

# **Khalifa and International Cooperation**

**H.H Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
President of the united arab emirates**



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## **Forward**

**With great pride and honor, I'm pleased to introduce this book: "Khalifa-a Vision of International Cooperation", which presents an account of the sustained efforts of President H.H Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan to bolster UAE's cooperation with many countries around the world. This is a task that H.H Sheikh Khalifa has done with great dexterity ever since he was Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi at a time when our late father and founding father of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan was preoccupied with the process of nation building and creation of sustainable prosperity for our country - a prosperity that transformed our country into a respected and developed nation that it is today.**

**If our country owes its very existence and prosperity to Sheikh Zayed's determination and unique style of leadership, it similarly owes its excellent regional and international relations to the evenhanded and judicious approach of President Sheikh Khalifa. For his understanding of global politics and its dynamics has shaped the UAE's foreign policy and enabled it to forge excellent ties with many countries around the globe. Sheikh Khalifa's vision of foreign relations is well recapitulated by his own words when he said:**

**"Since its inception, the UAE's adopted a wise and balanced foreign policy that made it a proactive player in the global arena. In tandem with policy, we succeeded to forge excellent ties with many countries and have continued to have excellent cooperation in many areas. The success of our model has proven that any country has an important role to play at the global stage, irrespective of its economic wealth, population or geographical size. What matters here is not the economic or**

**geographical weight but rather the principles upon which the country's foreign policy is based. This is in addition to clarity of objectives which the country seeks to achieve through its foreign policy.”**

**It is against this background that President Sheikh Khalifa made several high-profile visits to a number of friendly countries. During those visits, he conferred with the leaders of those countries on a wide range of issues including bilateral cooperation, global peace and stability and other issues of mutual interest. As he conferred with the leadership of those countries, Sheikh Khalifa always emphasized the need to uphold the principles of justice and international legitimacy as the basis for resolving problems in the Arab region and elsewhere in the world.**

**With respect to US-UAE ties, it is obvious that these ties have developed steadily in recent years as they were nurtured and augmented by high-level visits between top officials of the two countries. In his last visit to the US, Sheikh Khalifa urged US officials to promote peace in the Middle East so that the people of the region enjoy viable peace and stability that would enable them realize their aspirations for prosperity and development.**

**With respect to the European Union, the UAE has continued to enjoy excellent ties with EU members, particularly, France, Britain, Germany, Spain, Italy and Switzerland. Similarly, the UAE and Asian countries have had good relations for decades. The UAE also continues to play a leading role in economic and political groupings. Relations with Japan and China had been particularly good and were further boosted by Sheikh Khalifa visits to those countries. Much could be said about UAE relations with various regions of the world. It is therefore**

**better that I leave the readers to discern these ties for themselves as they read this book.**

**Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
UAE Deputy Prime Minister**

## **UAE-US relations**

**Relations between the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America date back as far as 1971 when the UAE federation was proclaimed. The US was among the first three countries to recognize the young nation and since then relations have continued to grow steadily, covering vast areas ranging from political, economic and cultural spheres to security , scientific and technological cooperation. Bilateral relations are based on concrete principles of candidness, realism and constructive cooperation. These principles led to steady growth of bilateral ties as manifested in the growth of the volume of trade and investments. But it must be stated that the able stewardship of the late Sheikh Zayed was really the force behind the robust growth of relations between the two countries. High-profile visits of officials in the two countries were another factor that helped sustain this growth. This is in addition to the credibility that the UAE has gained at the international stage as a result of its clear stances on various issues.**

**The consistency that the UAE showed on regional and international issues, in addition to its own success at home gained the country a worldwide acclaim. This consistency and clarity of vision was recurrent in the official meetings that H.H Sheikh Khalifa held with numerous US officials. In a meeting with the US energy Secretary on 11/10/ 1987 Sheikh Khalifa said:**

**The UAE's foreign policy is based on the principles of friendship, cordial relations with nations of the world, mutual respect and non-interference in the affairs of other countries.**

**On this basis, the UAE seeks to promote peace and stability in the region so that the people of the region recommence their quest for prosperity. The stability of the region is inseparable from the world stability.**

**On the domestic level, the UAE continues to pursue greater prosperity for its people and will ensure that its ties with friendly nations are based on mutual interest.**

**Both the UAE and the US view their ties as strategic partnership. While the US seeks enhanced relations with the UAE on various spheres, the UAE similarly seeks to augment its cooperation with the US in a manner that will ensure the sustainability of its economic progress. The country also wants to benefit from the technological advancement of the US.**

**On 10 May 1998, UAE-US ties received a significant boost with the visit of Sheikh Khalifa to Washington at the invitation of President Bill Clinton. During that visit, Sheikh Khalifa met President Clinton, Vice President Al Gore in addition to other senior US officials and leaders of both the Senate and the Congress.**

**Welcoming Sheikh Khalifa to Washington, President Clinton hailed the visit as historical, noting that it was the first high-profile visit by a UAE official. He then conferred with Sheikh Khalifa on a number of issues, ranging from bilateral cooperation to peace in the Middle East.**

**After his meeting with President Clinton, Sheikh Khalifa held a meeting with Vice President Gore on ways of bolstering bilateral cooperation in the areas of economy and trade, security and culture. Other issues such as the Middle East peace and Gulf Security were also touched upon. The role of the US in reviving the Mideast peace process and supporting**

**the Israeli redeployment of troops in the West Bank also topped the agenda.**

**In a communique issued at the end of the meeting, the two sides affirmed the need to maintain and bolster their strategic partnership, saying that this partnership would stabilize the overall strategic balance in the region. The two sides said their bilateral cooperation was encompassing, ranging from trade to security. The level of cooperation, said the communique, is manifested by the fact that the UAE has become the second largest GCC market for US products. It was also noted that many US firms are operating in the UAE, which enjoys modern business infrastructure and in addition to conducive business climate.**

**The communique said that the two sides discussed the developments in Iran and reiterated the call on Tehran to resolve the issue of the occupied UAE isles of Abu Moussa, Greater and Lesser Tunbs through international arbitration direct talks.**

**On the issue of Mideast peace process, the two sides affirmed the need to revive the peace talks between Israelis and Palestinian on the basis of the UN Security resolutions 242 and 338 which have upheld the principle of land for peace.**

**During the visit of Sheikh Khalifa , it was obvious that the two countries shared a common desire to forge ahead with their strategic partnership as the key to maintaining mutual national interests. Even before the visit of Sheikh Khalifa, the strength of relations between the two sides was amply demonstrated by the conclusion of the defense pact in 1994. Similar agreements in the areas of trade and investments were also encouraged during that time.**

**As he wound up his successful visit to the US, Sheikh Khalifa**

held a press conference at the Roosevelt Hall in the White House, during which he announced that his talks with Vice President Al Gore culminated in an agreement, allowing the UAE to acquire US-made F16 jet fighters. The agreement, said Sheikh Khalifa, aimed at upgrading the defense capabilities of the UAE. Here are excerpts of the remarks which he made during that press conference:

I'm pleased to convey the greetings of the people and Government of the UAE to the people and friendly government of the United States of America. I'm delighted to meet President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, with whom I extensively discussed bilateral cooperation and ways of bolstering it further. My talks with Vice President Al Gore culminated in an agreement, allowing the UAE to acquire F16 jet fighters. This agreement is aimed at upgrading the defence capabilities of the UAE. During our meetings, we also underlined the role of the US in the Mideast peace process.

Once again I would like to express my sincere wishes for the friendly people of the United States.

For his part Vice President Gore made a speech during the press conference in which he welcomed Sheikh Khalifa and the accompanying delegation. He hailed the UAE-US-ties, saying that the meeting which he had with Sheikh Khalifa was excellent as it touched on various issues, ranging from trade to security.

On the F16 deal, Vice President Gore said it underscored the strength of relations between the two countries. Besides, the F16 jet fighters will boost the defence capabilities of a strategic ally. The deal, he said, is a win-win situation for both the US and the UAE. For the US, it will create jobs for 30, 000 Americans and thereby contribute to the growth of the

country's economy. For the UAE, it will give an opportunity for the UAE Air Force to strengthen ties with the strongest and the most technologically advanced Air Force in the world. Other benefits include creation of better training opportunities including joint exercises. This is in addition to the obvious goal of maintaining security and stability in the region, an obligation deemed paramount by the US.

