

[View this email in your browser](#)



U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council  
[usuaebusiness.org](http://usuaebusiness.org)

**His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**  
**President of the U.A.E.**  
**Ruler of Abu Dhabi**  
**Supreme Commander of the U.A.E. Armed Forces**



**The Board of Directors, President,  
and staff of the U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council  
send their warmest wishes to the new  
President of the United Arab Emirates  
His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**

Overview

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan became President of the United Arab Emirates on 14 May 2022 following the passing of his brother, the late Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. His Highness previously served as Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the U.A.E. Armed Forces. Sheikh Mohammed was unanimously elected as the third president of the U.A.E. by the country's Federal Supreme Council, which consists of the rulers of each of the seven Emirates.

U.S. President Joe Biden congratulated his "long-time friend" Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, who has long played a critical role in shaping U.A.E. foreign policy, defense ties, and the U.S.-U.A.E. relationship. Alongside his global reputation, Sheikh Mohammed is known domestically as both a modernizer and a "man of the people."

Sheikh Mohammed is set to continue the trajectory of his predecessor Sheikh Khalifa and their father Sheikh Zayed, developing the U.A.E. socially while simultaneously further diversifying the nation's economy, and taking an even more prominent leadership role in the region and the world. Under the rule of His Highness, the U.A.E. is sure to remain, as Sheikh Mohammed once said, "a light that illuminates a dark land."

Government Leadership

Previously, in his dual capacities as Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council, Sheikh Mohammed oversaw the day-to-day affairs of the Government of Abu Dhabi in close consultation with his predecessor Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. This role took on a more public profile after Sheikh Khalifa suffered a stroke in 2014.

Under the guidance of Sheikh Mohammed, the U.A.E. has ushered in a new era of tolerance and peaceful coexistence between societies and religions. His contributions have greatly impacted the modernization of the U.A.E, solidifying the nation's status as a global destination for innovation. His Highness is particularly focused on improving the lives of citizens and residents of the U.A.E. and has previously stated that "every successful government treats its citizens as a national asset." Under his presidency, the U.A.E. will likely expand its umbrella of reforms focused on stability, sustainable development, and social welfare. Sheikh Mohammed has

often noted that human resources and the role of national service should be main characteristics of the U.A.E.'s domestic agenda.

### Foreign Affairs

As Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the U.A.E. Armed Forces, a UK Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst graduate, and a former special forces officer, Sheikh Mohammed's foreign policy has had his military experience at its heart. He made his mark in the foreign policy arena through a proactive foreign policy agenda aimed at transforming the U.A.E. into a regional political and military power, joining coalitions against the rise of regional terrorist organizations, countering Iranian proxies, and fighting against what he perceived as radical Islamist groups. This led to the U.A.E.'s involvement in regional coalitions that intervened in Yemen against the Houthis as well as imposed a blockade against Qatar. More recently, he has overseen dramatic shifts in U.A.E. foreign policy to include normalizing ties with Israel, as well as withdrawing from Yemen and achieving intra-GCC reconciliation. The U.A.E. has also served as a mediator to resolve disputes in the Horn of Africa.



*Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed greets U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris on 16 March 2022*



*Former U.S. President Barack Obama in discussion with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed*

According to a May 14th, 2022 New York Times report, [Mohammed bin Zayed, an Ambitious U.S. Partner, Rises to Lead the U.A.E.](#), the country is also recognized as a key economic, political, and defense ally of the United States. Bilateral ties are supplemented by over \$22 billion in trade flows, supporting hundreds of thousands of American jobs. Investment flows similarly strengthen this mutually beneficial relationship, with the U.A.E. investing roughly half of its sovereign wealth in the United States alone.

President Biden underscored the strength of the U.S.-U.A.E. relationship by sending Vice President Kamala Harris to Abu Dhabi to pay their respects following the passing of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa. Vice President Harris led a delegation of senior administration officials, including Secretary of State Blinken, Secretary of Defense Austin, CIA Director Burns, and Special Envoy for Climate Kerry. President Biden's congratulatory statement at the election of Sheikh Mohammed as President of the U.A.E. highlighted the Administration's

recognition of the U.A.E. as an “essential partner of the United States.” He identified Sheikh Mohammed as being at “the forefront” of the U.S.-U.A.E. partnership and expressed hope that his leadership will further build on the “extraordinary partnership between the United States and the United Arab Emirates that grew under His Highness Sheikh Khalifa's presidency.”

#### Domestic Policy – Social Initiatives

Sheikh Mohammed has long espoused policies of tolerance and inclusion as critical tools in the fight against extremism. In the 2015 anti-terrorism speech, Sheikh Mohammed outlined the U.A.E.'s three-fold strategy to countering terror and extremism, noting that: “The first element in this strategy is promoting the values of tolerance, moderation and the acceptance of others as opposed to extremist, radical or immoderate ideologies, which terrorist forces seek to implant in the minds of young people around the world.... The second element in the strategy against terrorism is making effective efforts to achieve sustainable development in poorer regions around the world, because extremist groups thrive in poor and distressed regions and exploit the difficult living conditions of people to recruit and brainwash them...The third element is strong and effective involvement in any international effort to curb the expansion of terrorist groups and their attempts to control countries and societies...”

