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**The Political Thought of the  
Late H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan,  
Founder of the United Arab Emirates  
(1966 – 2004)**

By

Hamad Ali Hasan Alhosani

Submitted to School of Government & International Affairs

of

Durham University

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

PhD in Political Science

July, 2011

## **Abstract**

This thesis highlights the political thought of H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, a man who made decisive contributions to the history of the twentieth century, and the various reflections of this political thought on the UAE, its people and the international community at large. In this regard, it explores and analyzes a multifaceted political thought that took its form in political practice in the establishment of the Federation, the management of crises and in the building of a prosperous enduring nation. Evaluating the factors that influenced the formation of the doctrinal matrix of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, this thesis traces the background from within which Sheikh Zayed's leadership skills evolved and developed. From his early years onwards, Sheikh Zayed made a firm commitment to undertake the considerable task of building a fully fledged state out of a divided tribal background, improve the lives of citizens, and carve a place for the UAE in the international arena.

This research project illustrates the implications and dimensions of Sheikh Zayed's political thinking process exemplified in his discursive statements and actions. It documents and analyzes the career achievements of Sheikh Zayed, a statesman acknowledged by contemporary and future generations to have had significant impact on the political direction and overall development of the UAE. This impact also demonstrates the potential of his contribution to the field of political thought.

One of this study's primary conclusions is that the accomplishments of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan during his rule have resulted primarily from his development of an integrated doctrine of governance that reflected his humanistic outlook. In this regard, at both the domestic and international levels, Sheikh Zayed's political decisions and acts were undertaken with reference to this outlook.

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I also express my deep thanks to the viva members who spent much time and effort to read and discuss this dissertation.

I am looking forward for using their remarks if necessary to set right what they see otherwise. Thanks are also extended to all those who have helped me to accomplish my dissertation. I beg their pardon if my memory does not serve me well to remember their names one by one. Yet, I do offer my special thanks to my wife who supported me significantly and assumed my parenting responsibilities due to my absence for this dissertation.

### **Dedication**

To the late Sheikh Zayed's spirit, the wise person and philosopher of the Arab nation, the unmatched leader, and essentially the nice human being who has taken his country from the middle of nowhere to heart of modern world, ensuring his country a well-respectful position on the international arena, and a strong say worldwide.

To his noble sons, top among whom is His Highness Sheikh Khalifah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the President of the United Arab Emirates, and His Highness Sheikh Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, to whom the credit of accomplishing this dissertation goes after God, the Almighty, for his boundless moral support. May God save them all, rest the soul of their father, and admit him into the best levels of Paradise.

## **Introduction**

First of all, I am compelled by ethics of scientific research to tell members of the viva that I have written up this dissertation in my mother tongue, i.e., Arabic, but followed the same by a translation into English.

There are two reasons behind this:

First: most references used in my research methodology are originally Arabic;

Second: English references related to my subject of research are not quite enough.

Consequently, I may find some difficulty in understanding some questions you may ask. Even if I grab full understanding thereof, I may find it difficult to return my answer in English since it is not my mother tongue.

For this I beg your pardon.

Thank you for your understanding.

This thesis highlights the political thought of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, a man who made decisive contributions to the history of the twentieth century. It addresses the various reflections of this thought in actions, the Emirati people, the country of the UAE, and the international community at large. Contemporary history has established that Sheikh Zayed was a determinant figure in the history of the Gulf region for over four decades. Among his greatest accomplishments is the establishment of the federation of the United Arab Emirates as an independent political state. Zayed's political capacity had significant impact beyond the mere creation of the state. It translated into endowing the newly born federation with elements of sustainability and strength to become ultimately a respected, thriving nation among a global community of nations.

Sheikh Zayed was renowned for his profound belief in the concept of federation, successfully conciliating between concepts that seemed to many to be

impossible to implement. These concepts included the tribe and the state, the emirate and the federation, indigenous traditionalism and modernism. Moreover, he was able to create his special texture of a singular nature, something very rarely found in modern and contemporary history. The largely tribal environment characterized by pragmatic traditions, within which Sheikh Zayed was active, means that his political achievements can be considered impressive. Notwithstanding, the difficult circumstances he encountered, he was able, thanks to his wisdom and dedication, to unify the populations of all the separate emirates under a single flag. This consolidated their unity, eliminating all sources of discord between the rulers of the former Trucial Coast Emirates, as they were formerly known during the era of British control.

Herein lies the importance of studying the political thought of Sheikh Zayed, a rare example of a man who was able to consolidate his nation's history and catalyze rapid national transformations to form a single state in which justice, security, stability and prosperity prevail. Sheikh Zayed established the pillars of a realistic political philosophy which aimed to preserve and observe the ethical principles lacking in the political life of most modern nations. He located the roots of such philosophy in old Arab tribal traditions as well as in Islamic precepts.

Zayed was also characterised by his quick understanding of the magnitude of rapid global transformations and international variables throughout the twentieth century. This earned him the status of a historical leader<sup>1</sup> who knew how to seize opportunities to influence the lives, not only of his people, but also the peoples of other nations. In this regard, Zayed was a pioneering figure in the Arab world in many respects. For example, he not only was the architect of the first and only presidential

---

<sup>1</sup> Nabil Ragheb's *The Roots of Civil Leadership: A Study on the Thought of Sheikh Zayed*, (1995) provides an interesting analysis on Sheikh Zayed as a historical leader.

system among the Gulf monarchies, but also established the first and only federal system of government in the Arab World. In this respect, he can be likened to other pioneering Arab leaders such as former President of Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba, who founded the first republic with a secular system in the Arabic Maghreb region, or to Abdul Aziz Al- Saud, the first king and founder of modern Saudi Arabia, who unified his country into a Kingdom and established an Islamic monarchy in the Gulf region.<sup>2</sup>

As a fervent unionist, Sheikh Zayed garnered much respect in the Arab world for his various stances in favor of Arab unity. From the outset, he made it clear that the case of the United Arab Emirates was solely the beginning of a broader vision that envisaged unity among all Arab countries on the basis of the various common features they share. In this same spirit, the UAE did not hesitate to provide material and moral support for the actions that served Arab causes. To a degree Sheikh Zayed could be compared to another renowned Arab leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, former President of Egypt, who advocated Arab Nationalism as a unifying ideology among Arab nations, with the exception that Sheikh Zayed did not act according to an ideological line in his quest for Arab solidarity except for the unifying tenets of Islam.<sup>3</sup>

Sheikh Zayed deserves much of the credit for the multiple successes he achieved as a leader of his nation. His leadership, based on the real support of his people at home and on wide recognition from abroad, stands as a clear example of what patience, flexibility and moderation can achieve if coupled with a deep sense of commitment to the duties and responsibilities of a capable leader.

This scholarly analysis of his accomplishments, and his influence on the course of his country's history, is a modest contribution providing a methodical assessment of the domestic and foreign policies that shaped his political outlook.

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<sup>2</sup> For an excellent biographical account on the life and achievements of King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, See McLouglin, Leslie (1993) *Ibn Saud: Founder of a Kingdom*. London: MacMillan.

<sup>3</sup> Morris, Claud (1976) *The Desert Falcon*, p.85.

Towards that end, this study relies on Zayed's statements and stances on contemporary local, regional and international affairs. It also draws on the collective memory of several individuals who either dealt with him directly or chronicled his deeds through their own work.

### **Literature Review**

Much has been written about the life of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. Indeed, there is an extensive amount of books, articles and reports that have dealt with him either exclusively or as part of general writings about the United Arab Emirates or the region. A considerable number of these contributions have been sponsored by government and thus portrayed Sheikh Zayed in a monographic documentary style, devoid of a scholarly objective approach.

Among the most significant pieces of literature that deals with Sheikh Zayed as a leader, and more specifically his charismatic leadership, is the doctoral dissertation of Mansoor O. Al-Mansoori, *Charismatic Leadership Characteristics of President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates*. The author applied, with reference to a case study, Max Weber's theory of charismatic leadership to Sheikh Zayed as a president of a nation (1985). He sought to identify what he termed the "charismatic leadership traits" of Sheikh Zayed by testing these traits empirically against a set of criteria or qualities defined by Max Weber. These are: requisite ability, personality characteristics, expressive behavior, self-confidence, self-determination, insight, freedom from internal conflict, eloquence, activity and energy level.

The author then divided up the leadership of Sheikh Zayed into three different epochs: as mayor of the city of Al-Ain, as ruler of Abu Dhabi, and as President of the

United Arab Emirates. He compared and contrasted these epochs in the political life of Sheikh Zayed with the specific charismatic qualities identified by Weber. The author concluded that Sheikh Zayed's charismatic leadership increased steadily over the three epochs of his political life.

The distinction of this study resides in its empirical approach, which makes it distinguished among the number of studies that dealt with Sheikh Zayed. However, human organizational/political qualities such as charisma or sense of leadership cannot be subject to secular scientific quantifying theories and criteria as these qualities are part of an intricate set of characteristics where the political interacts with the social, the psychological and the religious. Purely scientific empirical criteria cannot discern such intricacies. Therefore these traits can be examined more fruitfully through a prism capable of yielding a comprehensive analysis of such leadership-shaping factors.

Sheikh Zayed's leadership has also been studied in Arabic language primary sources, such as Nabil Ragheb's *The Roots of Civil Leadership: A Study on the Thought of Sheikh Zayed*.. This study explores the different aspects, dimensions and depths of Sheikh Zayed, emphasizing the critical phases of transition experienced by the UAE under his leadership. The author adopts an analytical and comparative approach to highlight the multiple facets of Sheikh Zayed's thought and thus focuses on themes such as Zayed's leadership, strategy, democratic and human values, thoughts on unity, views on national security, and foreign policy. These themes were dealt with in light of their mutual influence. However, this work seems to lack structural coherence in its structure as its chapters stand without logical connection to each other. The author sought to demonstrate that the positive strategic changes and development of policies and directions taken by the UAE were the direct outcome of

the thought of the late Sheikh on many issues ( This is also one of the objectives that this research project attempts to achieve) In this regard Ragheb's book states that "If we contemplate the civilizational achievements realized by Sheikh Zayed right after he became ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1966, we will find that it was the result of a historical leadership that was a turning point for the whole Gulf region." It should be noted that the publication of this book is credited to the Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation.

Other state-sanctioned publications tackling Sheikh Zayed's rule within a historical framework include Jayanti Maitra's *Zayed: from Challenges to Union*, commissioned by Abu Dhabi's Center for Documentation and Research. This book provides a detailed historical account of Sheikh Zayed's life and achievements from 1946 to 1971 as recorded in contemporary British documents. The book is original in the sense that it is exclusively based on archival documents that give an exceptional insight into certain aspects of events and challenges that the region witnessed, in addition to personalities with whom Sheikh Zayed dealt and interacted. This account is related in the form of a historical narrative that presents a critical analysis of facts and events gleaned from the original sources and cited in their appropriate context.

Hence, during the period covered by the book we witness the rise to power of Sheikh Zayed from a local leader tending to the needs and grievances of the tribes in the region of Al Ain, to the presidential office of a modern and prosperous United Arab Emirates. This research is of great historical value in the sense that it provides unparalleled detailed accounts of contemporary personalities and landmark events that marked and influenced the emirates before and after their federal union. The contribution of this book to the body of literature documenting the public life of Sheikh Zayed is impressive in its historical scope. However, it is limited by in the



period it covers and does not offer sufficient insight into Sheikh Zayed's career as President of the Federation.

Andrew Wheatcroft's *With United Strength: H.H. Shaikh Zayid Bin Sultan Al Nahyan the Leader of The Nation*, published by the government-backed Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research in 2004, has also provided a scholarly biographical account of Sheikh Zayed's political career. It analyses the UAE's federal experience in terms of its uniqueness in the region over three decades and similar to Maitra's work, but to a lesser extent, this book is based largely on previously unpublished historical records and documents. It is an in-depth study of the birth of the federation as a modern nation. Thus it constitutes a valuable record of an important era in the contemporary history of the Gulf region and the Middle East. Of course, Sheikh Zayed figures prominently in this work as it depicts him as an outstanding statesman who strived to accomplish quasi-impossible tasks within an environment that had been hostile progressive, modernist ideas. It states that the establishment of the UAE could be considered to be "the crowning achievement of Sheikh Zayed's life and career". What distinguishes this book from similar works is its historiographical approach that consists of gathering, assessing and analyzing historical records to understand the factors that underlie Sheikh Zayed's political success. This thesis will refer to several themes discussed in this book's chapters on account of their pertinence to the task of compiling his political biography. These include integration and solidarity, modernity and progress, peace and conciliation, as these are among the main conceptual foci for Zayed's political thinking.

The body of scholarly literature on the UAE and Abu Dhabi includes some pieces that make passing references to Zayed's life and career. Chapter six of Christopher M. Davidson's, *Abu Dhabi: Oil and Beyond* (2009) demonstrates how the

union of independent emirates prospered and held steadfast on account of the federal vision of Sheikh Zayed. In the first instance, this book provides, among other things, a valuable insight into the evolution of political life in Abu Dhabi in particular and the region in general, and how the UAE monarchical system managed to endure and survive the tide of change. Most importantly, it highlights the role played by Sheikh Zayed in setting this system on firm foundations enjoying full legitimacy and support both nationally and internationally. Through his wealth distribution plan, Zayed managed implemented a welfare system model that continues to benefit its recipient citizens. This issue will be discussed at a later stage, in Chapter four of this thesis. Davidson already provided an in-depth analysis on the success, stability and shortcomings of UAE's political system in a previous not less remarkable book: *The United Arab Emirates: a Study in Survival* (2005). Here again, Sheikh Zayed is portrayed in a few instances as a key factor in the success of this system. The author identifies several 'pathologies' that need to be addressed if the tremendous development process of the country is to continue unhindered.

Ahmad Ali Sakhni's *A Philosophy of Governance and Renaissance of a Nation*, in Arabic, is also notable within the Sheikh Zayed's leadership literature, and more specifically the various levels of the late President's political philosophy.

This thesis builds on existing literature in the field by providing an insight into the political thinking process of Sheikh Zayed, filling a scholarly gap in current knowledge. It seeks to do so by analyzing the statements and deeds of Sheikh Zayed during the most crucial phases of his life as ruler of Abu Dhabi, President of the UAE and 'father' of the nation. This thesis' contribution to existing knowledge lies in its articulation of the character of Sheikh Zayed and his leadership style.

### **Relevance of the Study**

The relative importance of the subject matter of this study stems from its discussion of the principles, values and dimensions of the political thought of a man who established a modern federal state that enjoys all the features and characteristics of advanced countries. Zayed built a promising state notwithstanding the difficulties posed by the UAE's location within extremely complicated local, regional and international contexts. Moreover, this study seeks to highlight the special traits of Sheikh Zayed's character from the early years of his rule and the development of his unique methods of dealing with local and international issues. There is yet to be a political biography of his political thought and his ruling philosophy to the extent that this study intends to accomplish.

Therefore, citizens of the UAE as well as foreign researchers need to understand, more than ever before, how the founder of the only successful federal system in the Arab world took decisions during his rule and which underlying principles and influences those decisions were based on. In this regard, this study highlights the necessity to implement the thought of Sheikh Zayed as a leader in special governance and leadership programs in UAE schools and universities.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to achieve several objectives:

1. To provide an introduction to the local, regional and international environment in which Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan was born and which affected the composition of the matrix of his political thought.
2. To provide an analytical study of Zayed's vision and philosophy in the establishment of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and his style of governance in overcoming obstacles and difficulties the state faced upon its establishment.

3. To articulate a practical vision of Sheikh Zayed's political thought while dealing with local, regional and international crises.
4. To recognize the place of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's political thought and his political philosophy within larger modern and contemporary political thought.
5. To highlight the special traits of contemporary political thought introduced by Zayed and the lessons that can be drawn from it.
6. To Determine the repercussions of Sheikh Zayed's political thought on the vital indexes of the state. That is, how the leadership of Sheikh Zayed set the wheels of economic development in motion, resulting in a stable and prosperous economic system.
7. To provide an analytical exploration of the welfare system established by Sheikh Zayed.

#### **Assumptions of the Study**

In order to achieve these objectives, several assumptions shall be addressed. These include:

1. H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan had a unique contemporary political perspective which could be described as "Human Political Thought of Islamic Direction" as does not belong to the known typical or pragmatic political schools of thought.
2. Sheikh Zayed was particularly insightful of unity; this helped the success of the only unified experience to survive in the Arab world as all others failed.
3. Sheikh Zayed had a particular style for handling regional and international crises different to all other known styles and methods of Crisis Management theory.
4. Sheikh Zayed's political philosophy somehow influenced the surrounding Gulf,

Arab, Islamic and international environments.

5. The principles and values held by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan can truly be considered as a model of wise ruling in contemporary history.

### **Study Limitations**

This study is not a biography. It is not portrayed in the form of a narrative, as has been the case with some of the distinguished biographical works of leaders, such as Leslie McLoughlin's *Ibn Saud, Founder of a Kingdom*, or Jayanti Maitra's *Sheikh Zayed, From Challenges to Union*. Rather, its main focus is the political career of Sheikh Zayed. The chronology of events is therefore not a primary concern for this thesis.

Also, it should also be noted that, given the nature of the subject-matter of this research, some difficulties were encountered while the study was being conducted. These are related to either political sensitivities or the availability of research that discusses political aspects of Sheikh Zayed's rule despite the apparent abundance of material produced. The sensitivities spring mostly from the fact that no Arab regime, either in the Gulf region or beyond, can be criticized, especially over issues related to borders, leadership, regional relationships, and other matters deemed "sovereign" to these regimes. As for the availability of material critical of Sheikh Zayed, it must be said that apart from foreign news articles that discuss issues of democracy and human rights and therefore address their criticism to President Sheikh Zayed, critical works produced by Emiratis remain scarce and they avoid direct criticism of Sheikh Zayed or of the ruling families. As a UAE national and having had the privilege to be the media companion of Sheikh Zayed between 1996 and 1999, the author can assert with confidence that Sheikh Zayed enjoyed a great deal of respect and love from his people and was viewed by citizens as an authentic father figure.

## **Methodology**

In view of the multiplicity of study aspects and its comprehension to cover different political and historical aspects, and decision-making as well as crises management, several methodological approaches shall be adopted including:

### **\* Historical Approach**

Sheikh Zayed was successful in the political domain on account of political strategies that carried a deep understanding of tribal politics, conciliation skills and an unquenchable desire for unity, social welfare and progress. In order to understand the fundamentals of Zayed's political thinking, it is necessary to review, retrospectively, the events, circumstances and environment that influenced him during his formative years and contributed towards shaping the region's destiny. This demonstrates the importance of an historical approach that would allow us to delve into determining factors of the political career of the founder of the UAE.

In this regard, it should be noted that almost all the statements, speeches and deeds of Sheikh Zayed have been documented extensively in official publications. Therefore, these constitute the primary sources consulted alongside the UAE Constitution and official websites that document full transcriptions of audio-visual material relayed by television and radio. One such example of these publications would be “Zayed: Thought and Action” (in Arabic) which covers all the activities of Sheikh Zayed between 1971 and 1984, including interviews given to national and international media outlets. The author will also draw upon his personal experience as former media companion to His Highness Sheikh Zayed when other primary sources such as audio and video recordings documenting some of Sheikh Zayed's activities were made and compiled. These recordings are now available in the archive department of Abu Dhabi television. Secondary sources will also be used to explore the historical background and provide insight into the various influences that affecting the course of events, as we know them, as to the creation of the federation and the political system that prevails in the UAE. These sources will also be used to highlight

views and analyses on either Sheikh Zayed or the United Arab Emirates or other topics that might be relevant to this study.

\* Analytical Approach

This method will assist in studying Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's trends and patterns of behavior as founder of the United Arab Emirates in detail, and understanding his responsibilities and duties as well as his political orientations.

Since almost all the statements, speeches and actions of Sheikh Zayed have been documented comprehensively in official publications, they represent the primary sources consulted together with the UAE Constitution and official websites. An example of such publications would be "Badawi, Jamal *Zayed's Journey from The Gulf to The Ocean, July 29<sup>th</sup> – August 21<sup>st</sup>*, Abu Dhabi, Ministry of Information, 1970".

Secondary sources will also be used to analyse and provide insight into the various influences that shaped Sheikh Zayed's philosophy and policies. One example of such secondary sources is "Al-Sakhni, Ahmad Ali *Sheikh Zayed: Falsafato Hokm Wa Inbi'ato Ummah*. (Sheikh Zayed: A Philosophy of Governance and a Renaissance of a Nation). Amman: Al Ra'id Scientific Library, 1998"

\* Statistical Research Approach

Over the course of 33 years as President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed provided a leadership with vision and foresight that has ensured the future prosperity and wellbeing of Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates. Hence, this approach is important to gather knowledge of growth and development of values in the UAE vital indexes during the period 1971 to 2004. Official governmental publications and documentations will be used to validate the statistical approach in this study.

Examples of such publications would be "UAE Ministry of Health, 2004 statistics [online] available at:

[http://www.moh.gov.ae/AdminCP/AssetsManager/Files/Statistics/Statistics\\_2004/index.html](http://www.moh.gov.ae/AdminCP/AssetsManager/Files/Statistics/Statistics_2004/index.html)" and " UAE Ministry of Finance and Industry, UAE Industrial Statistics 2004[online] available at:  
[http://uae.gov.ae/mofi/English/industry/e\\_inddev\\_statis2004.htm#Number%20of%20Establishments,%20Labor,%20and%20Investment%20in%20All%20Emirates](http://uae.gov.ae/mofi/English/industry/e_inddev_statis2004.htm#Number%20of%20Establishments,%20Labor,%20and%20Investment%20in%20All%20Emirates)"

### **Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis comprises five chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter provides background with an historical overview of the general setting of the regional area before the creation of the United Arab Emirates, as well as the circumstances in which Sheikh Zayed took political office and rose to prominence over the years from governor of Abu Dhabi's Eastern region to ruler of the Emirate. The second chapter provides insight into Sheikh Zayed's political thought and philosophy of governance through analyzing his multi-faceted vision and its manifestations in state-making and internal and external affairs. It also seeks to determine the underlying motives behind his unionist quests. The third chapter focuses on how Zayed's political thought is reflected in diplomatic and humanitarian stances taken in the face of regional and international crises and how such stances translated into political gains for the federation. Chapter Four deals with the concept of wealth distribution as conceived by Sheikh Zayed and seeks to discuss the political dimensions of the welfare state and its benefits for the regime. Chapter Five is a comparative analytical study of Sheikh Zayed against other historical Arab leaders.



**Chapter One:**

**The Formation of**

**H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's Thought**

**Section One: Local Environment**

**Introduction**

In order to conduct a comprehensive and objective study of the historical personality of H. H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, it is essential to shed light on the historical, geographical, geopolitical, local and social environment and transformations that contributed to the formation of his thought. Against a backdrop of Islamic teachings and principles, the inhabitants of Arabia had to diligently maintain a thirteen-century old balance between a pre-Islamic existence unbound by any rules of cohesion, peace and stability and a post-Islamic way of life.

The barren nature of the land however allowed for old methods of invading the other tribes in search of essential resources. Alliances were formed, allegiances were broken and cords were cut at times spilling blood, all in the quest of preserving the community's survival of the community. Fast forward to the nineteenth century and not much had changed except that order prevailed and the people enjoyed the lands' wealth in a much more peaceful and stable manner. Hardship existed in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s partly on account of local factors and partly also as a direct result of regional and international factors. The following decades nonetheless witnessed remarkable changes to the peoples of south-eastern Arabia, known today as the United Arab Emirates.

How that shift came about is somewhat unique in the context of practised political doctrines or human development. So how was it achieved one would ask? Was it the consequence of an amicable agreement or was it bestowed by an international body to conflicting factions? A totalitarian system, which gave a sense of affluence to its subjects, regardless of how true or false that system was? Or was it due to an invader who brutally imposed his will upon the destitute?

Tribal sensitivity was all it took to bring about an awe-inspiring record of progressive development to the people of the crucial Eastern coast. The geography of the land and natural placement of livelihood spots such as oases and terrain, which characterized this part of the world, shaped His Highness Sheikh Zayed's thinking. The immediate family considerations and larger structure of the tribe also influenced Sheikh Zayed's beliefs. Before the discovery of oil in the region, events therein proclaimed were not considered to be important, at least not at the international level. Subsequently, the various interests and aspirations of the regions' people had to be balanced and protected from external ambitions. Even if the region was to survive its own detriment and political and social wrangling, destiny made it certain that yet another test of wills will have to be overcome before the area was finally left to its own devices to deal with new transformations in wealth and social developments.

### **Geography**

The UAE is located in the midst of the richest oil producing countries in the Arabian Gulf. Its position is of high strategic value along the southern approaches to the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global transit point for crude oil. It covers an area of approximately 84000 square kilometers, more than 86 percent of which is occupied by Abu Dhabi. In addition, there are tens of tiny islands under the state's sovereignty

excluding the Tunb islands and Abu Musa Island that have been occupied by Iran since 1971. UAE shares a 530-kilometer border with Saudi Arabia on the west, south, and southeast, and a 450-kilometer border with Oman on the southeast and northeast. In the Gulf area in general, and the UAE in particular, the discovery of oil has had a great effect on the economy and on its social and political structure.<sup>4</sup>

The geography of the southern Arabian Gulf (formerly known as the Trucial States), consists of a 750 kilometers long coast line,<sup>5</sup> a series of mountains leading all the way to Oman and a vast expanse of open desert to the west bordering Saudi Arabia with oases scattered in some parts of the desert. Naturally, the mostly populated areas are those bordering the sea. Most of the United Arab Emirates is a desert. The Abu Dhabi desert constitutes the eastern edge of the vast Empty Quarter desert, which covers much of the southern half of the Arabian Peninsula. This desert is covered with sand dunes and spotted with scattered Oases, the most notable of which are the Al Ain and Liwa Oases that are rich in water sources, gardens and date trees. Their products have provided a major element of life for the traditional economy during ancient times. However, the proportion of arable land in the UAE does not exceed 0.80 percent of its territory. This factor, together with the small size of its population, constitutes a major vulnerability.<sup>6</sup> As for the climate, it differs from one area to another. The temperature rises in the summer with relative humidity increases. The rain is scarce, and the area is generally prone to occasional, violent dust storms.

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<sup>4</sup> Heard-Bey, Frauke (2004) *From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates*, pp.4-5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p.6.