Afterwards, Sheikh Khalifa called on the US Defence Secretary William Cohen at his office at the Pentagon. The meeting reviewed bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the areas of defence and in a manner that will bolster the security of the region. Like Vice President Gore, Secretary Cohen viewed the F16 deal as indicative of the strength of relations between the two countries, adding that the move would reflect positively on the stability of the region. He also praised the judicious foreign policy adopted by the UAE and its stance on various issues. The meeting further touched on other regional issues of the time, including the suffering of the Iraqi people during those days and relations between GCC states and Iran. Sheikh Khalifa and Cohen also conferred on the Mideast peace process.

In his meeting with Senate and Congressional leaders, including Senate Majority Leader, Sheikh Khalifa underlined the importance of the stability in the GCC region and the entire Middle East region. He also told the US lawmakers that it was crucial to the US to adopt a balanced policy vis-à-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. Explaining his vision of peace in the Middle East, Sheikh Khalifa said the solution must be based on the principle of land for peace and this entails a return of the Golan height to Syria, the return of South Lebanon, and a return of Jerusalem. The historic visit of Sheikh Khalifa was

**also an opportunity for the UAE students in the US to call on him and listen to a word of advice. During his meeting with the students, Sheikh Khalifa urged them to focus on their studies and excel in their fields so that the country benefit is greater.**

**Back in the UAE, high-profile visits continued. On September 2 1998, General Henry Shilton, Chairman of the US Joint-Chiefs of Staff visited the UAE and met Sheikh Khalifa. They reviewed military cooperation between the two countries in addition to other issues of relevance to the Middle East. In August 13th, 2000, US Assistant Secretary of State Edward Walker visited the UAE as part of a regional tour and briefed Sheikh Khalifa about his regional tour as well as on the efforts of the Administration of President Bill Clinton. Sheikh Khalifa told the US officials that lasting peace in the Middle East would only be achieved by reviving all the peace tracks including the Syrian track. Ultimate withdrawal of the Israeli from the occupied territories is the only way to end the conflict, asserted Sheikh Khalifa. He also received Walker in 2001 and discussed issues of the Middle East.**

**When terrorists attacked the United States on September 11, 2001, the UAE stood steadfastly by the US side . In his cables of condolences to the US President George Bush, Sheikh Khalifa expressed the condolences of the UAE people. He also expressed his confidence on the capability of the US government and people to withstand the terrorist assault. Sheikh Khalifa sent a similar cable to Vice President Dick Cheney. The UAE readiness to combat all forms of terrorism was also re-affirmed during a meeting of Sheikh Khalifa with General Tommy Franks , Commander of US Central Command who visited the UAE on 23 October 2001. The same**

**message was consistently conveyed to General Richards Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who visited Abu Dhabi on January 21 , 2002.**

**This UAE stance was appreciated by the US , as expressed by various top officials who visited the UAE, including Vice President Dick Cheney who visited the UAE on 16th March 2002. A follow up meeting was held a year later by Sheikh Khalifa with US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. Other political figures received by Sheikh Khalifa afterwards included Former US Secretary of State James Baker, US envoy to the Middle East William Burns, General John Abizaid, Deputy Secretary of State Ricahrd Armitage and General Richards Myers.**

**On the economic relations, Sheikh Khalifa maintained the UAE policy of strengthening ties with the US for the benefit of the people of the two countries. This message was also conveyed during his meeting in Abu Dhabi with Paul O'Neil, US Treasury Secretary.**

## **UAE and relations with the European Union Countries**

**The United Arab Emirates (UAE) maintains distinct relations with the European Union (EU) countries. This has been attributed to the position of the UAE in the Gulf region, and its dynamic role in the world economic and commercial movement. It is also traceable to the fact that the UAE foreign policy derives from a simple and clear philosophy based on supporting just issues and seeking to reinforce friendly cooperation relations with different nations , in accordance**

**with the principles of UN Charter and the moral values established by the international community.**

**The relations between the UAE and the EU countries have witnessed a great development in the last decades at all political and economic levels. The factor of geographic distance was never an obstacle to the development of these relations; rather, it constituted a source of enrichment to these relations, especially in the fields of trade and tourism.**

**H.H Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has been eager for strengthening the UAE relations with the European countries. He visited a number of these countries and met with their senior officials, discussing with them many issues of bilateral concern. Here we can see this distinct role played by H.H Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan in strengthening the UAE relations with the European countries, especially the major ones.**

## **UAE and France**

**The UAE and France have had long-standing ties since 1971. The two countries have cooperated closely over the years on many issues and forged special understanding, thanks to the political will of the UAE and French leadership. It might also be added that the deeply rooted relationship between the two countries has always been augmented by the mutual respect, exchange of high-level visits and continued consultations and coordination.**

**The UAE attaches a great importance to its relations with France because this country has always stood alongside the Arabs at international circles. Moreover, France always sought to balance international relations.**

**Relations between France and modern UAE took a significant turn in August 1972 when H.H Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan visited France, a year after the formation of the federation.**

**That was a momentous event and was better captured by the words of Sheikh Khalifa when he told his French hosts:**

**I would like to thank you for the kind invitation which you extended to me and the warm welcome accorded to me since my arrival to your friendly country. The bilateral relation and cooperation has been excellent and the UAE stands ready to promote these relations further. We are keen to benefit from the French expertise in various areas, including economic, military and industrial spheres. We are also appreciative of the stance of France vis-<sup>^</sup>-vis the Arab causes. I'm aware that this has been a long-standing policy of France since the era of your great leader General Charles De Gaulle. We are in the process of nation building, the foundation of which has been laid by President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The great strides made by France in various fields**

**will always guide us in our quest for progress and prosperity. We hope that our bilateral cooperation in military area will increase because we would like to strengthen our defence capabilities so that we guarantee the stability and security of our country.**

**In remarks to the press in June 1976 Sheikh Khalifa said:**

**It is not a secret that we are building a strong army that will be capable of maintaining our security and territorial integrity. This force will serve as a support to the greater Arab nation as it faces our common enemy. It is therefore not surprising that we have come to France to acquire modern weaponry. I'm here at the kind of the Defence Minister and the visit culminated in the a comprehensive agreement with France on various aspects of military cooperation, including supply of modern armament to the UAE armed Forces. There is no doubt that this agreement is also a result of the common desire between the two countries who have enjoyed excellent relations, nurtured by President Sheikh Zayed and President Valery Giscard d'Estaing.**

**The bilateral agreements mark a new era in the history of bilateral cooperation between France and the UAE. They also mark a significant step in the Franco-Arab cooperation and friendship in general.**

**In remarks during another visit to France in April 1977, Sheikh Khalifa underlined the importance of the agreements between the UAE and France, saying that the agreements were a result of good cooperation that the two countries have enjoyed over the years. Sheikh Khalifa further stressed this cooperation when he later met President d'Estaing. The momentum of relations was also sustained with another visit**

by Sheikh Khalifa in May 1983 during which he met the Defence Minister. The Minister told Sheikh Khalifa that his country was ready to provide the UAE Armed Forces with the latest military technology in the areas of infantry, naval and air armaments.

Following a meeting with the French Minister, Sheikh Khalifa told AFP:

Our talks focused on military cooperation and the achievements made in recent years within the context of the technical and military pact concluded in 1977. Our talks with our French colleagues were fruitful. The French have expressed their readiness to provide the UAE Armed Forces with the latest military technology in the areas of infantry, naval and air armaments. The Minister also told us that his country appreciates the UAE quest to maintain its territorial integrity and independence. In view of this excellent position, we have presented our defense requirement but we would not reveal any details about military deals. We look forward to cementing our ties with France and exchange visits with our French colleagues.

As Sheikh Khalifa said, the exchange of visits between top UAE officials has been vital in sustaining the excellent relations that the UAE and France have continued to enjoy.

Apart from the visits of Sheikh Khalifa, French Presidents have visited the UAE in numerous occasions since the times of President d'Estaing to Mitterand and Jacques Chirac. Without exception, French Presidents have attached a great importance to their relations with the UAE.

On the ministerial level, the two countries have continued to exchange visits. In 1992, Sheikh Khalifa received Jean No'1 ,

**French Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs. They discussed bilateral cooperation including investments. The talks were further followed up by the two sides during the visit of Minister of Foreign Trade Bruno Duriot who visited the UAE a year later. The minister expressed the willingness of his country to provide the UAE needs in the area of technology and development. In 1993, French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe visited the UAE and reaffirmed the French commitment to its UAE ties. The French have also continued to show their readiness to assist the UAE technologically. This is the message expressed by the French Minister of Industry and communications Franc P. during his visit to the UAE in 1997. During his meeting with Sheikh Khalifa, the minister delivered a letter to Sheikh Khalifa from the French Prime Minister Alain Juppé. For his part, Sheikh Khalifa hailed the role of France to promote peace and stability in the Middle East. The Minister said he was happy with the outcome of his talks with UAE officials. In particular, he was pleased with the results of his talks in the areas of trade and investments, energy, technology and exchange of expertise.**

**On military cooperation, Sheikh Khalifa received in October 1999 General Jean Pierre C., Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces. They discussed means of boosting military cooperation between the two countries. The meeting was part of the close coordination between the two countries as they were involved in the peace keeping mission in Kosovo. In remarks after the meeting, Sheikh Khalifa said it was necessary for the leadership of the two countries to cooperate in view of their growing responsibilities towards global peace**

and stability. This responsibility, said Sheikh Khalifa, makes it necessary for the leadership of the two countries to confer on a number of issues.