The first pillar of this strategy – promotion of the values of tolerance, moderation, and acceptance – has been on full display in recent years. In 2019, Sheikh Mohammed hosted Pope Francis in Abu Dhabi for the first ever visit by a pontiff to the Arabian Peninsula. Just one year later, the U.A.E. signed the Abraham Accords, normalizing ties with Israel, which in addition to the political and economic ties, allowed the nascent Jewish Community in the U.A.E. to come out of the shadows and flourish.

Sheikh Mohammed will also continue to emphasize the value of humanitarian assistance from the U.A.E. In a 2015 speech at the World Government Summit, His Highness emphasized his dedication to having not only the U.A.E. government give back on a global scale, but also via individual citizens and businesses. With an increased effort on humanitarian initiatives, Sheikh Mohammed has guaranteed that the U.A.E. “will always work to make the Middle East a better place to live.”

Appointed Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Government Restructuring Committee just a year after becoming Crown Prince, Sheikh Mohammed led a renewal of the Emirate's public sector, reorganizing its departments and authorities, shrinking the public sector workforce, and introducing new mechanisms for transparency and accountability. Just one example of his innovation in the public sector, Sheikh Mohammed has also been a leading proponent of the U.A.E.'s nascent space program, which includes missions to the Moon and to Mars.

As Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Education Council, Sheikh Mohammed worked to forge partnerships with prestigious world-class educational institutions and think-tanks, a number of which subsequently announced plans to either establish a base in the U.A.E. or join strategic joint ventures with existing academic establishments. New York University - Abu Dhabi is a prominent and successful outcome of these efforts.



# مشاريع الخمسين

PROJECTS OF THE 50



### Economic Reforms and Agenda

As the Vice Chairman of the Supreme Petroleum Council, which oversees the Emirate of Abu Dhabi's oil and gas sector, and Chairman of Mubadala Investment Company, Sheikh Mohammed has led efforts to diversify the country's energy portfolio, expanding into nuclear and solar power. Sheikh Mohammed is credited with helping conceive, formulate, and implement the U.A.E.'s overall economic diversification strategy aligning the country's economy along a number of other key economic sectors in addition to oil and gas.

To this end, Sheikh Mohammed has encouraged private and foreign direct investment in scientific research, logistics, health care, food security, and renewable energy. Under his presidency, the U.A.E. will likely continue its focus on attracting foreign investments and partnerships to boost the local economy and accelerate diversification programs. Recent economic achievements, including the country's surges in FDI and partnerships, have been due in no small part to Sheikh Mohammed. The U.A.E. will continue to emphasize its "strategic location and open economy with free transfer of profit, revenues, and assets" in the coming years. He also has been a fierce proponent of the country's Projects of the 50 initiative designed to propel the U.A.E. into becoming one of the top 10 countries in the world over the next decade.

Explaining his policy priorities in a national speech in February 2015, Sheikh Mohammed was quoted as saying: "Our best bet at this period of time where we have wealth is to invest all our resources in education, because there will be a time, 50 years from now, when we load the last barrel of oil aboard the ship. The question is, 50 years from now after we have loaded this last barrel of oil, are we going to feel sad? If our investment today is right, I think - dear brothers and sisters - we will celebrate that moment."

### Government-Owned Investment

Sheikh Mohammed is Chairman of Mubadala Investment Company, established by the Government of Abu Dhabi in 2002 to generate returns while accelerating the development and diversification of the local economy. Mubadala now has over \$284 billion in assets under management, of which over \$100 billion is invested in the United States.

Sheikh Mohammed is also a board member of the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), which is one of the world's largest sovereign wealth funds. In addition, in 2015, he was appointed Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Investment Council (ADIC), which has a predominantly U.A.E.-focused portfolio, and was split off from ADIA in 2007.

Finally, Sheikh Mohammed is Chairman of the Tawazun Economic Council (established in 1992 as the U.A.E. Offsets Bureau), which was originally created to generate greater economic impact from the U.A.E.'s extensive defense procurement program. Tawazun is now the U.A.E. defense and security acquisitions authority for the U.A.E. Armed Forces and Abu Dhabi Police.



*His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed with Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid, U.A.E. Vice President and Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Ruler of Dubai*

### Defense and Security

Sheikh Mohammed has long played a central role in the U.A.E.'s defense and national security establishment. Prior to his appointment as Deputy Supreme Commander of the U.A.E. Armed Forces, he held positions as Armed Forces Chief of Staff, Deputy Armed Forces Chief of Staff, and Commander of the U.A.E. Air Force and Air Defense. He was also a senior advisor on security matters to his father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founding President of the U.A.E. and former Ruler of Abu Dhabi.