<sup>6</sup> Bahgat Korany, Ali Dessouki, (eds.) (2008) *The Foreign Policies of Arab States: the Challenge of Globalization*, p.459

This desert has been occupied by nomadic camel herders camping in the oases near the scarce water sources. The people of Abu Dhabi and the other Emirates (Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, Ras al-Khaimah, and Fujairah), relied on fishing, pearl diving and building of traditional dhows (ships) for their livelihoods. The mountain communities practiced simple forms of agriculture. Extensive agriculture was practiced by nomads living in and around oases in the desert, where water irrigation posed a recurring problem. Other nomads were cattle raisers, moving from one locale to another in search of water and grazing. The scarcity of water and rain for extended periods was a challenging test for the local inhabitants.

Sheikh Zayed was born and raised in this same desert environment that shaped his character and personality and endowed him with features that were observable throughout his leadership. He experienced the same lifestyle as that of the tribesmen, growing up to cope with desert life and master survival prerequisites such as hunting, falconry, horse and camel riding. Also, among the hobbies that were common in the desert environment and in which Zayed excelled was poetry. His verses reflect many aspects of the desert as well as his great love for his heritage.

## **History**

The earliest evidence of man in the UAE dates back to earlier than 5500 B.C. in Marwah Island, west of Abu Dhabi. The island was inhabited by skilled herders who used stone tools. Meanwhile, the earliest collective burials which were first found at the lower slopes of Jebel Hafeet in Al Ain Oasis date back to **3000–2500 B.C.**<sup>7</sup> The nature of the landscape in the Abu Dhabi Emirate, and the shallow coasts, made the area, in the past, unattractive for any form of settlement, as it was difficult

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<sup>7</sup> (2007) “Important Dates in UAE History” Available at: [http://uae-embassy.org/html/Culture/Important\\_Dates.html](http://uae-embassy.org/html/Culture/Important_Dates.html). [accessed 12<sup>th</sup> December 2008]

for boats under sail to navigate. During both the pre-Islamic and the Islamic periods, evidence of settlement on the Abu Dhabi coast was rare.<sup>8</sup> While in the east of Abu Dhabi and the northern Emirates, ports were available because the shoreline was almost hospitable in many places.

Little is known of the pre-Islamic history of the southeast Arabian tribes. The people of the area converted to Islam in the year 630 A.D, when the envoys from the Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) arrived in the area.<sup>9</sup> Although Arab-Islamic sources mentioned Dibba, Julfar and Tuwwam (Al-Ain), as a reference to the arrival of Islam to the area, it is not until the ninth century that other places of the current modern UAE have been recorded.

During the seventeenth century, the area was known as the Pirate Coast, as raiders based their activities in the areas by harassing the foreign trade ships. The British sent expeditions to protect Indian trade from raiders. They arrived in the Gulf region in the 1720s. To protect trade, the British Government initiated a peace treaty in 1853, with the rulers of the Emirates (known as Sheikhs) in the region. The area was then named the “Trucial States”. Agreements were signed between the British Government and the Sheikhs of individual emirates. This treaty also stipulated that the rulers could not engage in independent relations with other foreign powers other than the British government.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of the treaty was to preserve navigation and suppress piracy along the Gulf coast, and in return, the British promised to protect the Trucial Coast states from any other external attacks. The British government enforced the treaty and disputes among them were referred to the British for settlement. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, industry has thrived in

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<sup>8</sup> Geoffrey R. King, “After The Coming of Islam and the Islamic Period in the UAE” in Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, (eds.), (2001) *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective*. Trident Press Ltd, p.70.

<sup>9</sup> P. Vine, Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Hellyer, eds., *United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2007*. (2007), pp. 9-22.

<sup>10</sup> Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, pp.286-288.

the area, which has provided both income and employment to the people of the Gulf coast. However, real economic resources were lacking and the Emirates were developing at a slow pace.

### **Early Style of Life**

The people of the UAE have experienced a spectacular transformation. However, it was essential to preserve the past. Back then, the traditional lifestyle consisted of nomadic herding, agriculture, fishing, pearl diving and sea trade, typical of the broader surrounding region. Life then was unlike what it is today. People had to live in hardship, relying on camels as a means of transportation. Throughout the country's history, people used the camel as a method for surviving the harsh environment of the sandy dunes and vast landscape. People travelled with their goods for hundreds of kilometres to their desired destinations. The trips were made between the coastal towns of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, heading towards oases deep into the desert in caravans, carrying agricultural products and livestock much needed in the tiny scattered villages. Entire families and their belongings were also transported regularly across the desert by camels, sometimes traveling long distances as far as Mecca during the annual (Hajj) pilgrimage season. The provision of sufficient amounts of water was a major problem facing the people in the past. In Al Ain and other oases, water was tapped using the falaj (Ar.pl. aflaj) irrigation system by utilising the water that came from mountain aquifers, while dates were cultivated from palm trees and watered by the trapped water beneath the sand.<sup>11</sup>

Pearls brought prosperity to the people with increased urbanisation of tribal societies settling in coastal villages. Some tribes engaged in pearl diving or fishing along the coast. Indeed, many of the men spent part of the year in the oasis and the

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<sup>11</sup> Hamdi Tammam, *op. cit.*, p.160

remainder at sea. The main manufacturing industry during the height of the pearling years in the Gulf in general was boat-building. The skill of building these boats can still be seen in the Bateen area of Abu Dhabi and along the creek of Ajman. Dhows are constructed using a few basic tools and without blueprints. More often than not, the final product would stand as a masterpiece of accuracy and quality. Over 1,200 pearling boats worked in the Trucial States area, each carrying an average of around eighteen men.<sup>12</sup> These used to depart from a single port that fell under the authority of a single Sheikh. At the beginning of each pearl harvest season, which starts from June and ends in September, the women stay at home caring for the children and the household in general. Overseas trade formed another source of living next to fishing and pearling for the Northern Emirates. The people in Dubai, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah looked outwards to the sea for their livelihood rather than inland, to the desert.

Cultured pearls originating from Japan painted an even more dismal outlook. The presence of foreign nationals during this period was negligible if not non-existent. The first arrivals to the various Emirates were made by nationals from the Indian subcontinent. Those were migrant workers undertaking low level paid jobs. More skilled labour arrived later in connection to oil discovery.

The absence of modern infrastructure made personal life difficult. Primitive tools were used when diving for pearls.<sup>13</sup> Transporting people and goods from one place to another was difficult enough as proper roads were not yet built and communication took some time. The daily life style was not as vibrant as it is today. As local culture has been based on Islam, this has guaranteed solidarity among the community which shares the good and bad trials of life events in almost everything;

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<sup>12</sup> Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p.182.

<sup>13</sup> Heard-Bey, *Ibid.*

from wedding celebrations and celebrating the two Eids in the Islamic calendar to sharing the grief of homes stricken with a tragedy.

Falconry was an integral practice and is still observed today. Though now it is widely used as a sport, it was a necessity in the old days as people sometimes supplemented their meagre diet of bread, dates and milk with a hare or bustard.<sup>14</sup> There is greater awareness however of protecting wildlife and the environment. A number of programmes have been introduced to protect, study and research the country's bird species in order to preserve the most rare and popular breeds.

The ancestors of the Bedouin, who lived in the sandy deserts of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, built small villages, planted date gardens, and made their houses from the date-fronds, where adequate water was available. This arc of villages at Liwa Oasis was the focus of economic and social life for the Bani Yas tribe. By the early 1790s, Abu Dhabi town became the centre of activity for leading Bani Yas tribe members. A close tribal family structure tended to safeguard a sense of unity and cohesion. Marriages were confined mostly within the tribe and men in particular resorted to outside marriages only when it was necessary to establish alliances with other tribes.<sup>15</sup> Although life was not sophisticated, there were still administrative tasks to be taken care of. Traders, farmers and the public generally must be furnished with the basic necessities of life. It was not possible to measure the economic performance in that period. Early records of oil revenues are not available. The economy boomed during the rein of Zayed the Great but declined after his death causing hardship to the people. The economy was based on simple production of dates, the pearl trade and food and other utility trade with India and Persia. The transformation that brought prosperity to the people took thirty years of consistent determination. Once the necessary base was

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<sup>14</sup> P. Vine, Ibrahim Al Abed, *op. cit.*, p.32.

<sup>15</sup> Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p.145.



built; comprehensive education, health and general social development improved tremendously. Sheikh Zayed always directed that special care must be paid to agriculture and the environment. The government institutions supported this direction, which resulted in a healthy agricultural policy and a general awareness of the risks to the environment.

It would not be important to place value on the size of the emirate of Abu Dhabi. As we will see, what Sheikh Zayed shouldered upon himself cannot be bounded by simple measure. His Highness has learnt very well since his early years, that fulfilling the needs of his people would require some sacrifice. The Al Nahyans had to oversee the administration of other areas as well, such as the Buraimi oasis and up to the northern borders with Qatar and southwards towards Oman. Their control stretched their abilities and tested the resolve of one of the most able ruling dynasties in the world. The twenty first century UAE is a vibrant proof before us all. The small population enjoyed a simple life free from the complications of our modern days. They enjoyed their land, the sandy beaches, desert dunes and imposing mountains. Ancient historical and symbolic places still however remain preserved to this day. The visionary leadership of Sheikh Zayed insured that the past and present have the same anchorage. No division is necessary between heritage and development, and no separation between the rooted ideals and the prosperity to come is comprehensible.

### **The Tribe**

The culture into which Sheikh Zayed was born was rooted in tribal traditions. In fact, several major tribes had an impact on the history of the UAE. Tribal migration to the region began in the middle of the sixth century B.C.<sup>16</sup> The harsh terrain that

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<sup>16</sup> Hamdi Tammam, *op. cit.*, p.25

they inhabited dictated their life and their traditional means of living evolved over many centuries within an environment of desert, oases, mountains and coastline. Historically, before Islam, Arab tribes in the Gulf occasionally attacked each other in petty warfare. With the presence of Islam and its shari'ah laws, these conflicts did not turn into endless clashes. With conflicts erupting between tribes, some clans defected from their original tribe to form alliances with other tribes, while others had to forge a more powerful group.

For generations, tribes such as Bani Yas, the Awamir and Manasir, among others, roamed the vast expanse of desert wandering great distances in search of pasture and water.<sup>17</sup> For almost four centuries the Bani Yas tribe dominated the Gulf coast from the Qatari borders to the Al Buraimi oasis in the west, while the Qawasim tribe dominated in the north-east (Sharjah and Ra's Al Khaimah).<sup>18</sup> The first reference to Bani Yas dates back to 1633, when they assisted the people of Julfar in their struggle to drive the Portuguese out of their emirate. The Bani Yas alliance had strong ties between its members. It was led by Bu Falah clan - Al-Nahyan current rulers of Abu Dhabi - and consisted of other clans such as Al Bu Falasah (who broke away in 1833 and established the Al Maktoum dynasty that has ruled in Dubai)<sup>19</sup>, the Qubeisat and the Sudan, Rumaithat, Mazarei, Bu Mihir, Hawamil, Marars, Mahariba, Qamzan, Sabais, Al Busair, and Al Michagin. The alliance also included sub-groups of other tribes.<sup>20</sup>

The authoritative hierarchy of the tribal system was characterised by the dominance of one single leader over each group. He must consult continuously with his colleagues in all matters that affect the tribe as a whole. This concept of leadership

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<sup>17</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p.223.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.82-83

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.27-39

<sup>20</sup> Sheikha Mouza Bint Mohamed Bin Bitti Al Hamid (2002) *Zayed: The Millennial Legend* Bin Dasmal Dubai. p.30.

traditionally discouraged inherited authority, nevertheless, leadership passed down within the same family, which best provided different tribe sections with shared wealth, food and goods. When conflicts erupted between tribes living in the area, a Bani Yas leader used to intervene to make peace between the warring tribes, especially during the wars of 1835.<sup>21</sup> The deep-rooted customs of Bani Yas in hunting and sailing were major influences on the leader's sentiment while wading into the sea of politics.

Contrary to the widespread impression that tribes are groups of Bedouins or nomadic herdsmen who constantly move across the desert in search of water and pastures for their cattle, many of these tribes were settled in specific areas for much of the year. They engaged in agriculture in oases or fishery along the coast of the Gulf. At certain times of the year, all clans and sub-tribes of the Bani Yas tribe would return to their oasis settlements, unlike clans such as Al Rumaihat, Qubeisat and the Sudan who remained settled near the coast for pearling and fishing. The Dhawahir spent the whole year tending their palm groves and farms irrigated by tapping underground water through falajes tunnelled through the earth. Where generally there is more rainfall in the northern emirates, thus the gravel plains are more fertile, tribes like Shariqiyyin from the town of Fujairah and Shihuh from Musandam dug deep in search of water flowing beneath the gravel beds of the valleys to irrigate the mountainside terraces.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, contrary to some early western preconceptions, the tribal environment was not a primitive context that inhibited progress towards formal modes of government. In fact, Arab sociologist and historian Ibn Khaldun described this in his 14<sup>th</sup> century *Muqaddimah*, as "group feeling", when he asserted that 'every mass

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<sup>21</sup> Wheatcroft, Andrew, *With United Strength – H.H. Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the Leader and the Nation*. ECSSR (2004), pp.46-51.

<sup>22</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p.77.

(political) undertaking by necessity requires group feeling',<sup>23</sup> The Arab tribes developed some degree of cohesion and solidarity that from the political perspective resulted in some form of centralized authority -represented either by the leader or the Emir- to which the tribe members paid respect and allegiance as long as this authority provided for their security and well-being.

This form of organization was necessary for survival in the regional context of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus, for this traditional structure, deep-seated notions like kinship, honor, revenge, loyalty were developed in a way that helped to form cohesive and protective societies in tribal settings. Solidarity (i.e. group feeling) has long been a critical factor in Arab Muslim history that determined the rise and decline of ruling elites in the region. What made Sheikh Zayed capable among his peers were these same tribal values and qualities that enabled him to lead his nation from this traditional background to the modern world of innovation. He managed to trigger the adaptability and resilience factors latent in tribal culture in order to make it cope with the changes he was fostering. Therefore, instead of being a barrier to modernization, it was precisely the culture of the tribe that empowered peoples of the region to embrace unprecedented development in so short a span of time.<sup>24</sup>

The ruling families in the Gulf region also shared common ground with the tribes of the Emirates. The fragile bond between the tribes within the UAE was further cemented by strengthening the relationship with external tribes as well. The young and active Zayed was never far from extending such help to his devoted family and clan during those early days of his life. The signed treaties for oil exploration and truce conventions with the British and the United States of America played an

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<sup>23</sup> Ibn Khaldūn. *The Muqaddimah : An introduction to History*. Translated by Franz Rosenthal. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967. P. 322.

<sup>24</sup> Wheatcroft, *Op. cit* p. 16.

important role in quashing turmoil and unrest in the region as a whole, thus, contributing to the establishment of stability, peace and prosperity. The people have exploited their environment extensively which affected the resolve and determination of this tribal society over many years before the discovery of oil.

### **The Al Nahyan Family**

Members of the Al Nahyan family, to which Sheikh Zayed belongs, have been rulers of Abu Dhabi emirate since the eighteenth century. This is a longer period than any other ruling dynasty in the Arabian Peninsula. Late in the eighteenth century, the first leader of Al Nahyan, Sheikh Issa Bin Nahyan (Bu Falah tribe) managed to assemble all the Bani Yas tribe under his leadership.<sup>25</sup> His descendents have since been the rulers for Abu Dhabi emirate. The Al Nahyan rulers have been responsible leaders, reigning with forethought and wisdom. Accordingly, under their leadership, the region enjoyed peace, security, and stability.

One of the most prominent figures in the Gulf area during the nineteenth century was Sheikh Zayed bin Khalifa bin Shakhbut Al Nahyan. He ruled the Abu Dhabi emirate from 1855-1909 and was known as ‘Zayed Al Kabeer’ (Zayed the Great) or Zayed I. He was the longest reigning leader of the Al Nahyan family. Sheikh Zayed bin Khalifa was a strong, wise, enthusiastic and practical man. He believed in consultation and managed to overcome obstacles through friendly relations with other Bani Yas clans. This helped him strengthen links with other tribes, and gain their respect and support. Sheikh Zayed Al Kabeer had eight sons (Khalifa, Tahnun, Said, Hamdan, Hazza, Sultan, Saqr, and Mohamed).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>26</sup> Hamdi Tammam, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-54.

After the death of Zayed I in 1909, the pearl trade declined and concern grew amongst other tribes for finding water and other sources of income. Allegiances were then important to maintain among tribes. With the difficulty of establishing quick communication with the other tribes scattered across the wide expanse of land, a tribal leader would need to know who was on his side and who was not. Aides and heads of delegations were dispatched from time to time for the purpose of resolving these matters and it was important to have a strong leader to maintain alliances with other tribes and clans. At this stage of its history, Abu Dhabi plunged back to a series of tragic conspiracies and fratricides between several figures of the Al Nahyan family reminiscent of the assassinations preceding the succession of Zayed I. Thus, in all, four rulers were assassinated by conspiring brothers before Sheikh Shakhbut –with the help of his uncle Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed I and his cousin Mohammed bin Khalifa - took over the rulership of Abu Dhabi marking the end of this dark phase in the history of Abu Dhabi.<sup>27</sup> Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan Al Nahyan (brother of Sheikh Zayed) became the ruler of Abu Dhabi in 1928. During his rule, he paid special attention to basic utilities, particularly fresh water for drinking and irrigation.<sup>28</sup> He is also credited with restoring stability to Abu Dhabi.

### **Sheikh Zayed's Childhood and Early Days**

Born around 1918<sup>29</sup> in Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed was the youngest of the four sons of Sheikh Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The young Zayed was named after his

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<sup>27</sup>See Hawley D. (1970) pp. 335-337 and Davidson C.(2009) pp. 28-30 for detailed accounts on the fratricides among members of Al Bu Falah family.

<sup>28</sup> Sheikhha Mouza bint Mohamed, p.35.

<sup>29</sup> Hawley D. (1970) claims that Zayed was born in 1908. So claims Herb M. (1997). Others like Rugh Andrea (2007) suggest 1916 as most common. However, it is officially established that Sheikh Zayed was born "around"1918.

grandfather Zayed bin Khalifa bin Shakhbut, Zayed the Great.<sup>30</sup> Most aspects of Sheikh Zayed's personality were formed during his childhood; his personality was greatly impacted by Arab tribal customs and traditions. During his childhood, he accompanied his father on many occasions in business and courtesy visits to local and distant tribesmen. He also attended several tribal sessions at his maternal grandfather's court (*majlis*). At a young age, Sheikh Zayed was listening attentively and enthusiastically to the discussions between the tribesmen. He used to ask lots of questions on various issues showing unexpected understanding of a child at that age.<sup>31</sup> Then, nobody had ever imagined that the young boy, Sheikh Zayed, would become a great leader. The Al Nahyans have ruled the Abu Dhabi Emirate for three and a half centuries. However, like other ruling families they were never far from internal problems and squabbles. Sheikh Zayed was familiar with war and peace laws, he also learned the values and ethics of Arabian generosity and nobility. His attendance of the tribal council sessions held by his father and grandfather helped him to acquire leadership characteristics early in life. It also gave him experience of dealing with people and crises.

The young Sheikh Zayed came to terms with the harsh cruelties of life when his ruling father, Sheikh Sultan bin Zayed I, was murdered by one of his brothers<sup>32</sup> (Zayed's uncle) after barely five years of rule during an era of turbulence that lasted almost two decades after the death of Sheikh Zayed I. Those early years had a deep influence on the young boy as he observed the workings of governance in its rudimentary form. Many of the qualities of the great leader he turned out to be, were derived from this early stage of work and learning. When Sheikh Zayed was young, Abu Dhabi, like the other emirates of the southern Arabia Peninsula, was poor and

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<sup>30</sup> UAEinteract (2005), Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan: A Special Tribute, [online] available at: [uaeinteract.com/uaeint\\_misc/pdf\\_2005/zayed\\_tribute/zayed.pdf](http://uaeinteract.com/uaeint_misc/pdf_2005/zayed_tribute/zayed.pdf). p.8. [accessed 10 October 2008].

<sup>31</sup> Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, pp.84-86.

<sup>32</sup> Rugh Andrea B. *The Political Culture of Leadership in the United Arab Emirates*. (2007) p. 73.

undeveloped with an economy based primarily on fishing and pearl diving along the coast and offshore, and on simple agriculture in the scattered oases inland. The ruling house lived a simple life always bridging the gap between themselves and their subjects.<sup>33</sup> Sheikh Zayed, like the members of his family, also lived a very hard life. This hard life increased his ability to face difficulties and taught him the importance of cooperation with other people to overcome the dangers and difficulties of life in the harsh desert environment.

The facets of modern life were non-existent in those days. Islam together with a basic human concern called for helping the poor through the provision of *zakat* (one of the five pillars of Islam that consists in sharing a certain percentage of one's possessions with the poor and the deprived). After his father's death, Sheikh Zayed's mother, Sheikha Salama Bint Butti, took him into her care and lived with him in Al Ain. She nurtured him with great love and careful attention. The helping hands that she used to lend to the less fortunate and poor people instilled in him not only the love of charitable actions, but also the ability to see and understand the needy and the importance of supporting and helping them.<sup>34</sup> During that period, there was not a single modern school anywhere along the coast. Zayed received basic religious instruction in the principles of Islam from the local Islamic preacher, attending religious Islamic education and learning the Quran.<sup>35</sup> Islamic guidelines had a great impact on his characteristics; he was brought up learning good manners and behaviors. This gave him a solid foundation on which he built his thought and safely arriving at confident decisions in years to come, clearly apparent during his leadership.

Sheikh Zayed's enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge took him out into the desert with the Bedouin tribesmen. During the late 1920s and early 1930s, he

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<sup>33</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, *Ibid*.

<sup>34</sup> Sheikha Mouza bint Mohamed, *op. cit.*, p.46.

<sup>35</sup> UAEinteract (2005), *op. cit.*, pp.8-9.



accompanied the Bedouins into the desert to learn about the way of their life, the environment in which they lived, their traditional skills and their ability to survive under harsh climatic conditions.<sup>30</sup> Sheikh Zayed's travels to remote areas of Abu Dhabi and his voyages offshore, not only taught him about his country, but also brought him into contact with the people and provided him with a deep understanding of them, their living conditions and their needs. He also learned Bedouin traditions. In addition to hunting, he learned how to shoot, ride camels and horses, to track, and find fresh water under the desert sands. In short, he successfully experienced Bedouin life and developed a love and understanding of the relationship between man and his environment. During his youth, whenever Sheikh Zayed was assigned a task, he was enthusiastic to accomplish it with full determination. When the first geological survey teams from foreign oil companies arrived in the region in the 1930s to carry out geological surveys of Abu Dhabi's deserts, Sheikh Zayed was assigned the task of guiding them around the desert. This gave him exposure to the oil industry that brought the wealth which he skilfully invested later for development of the UAE.<sup>36</sup>

Furthermore, Sheikh Zayed showed great willingness to know about the region and its history; he used to spend long periods of time with local old men asking them about history, listening to their stories, experiences and struggles. The period Sheikh Zayed lived in the desert with the Bedouin tribesmen forged the cornerstone that helped him gain the trust and mutual respect of the Bedouins. He realized in practice how qualities such as fearlessness, fairness, honesty, intelligence and generosity which his grandfather, Zayed the Great, embodied were required to manage tribes.<sup>37</sup> Like his grandfather, he gained their full support which was later essential to the establishment of the UAE federation.

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.9-12.

<sup>37</sup> Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p.64.

### **Ruler's Representative in the Eastern Region**

Sheikh Zayed's wide knowledge of the country and its people, his personal characteristics and the respect he gained from tribesmen in the desert, made him an obvious choice for his brother Sheikh Shakhbut, who fully trusted him and appointed him to be the ruler's representative in Al Ain in 1946.<sup>38</sup> His appointment was greeted with widespread approval by the local people as he was immensely popular for his involvement in their general welfare and his grasp of the dynamics of tribal politics.<sup>39</sup> The oasis of Al-Ain is located in the Eastern Region, approximately 160 kilometres east of Abu Dhabi Island. The Al Ain oasis complex then comprised nine villages, six of which belonged to Abu Dhabi, and three, including Buraimi, belonged to the Sultanate of Oman. Sheikh Zayed's task, as the ruler's representative included administering the six villages and the whole adjacent desert region.<sup>40</sup> Al-Ain, secured for Abu Dhabi by Zayed the Great, was significant strategically, economically and emotionally for the Al-Nahyan clan. It was the key to the emirate's coastal areas and provided the bulk of Abu Dhabi's agricultural production, becoming the favored home of the ruling family, where Zayed himself had grown up.

Among the main tasks that Sheikh Zayed had to accomplish in Al Ain was to collect the *zakat* on dates grown in the region from the tribes of the oasis. He also collected water taxes from those using the water canals. Other responsibilities included the enforcement of law and order in this region that was long accustomed to hardship and lawlessness.<sup>41</sup> His most important concern at that time was to develop the local economy which was largely based on agriculture amid a daunting scarcity of water that hampered any plans of development. Earlier neglect had caused deterioration of the irrigation system the successful maintenance and practicality of which was decisive for the prosperity of Al-Ain. In order to progress with this

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<sup>38</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Maitra, Jayanti. Zayed, From Challenges to Union. (2007), p. 15.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Maitra, *Ibid.*

challenge, Sheikh Zayed developed a water reform plan to exploit efficiently the underground water for irrigation purposes. He ensured that the existing subterranean water canals -which brought water to the fields from deep natural reservoirs around the Jabal Hafeet mountainous area some miles away - were dredged and restored. He personally financed the construction of a major new channel, and took part in the hard work involved.<sup>42</sup> This was a massive task considering the primitive tools that were used and the working conditions. It consisted of excavating a tunnel often at a depth of 35 meters below ground to tap into existing aquifer and then extend it for approximately a mile underground before emerging at the surface.<sup>43</sup> In the pre-oil era of extremely scarce resources, this endeavor was of great economic significance.

Part of Sheikh Zayed's reform plan was also the revision of the local water ownership rights to ensure a more equitable distribution among landowners. He thus confronted prosperous farmers who had controlled most of the distribution rights, thereby denying adequate irrigation for many small land-holders. As a first step and to set an example to the others, he surrendered the rights of the ruling Al Nahyan family for the benefit of small farmers and even pressured wealthy landowners by denying them access to the newly constructed water channel.<sup>44</sup> These steps had greatly helped stimulate agriculture in the area.<sup>45</sup> The consequent expansion of the area under cultivation in turn generated more income for the residents of Al Ain and was a major stabilizing factor. When water became available, Sheikh Zayed gave guidelines to plant ornamental trees; making Al Ain one of the greenest cities in Arabian Peninsula.<sup>34</sup> This encouraged Al Ain to develop its traditional position as a market centre for the whole region, bringing new business and prosperity. Under Sheikh

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<sup>42</sup> Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p.82.