During the year 1999-2000, Sheikh Khalifa received French Defense Minister Alain Richard and discussed areas of cooperation, particularly on military and technical aspects. They also discussed the situation in the Middle East and the need to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

For his part the French minister hailed the UAE standing in the international circles, saying that the clear principles on which the UAE foreign policy has been based have won the country a respect internationally. He said the efforts of the UAE, along with those of NATO to bring peace to Kosovo has been met with tremendous respect internationally. Apart from high profile visits, the French and UAE leadership maintained contacts via the phones or messages. When President Jacques Chirac won a second term, Sheikh Khalifa sent him a congratulatory cable, wishing him every success during his next tenure.

President Chirac also rang Sheikh Khalifa on Nov. 19 2002. During their telephone conversation, they exchanged views on bilateral relations and ways of further enhancing them. Regional and international issues were also discussed. On 14th January 2002, Sheikh Khalifa received Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces Henri BentZgeat. They reviewed military cooperation including exchange of expertise between the UAE and France. Sheikh Khalifa and the French General underlined the need for the international community to maintain the stability of the Middle East. They further stressed that international cooperation cannot be complete with a proper mechanism for maintaining global peace and

**stability.**

**The theme of regional and global stability has been a permanent agenda on the UAE foreign policy. The UAE-Franco relations have been geared towards this end, notwithstanding excellent bilateral ties between the two countries. In June 2003, Sheikh Khalifa visited France where he was received by President Chirac at the Elysée Palace. In remarks after the meeting, President Chirac described the UAE-French relations as strategic and should be used to the benefit of global peace and stability.**

**Sheikh Khalifa and Chirac discussed amongst other things, Iraq and Palestine and underlined the need for implementing the Road Map. Chirac told Sheikh Khalifa that the US was bent to exerting more pressure on parties of the Middle East conflict so as to bring about peace.**

**Other issues of bilateral cooperation, Middle East peace, continued to dominate meetings of Sheikh Khalifa and other French ministers who visited the UAE in 2003/4. Among the ministers who visited the UAE during this period were Dominique de Villepin, Foreign Minister and Michelle Alliot - Marie, Defence Minister and François Louis, Foreign Trade Commissioner.**

**UAE and Britain**

**British relations with the Gulf region date back to decades. British-UAE relations have been particularly strong and continued to be good over the years, thanks to the keenness of the leadership of the two countries.**

**The strength of relations between the two countries was best expressed by the late president and founder of the UAE Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who once said:**

**Our relations with Britain are age-old. We are so close with one another and through this mutual closeness we have found that Britain is worth of respect and trust. At the leadership level, British leaders have held their UAE counterparts at high respect.**

**Queen Elizabeth II and Crown Prince Charles have spoken kindly of the UAE leaders in many occasions.**

**As a mark of closeness between the two countries, Britain has come up openly in support of the right of the UAE over its occupied isles of Abu Moussa, Greater and Lesser Tunbs, occupied by Iran in 1971. To establish the undisputable UAE right, Britain has offered to provide all the documents validating the UAE case. It also offered to provide legal and diplomatic assistance in international circles.**

**The relations between Britain and the UAE have progressed steadily and are based on the principles of mutual respect and promotion of mutual interest of the people of the two countries. The two countries have also used their strong ties to work together to maintain regional and global peace and stability. They also share similar views on a wide range of issues.**

**Despite the strength of relations, the leadership of the two countries has sustained the momentum of ties through exchange of visits. In 1984, Sheikh Khalifa visited Britain to**

**bolster bilateral relations, as he stated during a speech made at the reception held in his honor by the then British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. During that speech, Sheikh Khalifa said:**

**I hope my current visit to the United Kingdom would contribute in further strengthening of relations between our two countries. We believe that our close ties are in the interest of our people as well as in the interest regional and global stability. We would like to see more visits by officials of the two countries so that the momentum of our bilateral ties is sustained.**

**Back home Sheikh Khalifa continued to receive visiting British officials. On March 16th 1998, he received British Defense Secretary who led his country's delegation to the International Defense Exhibition in Abu Dhabi (IDEX). British defense manufacturers exhibiting at IDEX showcased their latest technology offered by Britain. In remarks after meeting Sheikh Khalifa, the British official commended the UAE for its advanced expertise in the defense exhibitions industry.**

**On 20 Nov.1999, Sheikh Khalifa received Crown Prince Charles and discussed a wide-range of issues. Sheikh Khalifa praised the prince for his continued efforts to promote dialogue between the East and the West. For his part, prince hailed the UAE progress, saying that it success story was due to its judicious leadership. During his meeting with the British officials, Sheikh Khalifa raised crucial Arab and regional issues, particularly the issues of Palestine. For instance, in a meeting with the visiting British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Peter Hain on 30th October 2000, Sheikh Khalifa asked Britain to use its influence to bring more pressure on**

**Israel to implement UN Security Council resolutions. Sheikh Khalifa told Hain that Britain could use press Israel through the European Union to stop its wanton killings of the Palestinian civilians. Hain also recounted the efforts of Britain and its EU allies to bring a just and comprehensive peace to the region. He told a press conference afterwards that the UAE and Britain shared common views on a number of issues. Bilateral cooperation, he said, is progressing steadily particularly in technical, economic and commercial areas.**

**In June 2003, Sheikh Khalifa paid a four-day visit to the United Kingdom during which he met Queen Elizabeth II, Crown Prince Charles, Prince Andrew, the Duke of York and Prime Minister Tony Blair. Sheikh Khalifa and Blair held bilateral talks on various issues, with the two leaders re-affirming their commitment to augment the historical ties, which Sheikh Khalifa described as dating back to some 200 years.**

**Away from bilateral relations, the UAE British talks touched on the situation in Iraq and its political, humanitarian and security implications. Sheikh Khalifa spelt out the UAE position on Iraq, saying that its position is one that supports the Iraqi people and promotes the restoration of sovereignty, rebuilding of institutions, reconstruction of the country and election of government that would be truly representative of the Iraqi people .**

**Middle East peace process also surfaced in the talks with the two parties stressing the need to implement the Road Map Peace Plan as the best framework to achieving a comprehensive and just peace that will ultimately lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. While commending role of Britain under Tony Blair**

**to build an international coalition to bring peace to the Middle East, Sheikh Khalifa urged for an enhanced role to put more pressure to bear on Israel to accept the Road Map. The talks further touched on the question of terrorism and readiness of both sides to combat all forms of terrorism in cooperation and coordination with the international community.**

**After his talks with the Prime Minister, Sheikh Khalifa met Crown Prince Charles, who welcomed the visit of Sheikh Khalifa and noted its significance in terms of reinforcing the long-standing and historical ties between the two countries. He also met Prince Andrew, the Duke of York.**

**Later, Sheikh Khalifa was received by Queen Elizabeth at the Windsor Castle, who accorded him a warm welcome. Sheikh Khalifa congratulated the Queen on her Golden Jubilee.**

**In an interview with the London-based Arabic daily Al Sharq Al Awsat on June 3, 2003, Sheikh Khalifa said:**

**The UAE and Britain are bound by deeply rooted ties that have been over the decades strengthened by the wise leadership in both countries. These ties are also characterized by mutual trust as well as by the principles of mutual respect and mutual interests. The two countries have sought to balance their interest in everyway. As a major power, Britain is influential in international circles and can use its leverage to solve some of the problems in the region. It is on this basis that we have been engaged with our British colleagues in consultations over a number of issues in the region, ranging from Palestine, Iraq and terrorism.**

**Shortly after his visit to UK, Sheikh Khalifa received a letter from Tony Blair, dealing with several issues of mutual interest. On March 17 2004, Sheikh Khalifa received British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw and conferred over a number of**

**issues.**

## **UAE and Germany**

**Relations between the UAE and Germany owe their existence to the mutual desire by the leadership of the two countries in the early 1970s after the formation of the UAE federation. Since then, officials from the two countries have been keen to exchange visits so that these relations are taken to new highs. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed has particularly played a great role in cementing bilateral relations as directed by late Sheikh Zayed who enjoyed strong personal relations with German leaders and also attached great importance to economic cooperation with German firms and institutions. Sheikh Khalifa also met several German officials as part of the UAE keenness to cement relations with Germany. On May 27 , 2000, he met German Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Voller and discussed economic cooperation and joint investment projects. He cited the huge participation of UAE firms at the Emirates Exhibition in Hanover as an example of economic cooperation between the two countries. For his part, the German minister told Sheikh Khalifa that his country respected and admired the UAE success in various fields as well as its regional and international policies. He said the UAE exhibition in Hanover underscored the heritage, culture, civilization and progress of the UAE in many areas. The minister further noted that his country admired and appreciated the outstanding UAE efforts to conserve the environment. Despite the harsh environmental and climatic conditions, the UAE succeeded to expand greenery across the desert and staged a fabulous programme to conserve the marine environment.**

**In October the same year, Sheikh Khalifa received a**

parliamentary delegation from the German Bundestag. During the meeting, Sheikh Khalifa once again underlined the key role that Germany can play in resolving the Palestine issue. He also hailed the steadfast support provided by Germany to Arab causes. Hailing from a country that is renowned for environmental protection, the German delegation was stunned by the UAE environmental success story and also be by successes in various spheres of development.

