the defence sector in days to come."

The Deputy Secretary-General for National Defence and Security at the French Armed Forces, Air Chief Marshal Vincent Cousin, said the Hybrid war in Ukraine has highlighted the need to embrace latest defence

technologies. "Cyber security is one major area where the latest technologies have to be put in place. Progressive mastering of AI-related technologies is important for any nation's defence sector." Air Marshal Martin Elliot Sampson, senior Royal Air Force officer, serving as UK Defence Senior Advisor to the Middle East and North Africa, said innovation in the defence sector is vital as none of the security threats exist in isolation. He highlighted defence cyber programmes and Sixth Generation Fighter Programme initiated by the UK government apart from green initiatives in defence modernization.

100 unmanned vessels to patrol regional waters: US Commander

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Over 100 unmanned vessels will patrol the regional waters of the GCC next year.

General Michael Kurilla, US Naval Forces Central Command Commander, said this today in a session on Defence Modernisation and New Technologies, at the 18th International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Regional Security Summit: The Manama Dialogue 2022.

The new security initiative, the US General said, is part of beefing up the security plan and the surveillance in the Gulf waters while collaborating with partners in the region.

The strategy also includes



General Michael Kurilla, US Naval Forces Central Command Commander

building an experimentation programme here in the Middle East with regional partners to

defeat adversary drones.

General Kurilla said Task Force 59 here in Bahrain is us-

ing AI-based technology and enhancing it across the region. Bahrain and Jordan are the only

two regional hubs for the task force.

Task Force 9, the ground-based innovation task force, will test concepts and technology toward a fleet of unmanned land vehicles that allows using manned ground vehicles more effectively, he said.

"We have the technological capability right now to rapidly improved maritime domain awareness and build an integrated unmanned and artificial intelligence network to achieve safer seas and stronger protection for global trade," he explained.

Kurilla stressed the importance of international and regional partners for the success

of this strategy.

"Just last month, Bahrain participated in a naval drill in the Gulf where seven crewed ships from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Kingdom and the United States teamed with unmanned systems. This is one of many examples that underscore that our forces are realizing the future right now - and doing it together," he said.

He added: "At least 80 % of these unmanned vessels will come from our partnered forces. The number of partnered countries continues to grow and they are part of the TF 59 operational force and part of the TF 59 staff."