<sup>43</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine. *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Reich, Bernard, ed. Political Leaders of the Contemporary Middle East and North Africa: a Biographical Dictionary (1990) P.516

<sup>45</sup> UAEinteract (2005), *op. cit.*, p.12.

Zayed's leadership, the villages of Al Ain began to develop and integrate into a township.

In 1951, Sheikh Zayed accompanied his brother Sheikh Shakhbut to Europe. The visit was to France for legal hearings on an oil dispute, where the judgement was in favour of Abu Dhabi. This was his first trip overseas, to Paris and London, which gave him his first exposure to the developed world. Sheikh Zayed was impressed by the progress and development.<sup>46</sup> Sheikh Zayed's first impressions were related to the schools and the hospitals available in Europe. When Abu Dhabi's wealth started to accumulate, he decided that such facilities should be provided for his own people. Sheikh Zayed noted that he had many dreams for Abu Dhabi to catch up with the modern world, but at that time, he was not able to do anything, because he did not have the wealth and means of development in his hands to achieve these dreams. However, he was sure that one day his dreams would be fulfilled. In this context he said later: "There were a lot of dreams I was dreaming about our land catching up with the modern world, but I was not able to do anything because I did not have the wherewithal in my hands to achieve these dreams. I was sure, however, that one day they would become true."<sup>47</sup>

As the ruler's representative in Al Ain, Sheikh Zayed felt his people's desire to enjoy a higher standard of living like other people in the Gulf area who started reaping the revenues of the oil. He also felt a responsibility towards his people and realised that as part of the ruling family, his role was to compensate his people for the hard life they had faced in the past. Change would shortly begin to sweep across the Emirate as oil exploration got underway. Sheikh Zayed had a clear vision of what he

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<sup>46</sup> Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (1998), *Zayed Man of his People*. [online] Available at: <http://www.adcci.gov.ae:90/public/media/magazines/dec98/zayed.htm> – [accessed 16 November 2008].

<sup>47</sup> UAEinteract (2005), *Ibid*.

wanted to achieve for the people of Al Ain. He continued with his vision to develop all aspects life. Despite constraints through lack of government revenues, Sheikh Zayed succeeded in proceeding with development progress in Al Ain. He established the fundamentals of an administrative system, personally funded the first modern school in Al Ain and persuaded relatives and friends to contribute towards small-scale development programs.<sup>48</sup> This was followed by building roads, markets, and a hospital. During the twenty years of his rule over Al Ain, Sheikh Zayed succeeded in moving ahead with development of the area faster than anyone could imagine.

Sheikh Zayed was a simple man with a strong connection to his people. After he became the ruler of Al Ain, he continued to stay close to his people, to meet with them daily, listen to their stories and problems, and to help those who were in need. He was modest and never treated his people as followers, but peer to peer. He was kind and generous to all. Foreign visitors, such as British explorer Sir Wilfred Thesiger, author of 'Arabian Sands', described Sheikh Zayed as the head of a big family: "He was always available to listen to the problems of people, and he tried to solve the problems of those who came to him for judgment so that they would leave quietly, content with his judgment which were distinguished by their astute insights, wisdom and fairness."<sup>49</sup>

<http://eclsun.uaeu.ac.ae/elec/History/zayed2.jpg> Sheikh Zayed's task as ruler's representative also involved the practice of politics on a wider scale. In the face of competing territorial claims from Saudi Arabia, Zayed's popular and effective authority over the tribes consolidated Abu Dhabi's hold on Al-Ain, thereby maintaining Abu Dhabi's territorial integrity and its continued preeminence among the Trucial States. The 1930s territorial dispute known as "Buraimi dispute" with

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Hamdi Tammam, *op. cit.*, .62.

Saudi Arabia was significant because it involved a challenge to sovereignty over a huge part of Abu Dhabi's territory. Saudi Arabia based its claims on earlier occupations going back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The dispute took prominence amid the beginning of oil exploration operations in the area where each side challenged the other's sovereignty.<sup>50</sup>

Zayed as the representative of the Ruler of the emirate was responsible for dealing with the dispute and seeking possible solutions. In this regard he had to act on two fronts, firstly with Saudi Arabia as a mighty power with expansionist ambitions and secondly, with the tribes that the Saudis tried to entice with material benefits to break away from Abu Dhabi's authority. Given the lack of resources in Abu Dhabi and Al-Ain compared to the wealth of their powerful neighbor persuading the local tribes to keep their loyalty to Abu Dhabi seemed an almost impossible task, especially as Zayed himself was promised generous bribes from the Saudis if he backed their cause which he rejected outright. Such moves angered even the British whose appointed Minister in Jeddah, Sir Reader Bullard, accused Saudi Arabia of violating the arbitration agreement signed between both parties on the Buraimi dispute on July 30th, 1954.<sup>51</sup> Britain, as protector of the Trucial States at that time, played an important role in keeping the Saudis at bay in this dispute, intervening militarily at times to help expel Saudi forces from an area they had occupied by force.<sup>52</sup>

However, Zayed showed exceptional tact and tribal leadership skills, managing to dissuade successfully most of the wavering tribes from joining Saudi ranks and kept channels open with the defecting sheikhs. He even counteracted Saudi tactics by persuading those who joined the Saudi side to return to Abu Dhabi's

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<sup>50</sup> Peck, Malcolm C. *The United Arab Emirates: A Venture in Unity*, Boulder, Westview. 1986.P.120.

<sup>51</sup> Parker T. Hart. *Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership*, 1998. P.63.

<sup>52</sup> A Saudi detachment occupied the village of Hamasah in the Buraimi region from 1952 to 1955, which gave the Saudis a strategic presence at the heart of the disputed area and through which they sought to extend their influence to the local tribes.

allegiance taking back their property and possessions.<sup>53</sup> In this regard, Edward Henderson (1999) provides an emotional account of the return of tribal sheikhs and families' heads that had defected earlier during the conflict. Some of them came to meet Zayed to ask for forgiveness with their black head ropes around their necks and their head cloths around their shoulders and crawling in front of him seeking to kiss his feet. Sheikh Zayed "with the natural dignity which is especially his" respectively took them by their shoulders, raised them and said: "peace be upon you. You are forgiven and you may return to your house in peace".<sup>54</sup> Such an attitude left a positive impression among the tribes in the region and showed the extent of Zayed's influence in reestablishing allegiance of the tribes to the Al Nahyan family.

Though the territorial dispute with Saudi Arabia remained unsolved for some time, Sheikh Zayed's ability to hold the main tribes at Al Ain loyal to Abu Dhabi during the most critical phase of this dispute was instrumental to keeping Abu Dhabi's territorial integrity. Had he failed, the emirate would have lost most of its present territory and probably would not have continued to enjoy the same political clout among the Trucial States as it had at that time. His political astuteness and the negotiation skills he engaged greatly influenced the course of events and proved to be of great benefit to the emirate. Almost as important were the economic and social accomplishments of his governorship, which foreshadowed policies that would later mark his leadership as ruler of Abu Dhabi and as president of the UAE.

Zayed's diplomatic capabilities and his political experience in the peaceful settlement of external disputes became evident. Several indications of the tribes' respect to Sheikh Zayed character, their admiration of his leadership and human attributes, their trust and confidence in his opinions and judgments became clear.

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<sup>53</sup> Maitra, Jayanti. *Op. Cit.* P.26.

<sup>54</sup> Edward Henderson. *Arabian Destiny: The Complete Autobiography.* 1999. pp.229-230.

Tribes living throughout the desert region in Abu Dhabi, and far away deep into Oman, trusted Sheikh Zayed, and consulted him as a mediator in disputes. He was a man whose even-handed justice earned him respect from all.<sup>55</sup> The twenty years of Zayed's tenure as governor of Al Ain have been marked by a number of important contributions to Abu Dhabi's political life; all of these somehow have had enduring consequences.

### **Ruling Abu Dhabi**

After oil was discovered in Abu Dhabi in 1958, it became clear that the emirate had some 9.5 percent of the world's proved reserves of petroleum.<sup>56</sup> The first export of Abu Dhabi's crude oil to the world market was in 1962.<sup>57</sup> Although prices of crude oil were lower than they are today, the rapidly growing volume of exports greatly revolutionised the Abu Dhabi economy. The people of Abu Dhabi began to look forward to reaping some of the benefits that were already enjoyed by their neighbours in the Gulf region such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait. Despite the growing aspirations of the Abu Dhabi local people for progress, the economic hardships that the emirate had faced since the 1930s had accustomed the Ruler, Sheikh Shakhbut Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, to a needlessly cautious frugality. He was reluctant to invest oil revenues and was slow to approve spending on public development in the emirate. This caused frustration to his family as well as the people. Attempts by members of his family, brothers and the heads of the other tribes in the emirate to persuade him to move into development were unsuccessful.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p.103.

<sup>56</sup> UAE Government, UAE Oil and Gas, [online] available at:

[http://www.uae.gov.ae/Government/oil\\_gas.htm#Introduction](http://www.uae.gov.ae/Government/oil_gas.htm#Introduction) [accessed 10/12/2008]

<sup>57</sup> Oil & Gas Directory Middle East 2008, Abu Dhabi Marine Operating Company, available at:

<http://oilandgasdirectory.com/ogd/pages/cps/ads/admaopco.html> [accessed 10 December 2008]

<sup>58</sup> Wheatcroft, *Ibid*, pp.132-136.



Consequently, fear started to grow within the Al Nahyan ruling family who saw increasing complaints and dissatisfaction within the citizenry regarding slow development. An increasing number of able tribesmen departed to look for job opportunities in oil companies operating in neighbouring countries.<sup>59</sup>

This reality was confirmed by Sheikh Zayed himself when Abu Dhabi was becoming depopulated as residents fled to states with better economies,<sup>60</sup> its population gradually dwindling to alarming levels. The situation deteriorated to the point that many prominent tribes warned that Shakhbut's personality and attitude were causing a drift of tribal loyalties towards Saudi Arabia.<sup>61</sup> It is well established within tribal traditions that if a leader does not show full control of his area or understanding of his people's needs, the tribes and families would abandon the alliance and break out to establish alliances with other tribes.<sup>62</sup>

Zayed and the other members of the family were persuaded that if Shakhbut remained ruler of Abu Dhabi, the state would face a crisis that could jeopardize the continued control by the Al Nahyans. Therefore, in order to ensure continuity in the rule of Abu Dhabi, the Al Nahyan family decided that the time had come for Sheikh Shakhbut to step down. After several negotiation sessions held with him in which Sheikh Zayed was engaged, they successfully persuaded him to resign.<sup>63</sup> What is widely known as an act of deposition is not unusual in the patriarchal systems of government in the region where there is no precise order of succession, and where a leader perceived to lack the ability to govern effectively is often replaced by another, more capable family member. In fact, the act of deposing Sheikh Shakhbut was not a

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<sup>59</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *Op. cit.* p.206.

<sup>60</sup> Rugh Andrea. *Op. Cit.* p. 76

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* p. 78. Davidson (2009:39) claims that in mid-1960s about one hundred unhappy Dhawahir departed to live under the Saudi monarch's rule.

<sup>62</sup> Wheatcroft, *Ibid.*, pp.153-174.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

precedent among the Al Nahyan clan. Andrea Rugh highlights the deposition of Sheikh Muhammad bin Shakhbut bin Diab (Sheikh Zayed the Great's uncle) in 1818 by his father and his brother Tahnun for disloyalty towards the family patriarch whom he deposed two years earlier.<sup>64</sup>

The 6<sup>th</sup> of August 1966 became a crucial date for Abu Dhabi and its people. It was the date on which Sheikh Zayed was designated as the ruler of Abu Dhabi at a family conclave, with a mandate to progress as fast as possible with the development of the emirate. The record of Sheikh Zayed's achievements over the past twenty years in Al Ain and his popularity among the people had prepared him well for the post.

Once installed as ruler, Zayed displayed a skillful perception of tribal politics crucial to the successful rule of a traditional system of government. In the lower Gulf regional context, a ruler not only had to manipulate tribal relationships effectively but he also had to deal with a wide range of other relationships, drawing some persons closer and distancing himself from others.<sup>65</sup> Sheikh Zayed was highly skilled at this and he made sure to include the Bani Khalifa, grandsons of one of his uncles (the abovementioned Khalifa bin Zayed the Great, who supported the return of rulership to the line of the Bani Sultan (Zayed and his brothers) in key government positions,. Moreover, in order to ensure his base of support, Zayed also included in members of certain influential tribes and groups outside of the Bu Falah lineage, such as the Manasir and the Awamir.

Zayed also achieved a reversal in the tribal migratory trend to Abu Dhabi's advantage and reestablished the economic appeal that made the Emirate attractive

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<sup>64</sup> Rugh A. (2007:36-37) Maitra (2007:59) also provides an interesting parallelism between Sheikh Zayed and his grandfather, Zayed I, in terms of the pressure both had been subjected to from the tribal elders to take over rule of Abu Dhabi from relatives that stirred anger among the clan and the people.

<sup>65</sup> Rugh Andrea. *Op. Cit.* p.24.

enough for tribes to choose to settle permanently in it. Christopher Davidson (2009) cites the case of the Al-Zaabi tribe in Ras al-Khaimah as an example of this.<sup>66</sup> On account of Sheikh Zayed's incentives and latent discontent with the Sheikhs of their emirate, the Al Zaabi migrated on a grand scale to Abu Dhabi and settled in both Al Ain city and Abu Dhabi Island contributing substantially in increasing the Emirate's population. Within weeks of his succession, a comprehensive development program commenced and the dreams of the people began to materialize. Sheikh Zayed embarked upon a large-scale construction program in which priority was given to basic housing facilities, schools, roads, health services, an airport and a sea port. He also extended construction and development to Bedouin settlements in the desert as part of his aim to ensure that the benefits of the oil wealth could be shared and enjoyed by all people in Abu Dhabi.<sup>67</sup> This full-scale development strategy proved to be a wise choice as it helped steer the emirate clear from destabilizing regional factors. In this regard, it is important to note that Zayed took power at a critical juncture; he had to deal with tremendous challenges. The regional area was still subject to the ramifications of Arab socialism in the 1950s with the Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul-Nasser as one of its main advocates. The movement had referred to the monarchies in the Gulf as "anachronistic feudal" regimes, criticizing their acceptance of British domination. Pan-Arab slogans focused particularly on oil-rich Kuwait whose wealth was regarded as belonging to all Arabs not just a few people in the remote Gulf state.<sup>68</sup>

The infiltration of Marxist doctrines in the lower Gulf region, more specifically in South Yemen and parts of Oman, was another serious threat to the

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<sup>66</sup> Davidson . *Op. Cit.* (2009) p.53.

<sup>67</sup> Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, pp.301-311.

<sup>68</sup> Rosemarie Said Zahlan, *The making of the Modern Gulf States: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.* (1989). P.37

stability of the whole region as it involved radical ideologies that sought to topple the monarchies of the Gulf in the same way they did with the Federation of South Arabia in Yemen.<sup>69</sup> The new state of South Yemen under its radical Marxist leadership and its affinities with foreign communist powers such as the Soviet Union, China and Cuba, had begun to actively assist a similarly radical leftist organization already in active rebellion against Sultan Said bin Taimur's government in the Omani province of Dhofar. As its name suggested, "the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf" had plans to draw a new map for the whole region. Consequently, there was widespread fear that something similar to what had occurred in South Arabia could occur in the Gulf.<sup>70</sup>

These developments reinforced Zayed's conviction that there was a link between an improved life for the people and their continued support for a moderate, conservative, hereditary government. What was happening in neighboring Oman was principally the result of the Sultan's excessive frugality and his disregard for progress as well as for the well-being of his people.<sup>71</sup> Sheikh Zayed, mindful of the tensions recently experienced in his emirate due to the parsimony and indecisiveness of his predecessor, devised plans for swift development and distribution of wealth all over the Emirate and beyond to include the other Trucial States via what was then called the 'Trucial States Fund' to which Abu Dhabi provided up to 90 per cent of funds in 1968.<sup>72</sup> Zayed subsequently established the 'Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development' to provide aid to other Arab and non-Arab countries. This strategy

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<sup>69</sup> Malcolm Peck, "Formation and Evolution of the Federation and Its Institutions" in *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective*. Ed. Al Abed I, Hellyer P. London: Trident Press Ltd, 2001. P149

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> John Pimlott, "The British Army: The Dhofar Campaign, 1970-1975". In *Armed Forces and Modern Counter Insurgency*, Ed. Beckett, Ian F.W., Pimlott, John. (1985). pp.26-27.

<sup>72</sup> Muhammad Morsy Abdullah, *the United Arab Emirates: A Modern History*, (1978). p.139.

helped considerably to quell any threats and avoid the potential spread of Marxist ideology in the area.

Zayed's years in Al Ain had not only given him experience in government, but had also helped him to develop a vision of how the Emirate could progress. In the early days of his rule, Abu Dhabi witnessed the formation of a government for the very first time. He introduced a formal government structure and formed departments to handle specific tasks. Zayed also made sure that young national capabilities were given a chance to participate in the development process.<sup>73</sup> Abu Dhabi now had a leader who was determined to ensure not only that development should come, but that it should come as quickly as possible. Oil revenues were increasing year by year as new fields were discovered and exports increased. In addition, at the same time, the rising expectations of the people meant that the development programme had to get underway equally fast.

Now, with the authority to implement his vision, the increasing oil revenue had provided Sheikh Zayed with the means to fund his dreams, determined to provide the education and healthcare facilities he visited during his 1953 visit to France and Britain. He subsequently stated that "money is useless if not employed for the benefit of the people".<sup>74</sup> Of his first few weeks as ruler, Sheikh Zayed has said: "The entire picture was prepared. It was not a matter of fresh thinking, but of simply putting into effect the thoughts of years and years. First I knew we had to concentrate on Abu Dhabi and public welfare. In short, we had to obey the circumstances: the needs of the people as a whole. Second, I wanted to approach other emirates to work with us. In harmony, in some sort of federation, we could follow the example of other developing

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<sup>73</sup>Wheatcroft, *Ibid.* pp.168-192.

<sup>74</sup> Sheikha Mouza bint Mohamed, *op. cit.*, p.58.

countries.”<sup>75</sup> Sheikh Zayed always used to cooperate closely with everyone around him. He used to make inspection visits to project sites to personally follow up the implementation of the ambitious plans and to take measures to overcome any obstacles and make the decisions necessary to make development progress in the construction of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Over time, the emirate took a path towards stability, modernisation and prosperity, a harbinger of tremendous change that would result a few years later in the new United Arab Emirates federation.

## **Conclusion**

The modern state of Abu Dhabi traces its origins to the rise of an important tribal confederation, the Bani Yas, in the 18th century. The Bani Yas probably did not have a common ancestry, instead representing an ancient coalition of smaller tribes across the peninsula brought together by geography, circumstances and mutual interest. Of the component family groups within the Bani Yas, the Al Nahyan Family has been the dominating branch since Nahyan Al-Falah became Sheikh in the mid-18th century. This tribal background represents the cornerstone for Sheikh Zayed’s achievements. The lifestyle he lived during his early years allowed him to understand the people, their needs, pains and happiness. Nature endowed Sheikh Zayed with the strength and patience to work hard and be determined to achieve his targets for the nation. He was held in high regard by the Bedouins for his modesty, positions, justice and the simple life he lived. Most importantly, they loved him for his charismatic personality and his determination to help the people even with the shortfall of wealth resources. These, coupled with his deep sense of nationalism with which Zayed defended his territory, were the major qualities that earned him the loyalty of his

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<sup>75</sup> UAEinteract (2005), *op. cit.*, p 14.

people and assume the chieftainship of his clan. His energy proved that he was a man of development, one who could overcome obstacles to provide the best for his nation.

In this incredibly short span of time, the emirate of Abu Dhabi surpassed all expectations to emerge at the forefront of developing states. Within just four years, results started to crystallize promising with a significant qualitative leap in all aspects of life in Abu Dhabi where infrastructure was completed and educational and health services were provided. The government extended financial aid not only to the citizens but also the people of the other Trucial States to help them improve their lifestyles and living standards.

## **Section Two: Regional Environment**

### **Introduction**

The position of the UAE in dealing with major international events did not vary much from that of its neighbouring countries. In most of those conflicts the fact remains that the Gulf countries were not directly involved as key players, but their stance in these events cannot be separated completely from those events, as the Gulf region shared a prime oil-vested interest with the rest of the world, and most importantly it also shared a religious, linguistic and cultural commonality with the Muslim and Arab worlds. It was therefore a challenge openly facing these countries to maintain the stability of their tribal political systems as well as introduce change and reforms (in many cases unavoidable reforms) while at the same time maintain the rich values of their communities. Long before those events took place; the UAE managed to distant itself, astutely, from unnecessary confrontations with others. In 1853, its early sheikhdoms signed a “Perpetual Maritime Truce Agreement” - hence the name “Trucial States” - with the British Empire, administering maritime trade in the Arab

Sea and the strait of Hormuz. This secured fair access of all water channels to sea traders all the way to Iraq, on the northern tip of the Gulf and the Indian subcontinent. The UAE's stance regarding longstanding conflicts remained the same on the local, regional and international arenas.

During the 1940s, there were movements toward independence in several Arab countries in the Middle East such as Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt.<sup>76</sup> From the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict to the tragic attacks of 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, the Middle East remained under, and still is experiencing, a troubled political atmosphere and economic hardship. Reform and modernisation of these systems and the social framework constituted a priority which very few regimes managed to sustain. An overhaul of the policies that would contribute to such transformation had to envisage a participatory role for civil society, the business elite, the media, foreign capital and local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Events such as the oil crisis, the downfall of the Shah in Iran and subsequent regional wars were particularly threatening to the ruling regimes in the Gulf, and dragged the region into interminable conflicts. What would be at stake was the interest of foreign powers that relied on oil flows from the Gulf, and a turbulent environment and underdevelopment engulfing 1.4 billion Muslims.

### **The Arab-Israeli Conflict**

Shortly after Sheikh Zayed became Al Ain ruler's representative, the growing struggle in Palestine between Arabs and Jews led to a decision by the United Nations in 1947 to split Palestine into two states, an Arab State and a Jewish State. This

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<sup>76</sup> Britannica Online Encyclopedia, available at <http://www.britannica.com> [accessed 26 December 2008].



decision was accepted by the Israelis, but rejected by Palestinians.<sup>77</sup> The Arab-Israeli conflict has always been at the forefront of the Islamic world's concerns. An eventual end to this conflict might expose various agendas of the different governments and militant groups in the region and would undoubtedly transform its political landscape. The United States and the Soviet Union have challenged each other over this conflict. The 1970 oil embargo was inspired by this conflict and many civil and armed groups sought legitimacy for their agendas through it.

The Muslim nation and the Arabs specifically never forgave western powers that promised the Jews their own land and granted them the land of Palestine. While the Palestinian people had to disperse all over the world; the most sacred places to Muslims were being desecrated by the Jews. In the ensuing decades, this conflict remained at the centre of almost all political turbulences and tribulations in the Arab and Muslim world either in terms of socio-economic underdevelopment or regional political instabilities. This *status quo* served western players very well, and even some regimes in the Middle East were benefitted from this situation. For the 1.4 billion Muslims worldwide, however, the sacred mandate was there before them inciting the masses to rise and liberate their holy land from the infidels. To the detriment of western powers Arab nationalism grew on the rise, led by Egypt and Syria. National icons such as Gamal Abdul Nasser inflamed the political scene in the Arab world, while many other regimes in the area adopted Soviet communist thought and doctrines, calling for increasing an armed resistance against the occupation of Palestine.

Throughout the twentieth and the twenty-first centuries, the region has experienced periods of relative peace and tolerance alongside periods of conflict and

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<sup>77</sup> Bernadette Brexel. *Yasser Arafat*. (2004) P.22.

war, especially with the Arab-Israeli conflict. The list of Arab-Israeli wars included several major wars such as the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Suez War in 1956, the Six Day War in 1967, the October War in 1973 and the Lebanon War in 1982. There are many other additional but lesser conflicts between the Palestinians and the Israelis in Palestine (or the Israeli State).

During the last decade of the millennium, the proposed peace routes which the Palestinians and Israelis entered into ended in total failure. The Gulf States' position was supportive of the peace process, although, when they resort to their private quarters they may express a more sceptical view about its potential on the region. The UAE and other states rejected ideas for multilateral cooperation with Israel. In their view, a comprehensive peace deal must be brokered first before venturing the path of establishing normal relations with Israel, and there is no chance that the UAE will try to improve ties with the Jewish state. The position of the UAE proved to be a wise decision as other countries such as Qatar and Oman re-evaluated their hasty move towards normalising relations after they were faced with deteriorating developments on the ground.

### **The Oil Crisis**

On the backdrop of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arabs decided to use their new-found resource (oil) as a weapon to force western powers to abandon their support of Israel. The decision had a high cost in that an Arab leader had to pay with his life for such a decision. Black gold was supposed to be a catalyst for development and increase the overall wealth of the nations, but with the growing unrest in the region it was not properly utilised.

In 1973, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia called for an oil embargo on western powers that supported and armed Israel against the Arabs. Abu Dhabi soon followed this call as Sheikh Zayed felt it necessary to stand by his Arab brothers during a time of such adversity amid the kind of persecution and genocide carried out by the Israelis. The export of crude oil to the west was temporarily suspended in a show of solidarity with the Arab brethren.<sup>78</sup> Although its presence in OPEC is as the UAE, Abu Dhabi is the only emirate represented.<sup>79</sup> Dubai and the other UAE emirates do not abide by Abu Dhabi's commitments to OPEC or to OAPEC decisions, but their production levels are small enough not to be regarded as a significant market factor. Before the embargo, the question of nationalisation also caused significant concern in western quarters. In more recent times, the price fluctuations and increases, coupled with attempts to disrupt oil production as witnessed in Abqaiq oil complex in Saudi Arabia, and numerous attacks of armed sabotage took place in Iraq following the American invasion of 2002. In spite of Sheikh Zayed's assertion years later that oil is a finite form of energy; it was as if the impending decision to bring oil exports to countries that supported Israel was a natural one. Contrasting other GCC rulers, Sheikh Zayed had to take into account not only the best and more favourable decisions for Abu Dhabi, but as the head of a federation of seven emirates, the equally legitimate interests of the other emirates were equally legitimate.