Other German officials who met Sheikh Khalifa included Foreign Minister Joscha Fischer. His visit was an opportunity for UAE to consult with Germany on a wide range of issues, including ways of promoting trade and economic relations in addition to the situation in Iraq and Palestine. The importance of implementing the Road Peace Plan was stressed by Sheikh Khalifa during his meeting with the visiting German official. On Iraq, Sheikh Khalifa pointed out that the UAE was concerned about the stability of Iraq, adding that it was crucial for that country to restore its security so that its people get the same opportunity to pursue development and prosperity.

For his part the German Minister lauded the strong UAE-German ties and further expressed his country's desire to open more avenues of cooperation with the UAE, particularly in the areas of investment, trade and commerce. He pointed out that the UAE's strategic position makes it a gateway to many parts of the world. On December 12 2004, Sheikh Khalifa received Christian Volfe , Prime Minister of the German State of Lower Saxony. During the meeting the visiting delegation reviewed a number of projects with Sheikh Khalifa. These projects were part of the economic partnership

**between the UAE and Germany. Sheikh Khalifa viewed a model of the Volkswagen car which will be manufactured in Abu Dhabi Industrial City in Mussafah, From Volkswagen perspective, its joint partnership with Abu Dhabi represents a significant step towards new markets, considering the strategic location of the UAE in addition to sound economic infrastructure.**

**UAE and Spain**

**The UAE and Spain have had distinguished relations, dating back to 1941, when the Spanish Crown Prince (in exile) visited the region. He was then an officer in the British Navy. He left the UAE when his father died and he became the King of Spain. After the formation of the UAE federation in 1971, the elder sister of the current King Juan Carlos visited Abu Dhabi and Dubai and relations between the two countries continued to grow steadily. The opening of the Spanish embassy in Abu Dhabi in 1977 marked the beginning of a new phase of close relations between the two countries. The leadership of both the UAE and Spain showed considerable keenness to promote ties in cultural, political and economic spheres, as seen in the high profile and historic visit of King Juan Carlos in 1981. That visit which was truly a landmark event in the history of the two countries was warmly welcomed by late President Sheikh Zayed and the Crown Prince of the time Sheikh Khalifa. The ties between the two countries further received a boost in 1990 with the visit of Crown Prince Philippe. The Crown Prince discussed bilateral relations with the UAE officials and underlined the importance of these relations. Spanish Defence Minister also met Sheikh Khalifa and later described the meeting as fruitful. He expressed his confidence that Spanish-UAE relations were excellent and vibrant. In March 1988, Sheikh Khalifa received the General Jones, Chief of Staff of the Spanish Armed Forces. During his visit, the General hailed the progress made by the UAE armed Forces and ability to cope with the latest military technology. Also in the same year, Sheikh Khalifa received Governor of the Spanish Central Bank. He also met Spanish Defence Minister in 1997 who led his country's delegation to the international Defence exhibition IDEX. The Minister praised the**

**sophisticated organization of the exhibition, saying that it showed the superb expertise of the UAE in the exhibitions industry.**

**UAE and Switzerland**

**The UAE and Switzerland have enjoyed close and fast**

**growing relations.**

**In recent years, officials from both sides intensified friendly and officials visits, thus contributing enormously to the growth of ties between the two countries in cultural , economic and scientific fields.**

**Receiving the UAE ambassador in Bern on 23 May 1997, the President of the Swiss Federation Arnold Koler praised the wisdom of the UAE leader, particularly that of the founding father of the UAE the late President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. He said the most glaring examples of his wisdom was his magnificent success at home and balanced and sound regional and international policies. On November 13 2000, Sheikh Khalifa met the Swiss Minister of Foreign Pascal Kuchiban, Member of the Swiss Federation and Minister of Economy. During the meeting, Sheikh stressed the importance of mutual visits so that economic, political, and trade cooperation remains as vibrant as ever. The Minister for his part echoed Sheikh Khalifa's remarks, saying that his country was keenness to enhance its much-valued friendly relations with the UAE.**

**The Minister further expressed the gratitude of his country for the facilities provided to UAE-based Swiss companies. On September 14 2004, Sheikh Khalifa received Franz Denkin, Minister of Foreign Affairs. His meeting touched on various areas of bilateral cooperation between the two countries.**

**UAE and Italy**

**UAE and Italian officials have exchanged official visits over the last few years, thus contributing to reinforcement of bilateral cooperation in various fields. In February 1993, Sheikh Khalifa received Italian Defense Minister Salvo Andrew, who delivered to him a letter from President Oscar Luigi for President Sheikh Zayed. The letter dealt with bilateral relations in addition to other issues of mutual interest.**

**During his meeting with the Italian official, Sheikh Khalifa expressed the appreciation of the government and the people of the UAE of their outstanding friendship with the people of Italy. He pointed out that the UAE people admired and highly valued the role played by Italy in the liberation of Kuwait as part of the international coalition to restore legitimacy to Kuwait. Sheikh Khalifa told Andrew that the UAE would continue to enhance its ties. In response to Sheikh Khalifa's remarks, Minister Andrew hailed the wisdom of the UAE leadership, saying the strategic position of the UAE made it focal point in the Gulf region in political and economic terms. The judicious policies adapted by the UAE have won the country a respectable position in the global landscape. The UAE, he noted, is also known for support of just causes worldwide. Another element that has earned the UAE a respect is its economic success at home that has brought about a sustained prosperity for its people. On September 14th 2004, Sheikh Khalifa received Franco Frattini, Italian Foreign Minister and expressed his hope that his visit would further strengthen the already strong relations between the two countries. On regional and international issues, Sheikh Khalifa reaffirmed the UAE position which is strongly opposed to all forms of violence and terrorism. He specifically**

**cited the deteriorating situation in Iraq where innocent civilian lives are being lost on daily basis, including lives of relief workers who went there in the first place to assist the Iraqi people. Sheikh Khalifa expressed the sorrow and sympathy of the UAE over the gruesome killing of two Italian hostages in Iraq. He concluded his remarks by expressing the hope that Iraqi would be able to restore its stability and become an active member of the international community once again. The minister for his part praised the UAE stance on various international issues, adding that the UAE has been a focal point of stability in the Gulf Region.**

**UAE and Belgium**

**The UAE and Belgium began diplomatic relations in 1973 with the opening of the Belgium diplomatic mission. The first Belgian ambassador was appointed in 1975. The UAE also appointed its ambassador to Brussels who is tasked with coordinating relations with the European Union. Since the beginning of the diplomatic ties, relations have strengthened considerably between Belgium and the UAE, thanks to the keenness of the political leadership in the two countries. As a mark of long-standing friendship, King Albert II visited the UAE several times when he was Crown Prince, the last of which was in 1990, just three years before he was enthroned as King of Belgium. His son, Crown Prince Philip visited the UAE in December 1997. While in the UAE, the Crown Prince expressed satisfaction about the level of cooperation between the UAE and Belgium. He further underlined the need for exchange of friendly visits so as to maintain the momentum of bilateral relations. His visit also provided an opportunity for both to explore further avenues of cooperation, particularly in the economic areas. Prince Philip also praised the UAE progress, particularly in economic and agricultural areas.**

## **UAE and The Netherlands**

**In March 1972, the UAE and the Netherlands forged diplomatic ties, in view of the mutual importance that each side attached to the other. Since the commencement of the diplomatic representation, bilateral cooperation has developed steadily. As part of the efforts by the two countries to promote cooperation, Sheikh Khalifa met the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs in Abu Dhabi in June 1981. The Minister was then the Chairman of the EU Ministerial Council.**