Guided by the directives of both the late Sheikh Zayed and Sheikh Khalifa, Sheikh Mohammed helped develop the U.A.E. Armed Forces in terms of strategic planning, training, organizational structure, and enhancing defense capabilities. Sheikh Mohammed's direct guidance and leadership has elevated the U.A.E. Armed Forces into the ranks of leading militaries in the broader region, and is globally admired as a small, yet mighty force. The U.A.E. military prowess shown over the last two decades has earned it the admiration of global military leaders and has led many to affectionately refer to them as "Little Sparta."

In the various roles he has held in U.A.E. Armed Forces leadership, Sheikh Mohammed has been central to the U.A.E.'s deep and well-documented relationship with the U.S. defense industry. According to the Washington



Post, Sheikh Mohammed's approach to procurement "has involved purchasing the most advanced weapons the Emirates can obtain," noting that "the U.A.E.'s F-16s, which have been outfitted with custom-made radar units and fuel pods that permit long-range strike missions, are more sophisticated than the U.S. Air Force's F-16 fleet." The U.A.E. continues to express interest in procuring the F-35.

Since 2005, the U.A.E. has been an active member of international coalitions in military campaigns in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, and regional coalitions in actions in Yemen and Libya. The U.A.E. Armed Forces participated in U.S.-led operations in Somalia in 1992 and NATO-led operations in Kosovo in 1999. In fact, the U.A.E. has actively participated in every major international coalition since the first Gulf War.



*His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, formerly Chief of Staff of the U.A.E. Armed Forces, meets with troops in January 1993*

In this respect, the U.A.E. has established itself as not just a consumer of security, but also a provider of security and a key U.S. partner in a volatile and dangerous region. Shared concerns over Iran's destabilizing activities in the region and the rise of extremism led to an even further deepening of the relationship between the two countries over the last two decades. Today, the strong defense relationship includes the hosting of U.S. troops, participating in joint exercises and training, billions of dollars in arms purchases, and deep military and intelligence cooperation within the U.A.E. and abroad.

His Highness has also served as a global leader on counterterrorism efforts. In a 2015 speech, Sheikh Mohammed reiterated the U.A.E.'s resolve against terrorism, stating: "The scourge of terrorism has plagued the world, threatening the security of countries and societies. Recent terrorist attacks targeting civilians have reaffirmed the need for effective, concerted international efforts to face the forces and groups who practice, support, or justify terror under the guise of Islam, despite their actions being contrary to its tolerant and human teachings that call for peace, cooperation, and coexistence among mankind. The war against terrorist groups of all types is a war against attempts to destroy human civilization and its gains, and in such a war there is no choice but to prevail."

### Philanthropy

Sheikh Mohammed is a generous philanthropist. In 2011, he pledged \$50 million – matched by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation – to the GAVI Alliance, the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, for the purchase and delivery of vaccines to children in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In 2017, Sheikh Mohammed and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation launched a \$100 million fund to eliminate river blindness and lymphatic filariasis from key countries in Africa and the Middle East.

In 2008, Sheikh Mohammed provided an endowment of €25m [\$28.2 million] to establish the Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, which provides targeted grants to species conservation projects worldwide. It has given over 2,389 grants to 1,515 species or subspecies worldwide.

His Highness has also previously donated \$15 million on behalf of the U.A.E. to establish the UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UNGIFT), bringing together the UNODC, ILO, OHCHR, UNICEF, IOM, and OSCE to develop more holistic solutions to this international crime.

With the generous support of Sheikh Mohammed, the Special Olympics expanded one of the world's largest initiatives for inclusion in education for young people with and without intellectual disabilities. His Highness donated \$25 million on behalf of the U.A.E. to bring this initiative to six countries—Argentina, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Romania, and Rwanda. A significant move toward destigmatizing disabilities in the U.A.E., Sheikh Mohammed hosted the 2019 Special Olympics in Abu Dhabi, further underscoring his dedication to building an inclusive and tolerant society for all.



*His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed with the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, his father and first President of the U.A.E.*

### Family

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan is the son of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the 'founding father' and first President of the U.A.E., and Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Al Ketbi, known colloquially as 'the Mother of the Nation.' He is also the half-brother of the late Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, his predecessor as President of the U.A.E. Sheikh Mohammed is married to Her Highness Sheikha Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan, and has four sons and five daughters. His eldest son, Sheikh Khalid bin Mohammed Al Nahyan, serves as the Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Office and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the U.A.E.

For more detailed reporting on [H.H. Sheikh Mohammed's vision of the Middle East's future](#), please see the feature story first published in the New York Times Magazine Section on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020.



***Copyright © 2022 U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council, All rights reserved.***

**Our mailing address is:**

[news@usuaebusiness.org](mailto:news@usuaebusiness.org)

2001 K Street NW

Suite 201 North

Washington, D.C. 20006

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