### **The First Gulf War (Iran-Iraq)**

One year after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979 and the Islamic Revolution, war broke out between Iraq and Iran in September 1980 on account of

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<sup>78</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p.382.

<sup>79</sup> APS Review to the Market Trends (2007), Abu Dhabi –the Decision Makers. [online] available at: [http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi\\_0199-6180624/Abu-Dhabi-Part-4-The.html](http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-6180624/Abu-Dhabi-Part-4-The.html) [accessed January 3, 2009].

territorial disputes. The war lasted for eight years with a human cost of around one million lives, two million wounded and millions more were made refugees, with no clear victor on either side..<sup>80</sup> The UAE was in danger of being drawn into the hostilities of this conflict, as one of Iraq's conditions of ceasefire was that Iran had to leave the three UAE islands, Abu Musa and the two Tumbs, occupied by Iran since 1971.<sup>81</sup> Sheikh Zayed's policy was to use diplomatic channels through the United Nations to restore the islands. The UAE did not wish to provoke Iran, and preferred to save the country from the consequences of such a war. The war witnessed deployment of the most devastating conventional firepower and even chemical weaponry. The United States and other western countries backed Iraq through their allies in the Gulf, and the war dwindled the financial resources of the Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE.

Gulf countries were normally expected to side with and even finance the Iraqi regime in its war against Iran as it backed the mujahedeen in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union. It is interesting to note, that in the case of the UAE, and towards the final years of the war, Iran has managed to surpass Saudi Arabia as the UAE's main trading partner. This neutrality policy displayed by the UAE is exemplary, as it brings up the obvious question of how the UAE's foreign policy has occasionally been viewed by other players in similar conflicts. Did it undermine the position of other major players in the region or internationally? Or was it seen as a politically wise manoeuvre, beneficial to the overall foreign standing of the country in the long run?

### **The Second Gulf War (Iraq-Kuwait)**

The Iraqi-Kuwaiti border was a plagued by tension during the Ottoman Empire until 1899 when British offered protection to Kuwait in return for autonomy in local affairs. When Britain granted Kuwait independence in 1961, Iraq renewed its

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<sup>80</sup> Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afganistan, Palestine, Iraq*. (2004) P.153.

<sup>81</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, pp.384-385.

old claim that Kuwait formed part of southern Iraq. However, following intense global pressure, Iraq recognized Kuwait as an independent country in 1963. Nonetheless, there were occasional clashes along the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border and relations between the two countries were sometimes tense.

Relations between Iraq and Kuwait improved during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, when Kuwait assisted Iraq with loans and diplomatic support. When the war ended in 1988, the Iraqi government launched a costly programme of reconstruction.<sup>82</sup> By 1990 Iraq had fallen in around \$80 billion debt and requested Kuwait to cancel its share of the debt (around \$14 billion). At the same time, Iraq claimed that Kuwait was pumping oil from a field that straddled the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border and was not sharing the revenue.<sup>83</sup> Iraq's complaints against Kuwait grew increasingly serious. After several unsuccessful sessions by the Arab League to resolve the issues between Iraq and Kuwait, Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1990, and assumed complete control over the country. This invasion led to major crisis and resulted in massive destruction and instability in the region. Details on the UAE position and Sheikh Zayed's stance to deal with the crisis will be covered in chapter three of this thesis.

## **Conclusion**

Since the 1940s the Gulf States have become increasingly exposed to events in the rest of the Arab world, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the 1970s, they embarked on a crucial role with regards to western interests while dealing with this conflict. For the first time oil was used as a means to exert pressure on nations supporting Israel. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the UAE and other Gulf countries

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<sup>82</sup> Helen Chapin Metz, *Iraq: a Country Study*. (1988) P.19.

<sup>83</sup> Middle East and N. Africa Encyclopedia, Gulf Crisis (1990 - 1991), [online] available at: <http://www.answers.com/topic/gulf-crisis> [accessed 5 January 2009].

were engrossed in yet more regional conflicts. The outbreak of the Iraq-Iran war exerted more pressure on the region in that it threatened to spread to other Gulf countries, not to mention the social and economic implications it had on these nations. Just two years after the end of this war, Iraq sent its troops to invade Kuwait, which had considerable impact on the stability and politics of the region. From then on, the Gulf region was drawn into a persistent atmosphere of turbulence and insecurity.

## **Section Three: International Environment**

### **Introduction**

During World Wars I and II the UAE had no significant or notable role to play. Nearly all of those events touched at the heart of Islamic sentiment and bitter feelings throughout the Muslim world, particularly in the case of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the ensuing oil crisis, a mixture of nationalist politics, economic and other senseless reasons were at play in the other wars. Sheikh Zayed witnessed all the consequences, transformations and repercussions on the local, regional and international levels. While some of its foreign policy towards these crises seemed distant and even negative in the eyes of some of the factions directly involved in those events, the UAE's general position has been one of neutrality and resorts to common wisdom and logic, especially in the absence of solidarity and the prevalence of divisions among those involved.

### **World Wars I and II**

It was neither practically feasible nor possible for the Trucial Coast sheikhdoms to exert any kind of influence on the impending decisions made regarding major conflicts of the magnitude of the first and second world wars. Western powers on both sides very much determined the path and outcomes of events. The first discovery of oil in the region (in Iran) was a prime element that none of the warring parties could ignore, in the sense that every major industrial power eventually needed to exert influence to guarantee its share of its vital resource. Ever since the Ottoman Empire went into World War I in 1914 siding with Germany and Austria, then switching to the opposing side in World War II, the Arabian Gulf region was not under serious threat as they were under British protection which dictated and

determined a great deal of their course of action. The position of the UAE was to adhere as much as possible to a non-alliance stand towards conflicts.

No matter the motives of major players in the first and second World Wars, the main objective of the indigenous tribes of Arabia was to settle the inconspicuous disputes that arose as they struggled to provide the basic necessities of living. Inheriting this worry from his ancestors and tribal leaders, of a no premeditated intention to initiate aggression against others, Sheikh Zayed maintained the provision of basic resources of water and shelter for the people as the primary goal. The British might have had their reasons after the decline of the empire and the British East India company acted as an agent guaranteeing the residual interests of the British in the area, while other forces incited by the encampment of a world economic depression during the 1930s. When the area was threatened with starvation from food shortages as a result of the economic depression, the British Government supplied the Trucial Coast sheikhdoms with rations of food.<sup>84</sup>

Armed with experience and foresight, the young Sheikh Zayed, initially began to display his leadership skills when he was assigned as ruler's representative to administer Al-Ain in 1946, one year after the curtain was drawn on World War II. Eventually, the British decided to leave the area in 1971, which opened a window of opportunity to reshape the foundation of many spheres in politics and society. From this point onwards, it was not anticipated that the UAE was standing on a launch pad that would take it to new possibilities rarely witnessed in history within such a short time.

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<sup>84</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, p.250.



## **The Cold War**

The Cold War followed the World War II. It was the period of conflict, tension and rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Cold War lasted from the end of the Second World War in 1945 until the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. During this period, the Cold War dominated world politics, involving competition between two rival powers over several issues including political influence and economic goals. The Cold War extended to every region of the world. The Middle East and Arab countries were indirectly part of the conflict, as the United States continuously tried to divert the Arab world from the Soviet influence, mainly by using Islamic insurgents against existing Arab leaders who maintained relations with the Soviet Union.

## **The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan**

Wary of Soviet expansionist intentions, the United States needed a group that would repel any intervention. Using the label of defending Islam against the theological communist regime, the United States managed successfully to convince Gulf monarchies to send their devout Muslims in droves to fight the Russians. With this golden window of achieving martyrdom, there was no shortage of mujahedeen to answer the call. The Gulf Arabs allies of Washington were genuinely apprehensive of a Soviet move so close to their region.<sup>85</sup> They felt compelled to support the mujahedeen's movement in Afghanistan,<sup>86</sup> pouring monies into their operations and overloading their financial bourse in parallel to their support of Iraq, with Saudi

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<sup>85</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais. "Afghanistan and the Regional Powers" in Asian Survey, Vol. 33, No. 9 (Sep., 1993), pp. 905-922..

<sup>86</sup> Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia, Afghanistan [online] available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afghanistan> [accessed 6 January 2009].

Arabia yet again acting as the principal financial backer of the Afghan war lords and their Arab partners.

Willingly or otherwise, a foreign policy which backed the mujahedeen has succeeded in expelling Soviet army might from Afghanistan. Deliberately or not, the same policy was bound to backfire some 13 years later on American soil in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania after the forced withdrawal of the Russians from the country and the subsequent dislodgement of the communist regime from power by the mujahedeen guerrillas. The events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 were laid squarely on the (once brother in arms) Arabs fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan; Al-Qaeda and its main ally Taliban groups, with Osama bin Laden accused of being the architect of the attacks.

## **9/11**

The 2001 attacks on the United States were allegedly attributed to Osama bin Laden and his group Al-Qaeda, ten years after he was expelled from his home country Saudi Arabia for his anti-government stance.<sup>87</sup> The background to his movement began when Islamists criticised the prolonged presence of US forces in Saudi Arabia and in other Gulf countries following the Second Gulf War. Fearful of growing discontent in the area, political expression and public gatherings were banned, further stifling an essential human right. However, Muslims managed to devote efforts to generate strong and vibrant debate, which gained popularity in the UAE and other Gulf states.

In the case of the UAE, the population disparity can be attributed in a minor way in the following manner. In order to increase its local labour force to meet the

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<sup>87</sup> Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia, September 11, 2001 attacks. [online] available at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/9/11> [accessed 3 January 2009].

economic demand of diversification, many young Emiratis sought higher education in western countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. There, many of them were exposed to varying ideologies as a part of their educational programme or through interaction with others from different social backgrounds. Although one could barely formulate a well-rounded Muslim identity in these countries, some UAE nationals returned with even a stauncher grip on Islamic principles; a more firmly held position about Islam than they had before they left. This is attributed to the overly liberal cultures of the West rejected by the few religiously devout students studying there.

As two UAE citizens were involved in 9/11, the country came under the spotlight as one of the main sponsors of terrorism and provider of financial support to terrorist groups. It was very difficult to shake off this image, as the UAE along with other countries in the Gulf had to re-examine their education systems as one measure among many other corrective steps initiated by will or imposed from the west. Nevertheless, let history not forget the year of 1946, in this context of the events that shaped the path the region went through, when the British military and civilian headquarters stationed at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem was bombed and destroyed, under the planning of Menachem Begin, the subsequent Israeli prime minister.<sup>88</sup> Taking these two extremes in perspective, one can only wonder how international interests and swings of allegiances might be manipulated by countries.

## **Conclusion**

During World War I and II, the Gulf Arabs were distant in terms of decisions affecting the major course of events, as Britain entered into protection agreements with the Arabian Gulf ruling tribes to establish safe shipping passages to the Indian

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<sup>88</sup> Goliath Business Knowledge on demand(2006), The bombing of the King David Hotel. History Today. [online]. Available at:: [http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi\\_0199-5606097/The-bombing-of-the-King.html](http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi_0199-5606097/The-bombing-of-the-King.html) [accessed 5 January 2008].

subcontinent. World War I transformed Middle Eastern history. In the nineteenth century, The British and French colonised much of the defeated Ottoman Empire, and took over the Arab world as territories mainly the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon and Syria. The consequences and repercussions of World War II made life harsh and difficult for most undeveloped world nations. The Middle East peoples were no exception, with food shortages and outbreaks of polio. During that period, the Trucial States were far down the list of priorities for the Allies. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan exerted more pressure on the region in that the social and economic aspirations proved harder to attain. The minds and lives of some of the younger generation were sacrificed in the hope of reversing their faith, and as a result, deeper, more extreme and tragic remedies were applied as in the sad events of 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001. The above mentioned conflicts contributed to the circle of turbulence and insecurity.

The land of the Arabian Peninsula has long posed a challenge to the inhabitants of this region. A long coastal line with mountainous terrain to the south and an open desert to the northwest are features of the UAE geography. Nomads living in this area for many centuries have relied on agriculture, fishing, pearling and sea-trade with other nations. Extended families have lived in close relationship forming the backbone of a larger tribal structure that managed to rapidly transform the lands of those nomads into the modern day UAE. The ruling families in the Gulf States established themselves around 1800 and for almost four centuries the Bani Yas tribe has been the main influential factor in the south eastern tip of Arabia. Virtues such as honour, pride, truthfulness, compassion and chivalry, to say the least, are only a small part of what characterises the selfless Bedouin individual. Islam further

cemented their shared relationship and dictated the just and proper way to interact with each other.

From the humble economies of the past through the prosperity experienced after the discovery of oil, the Al Nahyans demonstrated the skill and wisdom of those who committed themselves to lead the people of this growing nation. The mundane way of living of the past was not merely a means of survival; its rich heritage has also constituted an integrated social system that withstood the test of time. Efforts are continuously made to preserve this wealth of tradition to act as a bridge to an enlightened and bright future. The people and tribesmen of Abu Dhabi people held a great respect and love for Sheikh Zayed on account of his modest and positive personality, his integrity and generosity even though the means were limited for the simple life he led. His wise vision, aspirations and perspective that the country's wealth has no value if not used for development of the country and the people were consistently expressed through actions to make his homeland into a developed country faster than was through possible.

During the early years of his life, Sheikh Zayed and the then Trucial States were not directly involved in the Middle East and international confrontations. However, the consequences of World Wars I and II, the rivalry between the two superpowers during the Cold War and their competition to include the Middle East countries under their influence had greatly impacted socio-economic and political structures in the region. This experience had influenced greatly Sheikh Zayed's political thought and personality, which became very clear in his positions while dealing with emerging crises at both the regional and international levels. Sheikh Zayed was a skilled mediator and his successes can be attributed primarily to the value he attached to dialogue and cooperation. He consistently approached internal,

Arab and international affairs with the wisdom, experience and vision accumulated throughout more than fifty years as ruler and president.

## Chapter Two:

### H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's Political Thought and Philosophy of Governance

#### Introduction

Without question one of the most important factors in sustaining the UAE for more than three decades and endowing it with its present strength and stability was Sheikh Zayed's leadership, notable for both its long duration and effectiveness. Sheikh Zayed was a practical visionary with a humanistic approach to statesmanship. His philosophy of governance was based on his deep-rooted convictions and actual experience, rather than contingent on mere theories or superficial knowledge. From its outset, Zayed's concept of authority remained rooted in his belief that that one should "never put oneself in the position of leader unless one feels that one is able and unless God has given one the gift to carry out the mission"<sup>89</sup>. In fact, he believed responsibility to be a "dangerous affair", that no-one should shoulder easily, let alone shoulder the responsibility of a nation.<sup>90</sup>

However, Sheikh Zayed sought to exercise his powers not as an autocratic ruler, but as a compassionate father taking care of his nation in accordance with the tenets of Islam and tribal principles of governance. Thus, he believed firmly that "the responsible leader can win the love of his people only if they feel they can trust him. He will be like a father with his children; he will look after their affairs, be concerned

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<sup>89</sup> Claud Morris, *The Desert Falcon: the story of HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan*,. (1974), p.63

<sup>90</sup> Association of popular heritage revival UAE, *Zayed the Glorious. Part-2*. (1992). P. 183

with their problems and demonstrate no favoritism. Any person in authority who ignores these points is not fit to assume the responsibilities of leadership.”<sup>91</sup>

His Highness grasped the principles of Islam in his childhood and they remained as the foundation of his beliefs and actions throughout his life. Indeed, the ability with which he and the people of the UAE were able to absorb and adjust to the remarkable changes of recent decades can be credited largely to the fact that Islam has provided a perpetual and steadfast core to their lives. Today, it provides the inspiration for the UAE judicial system and its place as the ultimate source of legislation is enshrined in the Constitution. On the important issue of relations between governments and citizens, the essence of Zayed’s diplomacy was to develop a mutual understanding supported by dialogue and discussion. This was to maintain a pattern of conduct based on “soft communication that got the required results and kept friendships intact, not thunderbolts hurled for self gratification those were apt to destroy both deliverer and recipient.”<sup>92</sup>

Sheikh Zayed also embraced the Islamic way of carrying out his public duties. He once said that “our system of government does not derive its authority from man, but is enshrined in our religion, and is based on God’s book, the Holy Quran. What need have we of what others have conjured up? Its teachings are eternal and complete, while the systems conjured up by man are transitory and incomplete”<sup>93</sup>. This statement reflects Zayed’s firm attachment to his cultural background within which the cornerstones of his historical leadership had been laid. His leadership skills and competencies were further enhanced through reading and meticulous study of

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<sup>91</sup> Maitra (2007), Op. Cit. p.96.

<sup>92</sup> Claud Morris, *Ibid*. P. 56

<sup>93</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2005,. (2005). P. 26



historical events in the region and the larger Arabian Peninsula, but also through the traditions and customs relayed by ancestors.

Power is an important consideration for a political leader, as it enables the leader to meet the challenges that confront his vision. Power is important for the realization of any vision. Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus described power as “the basic energy to initiate and sustain action translating into reality”.<sup>94</sup> Clearly, Sheikh Zayed, as a charismatic ruler, exercised his power to bring about his vision for the enhancement of the standard of living and prosperity of Emirati citizens. In discharging this responsibility, he devoted all his time to serving the people, utilizing the country’s resources to this end. Furthermore, what is perhaps most striking about Sheikh Zayed was his ability to embody and help sustain a system of traditional social, cultural and political values while intuitively understanding and effectively dealing with the modern world which forced itself upon Abu Dhabi and the UAE.

## **Section One: Domestic and Foreign Policy**

### **Introduction**

Bearing in mind the philosophy of politics of Sheikh Zayed, some aspects of which have been outlined above, it is clear how comprehensive his vision was with regards to internal and foreign affairs. In fact, His Highness maintained the same principles and values at both levels since these same principles and values are set on the firm foundations of his Islamic beliefs and his competences as an accomplished statesman. The comprehensiveness and broadness of Sheikh Zayed’s thought was not limited by geographic boundaries and conceptual dimensions; therefore, this vision cannot be divided up around these limits. He especially endeavored to integrate the

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<sup>94</sup> Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, *Leaders: The Strategies for taking Charge*,. (1985). P. 15

UAE into the international system from the very moment of its inception achieving a civilizational complementarity with this system through cooperation and interaction. As cooperation was one of the main features of the thought of Sheikh Zayed, whether at the domestic or foreign level, the UAE did not content itself with only reaping the fruits of its development but also reached out to the outer world spreading its wealth. In this respect, Zayed said “This wealth is spent primarily on our people who lived in deprivation and backwardness for many years. This wealth is being spent to provide services and build schools, hospitals and agriculture. After that, we have commitments towards our Arab brethren with whom we share the same goal and destiny. Then we have commitments towards our brethren from Islamic and friendly countries who support our causes. Therefore, we engage in many paths that do not contradict with each other; the domestic development projects are continuing and our services to our Arab and Muslim brethren are continuing.”<sup>95</sup>. On another occasion Sheikh Zayed also stated “ [...] We believe that there is no true benefit for us from the wealth that we have unless it does not also reach those in need, wherever they may be and regardless of their nationality or belief”.<sup>96</sup> This thought, therefore, crystallizes the full circle of universal interaction from a firm belief that a country cannot stand by itself unless it first lays firm foundations of its continuity and then coexist with its neighbours and the international community.

### **Zayed’s Vision of Domestic Policy**

Sheikh Zayed's internal policies were designed to enhance the integration and centralization of the federation. He committed himself to the responsible use of the

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<sup>95</sup> The National Federal Council, *Zayed Wal Majlis Al Watani Al Ittihad*, (Arabic) (Zayed and The National Federal Council, (2005). pp.38-39.

<sup>96</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, *op. cit.*, (2005). P. 82

federation's rich natural resources, particularly its massive reserves of oil and gas. Sheikh Zayed has continued to fulfill his promise that the wealth of the nation should be used to the benefit of its entire people. In this regard, he stated “We believe that wealth in itself is of no value unless it is dedicated to the prosperity and welfare of the people”<sup>97</sup>. Thus, it goes without saying that the citizen was given full priority in Sheikh Zayed’s thought regarding development. Zayed also focused on achieving full integration of the means of production in the larger federal framework by setting up a solid economic infrastructure that propelled the UAE to leading ranks either regionally or internationally. Also, among the main focal points of Sheikh Zayed’s domestic policy is his concept of democracy, commonly known among scholars as “Desert Democracy”<sup>98</sup> which has been in itself a way of life in Emirati society long before the formation of the state.

### **The Philosophy of Development: Building the People**

Sheikh Zayed was aware that the future prospects of the UAE would require engaging all the members of the society in the development process. He believed this could not be achieved unless citizen capacity building was carried out effectively, commenting “The human being is the basis of any civilizational process”.<sup>99</sup> For Zayed, the economy, despite its importance, remained subordinate to human forces in the process of development; this is based on development of human resources through economic resources. This in itself represents an elaborate economic philosophy that seeks to achieve sustainable growth through investment in human capital. In fact,

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<sup>97</sup> Fahim Bin Sultan Al Qasimi, in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed., *A century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and The United Arab Emirates*. (2000). P. 6

<sup>98</sup> See, Maitra, *op. cit.*, p.429, see also Hamdi Tammam, *Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan :The Leader and the March*, (1983).

<sup>99</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *Zayed: Ramz Al-Wahda Wa Onwan Al-Irada*.(Arabic) (Zayed: A Symbol of Union and a motto of Will ) (1992). p. 68

many theories subsequently came to confirm that this visionary philosophy is based on well established economic tenets. Indeed, Dr. Erich Gundlach, a prominent German economist, wrote “the new growth theories highlight the impact of human capital on economic development. Taken at face value, this theoretical insight does not come as a big surprise, especially in East and Southeast Asia, where good education has traditionally been held as a productive investment”.<sup>100</sup> It was not the oil revenues that made the modern UAE state, it was rather the cohesion and harmony between financial capital and a skilled human workforce that managed this capital. This means that successful development can be arrived at through the sound management of capital and natural resources by the human factor.<sup>101</sup>

For Sheikh Zayed, comprehensive development requires a wide popular participation from all strata of society, a fact which necessitates the existence of sound intellectual capacity and physical capability among the people for optimal performance. This is based on the belief that an educated and trained citizen is better equipped to deal efficiently with the fundamentals of development including capital and other means of project execution. However, Sheikh Zayed’s vision of human capacity building should not be viewed as an end in itself or as part of a more general developmental process. Rather, this vision should be viewed within a more comprehensive framework that encompasses the civilizational aspect itself with all its dimensions. That is what Zayed meant, in the author’s view, when he said “The human being is the basis of any civilizational process. Our care of the human being is essential because he is the pivot of all real continuous progress. Whatever buildings or facilities or schools or hospitals we build and whatever bridges or landmarks we

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<sup>100</sup> Erich Gundlach, “ The Impact of Human Capital on Economic Development”, in Chew, Rosalind et al. (eds.), *Human Formation Capital as an Engine of Growth*. (1999). P. 7

<sup>101</sup> Ahmad Ali Al-Sakhni , *Sheikh Zayed: Falsafato Hokm Wa Inbi'ato Ummah*. (Arabic) (Sheikh Zayed: A Philosophy of Governance and a Renaissance of a Nation) (1998). pp. 175-176

construct, all these will remain lifeless material entities unable to carry on by themselves. The soul of all this is the human being; the human being who is capable by means of his thought, his craftsmanship and his potential to maintain all these facilities and achieve progress through them and grow with them.”<sup>102</sup> This sums up Zayed’s strategy of human development as a core strategy that incorporates all other aspects of civilizational development including economic development, social development, political development etc., especially when Sheikh Zayed insisted that the effort and work exerted by the human being is the true wealth. The more it is spread among citizens, the bigger the yield it generates; unlike the subterranean wealth that wanes gradually by way of continuous extraction and consumption.

Moreover, Zayed’s vision of human development is not an end in itself because it is the kind of investment that would provide the means through which the process of nation-building is achieved. In fact, it proved to be a highly profitable investment since that represented in Zayed’s view the kind of “safety valve” that would guard the country against times when the oil reserves run dry,<sup>103</sup> and at the same time provided the UAE with an army of citizens who have risen to the challenges facing their country and contributed to making their nation a model of rapid, miraculous transformation. A better illustration of this transformation was depicted in the 2004 Human Development Index (HDI) released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UAE was ranked within the category of “High Human Development Index” countries, at the 49<sup>th</sup> position out of 177 countries worldwide. Thus the UAE, “ranked among the countries with high human

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<sup>102</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Ramz Al-Wahda...* p. 68

<sup>103</sup> Stuart Land, *Zayed: 1918-2004, A Tribute to HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan*(2004). p. 113

development with Development Index Trends, calculated within a period of 1975 to 2002, showing an upward trend".<sup>104</sup>

The Human Development Index is a composite index that measures the average achievements of a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth, knowledge as measured by the adult literacy rate and the combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools, and a decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) in US dollars. The life expectancy at birth in UAE stood at 74.6 years, adult literacy rate at 77.3, combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools at 68 per cent. With 95 -100 per cent of the population having sustainable access to affordable essential medicines, UAE has shown a considerable increase in health expenditure which stood at 921 PPP US Dollars. Public health expenditure stood at 2.6 per cent of the GDP. The child immunization programs conducted was also lauded in the report as the below one year olds fully immunized against tuberculosis and measles showed a good 98 and 94 percent respectively.

UAE has also recorded one of the highest population growth increases with an annual growth rate of 6.5 per cent. From the 0.5 million in 1975, the UAE population has soared to 2.9 million as per the 2002 figures. Technology diffusion in the UAE has also fared well, of 1000 people, 291 have access to telephone landlines, 647 being cellular subscribers and 313.2 Internet users.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> WAM (2004) UAE Among High Human Development Index Countries[online] available at: [http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1089963225919&pagename=WAM%2FWAM\\_E\\_Layout](http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?c=WamLocEnews&cid=1089963225919&pagename=WAM%2FWAM_E_Layout) [Accessed on 20 March 2009].

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

This upward trend continued at an even faster pace in subsequent years when the United Arab Emirates asserted its place among the countries that made significant strides in making the life of its people better and better, thus following the footsteps and the guiding philosophy of Sheikh Zayed in the field of human progress. Indeed, in the latest UNDP's HDI Index issued in 2008, the UAE stood at the 31<sup>st</sup> position worldwide (out of 179 countries)<sup>106</sup> .