**The meeting focused on the situation in the Middle East with the both sides stressing the need for the EU to play proactive role in resolving the Palestinian conflict, which they said, was necessary for global stability and security.**

**UAE and Austria**

**The UAE and Austria have many things in common in terms of administrative set up, foreign policy and economic policies. The nature of the UAE-Austrian relations shows that geographical and cultural variations between nations are no criteria for gauging similarities. The UAE and Austria are so close that the degree of friendship far outstrips commercial ties or any bilateral agreements. The UAE is aware of the rich historical tradition of Austria and therefore values its contribution to human creativity over the centuries. The UAE on the other hand is viewed by the West as a successful example of unity, harmony and economic progress in various fields. Its economic openness is also a factor that attracted many western powers to stage economic partnership.**

**On March 31, 1984, the Austrian Chancellor visited the UAE and was accorded a warm welcome by Sheikh Khalifa, who praised Austria for its positive stance on various Arab issues. The Austrian chancellor reaffirmed his country's unstinted position on the Palestinian question.**

**In remarks to the press, the Austrian Chancellor said his visit to the UAE was the first by him to an Arab state since he assumed office. He said the visit had availed him with the opportunity to discuss Arab issues with important countries in the region such as the UAE. He further remarked:**

**What has impressed during my short visit is not only the comprehensive development that the country has made in various fields, but the strong adherence to traditional values, strong faith and dedication. These are important values to human progress.**

**He stressed the importance of exchange of visits between the two countries as a way of promoting and maintaining bilateral cooperation, saying that he was able to confer with the UAE**

**leadership not only on bilateral issues but also on regional and international issues.**

**Years later, the visit of the chancellor was followed by the visit of Dr. Kurt Waldheim, President of Austria. Dr. Waldheim was received upon arrival on March 19, 1989 by Sheikh Khalifa and later held talks with the late President Sheikh Zayed. Dr. Waldheim noted during his meeting that there was sweeping changing in the global stage which might lead to the resolution of tension around the world, particularly in the Middle East conflict.**

**The UAE and Japan**

**The UAE and Japan are bound by a strong and long-standing relationship, which is marked and sustained by enormous mutual interest. Needless to say, Japan is the largest trade partner to the UAE from which the country imports most of the needs. The UAE also exports the bulk of its oil products to Japan. The UAE-Japanese relations date back to the pre-UAE federation days, where the two countries engaged in trade exchange through Japanese companies in the Arabian Gulf. Japan and UAE had always held one another in high esteem. As once stated by the former Japanese Prime Minister Takshita:**

**Japan is honored by the visit of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. During that visit, Sheikh Khalifa visited an exhibition in Osaka and also met the Japanese Crown Prince. His visit also saw the formation of the Japanese-Emarati Friendship Society in which Sheikh Khalifa was elected as the honorary Chairman.**

**Since then, UAE and Japanese officials continued to exchange visits so as to sustain the momentum of the close ties between the two countries. During their visits, Japanese officials have been consistent in their support of the Palestinian cause. They also praised the unique UAE experience in unity and federation which was quickly accentuated by massive development in various fields.**

**In 1978, Sheikh Khalifa met the Japanese Foreign Minister Suna Sunuda. The two sides expressed satisfaction over the level of bilateral cooperation and reaffirmed commitment to work together to bring about a lasting peace in the Middle East.**

**In 1988, Sheikh Khalifa met the Chairman of the UAE-Japanese Friendship Society Mr. Takayama and discussed**

ways of strengthening bilateral cooperation between the UAE and Japan. A year later, he received the new Chairman of the UAE-Japanese Society Yushiro Nakayama, who was also the supreme advisor of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC). Nakayama

delivered a letter to Sheikh Khalifa, renewing the invitation of the Japanese Government to the then President, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. Other officials whom Sheikh Khalifa received included Akira Neshida, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Judco, the partners of ADNOC in developing marine oil fields.

In May 1990, the historical ties between the UAE and Japan received a great boost with the visit of the late President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan to Japan. The visit was part of a tour that included China and Indonesia.

As he received the Japanese Minister of Industry, Sheikh Zayed made remarks on the historical relations in which he said:

We are keen to promote and maintain our strong and historical relations with Japan. The warmth and friendship that marked our meeting today with HM the Emperor of Japan and the members of his government will always guide us as we move ahead with our cooperation. We will support one another, and as far as we are concerned, our oil fields will be at the disposal of our Japanese friends. Should Japan require anything in the future, we will be there to provide. The Japanese government knows that our untapped fields are still many and therefore Japanese demands will continue to be met in the future.

Commenting on Sheikh Zayed's Asian tour, Sheikh Khalifa said it was one of the most successful visits and underscored

**the keenness of the UAE to enhance its relations with countries of the region. The visit which yielded positive results was part of the strategic approach of the Gulf States. Such an approach, said Sheikh Khalifa would serve the strategic interests of the Arab world in view of the rapid political and economic changes in the global stage.**

**Sheikh Khalifa further noted that the visit uplifted UAE relations to more robust levels with three Asian powers with notable political and economic standing, not only in the continent but at the global stage.**

**During the period from 1991-93, Sheikh Khalifa met Chairman of the UAE-Japanese Friendship Society, Yushiro Nakayama who briefed Sheikh Khalifa about the proactive role that the society had been playing in maintaining the momentum of friendship between the two countries. Nakayama particularly praised the support that the society received from President Sheikh Zayed. During his visit to the UAE, he met President Sheikh Zayed and the then Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa.**

**The robust relationship continued and had been marked by high-profile visits that were really befitting the historical ties binding the two countries. In 1995, Crown Prince Naruhito and his wife visited the UAE in response to an invitation by Sheikh Khalifa.**

**In a statement to the media delegation accompanying the Crown Prince, Sheikh Khalifa said:**

**On behalf of the UAE people and government, I' m pleased to welcome Crown Prince Naruhito and his wife Princess Masaku. Their visit to the UAE is in response to our invitation which emanated from the desire to further cement our strong and friendly relations. My delight is even greater because this**

would avail us with the opportunity to continue our dialogue with a great personality, whom we have known so closely since our visit to Japan in 1970.

The UAE and Japan have had a historical relationship that is characterized by a special friendship, mutual interest and close cooperation that dates back to more than quarter of a century. Geographical distances have not impeded this cooperation, suffice it to say that Japan has remained the top trade partner to the UAE. The visit of Sheikh Zayed to Japan in 1990 and the subsequent meeting with Emperor Akihito was a distinctive mark in the history of relations between the two countries. This visit as comes another landmark in the history of our relations.

In view of the current changes in the global stage, it is our strong believe that Japan can play a proactive role in the maintaining global peace and stability.

During the period from 1997 -2002, Sheikh Khalifa received several chairman of the Japanese-UAE Friendship Society, who praised the progress of the bilateral relations between the two countries in many spheres. Senior executives from the Japanese firms also paid courtesy calls to Sheikh Khalifa as a token of appreciation for his patronage of the UAE-Japanese ties.

## **UAE and China**

**Although the UAE and China formally began diplomatic ties in 1984, the traditional friendship between the peoples of the two countries is deeply rooted in history.**

**The peoples of both countries have had trade relations long before modern institutions were put in place. Owing to this deep historical heritage, the leadership of both countries attached greater importance to bilateral between the two countries.**

**The visit of the late President Sheikh Zayed to China in 1990 was the first by a GCC leader. The visit did not only elevate Sino-UAE ties to new highs but also forged a political framework within which China became a strong and permanent ally of Arab causes, particularly the Palestinian cause.**

**Following Sheikh Zayed's visit, Chinese Deputy Prime Minister visited the UAE in July 1993 and was received by Sheikh Khalifa. The Chinese official praised the strong relationship between the UAE and his country, noting that Sheikh Zayed's visit was a landmark event in the history of the two countries. Several agreements were concluded during the visit.**

## **UAE and India**

**Since times immemorial, India has had trade relations with**

various sheikhdoms that existed in what is today known as the UAE. Before the rise of modern states, trade was the bond that linked different peoples. In the case of India and the Arabian Peninsula, the strategic geographical location of each side made trade links even stronger. This explains why there is a strong Arab presence in India and an equally stronger Indian presence in the Gulf region. With the independence of India and subsequently the Gulf states, both sides sought to promote their relations.