### **Developing The Economy**

Ensuring sound economic development was another cardinal priority of Sheikh Zayed's domestic policy, as it goes hand in hand with the building of human capital and ultimately the nation-building process. Thanks to the oil wealth that the country sought to exploit wisely and channel towards this process, foundations have been laid to set solid bases for sustainable economic development. Sheikh Zayed said "The oil wealth bestowed on our nation by God must be directed towards serving the present of the citizen and the future of the nation. We must plan for the future in order to be able to face the likelihood of oil depletion by setting up factories, preparing the citizens and providing them with the expertise and education, and diversifying the economic base."<sup>107</sup> This statement organized the guidelines regarding how the resources beneath the desert should be reinvested for the future of the country and the welfare of the citizens. In order to achieve this, Sheikh Zayed spoke about the importance of preparing the human resources and at the same time building a fully fledged industrial sector and diversifying the economy away from reliance of natural resources revenue.

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<sup>106</sup> UNDP(2008) The Human Development Index - going beyond income[online] available at: [http://hdrstats.undp.org/2008/countries/country\\_fact\\_sheets/cty\\_fs\\_ARE.html](http://hdrstats.undp.org/2008/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_ARE.html) [Accessed on 21 March 2009].

<sup>107</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, p. 68 .

Similarly, Zayed emphasized, on many other occasions, the need to diversify the economy as a strategic choice to safeguard the national economic future, protecting it from any potential conjunctural developments. He said “The state’s planning is based on the necessity to diversify the economic base through developing industry and agriculture as an additional source of revenue beside petroleum, and an alternative source of revenue in the event of petroleum depletion.”<sup>108</sup>

Therefore, the strategic planning of the nation’s economy in the mind of Sheikh Zayed stems from his view that total reliance on oil as a sole source of economic revenue is a risky venture on many fronts. This is with respect to the fluctuations of oil markets, the provision of strategic crops and food products, or again with respect to the likelihood of the exhaustion of this valuable natural resource. This in itself reflects the futuristic strategy and vision that Zayed elaborated as a leader who went beyond the time frame to ensure continuity for his country.

Sheikh Zayed’s orientation was to use oil income to create other sources of revenue, including bigger agricultural exploitations, digging wells, setting up oil industries, and other lacking regional industries, such as cement.<sup>109</sup> Thus, His Highness endeavored to put his diversification plan into execution through first developing viable agricultural and industrial sectors to fit the dimensions of the newly created state, and subsequently seeking more means of economic diversity through developing a solid services sector, investing abroad, and attracting foreign direct investment.

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<sup>108</sup> Ahmed Ben Hamed, *Kalimat Min Noor.. oqtatafat min Aqwali Sahib Assomow Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan* (Arabic) (Enlightening words : Excerpts from Statements of Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan ), p. 21.

<sup>109</sup> Nabil Ragheb, *Osool Arriyada Al-hadariya : Dirasa fi Fikr Al-Sheikh Zayed* (Arabic) (The Roots of Civil Leadership: A Study on the Thought of Sheikh Zayed), (1995) p. 376.



### **Agriculture: Zayed's Winning Bet**

Sheikh Zayed focused his attention on the agricultural sector while he was aware of the structural challenges that lay ahead. Having developed expertise in this field as the ruler's representative in Al Ain he was even more determined to go ahead with ambitious agricultural projects. As the desert environment was not fit for projects of this type, there were several objections from foreign experts. He once revealed to Egyptian TV that "All the experts who arrived here in the past did not encourage agriculture. But we told them let us experiment; we might succeed in turning our desert into an agricultural region. Indeed, we started the experiment and succeeded, which encouraged us to carry on in this field."<sup>110</sup> This reveals a considerable amount about Zayed's own expertise on the ground which surpassed even the experts' scientific conclusions. It also highlights his strong belief in the vital necessity of agriculture as a strategic sector which would guarantee the country's self sufficiency through agricultural products and foodstuffs. Moreover, His Highness, even considered this sector as the essential prerequisite of any civilization. His gave a famous statement in this regard, "You give me agriculture, I will guarantee you civilization."<sup>111</sup>

Among the structural obstacles that Zayed had to confront were the traditional means of exploitation, scarcity of water, small patches of exploited land, a limited range and quantity of produce. He endeavored not only to tame the desert, but also to redress the situation by adopting a more efficient approach reliant on modern technology, stressing how science and knowledge could contribute to boost productivity and rationalize water use through efficient irrigation systems. He said, "Science reached domains unthought of previously. [...] Agriculture needs two

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<sup>110</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, p. 224

<sup>111</sup> Abdullah Rashid Ahmad Al-Kaabi, Ed., *Al Kalam Al Ajab Min Hakim Al-Arab*. (Arabic) (Words of Wonder from the Sage of the Arabs) (2003). p. 206

fundamental elements: arable land and water, then comes the role of work to set up irrigation canals and the necessary facilities. All this requires scientific expertise. I believe that the United Arab Emirates is among the countries most in need of agriculture. Therefore, we are looking for companies with expertise in sea water desalination and arable land restoration. We will, by God's will, reach our goal in achieving self-sufficiency in agricultural products.”<sup>112</sup>

Clearly, Sheikh Zayed had set his target for the nation; attaining a level of self sufficiency in agrarian produce irrespective of the challenges. By combining his ambitious vision with the necessary means and expertise, and by revolutionizing the methods of farming and allocating land and fertilizers to farmers, Zayed managed to instill in his citizens in the rural regions a sense of duty and commitment to turn the desert into a productive oasis, and therefore contribute to the development of the nation. Ultimately, Zayed managed to achieve his strategic goal in attaining self-sufficiency in many products and crops to the point that productivity of some produce even far exceeded domestic needs and therefore have been exported abroad. “ [...] Today, thanks to our determination and local expertise in agriculture, we managed to grow and produce and export vegetables and fruits from Liwa region. That's why I say 'He who sows, reaps'. We in the UAE we reap the fruits of our planting in science and knowledge.”<sup>113</sup>

On another occasion, Sheikh Zayed proudly announced the results of his fruitful strategy: “When the state of UAE was formed 20 years ago, agriculture was limited in some oases and mountainous villages. Today, the desert soil produces 114 kinds of plants including the planting of 18 million palm trees, and the cultivation of

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<sup>112</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture , *Zayed: Fikr wa 'Amal*. (Arabic) (Zayed: Thought and Action) (1984). p.237.

<sup>113</sup>Excerpts from His Highness's Address to UAE students in Britain and Ireland in London on 26/08/1997.

140 thousands hectares of land in the Western Region, and 160 thousand hectares in the Eastern Region that contain now 80 million trees which reach the borders of the Empty Quarter known for being the driest and toughest region in the world. This accomplishment was not an easy task. It required a strong will and determination to defy a harsh environment.”<sup>114</sup> Thus, thanks to Zayed’s agricultural policy, agriculture achieved a qualitative breakthrough not only in the economic but also the environmental fields. While forests and arable lands are shrinking in many regions due to desertification, impacting negatively on the human and animal life, agriculture in the United Arab Emirates endowed the desert with a productive vitality thanks to fruitful trees and crops. This, in turn, influenced the UAE environment, invigorating and moderating it.<sup>115</sup>

Why did Zayed insist so much on growing his nation’s own crops while he had all the financial means from oil income to buy from abroad all the necessary foodstuff his country needed? His resolution to achieve success in the agricultural sector reflects the depth of his thought and foresight regarding the importance of comprehensive development in achieving integration between the different sectors. Agriculture and industry complement each other. Emphasizing on developing only one sector and excluding the other leads to significant disruptions in the economy. Moreover, agriculture has a big impact on industry as it provides the raw material and agrarian products needed by the food industry.<sup>116</sup> This leads us to the other sector dearest to Sheikh Zayed in the development process.

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<sup>114</sup>UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Ramz Al-Wahda...* p. 174.

<sup>115</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

## Sheikh Zayed's Vision of Industrial Development

Industry was the other component envisioned by Sheikh Zayed to achieve economic diversification. The importance given to industry was “one of the most important strategic choices made by the state”<sup>117</sup>. In fact, H.H. Sheikh Zayed had a clear farsighted vision which established the basis for setting up a developed multidimensional industrial structure capable of raising the national economy to the level of international markets. In this regard, Zayed asserted: “We started implementing an extensive plan to put into execution various industrial projects including light, medium and heavy industries. Such factories will bring about profits and will be of bigger benefits and might provide us with more than we earn from oil”.<sup>118</sup>

Since the early years of the federation, Sheikh Zayed stressed the importance of building a solid industrial base within the framework of his economic development strategy. Indeed, this sector has been one of the means by which the productive structure of the national economy was built to help set the country free from the complications of a one product-based economy. Sheikh Zayed defined the role of the industrial units of all kinds in consolidating the union and contributing beneficially to the community. He said “Every factory small or big must serve the Union. Every project should be directed to the welfare of society. If this is achieved, the community will experience happiness for the synergy accomplished among each other.”<sup>119</sup> Thus, Zayed expressed his belief in the industrial sector as a means capable of not only contributing to the society's welfare, but also to the country's unity, which

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, p.235.

<sup>118</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Zayed wal Bina' Al-Watani*. (Arabic) (Zayed and the National Edification) (1991). p.50.

<sup>119</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Fikr wa 'Amal*. p.284.

indicates the importance that Sheikh Zayed gave to this pillar in the UAE economy. His Highness viewed industrial projects as essential components of a national economy that must be integrated fully within a federal framework.

Manufacturing activity, just like other sectors, started modestly in the UAE. However, Zayed's planning and a sound development policy that sought to invest oil earnings in establishing industrial bases in the country, significant strides have been made in this field. The process of industrialization gathered momentum following the formation of the Federation. During the last three decades, with the Government's increasing emphasis on diversification and basic components such as capital and energy readily available, the manufacturing sector has made significant progress in the UAE. The policy of diversification strongly supported by Sheikh Zayed, was applied within the industrial sector itself, having a positive impact on the UAE economy. However, beside the efforts deployed by the federal government, governments of individual emirates have played an important role in this process. Initially the UAE took advantage of its established oil and gas operations to develop related industries, such as petrochemicals, fertilizers, cement and aluminium. Subsequently, the range of manufactured goods widened to include electronic items and light machinery for export.

Currently, major growth areas include capital-intensive high-technology industries supplying, among other items, security and safety equipment, information technology equipment, medical equipment and services, construction products, air conditioning and refrigerating equipment, environmental and pollution control equipment, and sporting equipment. Import substitution and strong local markets are

driving forces for further growth in the UAE manufacturing sector.<sup>120</sup> The share of industry in the national economy witnessed steady growth and, therefore, provided a reliable source of revenue. Hence, from 2.7 percent at the time of the creation of the Federal state, it reached 3.8 percent in 1980, then 7.7 percent in 1990. Subsequently industry's share in the UAE economy grew to 8.7 percent in 1995.<sup>121</sup> Today, the industrial sector industrial sector contributes more than 27% to the National Gross Domestic Product (GDP).<sup>122</sup> These achievements would not have reached this level without the continuous support and close follow-up from Sheikh Zayed who promoted manufacturing gradually and steadily until it became a fully fledged sector enabling the national economy to stand firmly in front of international and conjunctural challenges.

### **An Open Door Policy as the Key to Economic Development**

The diversification drive of the economy away from dependence on hydrocarbons also led to the development of other non-oil sectors including the services sector which occupies a considerable position in the UAE economy. In this regard, Sheikh Zayed set clear guidelines in managing the surplus of oil money. That is, after giving priority to the domestic level in terms of a full scale multidimensional investment policy, he determined that a part of oil income should be directed internationally through investments made in many countries. He said "Priorities of investment should be given to internal level [...] Then, the surplus of the revenues is directed primarily to help our brethren, and invest in beneficial sectors in the neighboring countries before reaching far countries and it goes without saying that the

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<sup>120</sup> World trade Organization (2005), Trade Policy review of The United Arab Emirates, p.58. [online document] Available at : [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/tpr\\_e/s162-4\\_e.doc](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/s162-4_e.doc)

<sup>121</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

<sup>122</sup> Gulf News (2008), [online]available at: <http://gulf-news.com/articles/08/12/04/10264609.html>

foreign investments should be distributed on different regions and not concentrated exclusively in one region or country.”<sup>123</sup> . This is a clear testimony of the necessity to seek other alternatives for the national economy even abroad, which not only consolidates the status of the country, but also establishes firm relations with other countries based on mutual interests.

Sheikh Zayed took notice at an early stage of what the world economy had become, and how integration became the dominant feature determining all the transactions. This became even more obvious by way of globalization which made it impossible for any country to sustain itself in isolation from the rest of the world.<sup>124</sup> This also implies opening up to foreign investments to which Zayed paid special attention as a source of vitality to the national economy thanks to the expertise, technology and the confidence it attracts to local economic activity. Highlighting the importance of foreign investments His Highness said: “We certainly want the national economy to enter a more active, more consolidated and stronger phase... If we welcome foreign investments from Arab or non-Arab countries that are because of what they carry with them in terms of advanced technological knowledge we are in need of.”<sup>125</sup>

Therefore, thanks to the harnessing of all available resources to the development of the country, the UAE gained, under Sheikh Zayed, a respectable place not only in the Arab World but in the international business community as well. Today, from a bunch of rudimentary fishing and pearl diving economies, the UAE witnessed a dazzling paradigm shift to become an international commercial and financial bastion. Moreover, Sheikh Zayed had vision in not only seeing his own

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<sup>123</sup> Nabil Ragheb, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

<sup>124</sup> Dr. Yussuf Mohammed Al-Midfai, *Zayed wal Imarat : Bina'a Dawlat Al-Ittihad (Arabic) (Zayed and the Emirates: The building of the Union State)*, (2008) p. 283.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

country making great strides in development and in the enhancement of the standards of living of his once destitute people, but also that of the entire Arab World and beyond.



## **Democratic Governance**

Zayed's philosophy of governance and internal policy cannot be discussed without tackling his Highness's view of democracy. We have seen how His Highness derived much of his principles of rule from the precepts of Islam and his cultural heritage. These were the main sources of inspiration that led Zayed to conceive a mode of human social and political interaction that struck a balance between the historical and traditional background of his society and the evolving requirements of modern political life. Sheikh Zayed asserted this reality when he stated "We have experienced democracy in which we actually live, for hundreds of years under the principle of consultation (*Shura*). We look forward to achieving more phases of this experience and benefit from the experiences of our brethren who have gone through the same circumstances as ours."<sup>126</sup> Thus, Zayed not only testified that democracy was not an alien practice for his society, but also demonstrated a great deal of pragmatism and openness towards broader prospects for democratic rule. His primary concern was fulfilling the wishes of his subjects no matter what their nature might be.

For this purpose, Sheikh Zayed established the necessary constitutional institutions (i.e. Abu Dhabi National Consultative Council and UAE Federal National Council) to act as a means through which popular grievances and wants could be discussed openly and channelled to executive authorities. However, these were by no means a substitute for the traditional form of interaction between the ruler and the ruled in Zayed's philosophy of governance. In fact, he insisted that direct contact and open discussions between the two were essential prerequisites for the realization of his people's welfare and the sustainability of the nation. He said, "The ruler must constantly meet with his people. There should be no barriers between them under any

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<sup>126</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *op. cit.*, p.175.

circumstances.”<sup>127</sup> Moreover, Sheikh Zayed set a roadmap for the kind of relationship that should exist between the leadership and the people. It is a relationship based on the sense of duty towards the people in terms of serving them and achieving their desires, that is why – in Zayed’s view - the governor should intermingle with his subjects to understand their lives, needs, and grievances. He said in this regard: “A ruler, any ruler, is only there to serve his people and secure their welfare and prosperity... To the end, the leader must live among his people to sense their needs and touch their problems, which cannot be achieved if the leader isolates himself from his people.”<sup>128</sup> In this respect, Saeed Mohammad Al Gandi, former speaker of the Federal National Council, said in his testimony paying tribute to Sheikh Zayed: “The dearest thing to Sheikh Zayed's heart was to listen to his fellow compatriots. This attitude was quite natural, for he had grown with the deep-rooted nobility of his people characterized by amity and compassion. There were absolutely no barriers between Sheikh Zayed and his people”.<sup>129</sup>

Through his daily visits to cities and villages nationwide, Zayed developed a relationship of love, confidence and trust with the people. Such visits were fundamental to his democratic rule and emanated from his belief that the success of any ruler depends on several factors, primarily on consultative democracy.<sup>130</sup> Other values that were of special importance to Sheikh Zayed in his interaction with the people were freedom, justice and equality. Under the umbrella of such values, every citizen could live without fear and safeguard the great gains the country has achieved for them. The citizen developed a sense of belonging to the nation to the point of

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<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.* p.175.

<sup>128</sup> Cited in Zayed Charitable Foundation , The Consultation Approach and the Model (Arabic) [online] available at <http://www.zayedfoundation.com/home.aspx?tabindex=3&tabid=2> [accessed 2 March 2009]

<sup>129</sup> Gulf News (2005) The Ruler who Listened to His People [online] Available at: <http://archive.gulfnews.com/articles/05/11/02/189572.html> [accessed on 11 March 2009]

<sup>130</sup> Maitra, *op. cit.*, P.430.

showing full readiness to defend it and its federal foundations against any break up or narrow regional ideologies.

Asked by a foreign reporter about his opinion on democracy, His Highness replied, “We think that achieving justice is the road to democracy, and any demeaning of justice is against democracy. Of course justice will not satisfy all the people but it will satisfy the majority.”<sup>131</sup> In Zayed’s thought, justice, freedom and equality are essential for people's progress since they materialize in the opportunities given to citizens to shoulder their responsibilities to serve their country and partake actively in its development. Accordingly, His Highness had a firm belief in the necessity of “the participation of the people in shouldering the responsibility, in partaking in the consultation process (*Shura*), and in governing. Our goal in life is to achieve justice, fairness, and support the weak against the powerful. We have no reservations over having our countrymen shoulder the responsibility of governance so long as our objectives are the ones I have just outlined.”<sup>132</sup> It is obvious here how Zayed was confident and assured as a ruler who was not afraid of sharing power or inviting his people to participate in bearing national responsibilities.

The democracy cherished by Zayed reflects his kind of rule where the citizens, through their representative bodies, can “take and be part of the mechanism which runs the affairs of the nation” and its development schemes.<sup>133</sup> Because Zayed was a firm believer in necessity evolution, he was ready to embrace change in the democratic process itself provided that this change came gradually and was not imposed from the exterior. In fact, this approach of prudence was necessary at a certain period of the nation building process. He expressed this view clearly when he said “The truth is I have no objection to citizens choosing their own representatives.

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<sup>131</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Fikr wa 'Amal*. p.110

<sup>132</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Ramz Al-Wahda...* p. 56

<sup>133</sup> Salem Bin Ham, *My Voyage with Zayed*. (2000). p. 138

But, as you know, our experience in this domain is new. Careful consideration is necessary. We need also to leave room for the citizens to meditate on the matter and study it before taking a new step, so that this step would be mature and correct”.<sup>134</sup> On another occasion Zayed asserted that talking about parliamentary democracy which was a new experience then, must come gradually, and democracy should come on gradual steps.<sup>135</sup> Zayed then, was well aware of the difficulties related to the democratic approach, not only in its application, but also in its nature as a way of thought and a philosophy which requires a great deal of meditation and consideration, before implementing its different aspects in society. More importantly, he wanted his people first to acquire a full understanding of such an approach before taking further steps in this direction.

At the time, this prudence on the part of Sheikh Zayed was not fully understood within some circles in the west. Many critics argued that the UAE “has a great system of government but is not a democracy.”<sup>136</sup> Of course the democracy they refer to is the western style of governance prevailing in their own countries. Some also interpreted this cautious approach towards democracy from the part of the UAE leadership as a lack of any intention to move forward in this field. “The conventional assessment has been that Zayed and those around him, notably Crown Prince Khalifa, feel there is no need to move towards elections and democracy. But the President’s position has been more nuanced and non-committal”<sup>137</sup>. But some prefer to use the term “benevolent autocracy” to refer to the government style in the UAE since it suits

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<sup>134</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed fikr wa ‘Amal*. p. 238

<sup>135</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *op. cit.* pp.178-179

<sup>136</sup> Nahim bahrani (2005), Democracy within Autocracy. [online] available at <http://www.iranian.com/MBahrami/2005/April/Democracy/index.html> [accessed 26 February 2009]

<sup>137</sup> Gulf States Newsletter, Vol 25, Issue 656, 5 March 2001. p. 8

the country and its people, and is better than the style of rule in some neighboring countries.<sup>138</sup>

However, Sheikh Zayed was clear when he stated that “the principle of consultation will, forever, remain one of the most essential bases of our life. I am looking forward to a future when our offspring follow our steps and apply the same principle according to their own ways of life, systems and prevailing concepts of the age.”<sup>139</sup> ‘The future’ that Zayed was talking about did not take long to come, since in December 2006 the UAE held its first elections ever since the creation of the Federation to elect members of the Federal National Council. This historical event is one of the steps forward that the UAE leadership took towards “enabling the citizens to participate effectively in the drawing up of their country’s future.”<sup>140</sup> The elections represent then a partial fulfillment of Zayed’s vision regarding the participation of his people in the process of governance.

### **U.A.E. Foreign Policy**

The foreign policy of the United Arab Emirates has been based upon a belief in the need for justice in international dealings between states, including the necessity of adhering to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of others and the pursuit, wherever possible, of peaceful resolutions of disputes, together with a support for international institutions, such as the United Nations. The objectives of this policy have been to secure the country’s borders, protect the stability, independence and sovereignty of the UAE over its territories, and ensure a decent free life for its citizens, through establishing good bilateral, regional and international relations that

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<sup>138</sup> See Brian Cloughley (2004) Democracy-Bush style- in the Gulf [online] available at: <http://www.counterpunch.org/cloughley12042004.html> [accessed 13 March 2009].

<sup>139</sup> Hamdi Tammam, Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayyan. The Leader and the March, (1981) , p.129.

<sup>140</sup> Maitra, *op. cit.* P.431.

are based on constructive cooperation between peoples.<sup>141</sup> However, it is important to note that Sheikh Zayed, in the same way he stamped his own distinctive style on domestic policy, carved an uncommon style on the foreign policy of his country. Being a conciliator and peacemaker by nature, and showing an exceptional predisposition to spend the resources at his disposal not only for the benefit and welfare of his citizens, but also for those in need elsewhere, he rose at the international arena as a strong defender of the rights of those he felt were disadvantaged.

Sheikh Zayed was aware of the strategic position of the United Arab Emirates and the challenges that such position engendered in terms of security, political and economic dealings with the regional and international environment of the country. In this regard, he said “the great importance of the strategic and economic position of our country gives special importance to the foreign policy through which we deal with other countries and peoples, including the near and the distant.”<sup>142</sup> This reflects Zayed's keen understanding of power politics in the region and his perception of how the UAE's interests should be protected at the regional and international level taking advantage of the country's strategic location and its oil wealth as leverage assets. It also reflects the importance that His Highness gave to international issues either relating to the immediate concerns of the leadership and people in the UAE or to those that concern humans everywhere.

In his address to the Federal National Council on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1972 Sheikh Zayed defined the general features of UAE foreign policy when he said that “the foreign policy of the state of the United Arab Emirates aims at supporting Arab and Islamic causes and interests. It also aims to promote friendship and cooperative

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<sup>141</sup> Al-Sakhni , *op. cit.*, p. 70.

<sup>142</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Zayed wa Siyasa al-Kharijiyya*. (Arabic) (Zayed and the Foreign Policy) (1991). p.21.

relations with all nations and peoples in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and the international ideal ethics.”<sup>143</sup> As this statement suggests, Sheikh Zayed outlined the different dimensions of UAE foreign policy on the basis of either its belonging to the Arab and Islamic world, or the international community at large, which *per se* imposes a set of obligations and commitments of the nation with regards to other countries and peoples.

### **UAE Foreign Policy at the Arab Regional Level:**

Of the basic fundamentals drawn by Sheikh Zayed with regards to foreign policy within the Arabian Gulf region, and in the broader Arab world, the UAE has sought to enhance cooperation and to resolve disagreement through a calm pursuit of dialogue. Thus one of the central features of the country's foreign policy has been the development of closer ties with its neighbours in the Arabian Peninsula. The key priority, naturally, was that of seeking security and stability within the immediate region of the Arab Gulf, including both the states of the peninsula and the two other littoral states, Iraq and Iran. It has done so within the framework of promoting close ties with the other states of the peninsula, with whom it shares religion, history, language, culture and tribal and other affinities, as well as systems of government.<sup>144</sup>

### **The Gulf Region**

Relations with the five other member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been a cardinal feature of UAE foreign policy, pre-dating the formation of the Council itself in 1981. As the UAE's nearest neighbours, these states are of

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<sup>143</sup> Al-Sakhni, *Ibid.*, P. 70.

<sup>144</sup> Petter Hellyer, “The Evolution of UAE Foreign Policy” in Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, eds., *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective* (2001). P. 162.

major importance to the Emirates. Sheikh Zayed saw that it was important to work towards a natural and historic unity of the Gulf Arab nations by preparing the ground towards that end, such as founding strong and sincere relations, in all fields and spheres, be they political, economical, cultural or social.<sup>145</sup> When, in February 1968, Britain announced its intention to leave the Gulf by the end of 1971, President Sheikh Zayed, then only ruler of Abu Dhabi, took the initiative in launching a campaign for a federation between the states of the lower Gulf. This initially included Qatar and Bahrain as well as the seven emirates, and it was not until the summer of 1971 that the former decided not to join the federation. When they did so, Sheikh Zayed stated that the door remained open for Qatar and Bahrain if they wished to join the federation. Although they did not, it is reasonable to say that the way in which the UAE successfully established itself as a federation in the 1970s helped pave the way for the formation of the larger GCC in 1981.

Sheikh Zayed tirelessly stressed the importance of setting common goals in the region despite some differences that prevail among some countries. He saw in union a source of strength for all these nations in front of more serious and compelling challenges. He said “We believe strongly in the importance of unity between the countries of the Gulf region, as a basis for an Arab comprehensive unity. [...] With Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries we are one family with a common history, and customs and traditions which belong to our common civilizational heritage, and in which prevails the spirit of our true Islamic faith.”<sup>146</sup>

However, the existence of affinities and common features between the countries of the region did not override completely some differences that prevailed for some time. Thus, if UAE enjoyed more or less excellent relations with Oman, Qatar,

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<sup>145</sup> Salem Bin Ham, *op. cit.*, p. 138

<sup>146</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Ibid.*, p.69.



Bahrain, and Kuwait, despite some issues that pre-dated the creation of the federation, the same thing could not be said about Saudi Arabia with which Abu Dhabi had territorial disputes. In fact, Saudi Arabia withheld recognition of the UAE in 1971 and declined to establish relations with it. This was an ominous sign, especially since the Saudis had raised yet again the question of the Saudi-UAE border and ownership of the Buraimi oasis.

An early foreign policy priority for Sheikh Zayed was, therefore, the ending of this border dispute. Relations with Saudi Arabia were tense for three years until 1974, when the border dispute was “resolved” and Riyadh extended recognition to Abu Dhabi. Zayed nevertheless continuously advocated the unity of the states of the Gulf on the basis of their common language, religion and contiguous land.<sup>147</sup> Yet, advocating unity, coordination, and cooperation among the countries of the Arabian Peninsula is one thing, and developing a foreign diplomacy that carries the specific features of the UAE and preserves its interests is something else. Sheikh Zayed made sure that fraternal ties would not harm the general interest of his country and people.

Thus, despite the closeness of its relations with its GCC partners, the UAE has on occasions taken a distinctively separate approach as a result of differing political and economic objectives, such as those pertaining, for example, to a common tariff policy, which would have had a negative impact on UAE’s trade business; or again in matters of humanitarian nature such as UAE’s incessant call to reassess United Nations sanctions against Iraq, despite opposition from its GCC partners.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> William A. Rugh, “Leadership in the UAE : Past, Present and Future” in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed., *A Century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and the United Arab Emirates* (2000). P. 253.

<sup>148</sup> Petter Hellyer, *op. cit.*, P.168.

## **Relations with Iran**

UAE policy towards Iran has always sought the promotion of cordial ties, the impetus for this not only being a matter of wishing to establish good relations with a powerful neighbor but also being motivated by extensive commercial ties that can be traced back for thousands of years. Early attempts to implement this policy, however, were adversely affected by territorial claims of Iran to three of UAE's islands in the Gulf: Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa. Thus, at the end of November 1971, Iran invaded the Tunbs, killing a number of policemen and expelling the population of Greater Tunb. In the case of Abu Musa, the ruler of Sharjah was persuaded by the threat of Iranian invasion to sign a Memorandum of Understanding, under which Sharjah and Iran instituted an administrative division of the island.<sup>149</sup> Iran later asserted full control of Abu Musa in 1992.

Zayed opted for diplomacy from the beginning of the crisis, considering it a matter of priority for the United Arab Emirates. His approach to this problem consisted of seeking quiet solutions and engaging the Iranians in talks while nurturing good relations based on respect and cooperation, which won him praise and respect all over the world. He stated on one occasion: "Our friendship with Iran is a fact imposed by good-neighborly relationship that must prevail between the region's countries. These relations require from us understanding to maintain common interests."<sup>150</sup> In line with this, the UAE consistently emphasized that it will pursue its attempt to regain the islands only through peaceful means. Thus, in late 2000, it has put forward two suggestions on ways to solve the problem. The first was to set direct bilateral negotiations with Iran, which Teheran subsequently refused. The second option was

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<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p.170.

<sup>150</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Al-Qiyada*. (Arabic) (Leadership) (1981). pp.439-440.

to refer the matter to international arbitration or to the International Court of Justice. The UAE asserted that it would accept any ruling as binding should it emanate from this process. This also was faced with rejection from Iran, declining to acknowledge any issue of sovereignty and continuing to strengthen its presence on the islands. Sheikh Zayed, knowing that he was dealing with a country that constantly sought to assert its hegemony in the whole region,<sup>151</sup> had no other choice but to seek international support for his legitimate claims, getting the GCC, the League of Arab States and the United States to support him. Therefore, the UAE regularly raises the islands issue in various international fora, and loudly protests any moves by Tehran to consolidate control over them. Even in asserting its rights on the islands, the UAE has been careful not to imply that it seeks confrontation with Iran or pursue its endeavors at the cost of a major disruption of regional stability.<sup>152</sup> Moreover, the UAE is even going an extra mile to engage with Tehran not only for an amicable solution to the island dispute but also to prevent Iran from falling deeper into an isolationist niche with its controversial nuclear program.

### **The Arab World**

The Arab identity of the United Arab Emirates is also of great importance. It is reflected in the country's approach towards other Arab countries, with whom the promotion of relations represents a main foreign policy priority. Intimately related with this is the Israel–Palestine conflict, perceived as an issue of dispossession, as well as one of territorial occupation and the violation of basic human rights. Thus,

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<sup>151</sup> See Hassan H. Al-Alkim., “The United Arab Emirates and Subregional Powers”, in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed.,: A century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and The United Arab Emirates. (2000).

<sup>152</sup> F. Gregory Gause III., “The UAE : between Pax Britannica and Pax Americana”, in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed., A century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and The United Arab Emirates. (2000). P.228

Sheikh Zayed paid great attention to the common welfare of the Arab *Ummah*, and its rights to freedom and unity. His Highness more than once stressed his country's belonging to a broader geographical entity on the basis of its linguistic, cultural and religious roots, which determines certain mutual rights and obligations between the UAE and the Arab world; "the UAE is an integral part of the Arab world just as its people are. We are united with our Arab brethren by common past and present, and by a common destiny. Together we are engaged in the march of liberation and progress, committing ourselves to what they commit themselves to, and contributing with them."<sup>153</sup>

As the Arab-Israeli conflict is a primary concern of foreign policy of the Arab world, the UAE was no exception to this reality. In fact, Sheikh Zayed and his people perceived this issue as a matter that directly impinged upon the interests of their country, especially that UAE, since its inception, has been championing causes related to Arab nationalism and principles of human and civil rights; and more importantly, because the occupation of Palestine was something of particular interest to the UAE, which also had part of its territory occupied by a foreign power. Therefore, support for the Palestinians has been a significant component in UAE foreign policy since its establishment. This support has taken many forms, ranging from providing political and material backing to the Palestinian Liberation Organization, to taking a unified stance with all Arab countries in the negotiations and initiatives seeking to implement a solution in accordance with international legitimacy.<sup>154</sup>

On the wider question of the establishment of normal relations between Israel and the Arab states, the UAE has adopted a clearly distinguishable approach. Both Jordan and the Palestinians reached agreements with Israel in the period between

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<sup>153</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *Ibid.*, p.327.

<sup>154</sup> For further details on the various aspects of support provided to Palestinians by UAE, see Chapter III of this research.

1991 and 1995, following Egypt in bringing an end to the state of hostilities. In association with this process, the United States exerted diplomatic pressure on other Arab states to normalize relations with Israel, and, in particular, to cease implementation of the Arab economic embargo on Israel and on companies dealing with it.<sup>155</sup>

In 1994, the UAE along with the GCC states, agreed to suspend the secondary and tertiary aspects of the boycott against the Hebrew state, but declined to lift the primary boycott which bans any dealings with Israel itself. The six countries said that they would support an initiative in the Arab League to consider ending the boycott entirely. The announcement said that the six gulf countries recognized "the importance of a review of the provisions of the Arab boycott of Israel so as to take into consideration progress achieved and substantive future requirements of the peace process."<sup>156</sup> Subsequently Qatar and Oman made steps towards a cessation of the primary boycott. The UAE, however, declined to do so, insisting that a full normalization of relations must await the conclusion of a satisfactory overall peace agreement between Israel and all its neighbors, including a just and lasting resolution of issues relating to the Palestinians, including the right of return for refugees and the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.<sup>157</sup>

With regards to other Arab countries, UAE foreign policy has focused mainly on the resolution of inter-Arab differences and on working for a consensus approach that seeks ways to diminish if not eliminate divergences between Arab countries. This reflects the personal philosophy of Sheikh Zayed who offered his own office as a

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<sup>155</sup> Petter Hellyer, *op. cit.*, P.173.

<sup>156</sup> The New York Times (1994) Saudis and 5 Other Gulf Nations Will Ease Their Boycott of Israel [online] available at: <http://www.nytimes.com/1994/10/01/world/saudis-and-5-other-gulf-nations-will-ease-their-boycott-of-israel.html?scp=1&sq=boycott&st=nyt> [accessed 4 March 2009]

<sup>157</sup> Petter Hellyer, *Ibid.*, P.173.

conciliator and mediator on a number of occasions with much success. He affirmed in this regard that he had “the conviction that the division among the Arab *Ummah* is temporary, because the Ummah is in itself a reality that existed over centuries, and will not survive without solidarity and unity. For this purpose, we strived continuously to call the Arab leaders to joining forces, cooperation, and solidarity between each other, and surpassing their differences for the sake of the common interest of the Arab nation.”<sup>158</sup> This approach does not imply a belief in an unattainable unanimity of policy. In fact, Sheikh Zayed openly called for an amendment of the charter of the League of Arab states in order that majority decisions can be taken. Nor has the approach meant that the UAE has overlooked actions by other Arab states which it believes to have collided directly with its own national interests. The support perceived as being offered by some Arab countries at the time of the 1990–1991 Gulf conflict, for example, led to a freezing of relations for some time, although by the mid-1990s, they began once again to thaw.

Sheikh Zayed, being a man of positive thinking and hope, and of clemency and leniency, always campaigns for forgiveness. He forecast a day when all Arabs will have unity of word and speech, living in forgiveness and consolidation, when negative attitudes will be shelved and forgotten, because reconciliation between brothers and friends is obligatory.<sup>159</sup>

### **UAE Foreign Policy at the Islamic Level**

Regarding the relations with Islamic countries, Sheikh Zayed left no stone unturned searching for ways and means to strengthen these ties. On this basis, UAE’s

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<sup>158</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *op. cit.*, *Zayed wa Siyasa al-Kharijiyya..* p.207.

<sup>159</sup> Salem Bin Ham, *op cit.*, p. 163.

foreign policy involved the recognition of a Muslim dimension to international affairs beyond the Arab world. This policy has always been based on firm principles deeply rooted in Zayed's thought that take the form of the strong belief that Muslims are brothers despite their racial or national differences. Moreover, the unity of creed imposes strongly such bonds of fraternity, in the same way it imposes duties such as providing help, support and cooperation between the Muslim peoples. Therefore, Islam is a key determinant of UAE foreign policy towards the Islamic world.<sup>160</sup> Sheikh Zayed outlined this when he said that "the strong bonds that link us with the brotherly Islamic countries [...] invite us to sincerely seek unifying the Muslims and support their causes through our participation in conferences and Islamic organizations and international forums. The United Arab Emirates did not spare any effort to provide support and back up to all Islamic organizations and participate in them, beside supporting and cooperating with all Islamic countries."<sup>161</sup> The UAE has been an active participant in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and its associated agencies. This began in the 1990s to become a significant factor in foreign policy formulation based on the practical belief that the Islamic world is an important political and strategic dimension for either the UAE or the Arab world. Therefore, efforts must be exerted to reach a common Islamic stance that supports all their causes. This is the rationale behind His Highness striving continuously to achieve a certain degree of harmony and coherence between Islamic and Arabic political decisions to put an end to the state of weakness that the Islamic and Arab nations have been experiencing.<sup>162</sup>

President Sheikh Zayed has been more vocal than any other Muslim leader in calling for dialogue between Islam and Christianity. Sheikh Zayed [was] an eager

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<sup>160</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>161</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Ibid.*, p.308.

<sup>162</sup> Al-Sakhni., *Ibid.*, p.114.

advocate of tolerance, discussion and a better understanding between those of different faiths, and in particular, has been an ardent advocate of dialogue between Muslims and Christians, recognizing that this is essential if mankind is ever to move forward in harmony.<sup>163</sup> This has earned him respect all over the world and placed the UAE as a legitimate moderate interlocutor about Muslim affairs at the international arena. Thus, UAE diplomacy became actively engaged in issues relating to conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. It also actively demonstrated its concern for the suffering of fellow Muslims in Chechnya, during the conflict in the late 1990s that resulted from the Chechen attempt to secede from the Russian Federation, dispatching humanitarian assistance to the Chechens.<sup>164</sup> Zayed's involvement, in accordance with the humanitarian aspects of his foreign policy, was additionally stimulated by his belief that the international community was displaying double standards by failing to take action to alleviate the sufferings of Bosnian and Chechen Muslims while condemnation swiftly followed any attack by Muslim Arabs and Palestinians against Israel.

Regarding the tragic events in Bosnia Herzegovina in the early 1990s in which Muslims fell prey to war crimes and genocidal practices while western world was passively watching, Sheikh Zayed expressed his disappointment towards the Europeans who kept silent in the face of such hideous crimes against humanity in a European land: "Shame on Europe for deliberately taking this position, and shame on humanity while Muslim people are being treated like animals while the world is watching. Those who claim justice and democracy should keep quiet on their shame

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<sup>163</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2004., p.25.

<sup>164</sup> Petter Hellyer, *op cit* . P.174.



and their failure towards what is happening and which has been unprecedented in history.”<sup>165</sup>

The failure of the international community, in particular Western Europe and the United States, to intervene and impose of an arms embargo both on the Serbian government and on Bosnia permitted the killing to continue. Sheikh Zayed made impassioned appeals for an end to the killing and subsequently the UAE openly announced its intention of breaking the arms embargo, and began to assist the Bosnian government to replenish its military arsenal. This, in turn, contributed to a stabilization of the military situation and to Bosnia’s eventual survival. The UAE then provided substantial financial and humanitarian assistance to help the country rebuild. Meanwhile, UAE’s efforts to widen the prospects of its relations with Islamic countries were given fresh impetus following the dissolution of the former Soviet Union. The UAE developed increasingly close relations with the Muslim states of Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. These relations included both the development of bilateral trade and UAE investment, both public and private. More generally, however, while displaying sympathy for fellow Muslims, by the mid-2000 the Emirates’ foreign policy showed little sign of specifically Muslim content.<sup>166</sup>

### **UAE Foreign Policy at the International level**

Beyond the Arab and Islamic worlds, the United Arab Emirates has pursued a policy of seeking to build friendly relations with other nations, both in the developing and in the industrialized world. While this policy is implemented at a bilateral level,

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<sup>165</sup> Al-Sakhni., *op cit* p.116.

<sup>166</sup> Petter Hellyer, *op cit* . P.174.

another important feature of UAE policy has been its support for international bodies, like the United Nations and its various agencies such as the Non-Aligned Movement. Through its support for such bodies, it has sought to reinforce the rule of international law and to support the implementation of internationally agreed conventions, so as to protect the interests of the small, the weak and the powerless. This policy springs from the wise conviction of H.H. Sheikh Zayed that interacting with other countries in the world and working in concert with other nations within international frameworks, is essential for the survival and sustainability of any country. He stressed this fact saying that no country can live isolated from the international community, and people cannot progress without watching closely the steps of other peoples who preceded them on the path towards progress.<sup>167</sup>

For Sheikh Zayed, developing relations with as many nations as possible in the outside world was a matter of strategic importance, since this not only ensured the interests of the nation but also bounced back positively at the domestic level to guarantee well-being for its people. In this regard he declared “The national interest requires that every state should build its relations with other countries on the basis of mutual interests, in order to achieve prosperity, and not limit its relations to only one country.”<sup>168</sup> This philosophy is also founded on security and geopolitical realities. Thus, since its independence UAE has sought out strong relations with a number of Western powers. What is noteworthy about these ties with the West is the evident desire by the UAE to avoid overreliance on any one Western power for defense and security. In this regard, Sheikh Zayed, part of his policy of balance, was particularly

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<sup>167</sup> Al-Sakhni., *Ibid.*, p.119.

<sup>168</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Ibid.*, p.447.

careful to cultivate strong defence and economic ties with other great powers beside the United States, such as Great Britain, and France.<sup>169</sup>

As Sheikh Zayed was conscious of the strategic importance of the United Arab Emirates within the world map, and the interest and competition that such importance would create among world superpowers, more specifically the United States and the former Soviet Union, to establish close ties with Abu Dhabi as a potential ally, Zayed opted for neither camp by joining the Non-Aligned Movement which embraced principles dear to His Highness such as striving to establish security, peace and defending the rights of peoples and supporting their just causes away from the ideological interests of the world powers. This stance did not hinder Sheikh Zayed from establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in the 1980s. In fact, since its formation in 1971 and until the end of the cold war, the UAE was committed to the free-market economic system and Islam, none of which were acceptable to communist ideologues. Moreover, its oil resources were sold mostly to western countries which embraced anti-Soviet stances, which suggests that the UAE had opted for the safeguard of its national interest by dealing more closely with the Western camp.<sup>170</sup> But, once Zayed felt that there was a need to open up to the Soviet side as a result of geopolitical developments, he declared that “The Soviet Union does not represent any threat against UAE or against other Gulf states”<sup>171</sup>, and pursued a policy of developing relations on the basis of common interests and mutual respect.

As for European countries, in addition to the excellent historic relations that UAE cultivated with Great Britain, they have always practiced a policy of friendliness and cooperation with the Emirates. And thanks to Zayed’s conscious openness policy, these relations gradually developed to reach high levels of mutual trust which was *per*

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<sup>169</sup> F. Gregory Gause III, *Ibid.*, P. 220.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* P. 221.

<sup>171</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture , *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Fikr wa ‘Amal.* p.615.

se a political gain for the sake of Arab causes.<sup>172</sup> In line with this, Sheikh Zayed stressed the importance of establishing an Arab-European dialogue to examine urgent issues and development with a view to find just and peaceful solutions to them; “Our government aims at laying sound bases for relations with the European nations within the framework of the Arab-European dialogue ... to serve the Arab causes and consolidate cooperation with European countries in the industrial, commercial and cultural fields.”<sup>173</sup>

Beyond its relations with individual countries, the United Arab Emirates has also devoted considerable attention to organizations designed to strengthen international collective security, whether through established organizations or through temporary coalitions. In each case, humanitarian issues provided essential motivation.<sup>174</sup> This aspect of its foreign policy has been embodied in its role in international peacekeeping efforts either in the Middle East, or beyond. For instance, in the early 1990s, the UAE responded to an invitation from the Secretary General of the United Nations to provide units for the UNISOM II peacekeeping operations in Somalia, which had already received development assistance from the Emirati government.

Moreover, following the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, the UAE extended its peacekeeping to Kosovo, where in 1998 the Serbian government launched major offensives against the Muslim Albanian population of Kosovo. While again calling for international intervention, the UAE, through its Red Crescent Society, launched a major program of humanitarian assistance and later was the only Muslim state to offer to

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<sup>172</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, p.123

<sup>173</sup> Cited in Al-Sakhni, *Ibid.*, p.123

<sup>174</sup> Petter Hellyer, *op. cit.*, P. 176.

participate within the special international peacekeeping force (KFOR).

### **Sheikh Zayed's Responses to Foreign Policy Challenges**

The UAE faced many challenges that potentially threatened its security, stability and interests. Such challenges stemmed mainly from the immediate neighborhood of the country implying some regional powers such as Iraq and Iran. Sheikh Zayed's response to each challenge varied according to variables related to national interests and international circumstances. Thus, the UAE has been facing an increasingly hegemonic Iran either under the rule of the Shah or after the Islamic revolution in 1979. In fact, Iran has been described as a regime that works increasingly 'against Arab Gulf interests'.<sup>175</sup> Such hegemony culminated with the Iranian occupation of the three Emirati islands and the persistent refusal by Tehran to settle the matter either through direct talks or via international arbitration. Zayed considered the occupation of the islands “a disturbance of the security of the region”.<sup>176</sup> However, this did not change the track that Zayed traced for this sovereignty issue; that is, seeking a settlement through diplomatic means. Thanks to this strategy, the relationships between the two countries have been mutually beneficial as both nations keep active diplomatic and trade ties. Over time, this approach paid off and enabled the UAE not only to garner sympathy and support from the international community for its legitimate claims, but also to develop an essential trade relationship that affords UAE a unique economic lever against its neighbor.

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<sup>175</sup> WMD Insights (2009) Export Controls in the United Arab Emirates: A Practical Manifestation of a Strategic Dilemma [online] available at: [http://wmdinsights.com/I30/I30\\_ME1\\_ExportControls.htm](http://wmdinsights.com/I30/I30_ME1_ExportControls.htm) [Accessed on 15 July 2009].

<sup>176</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, Paula Vine, Abdullah Al Jabali, eds., *Chronicle of Progress*, (1996), pp.359-360

Saddam Hussain's Iraq was also a source of concern, because of its size, proximity and political orientation that was generally critical of monarchies. Iraq along with former Soviet Union and China provided the Marxist rebels in Oman with assistance.<sup>177</sup> The Iran-Iraq war also exacerbated UAE's concerns, especially after the "tanker war" brought fighting closer to UAE territory, and when Iraq included in its ultimatum to Iran the condition that the Islands of Abu Musa and the two Tunbs be returned to UAE. Iraq accused the UAE and other Arab countries of leaving it all alone to defend Arab soil. Despite this, Sheikh Zayed resisted pressure to side completely with Iraq. At some provocations related to the conflict, including an attack on UAE offshore facilities, Zayed showed restraint. He was reluctant to provoke Iran by siding too blatantly with Baghdad and the UAE remained a major source of re-exported goods to Iran while continuing to provide support to Iraq.<sup>178</sup> Consequently, Abu Dhabi managed successfully to stay out of the conflict. This strategy allowed Sheikh Zayed to be in a credible position to call for an end of the war. He even volunteered direct help to stop the conflict, declaring in April 1982 that he was ready to mediate between the warring parties.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, throughout this war Zayed advocated keeping super power rivalries out of the Gulf as much as possible, favoring instead a settlement to be arranged by Arab and Islamic organizations with the support of the United Nations.<sup>180</sup>

Even after the end of the Iraq-Iran war, Iraq proved once again to be a source of concern for the security of the Gulf States after it invaded Kuwait in the summer of 1990 and after Iraqi president Saddam Hussein openly threatened UAE demanding

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<sup>177</sup> William Rugh, *Diplomacy and Defense Policy of the United Arab Emirates*, (2002). P.16

<sup>178</sup> William A. Rugh, "Leadership in the UAE : Past, Present and Future" *Op. cit.* . P.257

<sup>179</sup> William Rugh, *Diplomacy and Defense Policy.. Op. cit.*, p.38.

<sup>180</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey , *Op. cit.*, p.385.

that Abu Dhabi cooperate on oil policy. Sheikh Zayed took such threats seriously and consequently changed his strategy towards establishing a form of military cooperation with the United States. Through this cooperation Zayed wanted to send a clear signal to Baghdad's regime to stop threatening UAE. Subsequently, the position of the UAE towards Iraq varied between tough stances towards the Iraqi regime's aggressive intentions and soft attitudes that took into consideration the regional balance of power and humanitarian concerns. In fact, the UAE objected to Washington's policy of containing Iraq and supporting Israel. Senior UAE officials, argued that Iraq 'fulfilled most of its obligations to the international community' and that a 'militarily strong and united Iraq' was needed to balance Iranian power.<sup>181</sup> Zayed himself said that Baghdad did not threaten its neighbors, and referred to the UN sanctions regime against Iraq as unjust. Hence, through a carefully measured multifaceted approach, Sheikh Zayed managed to keep the UAE safe from any regional altercations that might have jeopardized its security, and focused instead on securing stable development for his people. In overall terms, the foreign policy of the United Arab Emirates was characterized by openness, support for conciliation and consensus, as well as for international institutions. The country's foreign policy, since the state was established, has also been noteworthy for its consistency, thanks to the fact that the architect of this policy, Sheikh Zayed, continued throughout to guide its implementation until late 2004.

## **Conclusion**

The comprehensive vision of Sheikh Zayed, which comprised domestic and foreign affairs, allowed the United Arab Emirates to make giant strides in building its

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<sup>181</sup> Sean Foley, "What Wealth Cannot Buy: UAE Security at the Turn of the Twenty-first Century" in, *Crisis in the Contemporary Persian Gulf*, Barry Rubin, ed. (2002). P. 50.

vital sectors and more importantly its people benefiting fully from all available resources for the sake of development of the country. In essence, the philosophy of Sheikh Zayed, derived from his deeply held Muslim faith, is that it is the duty of man to seek to improve the lot of his fellow man. His outstanding record in government, first within the UAE and then concurrently on a broader international stage, is an indication of the dedication and seriousness with which he has sought to carry out that belief.

President Sheikh Zayed stamped his own distinctive style on the foreign policy of the UAE Government, as well as on its domestic policy. He was instinctively a conciliator and a peacemaker, and with a long record of being prepared to utilize the resources at his disposal for the benefit not only of the people of the Emirates, but also for those in need elsewhere. Under Sheikh Zayed, the UAE gained a respectable place not only in the Arab World but in the international arena as well. His Highness had the vision to not only see his own country achieving miraculous achievements in development and in the enhancement of the standards of living of his citizens, but that of the entire Arab and Muslim Worlds as well. His deeds even reached those with whom he shared nothing but the belonging to the human community. Sheikh Zayed was never unconscious of the role that he should play as an Arab and Muslim leader. His efforts towards getting Arabs and Muslims to pool their resources together never ceased. The role of Sheikh Zayed in promoting united Arab action for the defense of Arab national causes manifested in the unlimited support and financial backing of the Arab and Islamic causes, such as the Palestinian cause.

The United Arab Emirates also pursued a policy of promoting conciliation, cooperation and consensus, seeking, wherever possible, to defuse confrontation and



conflict. It managed thus to build friendly and fruitful relations with other nations, both in the developing and in the industrialized world.

## **Section Two: Efforts Towards Establishing the Federation and the Gulf Cooperation Council**

### **Introduction**

As a leader who carefully followed and understood the intricacies of his region as well as the implications of geopolitical developments that the Gulf was witnessing, Sheikh Zayed was able to foresee that there would be no way better for his people and neighbors to ensure continuity and sustainability unless adaptive measures and ambitious projects were conceived of. Among the draconian projects that Zayed strove to realize to this end, was achieving the Federation of the United Arab Emirates. Hence, he worked to build the UAE as a true union of emirates within a single federal structure. Sheikh Zayed endeavored tirelessly to build the UAE from 1968 when the concept of the federation was imposing itself strongly, until 1971, when it was launched, and then through all the testing moments of building a nation from many separate deep-rooted traditions which, through the decades, merged into the one nation that we know today. This success of the UAE is not an accident, but is due to the devotion and leadership given by Sheikh Zayed.

As the president of the United Arab Emirates since its foundation, Sheikh Zayed was a statesman who strove to help his citizens to improve themselves and fulfill their potential. He was instrumental in building a mature self-sustaining nation. Moreover, His Highness, who embraced so dearly ideal concepts such as solidarity and unity, was one of the original leaders who established the Gulf Cooperation

Council, which became the heart of the way in which member nations sought a way forward in the turbulent politics of the Gulf and Arab world. Through the successful experience of UAE he set a model for others to follow and recognized from the beginning that cooperation based on mutual respect and trust was essential to arrive at a better future. His unshakeable faith as a true believer, coupled with his consistent and unswerving drive to build consensus distinguished him as one of the great leaders of the Arab world.