With respect to the UAE, the late Sheikh Zayed outlined the basic principles of the UAE foreign policy, with India getting a special attention and was on top of his foreign visits. In 1975, Sheikh Zayed visited India and met the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The visit ended in a note of warm friendship and complete conformity of views between the UAE and India on various regional and international issues. Like the late Sheikh Zayed, Sheikh Khalifa has been keenness to promote and maintain the historical ties between the UAE and India. In remarks during a meeting of the joint Arab-Indian business council on 3rd October 1979, Sheikh Khalifa said the UAE and India are bound by historical relationship that has now been transformed into viable economic relations.

He pointed out that the UAE looked forward to cooperating with India in the area of petrochemical industry, whereby excess production could be exported to India for agricultural uses. He further noted that bilateral economic cooperation had gone a long way and that a number of projects were on the pipeline. What was required, he said, is to execute this project with immediate effect. In recent history of the two countries, official visits have continued. In 1976, former India President Fakhreddin Ali Ahmed visited the UAE at the top of

**a high-level delegation. His visit was followed later in 1981 by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Both visits showed that the two countries shared common views on a wide range of regional and international issues. On the Middle East, the two sides stressed the need for Israeli to withdraw from Arab territories which it occupied in 1967. In 2003, Indian President A.B.J. Abdul Kalam held talks with Sheikh Khalifa at Mushrif Palace during which the two sides re-affirmed their commitment to the long-term economic relationship. The Indian President lauded the impressive progress made by the UAE within a short span of time. He said India was proud of its partnership with such a fast growing economic power that the UAE has become.**

## **UAE and Pakistan**

**Pakistan is one of the countries that established early diplomatic relations with the UAE. The two countries have had long-standing ties even before the formation of the UAE federation. For instance, in 1969, the late Sheikh Zayed visited Pakistan when he was Ruler of Abu Dhabi emirate and met former Pakistani President Mohammed Ayoub Khan. This historical visit was followed by another visit by Sheikh Zayed in January 1970, where he held talks with President Agha Mohammed Khan. However, it was not until January 1972 that Sheikh Zayed made an official visit to Pakistan, shortly after the formation of the UAE federation. That visit laid the foundations for a new bilateral cooperation between the two countries. His talks with President Zul Fukhar Ali Bhuto were indeed historical marked an important era in the relations between the two countries.**

**The UAE sought to fulfill its brotherly obligations towards Pakistan at times of difficulties. For instance on 6, September 1973, Sheikh Khalifa announced that the Government of Abu Dhabi decided to donate \$ 4 million to the Government of Pakistan to help its efforts to reconstruct the building of houses that were destroyed by the devastating floods in the country during that year. As he made the announcement, Sheikh Khalifa said that the move was consistent with UAE obligation towards a fellow Muslim country with which it has special and historical relationship.**

**In further remarks during his meeting with Commander of the Pakistani frigate who called on him in Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalifa said the two countries were bound by common destiny and should therefore maintain the momentum of fraternal**

visits.

Indeed, as Sheikh Khalifa put it, these visits continued as top Pakistani officials Zul Fukhar Ali Bhuto, Mohammed Khan, Ghulam Mutafa visited the UAE in 1972, 1987 and 1990 respectively. On September 15th 1990, Pakistani President Farook Ahmed Legari visited UAE where he held talks and praised the bilateral cooperation between the two countries. Two years later, Sheikh Khalifa reciprocated his visit on 11 October 1992 during which he met Pakistani President Ghulam Ishaq Khan. Their talks revolved around bilateral cooperation, Arab and Islamic issues, particularly, the Palestinian cause in addition to other issues in the international arena. Later in the day, Sheikh held officials talks with Prime Minister Nawaz Shareef, who welcomed Sheikh Khalifa warmly and thanked him for the special care accorded to members of the Pakistani community in the UAE. For his part Sheikh Khalifa, underlined the role played by Pakistan in maintaining the security of the Gulf and the Indian Ocean. During Sheikh Khalifa's visit, the two sides agreed to further contextualize their bilateral cooperation by signing a number of protocols including double taxation protocol, trade exchange protocol in addition an agreement on the establishment of joint venture holding company to oversee public and private investments in the two countries. Sheikh Khalifa captured the essence of his visit to Pakistan in remarks in the guest book when he said:

As I implant the tree of friendship and brotherhood between the peoples of the UAE and Pakistan, I'm pleased to assert that this tree will continue to grow and remain a symbol of joint cooperation.

The visit of Sheikh was also an occasion to get first hand view

of the Pakistani military production industry. In a visit to Pakistani Military aircraft manufacturing and maintenance complex, Sheikh Khalifa was briefed about the products of the factory in addition to its assembling facilities which assembles mirage and F 6 aircrafts. It also produces small planes for training young pilots. He also visited the radar production section that manufactures radars and communications equipment. The products of the military facility which is based in Kamar city are sold to the Pakistani military in addition as well as to other countries.

In 1999, Sheikh Khalifa visited Pakistan. His visit began from the Punjab Province where he was met by Governor of the Province Shabaz Shareef. The Governor hailed the UAE contribution in the economic development of Pakistan through the many projects that were, and are, still being supported by Sheikh Khalifa. On 20 February 2000, Sheikh Khalifa paid a private visit to Pakistan during which he met the governor of the Punjab Province. While according a warm welcome to Sheikh Khalifa, the Governor expressed the gratitude of the Pakistani people to Sheikh Khalifa for the generous projects that he had been sponsoring in the remote areas of Pakistan. Another high-profile visit by Sheikh Khalifa was in February 2001, where President Pervez Mushraff received him. Sheikh Khalifa and Mushraff exchanged views on bilateral relations in addition to other regional issues. President Mushrraff expressed a special thanks to Sheikh Khalifa for the numerous projects that the UAE had been sponsoring in different areas of Pakistan. He noted that these projects contributed enormously to the growth of Pakistan's national economy. Later in a meeting of the Pakistani Cabinet, Mushraff reviewed the minutes of this

**2001 meeting with Sheikh Khalifa and told the cabinet that Sheikh Khalifa has expressed, during the visit, his desire to invest in number of economic projects in Pakistan as a way of helping the Pakistani economy. He further told the cabinet that this desire underscored the historical ties between the UAE and Pakistan. In the UAE, Pakistani officials continued to visit the UAE to bolster cooperation in various areas. In March 2001, General Mahmoud Ahmed, who led the Pakistani delegation to IDEX 2001 met Sheikh Khalifa and hailed the UAE stance on a number of Arab and Islamic issues. On 9th July 2002, Sheikh Khalifa received Dr. Attauramn, Minister of Science and Technology in Pakistan. The Minister stressed the need for cooperation between the two countries, saying that there are great potentials that could be utilized to enhance technological advancement.**

**In a nutshell, economic cooperation between the two countries is deeply rooted in history. Since the early 1970s trade relations took a more fashionable form and continued to grow steadily. One of the landmark projects that were launched was the establishment of an oil refinery facility at Mahmoud Kut Area in Pakistan, which was launched on the orders of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The establishment of the facility was a fulfillment of dream that the two countries cherished for more than quarter of a century.**

## **UAE and Russia**

**One of the basic principles of the UAE foreign policy is to forge cordial and friendly relations with nations of the world with the view of promoting human understanding. It is within this context that the UAE established diplomatic ties with Russia in 1971 and were elevated to ambassadorial level in 1985 on the basis of mutual respect, peaceful co-existence, mutual interest, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nations and promotion of global peace and stability.**

**Explaining the UAE view on relations with Russia, Sheikh Khalifa said:**

**Our foreign policy is based on the principles of openness, cooperation, non-alignment, non-interference in the affairs of other nations, and mutual respect. Our relationship with the Soviet Union and indeed the entire Eastern bloc is based on these principles. It is a policy that is also consistent with our national interests. Moreover, the Soviet Union is a major power that can play a leading role in maintaining global peace and stability. We hope that diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union would be a prelude for cooperation in economic and military areas. You may have noticed that we in the UAE have begun financial cooperation with the Soviet Union through recent agreements signed between some of our banks and Soviet banks.**

**Although the Soviet Union has disintegrated, the Russian Federation has maintained strong links with the Gulf States, particularly the UAE. Given its historical heritage and political weight, the Russian Federation is still a force to be reckoned with internationally; suffice it to say that it is a permanent member of the UN Security Council.**

**In view of this status, the UAE has maintained friendly ties with the Russian federation and received a number of officials. In 1991, Sheikh Khalifa received the Russian envoy Ievgeni Primakov who delivered a letter to him from the then Russian President Boris Yeltsin. During his meeting with Sheikh Khalifa, the Russian envoy expressed his country's keenness to reinforce cooperation with the UAE in various areas.**