### **Zayed's Vision and Efforts for the Establishment of the UAE**

In 1968, the British government announced its intention to withdraw from the Gulf region by the end of 1971 putting an end to a presence that lasted more than 150 years. This move left the local rulers of the emirates in disarray and shock. As “protectorates” they had been relying on the British for protection and other affairs. In fact, these rulers who had grown comfortable in their reliance on British political, diplomatic, and military power in an uncertain and dangerous part of the world, were faced for the first time with the prospect of determining and securing their own destinies.<sup>182</sup> For Sheikh Zayed, then ruler of Abu Dhabi, this development represented a challenge that should be dealt with wisely and swiftly to initiate a closer relationship with the other Emirates through seeking an alternative to fill the power vacuum left by the British in the face of many internal and external threats that might imperil the stability and integrity of each Sheikhdom separately. Hence his tireless endeavors to call for a union that would comprise all the emirates of the “Trucial Coast states” and even beyond. He himself stressed this point when he said that “the establishment of

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<sup>182</sup> Malcolm Peck, “Formation and Evolution of The federation and Its Institutions” in, Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, eds., *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective* (2001). P. 145.

the Federation is a national necessity since it guarantees stability and security and will provide help and support to our brothers in the Arab World and friends worldwide”<sup>183</sup>.

### **Zayed’s Unionist Philosophy**

Upon the assumption of power in Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed was keen to unite the people of the Trucial States. He believed in unionism not because it was a popular slogan, he believed in it because it was a national necessity and because it ensures strength, stability and security. For him, the concept of unity possessed a strong moral dimension and was never a matter of mere political convenience. Thus, within less than two years of his reign, Sheikh Zayed took the initiative and called for the union of these states. His strong belief in achieving unity among his peers and peoples in the region emanates from many factors including his Islamic faith and the tribal principles of governance, as well as from the value of unity *per se* as a vital necessity in the face of threats and challenges.

### **The Union from an Islamic Perspective and Tribal Principles**

Because Sheikh Zayed was a strong believer in the principles of Islam and in the heritage that he belongs to, his leadership took its main inspirations from this background. Thus he resorted to Qu’ranic verses to assert that union is a religious duty, because Allah the Almighty called for it for the good of the individual and the group.<sup>184</sup> Among the Verses that His Highness used to recite for this purpose “And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not

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<sup>183</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *op cit.*, *Al-Qiyada*. P.57.

<sup>184</sup> Al-Midfai, *op. cit.*, *Zayed wal Imarat*. p. 142.

divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth Allah make His Signs clear to you: That ye may be guided.”<sup>185</sup> He also used some Hadiths from Prophet Mohammed (Peace be Upon Him) that corroborated this same concept.<sup>186</sup>

Sheikh Zayed tirelessly stressed how union was important for him since it is part of the precepts of the religion which has unified the ranks of Arabs when they were living in separate weak entities. Therefore, he sought to make of his country one strong federation especially that many common features were already prevailing in the region such as language, ethnicity, creed, and heritage. He said “Our belief in union springs from our Arab and Islamic heritage. Islam united the Arabs and made of them one power and one nation.”<sup>187</sup> Moreover, throughout his experience since he was ruler of Al Ain city, Zayed realized the importance of such concepts as solidarity, synergy, and conciliation. By proposing compromise on many issues, Zayed managed to convince the other rulers to agree to join forces. His generosity and leadership were the backbone of the union. His Highness adopted a policy of promoting conciliation, cooperation and consensus, rather than confrontation, seeking to defuse conflicts among his subjects as well as among tribes in the region, because he held a firm conviction that "Division is not a natural practice of our people, and we do not express this fact out of emotion, but out of objective consideration of the issues at hand."<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> *Al-Imran*: 3:103, The Holy Qur'an, Ali Yusuf English Translation., (1998). P.134

<sup>186</sup> Al-Midfai,, *Ibid*.

<sup>187</sup> Al-Kaabi, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>188</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *op. cit.*, *Al-Qiyada*. p.58.

The basic elements of this approach can be traced back to the nature of the country itself. Society in the Emirates is essentially tribal in nature, and the tribal society in the Arabian Peninsula, heavily influenced by Islam, is essentially communal, requiring consultation and consensus in order to be able to survive.<sup>189</sup> One might say then that unionism was an integral part of his approach to life. He was the unparalleled advocate of unionism in both his statements and actions. Unionism was the original scheme of his national project and his real quest, which is why he proudly asserted: "Naturally I am a unionist, but I do not impose unionism on anyone."<sup>190</sup>

### **Union as a Geopolitical and National Necessity**

For Sheikh Zayed, union became a necessity because it represented the only way to shield the Emirates from regional threats and guarantee its stability. Through establishing a union Zayed aimed at pulling together all the actors in his geographic vicinity within one independent state that would enjoy a legal status qualifying it to the membership of the United Nations Organization. This membership represents in itself deterrence against potential aggressions.<sup>191</sup> But, which kind of threats did the sheikhdoms face on the eve of the British withdrawal from the region?

When the decision to withdraw from the Gulf was made, all the Gulf Arab states had extensive borders disputes. This was true of Bahrain and Qatar, which engaged in territorial disputes, and of the Trucial States, where boundary definition was only partial and deep-seated rivalries absorbed the individual sheikhdoms. These included, most significantly, the border dispute between Abu Dhabi and Dubai which

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<sup>189</sup> Petter Hellyer, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

<sup>190</sup> Shams Al-Din Al Doaifi and Mohammed Khalil Al-Siksek, eds., *Ibid* . p.55.

<sup>191</sup> Al-Midfai, *op. cit.*, *Zayed wal Imarat*. p.145.

erupted into warfare in 1948, and several border disputes between Sharjah and its neighbors.

Another deeply troubling issue which these states faced on the eve of their independence was the claims of powerful neighbors to some or all of their territory. Announcement of the British intention to withdraw from the Gulf brought renewed claims from the Shah's government of Iran to the island of Bahrain. Iran also claimed the lower Gulf islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs, which belonged to two of the Trucial States, Sharjah and Ra's al-Khaimah, respectively. The other major claimant was Saudi Arabia which had long asserted claims to a large part of Abu Dhabi's territory and saw in British withdrawal an opportunity to redress what it considered an injustice perpetrated and sustained by the British. Iran and Saudi Arabia presented conventional threats of territorial claims.

With the emergence of the new state of South Yemen in 1967, a new and different kind of threat hovered over the region. Indeed, South Yemen was a Marxist radical revolutionary state whose goal was the overthrow of all traditional regimes in the region. There was widespread fear among the Trucial States that something similar to what had occurred in South Arabia could occur in the Gulf.<sup>192</sup> In the face of such troubling challenges, Sheikh Zayed displayed an uncommon determination and strength of character to unify the ranks of the sheikhdoms despite the inter-Emirates disputes that prevailed among them. The essence of his unionist philosophy was based on the basic principle that "union is the path to strength, the path to self-esteem and power, and the path to common good. Fragmentation only results in

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<sup>192</sup> Malcolm Peck, *op. cit.*, P. 147.

weakness, and weak entities have no place in the world today.”<sup>193</sup> Sheikh Zayed realized at an early stage that the political context he was evolving in was a context of regional agglomerations in which statelets or small sheikhdoms would have no say and would fall prey to expansionist and hegemonic ambitions of regional and international powerful states.

### **Endeavors Towards the Union**

What was undoubtedly of greatest importance in ensuring the UAE’s creation was Sheikh Zayed’s own leadership and commitment of his state’s resources to the success of the enterprise. His Highness played a pivotal role in setting the stage for a conciliatory climate that established trust among the different actors in the region. In fact, it was Sheikh Zayed who began the process of moving towards a federation which would ensure the Trucial States’ survival and security and when, at a late hour, the prospects for federation were in serious jeopardy it was he who rescued them.<sup>194</sup> To attain his ambitions Zayed had to cope with the hurdles that were hindering their concretization.

### **Facing Internal and External Challenges**

In the new circumstances arising from the British Government’s decision to withdraw from the Gulf, the Political Resident underscored time and again that “friendship and cooperation and cooperation” among the rulers of the Emirates was an imperative necessity, particularly among the Rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai before whom “fell the main responsibility for peace and

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<sup>193</sup> Cited in Dr. Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Qasimi, *Hakim Al-Arab: Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan* (Arabic) (The Sage of Arabs: Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan). (2000). P.80.

<sup>194</sup> Malcolm Peck, *op-cit* P. 150.

stability in the Trucial States.”<sup>195</sup> Sheikh Zayed was aware of this fact and in February 1968 paid a visit to Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the Ruler of Dubai. With his unparalleled tact and pragmatism, he managed to persuade him to agree on a union of the Trucial States. Moreover, as an act of encouragement to the rulers of other sheikhdoms to demonstrate how unity could work and prove to be beneficial, both leaders decided to establish a union between their respective Emirates under one flag including managing some affairs collectively such as a common foreign policy, defense, and migration. They also agreed to invite the other rulers to meet in Dubai and discuss the incorporation of a union of the nine emirates, which was to comprise of the Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al Khaymah, Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Al Fujairah, in addition to Qatar and Bahrain.

Underscoring the significance of such agreement Sheikh Zayed declared “signing the agreement of the dual confederation between the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai paves the way for all the other Emirates, including Qatar and Bahrain, to study and discuss the agreement with the intention of joining the confederation which primarily aims at securing the future of the region.”<sup>196</sup> Therefore, Zayed saw in this accord a first step towards a broader union that would guarantee a stable future for the region. However, to achieve this goal and at the same time to consolidate this confederation, Zayed acted wisely during the same meeting to settle the border dispute with Dubai and made territorial concessions to this end. Both Emirates concluded an agreement on the demarcation, of their maritime frontiers, which was of crucial importance to the potential development of

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<sup>195</sup> Maitra, *op. cit.*, p.321.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* P.322.



Dubai's oil resources.<sup>197</sup>

Therefore, after surmounting this primary hurdle in his quest for union, Zayed set other goals. He had to build trust with other rulers and convince them that their powers as local leaders will stay intact and that his intention was not to dominate the Trucial States under a federal structure. In fact, mutual antipathies and suspicions among the rulers were exacerbated through a misunderstanding of the real motives behind some of Sheikh Zayed's domestic and external policies. Among these causes of concern was Zayed's building up of his own defence force which appeared to be on "an unnecessary large scale" to his neighbors. But Sheikh Zayed's arguments were that he was motivated by valid reasons of security based on the challenges provided by the regional context in the prospective British withdrawal from the Gulf.<sup>198</sup> Sheikh Zayed also resorted to financial inducements to encourage the other rulers to join him, explaining that "Abu Dhabi's oil and all its resources and potentialities are at the service of all the Emirates."<sup>199</sup> This pledge could not be ignored especially by the poorer sheikhdoms. But more importantly the rulers already had the evidence of Sheikh Zayed's generosity before them, Abu Dhabi having been the largest single contributor to the Trucial States Development Fund since 1968.<sup>200</sup>

At the extra-Trucial States level, more specifically with Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Zayed showed his predisposition to solve the territorial dispute between his Emirate and the neighboring kingdom through compromise and conciliation. Thus, Sheikh Zayed engaged in serious talks with the Saudi leaders regarding their claims on the Buraimi oasis and asserted his willingness to accommodate the Saudis on the western

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<sup>197</sup>Wheatcroft. *Op. Cit.*P.175.

<sup>198</sup>Jayanti Maitra, *op. cit.*, p.333.

<sup>199</sup>*Cited in* William A. Rugh, *op. cit.*, "Leadership in the UAE." p. 238.

<sup>200</sup>Ibrahim Al Abed, "The Historical Background and Constitutional Basis to the Federation." in Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, eds., *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective* (2001). P. 133.

borders of Abu Dhabi.<sup>201</sup> Although final agreement on border demarcation was not reached until 1974 after the establishment of the union, these efforts deployed by Zayed had a great impact on the final settlement between Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

As for its border differences with Oman, Abu Dhabi adopted a similar “spirit of conciliation and compromise”. He enjoyed excellent relations with the rulers of Oman having amicably settled their own border in the Buraimi Oasis in 1966.<sup>202</sup> Moreover, Zayed even considered including Oman. He paid a visit to Sultan Qaboos Bin Said in 1970 to see if the Sultan was interested in joining the union. Although the Omani leader declined, this began an excellent personal and official relationship between the UAE and Oman. Therefore, despite the huge difficulties that hindered the process of laying the foundations of a union, the strong belief of His Highness in the necessity of such an enterprise and the possibility of its realization stayed intact. He left no stone unturned in order to achieve this goal.

### **Exploring Different Options for the Federation**

Zayed had a pragmatic approach and a sound grasp of the political realities of the Gulf. Instead of committing himself outright to a course of action from which there could be no return, Zayed’s strategy was one of patience and to weigh every possibility and its outcome in order to attain the best results. His Highness’s ability to listen, understand and communicate was among several of his distinguished qualities which made him a successful negotiator. The Union he established with Dubai after a few weeks of the British proclamation was in his eyes just a first step towards a larger federation open to all the states in the southern part of the Arabian Gulf. In fact,

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<sup>201</sup>F. Gregory Gause III, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

<sup>202</sup>William A. Rugh, *op. cit.*, “Leadership in the UAE..”, P.293.

Article Four of the Abu Dhabi–Dubai Agreement invited the rulers of the other five Trucial States to discuss the agreement and to adhere to it. The rulers of Qatar and Bahrain were also invited to confer with the rulers of the Trucial States in order to discuss the future of the region as a whole, with a view to seeing whether a common stance could be adopted between the nine separate political units.<sup>203</sup>

Consequently, the rulers of the other Trucial States, along with those of Qatar and Bahrain, expressed their immediate acceptance of the offer to join the new union. On 25<sup>th</sup> February 1968, the nine rulers met in Dubai, to discuss the possibility of a potential union. Zayed seized the opportunity to declare that “This is an opportunity Allah, the Almighty, has made possible for us to meet here in this place, all of us together, with sincere and optimistic hearts to discuss the fundamentals of the Union. Then let us create from this conference an event of historic consequence, by realizing our ambition.”<sup>204</sup> This statement revealed much about Sheikh Zayed’s strong belief in achieving a union between the involved states based on the common sense that the bigger the number of the Emirates, the better for the federation. The Rulers signed an agreement on 27<sup>th</sup> February to establish the “Federation of the Arab Emirates”, also known as the “Union of Arab Emirates”.<sup>205</sup> Sheikh Zayed’s efforts in this project were tremendous, winning him praise and appreciation from the British authorities, who described His Highness as “instrumental in the creation of the Union of Arab Emirates” and appreciating “the valuable contribution which he had already made to the progress of [this Union]”<sup>206</sup> However, while the details of this federal structure had not yet been hammered out, it soon became clear that this Union was complicated amid the differences between the leaders regarding issues pertaining to the rules and

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<sup>203</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, *Ibid.*, P.128.

<sup>204</sup> Cited in, Salem Bin Ham, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>205</sup> Maitra, *Ibid.*, P.325.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.325-326.

scope of the federation and the status of the rulers and their Emirates. Some scholars even said that its doom was inherent in its Charter itself which stipulated *inter alia* that its purpose was, in part, “to reinforce the respect of each one of them for the independence and sovereignty of others.”<sup>207</sup>

Thus, despite many attempts to mend the situation and against the background of intense diplomatic efforts in which Kuwait and Saudi Arabia intervened to mediate between the Rulers for the sake of the continuity of the Federation of the Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain decided to withdraw from the federation. In this context, Zayed relented and, refocusing his energies on his immediate neighbors, mounted intensive contacts to help create a federation of the seven Trucial sheikhdoms. Against all odds, an agreement was finally reached and signed within a month of the British withdrawal.<sup>208</sup> Despite many failures in negotiation for the establishment of the federation, Zayed’s faith in it did not wane. He said in this regard that “Despite the difficulties and the obstacles that we faced for the sake of the establishment of the federation, we managed by the grace of Allah to unite among ourselves.”<sup>209</sup> He maintained his optimism, asserting that the door remained wide open for Qatar and Bahrain to join the federation which he envisioned as the rallying base for a wider union of the whole Gulf.

The Union which took shape in place of its earlier fragmentation actually “stemmed from an Abu Dhabi initiative” taken years earlier by Sheikh Zayed in February 1968. Arguably, it was not an easy task to weld together seven autonomous states of disparate size and wealth and a long history of political rivalry. But despite their individual identities and problems, there had been a fundamental unity and

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<sup>207</sup>Ibrahim Al Abed, *Ibid.*, P.130.

<sup>208</sup>Fatma Al-Sayedgh, “Diversity in Unity: Political Institutions and Civil Society.” in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed., *A century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and The United Arab Emirates.* (2000). P. 31.

<sup>209</sup>Al-Kaabi, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

community of interest between them. In the end, the federation of the United Arab Emirates became a reality.<sup>210</sup> The emergence of the Federation of the UAE represented for Sheikh Zayed a reward for his unremitting efforts and his unflinching pursuit of the ideal union. His Highness believed that Unity among the peoples of the former Trucial States was predestined, and a matter of importance not just for the peoples of the Emirates but for the Arab world as a whole.<sup>211</sup>

The hoisting of the flag on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1971 marked a historic moment and a new beginning. In the eyes of the people, Sheikh Zayed has justified their trust, but in his view he had merely performed his duty as leader of the nation.<sup>212</sup> Thus once the foundations for the Federation were laid, efforts were undertaken to consolidate its political structure and guarantee its durability.

### **Towards a Sustainable Federation**

After the formation of the new state, Zayed knew that the toughest part was yet to come. It involved changing the mindset of citizens who were not accustomed to dealing with a government system that Zayed, along with the rulers of other Emirates, strived to set up. He admitted this reality when he declared that “It is easier to erect buildings and develop agriculture; this does not take more than engineers and building material. But dealing with souls is a totally different matter. It is not easy to convince these people overnight [...] Making human beings change their habits at the expense of other habits is not an easy conception.”<sup>213</sup>

Traditionally, when tribesmen had a problem or any specific needs, they simply used to go to their chief or ruler for assistance. Transferring legitimacy from

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<sup>210</sup> Maitra, *Ibid.*, p.387.

<sup>211</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, Paula Vine, Abdullah Al Jabali, eds., *Chronicle of Progress*, (1996), p.13.

<sup>212</sup> Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p.192.

<sup>213</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Fikr wa 'Amal.* p.417

tribes to modern institutions, getting the citizens to trust the federal government as their new guarantor to their interests and needs, and getting them to look upon the president as their leader and the head of the new country, and more importantly, making them consider themselves as citizens of the United Arab Emirates was an incredibly difficult political task.<sup>214</sup> To alter this mindset, which had endured for centuries, and foster trust in state institutions, Sheikh Zayed, as President of a newly established country, spent a great deal of time promoting the message of Federation among his people. He was careful to use the existing substructure of tribal authority to convey the new development to the people. The aim was, on one hand to deliver the message through trusted voices, and on the other hand to integrate the long established traditional structures of local and personal rule with the new institutions of the state.<sup>215</sup>

Some scholars consider Sheikh Zayed's reliance on traditional norms and values of governance as "crucial in forming the UAE", noting that his commitment to the traditional values of Bedouin nobleness and generosity in dealing with his peers and rivals led him to take an approach best calculated to secure their lasting loyalty. Therefore, the UAE system which remains firmly rooted in its traditional past has proven durable and resilient in the face of significant internal and external challenges.<sup>216</sup> Thus, Sheikh Zayed, though a reformist and a modernist in essence, made sure to maintain key governance traditions and traditional means of personal communication such as meeting his subjects through the centuries-old *Majlis*, or even making inspection tours that brought the President closer to his citizens. This proved

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<sup>214</sup>Fatma Al-Sayegh, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>215</sup>Wheatcroft, *Ibid.* (2004). P.191.

<sup>216</sup>Malcolm Peck, "Shaykh Zayed and the Passage of the United Arab Emirates into the Modern World: The Uses of the Past" in *Journal of Social Affairs*, Winter2004, Vol. 21 Issue 84, pp. 29-41.

to be an effective way to gradually make the concept of federation a more acceptable notion among the populace.

Of course, such efforts needed to be supported by concrete achievements that the people expected from the new state, and Sheikh Zayed wasted no time in matching deeds to his words. In this regard, Abu Dhabi played an instrumental role in balancing the economic disparities that prevailed between rich emirates such as Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and the less developed emirates such as Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, Umm al-Qaiwain and Ajman. As a result, much of the funds needed to build a proper infrastructure in these emirates were provided by Abu Dhabi on Zayed's directives. Abu Dhabi's oil revenues were channelled into the federal structure and thus benefited the whole community. Abu Dhabi also played a significant role in building up allegiance among the UAE population towards the federal state. Moreover, during his tours in the Northern Emirates, President Zayed authorized and financed various development schemes from his own pockets outside the Union budget. Thus, His Highness funded different projects including infrastructure, houses, schools, hospitals, wells, and mosques.<sup>217</sup> Moves such as these convinced people to believe in their President's integrity and trust his commitment to use the enormous resources of Abu Dhabi for the benefit of all the other emirates.

From the outset, Sheikh Zayed determined the priorities to which the resources would be committed: "This wealth is spent primarily on our people who lived in deprivation and backwardness for many years. This wealth is being spent to provide services and build schools, hospitals and agriculture."<sup>218</sup> This reflected his core belief in unifying the people of all the emirates under the federal umbrella not allowing any futile sensibilities to emerge. On several occasions, Zayed stressed the commonness

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<sup>217</sup>Maitra, *op-cit.*, p.424.

<sup>218</sup>The National Federal Council, *Op. Cit.* p.38.

of the rights and benefits for all the citizens all over the UAE. He believed that the “individual belonging to the emirates of the Federation enjoys the same rights as the citizen in Abu Dhabi” asserting that this did not exist before the establishment of the Union.<sup>219</sup>

With its founding, the UAE began building a unique federal system endowed with an “inherent capacity for adaptation and evolution” thanks to Zayed’s strategy in mixing traditional and modern ingredients within the political institutions.<sup>220</sup> This political structure preserved the diversity of the seven different emirates, but at the same time was characterized by a unitary political system. The modern aspect of this system was embodied in the institutions that were set up to strengthen the federal state and incorporate it into the International community since it responded to the standards of governance recognized worldwide. Thus, four main political bodies were set up to realize the federal state: the Supreme Federal Council, the Offices of President and Vice President, the Federal Council of Ministers, and the Federal National council. However, it must be said that challenges that aroused doubts about the formation and continuity of the federation before and during its inception, have also contributed to a large extent in strengthening the sense of belonging to the Union and persuaded skeptics to show greater support for the federal system.<sup>221</sup>

Thus, the way the federal government handled serious internal crises such as the Sharjah coup attempt in 1972 which cost the life of the ruler of Sharjah, Sheikh Khalid Bin Muhammad Al-Qasimi, and the territorial clash between Sharjah and Fujairah in the same year, without mentioning the wisdom displayed by Sheikh Zayed towards external challenges such as the border issue with Saudi Arabia, the Dhofar’s insurrection in Oman, and Iran’s invasion of the UAE islands, removed doubts

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<sup>219</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *Op. cit.*, *Zayed wal Bina’*. p.73.

<sup>220</sup>Malcolm Peck, *Ibid.*, P. 9.

<sup>221</sup>Fatma Al-Sayegh, *op. cit.*, p. 43.



surrounding the UAE's ability to survive in the first few years of its existence. This in turn reflected positively on the stability of the federation.<sup>222</sup> President Sheikh Zayed acknowledged such difficulties when he said that “what we have faced during the first seven years was a dangerous matter, in fact very dangerous [...] but we confronted all this with patience and with what is best.”<sup>223</sup>

Consequently, the UAE federation went on to become a prime example of unity, surviving the ravages of time and even blossoming, contrary to the impression that prevailed among most observers that this new political entity lacked the basic requirements of statehood, possessed scarce human and economic resources and was not equipped to survive as an independent state through the severe challenges that lay ahead. Ultimately, Sheikh Zayed proved to be the right leader for such a historical turning point. In addition to vision, strength and energy, he possessed a distinctive capacity and determination to convincing others and reaching consensus. He also displayed a rare willingness to compromise and ability to accommodate his adversaries for the sake of achieving higher goals that would guarantee common interest. With his leadership skills he successfully weathered storms that might have proved fatal to any union hopes elsewhere. While the UAE federation was established on strong ethical and political principles, a logical sequel to this unionist drive was to seek greater regional integration and cooperation in the Gulf region, and firmer relations with the whole Arab World. Hence Zayed's valuable contribution towards establishing the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council.

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<sup>222</sup>*Ibid*

<sup>223</sup>UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Ramz Al-Wahda...* p.16.

## **Zayed's Vision and Efforts Towards the Establishment of the GCC**

Congruent with Sheikh Zayed's vision of the value of unity was the concept of regional integration, which he supported strongly through the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). After he achieved his goal at the national level by establishing a union between the Trucial States which became a fully fledged sovereign state recognized by the international community and considered by many to be a model of unity among world countries, Sheikh Zayed set his sights on a bigger area, the Arabian peninsula, which already formed a natural geographic union suitable for the establishment of a political, social, and economic union between the Gulf countries, forming thus the nucleus for the greater Arab Unity that Sheikh Zayed tirelessly called for; "Through the United Arab Emirates we have set our federal experience as a living model for all our brothers in the Gulf region, and after that we looked forward to establishing a greater union among the Arab brothers."<sup>224</sup>

Sheikh Zayed was one of the founders of the GCC, which became the means by which member nations have been seeking their way forward in the turbulent politics of the Gulf and Arab world. He recognized from the beginning that cooperation based on mutual respect and trust was essential to arrive at a better future.