**This objective was best served through numerous visits by several Russian officials, including the visit of the Minister of Foreign Economic Relations in June 1992, Deputy Defense Minister in March 1993, and Deputy Prime Minister in November 1993.**

**The visits have also showed that both the UAE and Russia shared common views on a wide-range of regional and international issues, notably on the fact that the two sides believe that the Gulf region should be free from weapons of mass destruction. As a member of the Quartet that sponsored the Middle East Peace Plan along with UN, US and European Union, Russia believes in a just peace that will bring about permanent settlement to the Mideast conflict and lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state.**

**In 1994, Sheikh Khalifa received the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation. The visit was part of the bilateral commitment to further develop economic relations between**

**the two countries. The Prime Minister said that his visit was part of the Russian policy to strengthen ties with countries of the region, particularly the UAE. During the visit of the Russian Prime Minister, an agreement was signed on mutual protection of investments. With the signing of the investment protection agreement, the economic relations gained added vibrancy, particularly in view of the great Russia openness and change in legislation. This allowed free movement of capital. To cope with this vibrancy, the two sides set up a joint committee on the basis of economic cooperation agreement which was signed in 1990. As part of the agreement, the chambers of commerce in the UAE signed agreements with Russia, allowing them access to information and international trade agreements. On the other hand, the UAE economic liberalization policies and sound investments laws attracted investors from around the globe including Russia. The Russian technology is required in different fields such as agriculture, oil and underground water. The competence of the Russian technology was quite apparent as the Russian Oil Company, which inherited the defunct Ministry of Energy of the former Soviet Union won a contract in 2000 to set up a refinery in Fujairah emirate with a production capacity of 2 million tons annually. On the military cooperation, the two sides signed a protocol in May 2000, providing for improvement of specifications of Russian armored vehicles used by the UAE military. The agreement was preceded by the visit of the Russian Minister of Defense Bavel Grachov in 1993. Both the UAE and Russia signed an agreement on cultural cooperation in 1996 in recognition of the cultural heritage of the two countries and how best this heritage will be used to the advantage of humanity.**



## **UAE and Indonesia**

**The relations between the United Arab Emirates and Indonesia goes back to immemorial history. The people of the United Arab Emirates have contributed to the discovery of the Indonesian archipelago, through trade routes they were organizing. These trade routes were the window through which Indonesia knew the world and transported its main products to its markets. Most importantly, it was through these routes that the Emirati people managed in spread Islam to Indonesia.**

**Indonesian communities in the Gulf countries helped strengthen the ties between Indonesia and these countries. Distinctive diplomatic relations between Indonesia and the United Arab Emirates have built up stronger, economic and commercial ties between them, making the UAE one of the biggest Indonesia's commercial partner in the GCC countries. As a result, commercial exchanges between the two countries have risen to 1.8 US billion dollars.**

**The United Arab Emirates and Indonesia are also members of various regional and international organizations, including the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and other organizations. They share the same views and opinions on international issues, commit themselves to the principles of fraternity and understanding among nations and peoples, and the settlement of international disputes through dialogue and peaceful means.**

**The United Arab Emirates always seeks to support security and stability in Indonesia, so that this country can play its role**

**in serving the Islamic countries and the OIC. Indonesia in turn puts special importance on its relations with The UAE, especially in the area of economic relations.**

**H.H Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan reiterated the importance of H.H the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's Asian tour in 1991, in which he visited Indonesia as part of the UAE political orientation and the strategic interests of the GCC countries in extending the bridges of cooperation to friendly countries.**

**H.H Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan held a meeting with the Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid on February 2001. He welcomed the visit by the Indonesian President and the delegation accompanying him, praising the development and growth of relations between the UAE and Indonesia, and confirming that the UAE is very keen to support security and stability in Indonesia and all Islamic countries for the good of their peoples.**

## **UAE relations with Central Asia**

**Arab presence in Central Asia and the Caspian area dates back to the 7th Century. Since Islamic invasion, Islam and Arabic language spread in the area. Today the Caspian region comprises Islamic republics, particularly after the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. The six Islamic republics in the Central Asia and the Caspian region include Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgizia, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Azerbaijan. Since the emergence of these republics, Sheikh Khalifa has been frequently visiting the area to see for himself the fundamental changes that have been occurring in the region. His keen interest in the developments of the region is a shrewd move that reveals an in-depth strategic vision. Commenting on this issue, Sheikh Khalifa once said:**

**We are bound by the bonds of Islam with these countries, who are trying to regain their Islamic identity after 70 years of communists rule. This process is no easy process and it obviously requires assistance from us. In particular, the economies of these countries need to be helped to move to controlled to liberal economies. They need to be assisted in terms of investments.**

## **UAE and Turkmenistan**

**President Saparmurat Niyazov of Turkmenistan visited the UAE on 19 June 1998, a historical visit that led to the conclusion of five agreements and MoUs between the UAE and Turkmenistan, covering the areas of economics and finance, media, aviation and higher education.**

**Sheikh Khalifa and President Niyazov held talks which the visiting President described very successful and laid concrete foundations for special relations with the UAE. In January 2001, President Niyazov met Sheikh Khalifa in Turkmenistan and expressed his pleasure over the visit, saying such visits were in the best interest of the people of the two countries. He said the UAE had been blessed with a wise leadership that safeguarded the interest of Muslim nations and thereby became a great contributor to global peace and stability. In response, Sheikh Khalifa said the visit underscored the commitment of the UAE towards fellow Muslim nations. He said his visits to Turkmenistan will bolster cooperation.**

**During the visit, both the UAE and Turkmenistan underlined to resolve the Palestinian problem on the basis of the principle of “land for peace” which is endorsed by the United Nations’ resolutions. They also re-affirmed their commitment to the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. This recognition, they said, is the key to attaining a lasting peace in the Middle East.**

**On 22 April, 2001, Turkmenistan Deputy Prime Minister for Oil affairs visited the UAE and delivered a letter to Sheikh Khalifa from President Niyazov dealing with bilateral cooperation. In November of 2001, Sheikh Khalifa visited Turkmenistan and held talks with President Niyazov during**

**they conferred the fast growing bilateral ties between the two countries. Commenting on the visit of Sheikh Khalifa, President Niyazov said the warmth of relations between the two countries and the close economic cooperation was really a unique example in international relations. Commenting along similarly lines, Sheikh Khalifa said the exchange of visits was the life-line of cooperation and friendship between the UAE and Turkmenistan. The meeting also touched on regional and international issues, particularly the issue of terrorism which requires concerted international efforts. The two sides also stressed the need to help Afghanistan. In this context, President Niyazov praised the procreative role that the UAE has taken with respect to the reconstruction of Afghanistan and its continued support for the Palestinian people. Several ministers from Turkmenistan continued to visit the UAE where they discussed various related to bilateral cooperation. In short Sheikh Khalifa's vision of the Caspian region and Central Asia is one that is strategic and will have a positive effect on the peoples of the two countries. The last two visits by Sheikh Khalifa were on 25 December 2002 and again in December 2004. During those visit, the two leaders discussed relevant of issues of mutual interest at the regional and international levels in addition to bilateral relations.**

## **UAE and Kazakhstan**

**The UAE and Kazakhstan owe the strength of their relationship to the visionary leadership of Sheikh Khalifa and President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Sheikh Khalifa's keenness to promote ties with Kazakhstan is part of the overall UAE strategy to assist fellow Muslim countries of Central Asia and the Caspian region to achieve economic prosperity after seven decades of communist rule. The efforts exerted by Sheikh Khalifa in this respect has always been appreciated by the leadership and the people of Kazakhstan, as evinced by the First Class Order of Friendship, awarded to Sheikh Khalifa by President Nursultan on 3rd March 2002. The Order, which is the highest order in Kazakhstan was presented to Shiekh Khalifa by the non-resident Kazak ambassador to the UAE Baghdad Amiriev. As he received the order, Sheikh Khalifa thanked President Nursultan for this great gesture of friendship, adding that relations between the two countries were stronger and would continue to grow with added strength in the future.**

**In line with his long-term commitment to cementing relations with Kazakhstan, Sheikh Khalifa visited Kazakhstan on 8 October 2002 on invitation from President Nursultan. As he received Sheikh Khalifa, President Nursultan said both the UAE and his country had gone a long way in building strong diplomatic, economic and cultural ties with the UAE. He said visit of Sheikh Khalifa was the best example of how excellent relations had been with the UAE. For his part, Sheikh Khalifa echoed the remarks of Sultan about strength of the two-way relationship. He added that the UAE had a duty to help its Muslim brethren and also forge good cordial and friendly**

**relations with different nations of the world. Sheikh Khalifa meeting with President Nursultan touched on different issues, ranging from bilateral cooperation to regional and international issues. Following his talks with President Nursultan, Sheikh Khalifa visited the Kazak Cultural Centre which displays artifacts from the national culture of Kazakhstan, from the early days to the making of modern state. He spent some time on the Bedouin hall which houses many sculptures reflecting the history of the country during the Middle Ages until the 18th century. After the visit Sheikh Khalifa held officials talks with the Prime Minister Iman Ghali Gasimjamitov. During the talks, wide ranges of issues were discussed and strategies to further bolster bilateral cooperation were devised to satisfaction of both parties. In opening remarks to the meeting, Sheikh Khalifa reaffirmed the UAE commitment to strengthen relations in a manner that will safeguard the interest of the peoples of the two countries. Earlier, the Kazak Prime Minister opened the meeting by warmly welcoming Sheikh Khalifa, saying that his country heading towards greater economic openness and would therefore stage a strong partnership with the UAE. Given the resources of the two countries, they can team-up to create joint ventures that could be of great benefit to the people of both countries. On January 2004, President Nur Sultan Nazarbayev visited the UAE where he was accorded warm and friendly welcome by Sheikh Khalifa. He commended the progress made by the UAE in various fields, saying that this great success has won the UAE an admiration and respect by the government and people of Kazakhstan.**

**President Nursultan's visit was followed by the visit of Vice President Ahmed Jan Assimov on 11 December 2004 , who**

**headed the Kazak side in the meeting of the joint ministerial between the UAE and Kazakhstan. Among the issues that were discussed by the ministerial committee were the issues of invigorating the economic and commercial agreement. Cooperation on judicial matter, environment, media, security, and exhibitions were discussed.**

## **UAE and Malaysia**

**The UAE and Malaysia are known for their similar economic and political success story. Although the two countries emerged as a result of different historical processes, yet they were able to achieve economic miracles that fundamentally transformed the quality of life for their people. They sought to diversify the sources of income, modernize their economies, and the same, time preserved the indigenous heritage of their people.**

**On the political domain, the two countries share similar positions with respect to propagating and defending the rights of the developing nations. In particular, Malaysia and the UAE have been critical about the economic hegemony of the developed world and their desire to subjugate the developing world through unfair globalization policies. This position has been strongly articulated by the two countries amongst the Organization of the of the Islamic Conference (OIC) countries so that they take control of their destiny.**

**Diplomatic relations between the UAE and Malaysia date back to the 1970s and continued to grow, thanks to the leadership of the two countries, who had been keen to cement relations through mutual visits.**

**The UAE-Malaysian relations were among the first to be organized within a certain specific framework. For instance in 1972, the two countries signed a trade agreement and by 1975 they formed a joint ministerial committee, followed by signing of cultural cooperation agreement in the same year. In 1991, investments promotion and protection agreement was signed. Another agreement on aviation was signed in 1994 in addition to the agreement on avoidance of double taxation. Additionally, a memorandum of understanding on information technology and multimedia was concluded in 1996.**

**Both Malaysia and the UAE are poised for digital economies and this explains why businessmen from both sides entered joint ventures on a number of projects. The availability of sound economic infrastructures couple with political stability are some of the features that attracts investors in the two countries.**

**The two countries have always been keen to ensure that cooperation amongst them serves the wider interest of the people of Asia and the Middle East. They are aware of their economic powers, particularly in view of the fact Malaysian market cater for the needs of some 500,000 consumers in Asia while the UAE markets caters for the needs of some 300.000 Arab consumers. In the area of tourism, Malaysia and the UAE are cooperating to achieve what is known as tourism integration and could later be widened to include the rest of**

**the GCC states. This is an issued touched upon when Sheikh Khalifa received in Malaysian Minister of Information Tansri Khalil Yaqoub on 30th October 2002.**

**As he welcomed, the minister, Sheikh Khalifa hailed the support which Malaysia always lent to Islamic and Arab causes in international circles and further expressed hope that bilateral agreements that were signed would serve the interest of the people of the two countries.**

**The long-standing UAE-Malaysian relations also dominated the meeting of Sheikh Khalifa with the former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohammed on May 4th 2004. While in the UAE, Dr. Mahathir attended the graduation ceremony of the Navy College cadets.**

## **UAE and Afghanistan**

**The UAE provided considerable support to the Afghan people for many years, particularly in terms of social and economic services. The UAE activities are quite visible in terms of hospitals schools that were built in the refugees camps in the neighboring countries and also in different Afghan cities after the war.**

**On the political level, the UAE was at the forefront of countries that supported the restoration of sovereignty to Afghanistan and called for formation of a national government that would be inclusive of all the Afghan factions. When a national government was formed in March 1989, the UAE left no stone unturned to narrow the gap between rivaling factions with the view of ending internecine fighting that ensued in 1989.**

**Today, the UAE remains committed to supporting Afghanistan so that it becomes the oasis of peace and security for which it had been known in the past. In this context, the UAE has been receiving Afghan officials to get their view as to how their country could be helped to overcome the legacy of the war. One of the first officials to visit the UAE was Mohammed Younis Ghanoni, Minister of Interior, who visited the UAE 22 April 2002 and was received by Sheikh Khalifa. As he received the delegation, Sheikh warmly welcomed them, pledging the UAE support in the reconstruction efforts and further stressed the importance of bilateral cooperation between the two countries. He also expressed his hope for restoration of permanent stability in the country. For his part, the minister extended the thanks of his government and people to the UAE for steadfast support provided throughout**

**the difficult years in the history of the country. He pointed out that such a noble humanitarian gesture will be remembered for ever by the Afghan people.**

**On September 2002, Sheikh Khalifa received the Afghan President Hamid Karzai and his entourage. They reviewed the situation in Afghanistan, including the political and economic changes and the associated stability that emanated from the present situation.**

**Commending the UAE for its unstinted support to the people of Afghanistan, President Karzai said the financial and material support that the UAE provided to his people was a mark of genuine human brotherhood which the people of Afghanistan will not forget. He expressed his hope that his would open avenues of investment in his country. Also as part of the commitment to bring about conformity of views in the country, Sheikh Khalifa received the former Afghan King Mohammed Zahir Shao on 7 January 2003. During the meeting, they exchanged views on various issues and also explored ways of supporting reconstruction projects in Afghanistan. The former King once again thanked the UAE for its sustained engagement in Afghanistan.**

## **UAE and South Africa**

**With the demise of the Apartheid regime and the coming to power of the African majority in 1994, after having been oppressed for over 350 years, the UAE lifted economic sanctions that were imposed on South Africa and established diplomatic relations with Pretoria in the same year.**

**Since the establishment of the diplomatic relations, the two countries have had excellent relations. Former South African President Nelson Mandela visited the UAE in April 1995, December 1998 when he participated in the inauguration of the GCC summit and again in 2000 when he participated at a global economic conference in Dubai.**

**Mandela's successor, President Thabo Mbeki also maintained communications with the late President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, sending him two letters in January and December 2001. The letters dealt with bilateral relations and prospects of future cooperation. President Mbeki also praised the UAE role in strengthening Arab-African cooperation.**

**South Africa also been an active participant at the IDEX exhibition held in the UAE since 1993. The South African delegation to IDEX 2003 was headed by the Minister of Defense, who told the press during the show that his country was keen to be part of that global event. He said South Africa was looking forward to forging a strong partnership with the UAE. In November 1999, South Africa signed a deal with the UAE on the purchasing of weapons for defense and peace-keeping purposes. The two countries also signed an agreement on air services in February 2001.**

**In a nutshell, South Africa and the UAE are strong economic players and will continue to need one another. South ranks sixth in the world economies ladder and an industrialized**

**nation that will continue to require oil. The UAE on the other hand, is an oil-based economy and will need South Africa. Moreover, the two countries share similar foreign policy principles.**

## **UAE and Venezuela**

**The UAE and Venezuela maintain good relations not only because they are OPEC members but also because they share similar views on many issues. The UAE's keenness to maintain good ties with Venezuela falls within the context of its long-standing policy of maintaining friendly ties with nations of the world.**

**The closeness of relationship between the two OPEC member states was underlined by the visit of President Hugo Chavez to the UAE in 2000, where he held talks with Sheikh Khalifa. During the meeting, Sheikh Khalifa pledged the UAE support to OPEC resolutions that were expected to be adopted by the OPEC summit in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas. Sheikh Khalifa said the UAE was keen to stabilize the oil market in accordance with the OPEC strategy. Sheikh also commended the efforts of President Chavez to evolve future plans for OPEC.**

**For his part, President Chavez hailed the UAE contribution in OPEC, saying that the UAE policy has won it a great respect in international circles.**