### **The GCC as Part of Zayed's Unionist Vision**

During Sheikh Zayed's quest to create a union of sheikhdoms in the lower coast of the Gulf, he strived to include as many states as possible in this project. Thus, in addition to the Trucial Coast States, he invited the states of Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia to join this effort. These endeavors, although they did not yield the results that matched His Highness's ambitions, have nonetheless prepared the ground

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<sup>224</sup>Al-Kaabi, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

and the minds for any potential larger unionist projects in the area. Therefore, Gulf Arab unity was a goal that Sheikh Zayed worked towards during the 1970s. He sought to bring the states of the region closer, by creating practical links between these states, in fields such as aviation, industry, information exchange, oil affairs, the environment and currency alignment.<sup>225</sup> In the same way he stressed the common historical and cultural features uniting the sheikhdoms of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed underlined the uniform factors shared by all gulf countries in saying that “the Gulf countries are one family that is joined together by a common history and the same customs and traditions which go back to our common cultural heritage and over which reigns the true spirit of our true Islamic religion.”<sup>226</sup>

As President Sheikh Zayed was a unionist at heart, his philosophy knew no boundaries. He never gave up his dream of fulfilling a regional union as part of a more ambitious enterprise, stressing that “we are with every unionist move in the Gulf and the Arab Peninsula. We are unionists in our aspirations: our internal union, then our Gulf union which would be the first brick for the Arab unity.”<sup>227</sup> Moreover, Sheikh Zayed’s approach to achieving a Gulf union was based on the same motives that called for the UAE formation. That is, the geopolitical situation and the circumstances have made such a project a necessity more than ever, since “covetous currents are advancing towards us and sinister intentions surrounding us”<sup>228</sup> especially as the region is rich with natural resources which make these countries potential targets of foreign greed. To confront these currents there is no better way than seeking to consolidate the ranks between Gulf nations in order to make the region stronger and insuperable.

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<sup>225</sup>William Rugh, *Diplomacy and Defense Policy.. Op. cit., P.17.*

<sup>226</sup>Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *op. cit., Al-Qiyada.* p.192.

<sup>227</sup>*Ibid.* p.178.

<sup>228</sup>*Ibid.* p.182.

Sheikh Zayed envisaged the way a potential union between Gulf states should be set if it aspires to be durable and efficient and at the same time avoid facing the same dismal fate that other tentative Arab unions have witnessed. In this regard, he insisted from the outset that this was to be a vital and active organization, with real potential to achieving growth and progress. As he expressed it; “Gulf unity is not merely intended as a declaration of unity reflected in the creation of a single state having one flag and a national anthem, but what is needed is the laying down of foundations of unity that rely on sound political, cultural, social and economic principles. These principles will enable Gulf unity to hold out in the face of challenges and will help to withstand external storms and pressures.”<sup>229</sup>

Gulf unity was a collective effort and as leaders of other Gulf states were involved, Sheikh Zayed had to act in concert with the majority who opted for a cooperation council to be set up. Thus, after the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Zayed expressed the true dimension of his unionist ambition regarding this regional organization. His Highness aspired to a federal framework uniting the Gulf states rather than that of a cooperation framework. He said then that his ambition was “to see a federated Gulf rather than a co-operation council among the six member states”. But he added that the Council was established according to the desire of the leaders of the member states.<sup>230</sup> Zayed therefore had to respect this desire, and strived to defend this council and make it a successful organization advancing the interests of the countries and the welfare of the peoples of the region. He believed in allowing the development of the GCC to take its own course, because time would inevitably bring fulfilment to his unionist vision.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> Cited in, Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p.237.

<sup>230</sup> Association of popular heritage revival UAE, Zayed the Glorious., Part-1. (1992) P. 178.

<sup>231</sup>Wheatcroft, *Ibid.* P.239.

### **Zayed's View on the Importance of the GCC**

The GCC was looked upon by His Highness as a stepping stone for strengthening the links of cooperation between the Gulf States, whose people share similar characteristics and aspirations. He also saw in this organization a “strong support for the Arab nation as a whole, and the Arab League in particular”.<sup>232</sup> Sheikh Zayed considered that the real value of the GCC was reflected in the fact that it was in itself the “culmination of a long period of continuous sincere efforts” exerted by the countries of the region to develop aspects of cooperation and coordination.<sup>233</sup>

In addition to relations of coordination and cooperation between GCC member states, Sheikh Zayed also stressed the importance of other roles that the Council should move to strengthen as they were important in the promotion of political unity. Thus, he saw in a common Gulf market “a first step towards the political union between the countries of the region” highlighting the importance of economic cooperation amid “the era of conglomerations and the unification of transactions” at the international level.<sup>234</sup>

Zayed considered the GCC a means through which Gulf countries could achieve economic integration and acquire the capabilities to face with efficiency and leverage the other blocs taking shape worldwide, without the need to make any unfavorable concessions. He believed that economic power was “the real measure of the Gulf self-power”, asserting that for the sake of its strength and insuperability in the contemporary world, the Gulf region needed to converge its strength and efforts and achieve coordination in the economic field.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> Salem Bin Ham, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>233</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *op. cit.*, *Al-Qiyada*. p.197.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.* p.198.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.* P.197.

Another field of primary importance to Sheikh Zayed within the structure of the GCC was regional security. His concept of security in the Gulf was based on his firm stance against any foreign presence or intervention. He emphasized that his “concept of Gulf security is that the Gulf countries should be left alone to live in peace and stability without resorting to foreign powers and away from the intervention of super powers or other countries to determine the fate of the region.”<sup>236</sup> Therefore, Sheikh Zayed was in principle, strictly opposed to any outside military alliances or bases established on Emirati soil and thus did not conduct military agreements with superpowers such as the United States “as did Oman and Bahrain”, as he wanted to retain his independence and impartiality.<sup>237</sup> He believed that Gulf countries to be capable of defending themselves through solidarity.<sup>238</sup> Consequently, Sheikh Zayed saw in the GCC a bloc capable of providing a security umbrella for its member countries. Geopolitical developments such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991 later convinced Sheikh Zayed of the need for better coordination with western superpowers over security matters.

Zayed also practiced a policy of balance toward superpowers seeking to maintain cordial relations with all blocs despite their opposing ideologies, without getting pulled into either orbit. Thus, while he recognized the need for defence, he saw it as imperative that Arab states in the Gulf should be ready to manage their own part rather than rely on surrogates. As he saw it, the only reasonable option was for the Gulf states to provide for their own security.<sup>239</sup> Hence, Sheikh Zayed regarded the GCC as an important organization that played a crucial role in preserving, *inter alia*,

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<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.* P.215.

<sup>237</sup> William Rugh, *op. cit.*, *Diplomacy and Defense.* P.46.

<sup>238</sup> Association of popular heritage revival UAE, *op. cit.*, Part-1. P. 174.

<sup>239</sup> Wheatcroft, *Ibid.* P.236.

the security, economic, political, social, and cultural interests of the countries and peoples of the Gulf area.

### **Efforts towards the Establishment and Formation of the GCC**

Sheikh Zayed's ambition to unite the people of the area and make them join forces, drove him to work closely with the other rulers of the Gulf countries in order to create the Gulf Cooperation Council. Along with other Gulf leaders, His Highness exerted all kinds of efforts that ultimately led to the formation of the GCC. In fact, during the 1970s there was a great deal of coordination in all fields between these states as a preliminary effort "for an ineluctable result which is the union of the Gulf states with the will of Almighty God."<sup>240</sup> Moreover, since the Gulf was affected by serious political and security developments, and as a manifestation of the UAE's balancing policy in the area during the period of the Iranian Revolution and the Iran-Iraq War, Sheikh Zayed played a very supportive role in the establishment of the GCC. In fact, the combined threat of the ideological spillover of the Iranian Revolution and the military spill over of the Iran-Iraq War was among the main reasons that led to the formation of the GCC.<sup>241</sup> Therefore, congruent with his firm stance against foreign intervention, Zayed saw in the efforts being made to form some kind of unified front against such threats as a cardinal move that needed to be supported. However, before achieving such an objective the six Gulf nations had to come to terms with their differences and historical tensions, which was not an easy task, no matter how clear the balancing imperatives in the region were. Sheikh Zayed had to overlook a history of border tensions with Saudi Arabia. Indeed, the agreement forged between the UAE and its neighboring Kingdom strengthened the confidence of

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<sup>240</sup>Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Fikr wa 'Amal*. p.158.

<sup>241</sup>F. Gregory Gause III, *op. cit.*, p.217.

the Gulf States that they could and would “act in concert”, a conviction that eventually led to the formation Gulf Cooperation Council.<sup>242</sup>

With foresight, Sheikh Zayed envisaged the importance of setting grounds for agreement and mutual support and understanding between the Gulf nations, especially in the circumstances prevailing in early 1970s. This, he predicted, would provide a certain degree of political, economic and military power. This is why when the call for organizing a Gulf summit at that time was made, Zayed did not hesitate to express his support for this initiative as the only way to coordinate between the policies of these states and generate economic benefits for all countries in the region.<sup>243</sup>

Sheikh Zayed emphasized on many occasions the importance for the Gulf states to have their own conference held regularly to coordinate themselves in many fields, as these countries share the same destiny, resources and viewpoints.<sup>244</sup>

His mark on the establishment of the GCC became evident during a crucial step in this process when on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1975 he hosted Sheikh Jaber Ahmad Al-Sabah, the then Kuwaiti Crown Prince, who conferred with His Highness in Abu Dhabi on ways to boost cooperation between the Gulf countries.<sup>245</sup> Both parties expressed their satisfaction with the development of relations between the Gulf states, boosting links and cooperation among them. They also expressed their firm belief in the necessity of cooperation in all fields calling for the establishment of a “kind of union or federation based on sound and strong foundations” for the benefit of the peoples and stability of the region.<sup>246</sup>

Therefore, the UAE was a venue to an important stage in the efforts leading ultimately to the formation of the GCC. While it would be an exaggeration to say that

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Wheatcroft, *op. cit.*, p.234.

<sup>243</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *op. cit.*, *Al-Qiyada*. p.184.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.* p.196.

<sup>245</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, P.147.

<sup>246</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.



the UAE was the driving force behind the formation of the GCC -Kuwait had the original idea, and Saudi Arabia promoted it most vigorously in the few years preceding its formation- it is clear that Sheikh Zayed and the UAE government were very supportive of the project. The founding summit was held in Abu Dhabi in May 1981, and since that time the UAE has encouraged GCC consensus on foreign policy and economic matters.<sup>247</sup>

### **Hosting the Inaugural GCC Summit in Abu Dhabi**

As shown above, common traits and regional developments have provided an incentive for the UAE and the other five Gulf monarchies to join the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Council was founded at a summit conference held in Abu Dhabi on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1981, following an initiative by Sheikh Zayed, and has since become, with strong UAE support, an effective and widely-respected grouping. It was intended to facilitate the development of closer ties between its members and to enable them to work together to ensure their security.

The Abu Dhabi meeting, under the chairmanship of His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, was historic in the sense that it laid the practical foundations upon which this regional body would articulate its actions regarding mutual, regional and international issues affecting member states.

The GCC Charter states, *inter alia*, that “the basic objectives are to effect coordination, integration and inter-connection between Member States in all fields, strengthening ties between their peoples, formulating similar regulations in various fields such as economy, finance, trade, customs, tourism, legislation, administration, as well as fostering scientific and technical progress in industry, mining, agriculture,

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<sup>247</sup>F. Gregory Gause III, *op. cit.*, p.218

water and animal resources, establishing scientific research centers, setting up joint ventures, and encouraging cooperation of the private sector.”<sup>248</sup> These objectives reflect the very spirit of Sheikh Zayed’s vision regarding the scope of cooperation and coordination between the Gulf states. In fact, a careful reading of all his statements prior to the establishment of the GCC suggests that His Highness had already preconceived the main principles of unity among these countries. Therefore, it was no mere coincidence that Sheikh Zayed was chosen “by acclamation” as the first president of the GCC Supreme Council and that he was the first Head of State to sign the Charter.<sup>249</sup>

The real value of the GCC was primarily reflected in being “ a culmination of a long period of continuous and loyal efforts” that have been exerted during the previous years by all concerned countries, in order to develop aspects of cooperation and coordination. However, Zayed made sure to stress the general framework to which this regional organization belongs. Thus he asserted that the GCC would not limit its responsibilities to the problems of the region, but will extend such tasks to include the Arab World at large.<sup>250</sup> Furthermore, Sheikh Zayed was among the fiercest defenders of the GCC after its establishment. Hence, when stories circulated that the creation of the Council meant that the Gulf states were leaving the Arab League, His Highness took care to deny this,<sup>251</sup> reassuring Arabs that the GCC would not defer its commitments towards them and would support the Arab stances.

Today, three decades after its formation and just as Sheikh Zayed promised, the GCC proved to be a real pillar of support to the Arab world in all issues related to Arabs and Muslims. The GCC has made considerable progress in a wide range of

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<sup>248</sup>The GCC Official website, The Charter [online] available at : <http://www.gccsg.org/eng/index.php?action=Sec-Show&ID=1> [accessed 6March 2009]

<sup>249</sup>Wheatcroft , *op. cit.*, p.238.

<sup>250</sup> Association of popular heritage revival UAE, *op. cit.*, Part-2. P. 177.

<sup>251</sup> William Rugh, *op. cit.*, *Diplomacy and Defense...* P.47.

fields including the spheres of foreign policy, economy, and defence, with the UAE actively working for an improvement of links between member states and to encourage trade among them. Although the ambition of full monetary union within this council by 2010 appears to be unrealizable, with UAE's withdrawal, political and strategic coordination between the six members remains strong. Indicative of this are the huge strategic common projects that are being implemented in terms of nuclear energy and railway network linking.

### **Conclusion**

It is clear then how the creation of the United Arab Emirates has contributed in a tremendous way to initiating efforts of unity in the Gulf region. In fact, the efforts that Sheikh Zayed made in establishing a nation despite all the political, historical and regional hurdles that such an ambitious enterprise faced were unique in terms of the great deal of patience and wisdom that was behind them. Moreover, these obstacles convinced some observers that a union between the sheikhdoms of the Trucial States Coast was an impossible task. The most optimistic among them predicted a short life for the newly established federation. But, against all odds, Sheikh Zayed proved them wrong. He had the vision and foresight that led him to conceive a union not only capable of enduring over time, but also a nation that has played a vital role in the regional and international arenas supporting Arab causes and intensifying efforts for Arab unity. In this same context, came the efforts of the UAE, under the leadership of President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, exerted towards the establishment of The Gulf Cooperation Council. In fact, the UAE and GCC have put an end to the

“feeling of frustration that was prevailing in the Arab world due to the failure of all projects aiming at establishing Arab unity”.<sup>252</sup>

### **Section Three: Comparative Study of the Vital Federation Indexes During The Rule of H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan (1971-2004).**

#### **Introduction**

Sheikh Zayed managed to build the United Arab Emirates as a true union of emirates within a single federal structure, and his greatest lasting monument is the successful nation into which the UAE has grown. Since 1971, His Highness worked tirelessly to build the UAE which, through the decades, developed into a leading regional economic and commercial hub. Since its inception, Sheikh Zayed along with the rulers of other Emirates, strived to endow the country with the infrastructure and the elements necessary for its growth and sustainability. Thus, the new state has undergone massive reconstruction over the last several decades, from a collection of small, insolvent states to a dynamic, modern and luxurious country that boasts one of the highest standards of living in the world. Much of that growth is attributed to Sheikh Zayed who focused spending on the human resources of the country and expansion of infrastructure, and took great measures to diversify the economic base and develop social infrastructure, which enabled the UAE to achieve a significant degree of development in all sectors within a narrow timeframe. Progress, in terms of the provision of social services, health and education, as well as in sectors of the oil and non-oil economy, has brought a prosperity that has spread throughout the seven

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<sup>252</sup> Ahmed Jalal Al-Tadmori, *Malamih al-Istratijia Al-Qawmiya Fi Al-Nahj Assiyassi Li Shaykh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan.*, (Arabic) (Features of the Nationalist Strategy of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan). (2002). ECSSR publication, P.11.

emirates, from the most modern cities to the remotest areas of the desert and mountains. This remarkable growth has taken place against a background of enviable political and social stability and despite the insecurity and conflict that has prevailed in the region.

Discussing the achievements that were accomplished during Sheikh Zayed's reign in one section may not be a possible endeavor, especially as this time span surpasses three decades. Therefore, we will explore some aspects of economic and social development that have taken place in the federation during this period.

### **Economic Indicators**

Before the discovery and export of oil, the economy of the Trucial States depended mainly on subsistence agriculture, nomadic animal husbandry, pearl trade, fishing, and seafaring. The epoch of economic development in the UAE began in the early 1970s, the federation's formation on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1971 (and the establishment of its formal economic, social, and political institutions) coinciding with a massive increase in oil production and oil exports.<sup>253</sup> Thanks to the abundance of natural resources such as oil and gas, Sheikh Zayed embraced resource-based industries as a development strategy, an industrial strategy based on the utilization of natural resources. There has been a deployment of windfall income, largely directed towards the development of social and economic infrastructure, which enabled the UAE to achieve a significant degree of economic development during the 1970s.<sup>254</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Mohamed Shihab, "Economic Development in the UAE" in Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, eds., *United Arab Emirates: A New Perspective* (2001). P. 249.

<sup>254</sup> See Fatima Al-Shamsi, "The Economy of The UAE: General Aspects and Determinants of Growth" in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed., *A century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and The United Arab Emirates*. (2000).

In fact, when the UAE was founded, its economy was negligible and its non-oil sector was just taking shape as it was heavily reliant on oil sales. The country is now the second biggest economy in the Arab world after Saudi Arabia. Four years after the federation, the country's economy ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the Arab region and in 1990 it leapt to the fifth rank. In 2000, the UAE had the third largest economy after Saudi Arabia and Egypt and in 2004; it was second only to Saudi Arabia.<sup>255</sup> During Sheikh Zayed's era, the UAE became a country with the one of the highest standards of living as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stood at Dh314.81 billion in 2004 against Dh6.5 billion in 1971.<sup>256</sup> In fact, the income per capita witnessed a steady growth to reach 28,971 in 2004, far better than 19,360 in 1996.<sup>257</sup> This huge leap during which the GDP multiplied by more than 53 times is mainly due to the contribution of sectors other than that of hydrocarbons, which reflects the sagacity of Sheikh Zayed in terms of developing an economic base that does not rely solely on oil and gas.

### **The Hydrocarbon Sector**

As a backbone to the economy, oil exports accounted in 2004 for about 30 percent of total UAE Gross Domestic Product. While it has been making significant strides in developing and diversifying its economy, the UAE has accelerated the development of additional hydrocarbon reserves and its output capacity in response to internal and external needs. Thus, the investments that have been made in this sector during the previous years raised UAE's production capacity by 500,000 b/d in 2004,

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<sup>255</sup> UAEInteract (2005) UAE becomes second largest Arab economy [online] available at: [http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/UAE\\_becomes\\_second\\_largest\\_Arab\\_economy/18806.htm](http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/UAE_becomes_second_largest_Arab_economy/18806.htm) [accessed 16 March 2009]

<sup>256</sup> WAM (2008) UAE Marks Fourth Sheikh Zayed Death Anniversary [online] available at: [http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WAM%2FWAM\\_E\\_AdvancedSearch&searchText=era&fYear=2008&fMonth=11&fDay=01&tYear=2008&tMonth=11&tDay=01&submit=Search](http://www.wam.ae/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WAM%2FWAM_E_AdvancedSearch&searchText=era&fYear=2008&fMonth=11&fDay=01&tYear=2008&tMonth=11&tDay=01&submit=Search) [Accessed 4 February 2009]

<sup>257</sup> Arab Monetary Fund, *Economic Indicators of Arab Countries*, 1996-2006.

which make the UAE capable of producing more oil than its OPEC quotas allow.<sup>258</sup> However, one major feature of UAE's oil sector was the gradual decline in productivity witnessed during the 1980s and early 1990s. This was due to many factors, especially the fall in world demand, world economic recession, and OPEC quotas system.<sup>259</sup> Still, oil revenues constituted a main determinant in the UAE development strategy launched by Sheikh Zayed in the early years of the Federation, since they were viewed by His Highness as a source of investment towards the consolidation and development of other economic sectors. This strategy started bearing fruits in the mid 1980s as oil's share in the GDP declined to less than 50 percent.<sup>260</sup>

Moreover, the UAE is endowed with a huge potential for growth in the long term as proven oil reserves stand at 97.8 billion barrels, while natural gas reserves are estimated at 213.5 trillion cubic feet. This means that the oil and gas sector will continue to occupy a key position in the UAE economy, especially as these reserves rank the UAE among the top energy-rich countries in the world, i.e. fifth place worldwide in terms of the size of its oil reserves, and fourth place with respect to its natural gas reserves.<sup>261</sup> In a matter of decades, Sheikh Zayed turned the UAE into one of the major players of the international oil industry, especially as it has become one of the rare swing producers in the of world capable of altering its production to conform with OPEC quota changes.

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<sup>258</sup> P. Vine, Ibrahim Al Abed, , P. Hellyer, eds., United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2006., (2006). P. 125.

<sup>259</sup> For a discussion on the decline of oil output in UAE in this period, See Fatima Al-Shamsi, *op. cit.*, p.80. See also Dawlat Al Imarat Al Arabiya Al Mottahida.. Khamsata Ashara Aman Ala Tariq Al Bina'a wa Taqaddom, (Arabic) (The United Arab Emirates: 15 years of Edification and Progress), Ministry of Information and Culture. (1986). Pp. 106-107.

<sup>260</sup> Mohamed Shihab, *op. cit.*, P. 253.

<sup>261</sup> P. Vine, Ibrahim Al Abed , P. Hellyer., *Ibid.*

## **Non-Oil Sectors**

Since the early seventies Sheikh Zayed stressed the need to adopt a diversification and liberalization program to reduce reliance on oil and transform the federation's economy from a conventional, labor-intensive economy to one based on knowledge, technology and skilled labor. Hence, the federal and individual Emirate governments have invested heavily in sectors such as Industry, agriculture, tourism, aviation, commerce and telecommunications. Indeed, the non-oil sectors, notably petrochemical, aluminium, tourism, and entrepot trade, have experienced strong growth, averaging about 9 percent a year in real terms in the 1990s. In 2000, these sectors accounted for about 70 percent of total GDP, and non-oil exports, including re-exports, made up 43 percent of the country's total export receipts.<sup>262</sup> Furthermore, between 1971 and 2004, the non-oil sectors have been steadily growing at a rate close to 18 per cent per annum, non-oil GDP has doubled more than 200 times during this period.<sup>263</sup>

## **Agriculture**

The total area of land under agriculture and forestry constitutes less than 1.5 per cent of the total land area of the UAE. Agriculture has made only a small contribution to GDP (3.8 per cent in 1999).<sup>264</sup> There has, however, been a consistent and substantial increase in the amount of land devoted to agriculture and forestry over the past three decades as a result of sustained efforts by the UAE Government to promote agricultural development using incentives such as granting free agricultural plots to any UAE citizen, preparing land mechanically against no charges, providing

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<sup>262</sup> International Monetary Fund, "With open economy and sound policies, U.A.E. has turned oil "curse into a blessing" in *IMFSurvey*, Volume 31 Number 19, October 21, 2002. P.330.

<sup>263</sup> Omar Masood, Bruno S. Sergi "Quantitative measurement of economic sectors effect on the non-oil GDP in United Arab Emirates", in *International Journal of Trade and Global Markets*, Vol.1, No 3, 2008. P. 246.

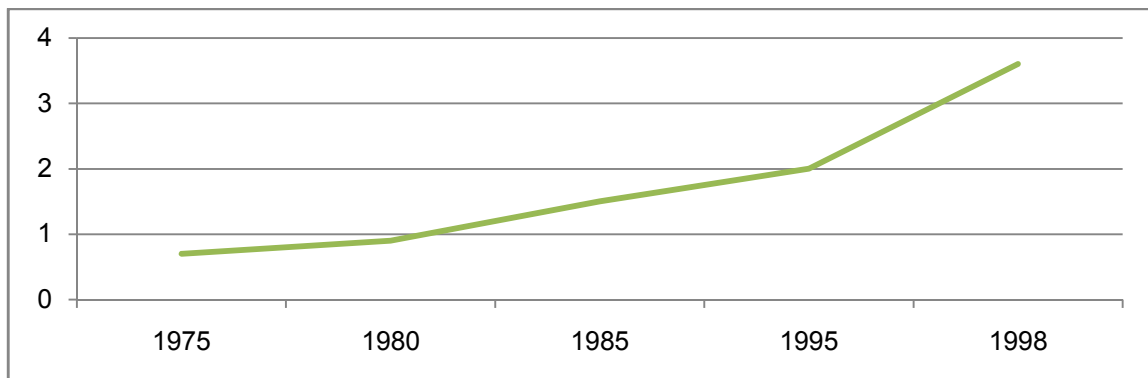
<sup>264</sup> Mohamed Shihab., *op. cit.*, P. 251.



production inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides at low cost, drilling water wells for free, and securing the market for produce.

The very limited agricultural potential of the UAE, with unsuitable land, water scarcity and harsh climate, has not been an obstacle to its development. In fact, agricultural production increased more than fourfold from 1975 to 1998 at an average annual growth rate of 12.6 per cent. This consistent increase in the agricultural output is attributed to the sustained efforts of the UAE's Government to promote agricultural development with aforementioned incentives and subsidies.<sup>265</sup> The country has become self-sufficient in salad crops and poultry for much of the year and even exports crops to markets in Europe. The economy has seen a steady increase in investment in agriculture and fisheries, with the private sector playing an increasingly important role, especially in the dairy, poultry and dates industries.<sup>266</sup> The constant growth registered by the agricultural domain reflects the special care that His Highness Sheikh Zayed paid to this sector despite unfavorable climatic conditions and a lack of water in the country.

**Growth of Agriculture (Percentage of GDP)**



<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.* P.253.

<sup>266</sup> Omar Masood, Bruno S. Sergi., *Op Cit.* P. 241.

## Industry

While the value-added growth rate in the UAE oil sector was fluctuating during the period 1975–1998, the manufacturing sector value-added growth rate was steadily increasing. This sector's value increased significantly from Dh 472 million in 1975 to Dh 9443 million in 1985, to Dh 18,855 million in 1998, and to Dh 24,009 million in 1999. Its contribution to GDP increased significantly from 0.9 per cent in 1975 to 3.8 per cent in 1980 and to 12.6 per cent in 1999.<sup>267</sup> In 2004, the UAE's manufacturing sector contributed around 14 per cent to GDP and has become the largest non-oil economic sector in the country. Growth in this sector has been impressive, showing a 15 per cent increase in 2004, valued at Dh45 billion.. The impetus for growth has come from an increase in population and demand for consumer goods on the one hand and the expansion of free zones and foreign direct investment in the country on the other.<sup>268</sup> In 2004 there were 3036 manufacturing establishments registered with the Ministry of Finance and Industry, compared to 2153 in 2000.<sup>269</sup> Moreover, local manufacturing made strides to the point of establishing a foothold in international export markets besides catering to increasing demand from the domestic non-oil economy. The scope of industrial sector activity has widened considerably to include new fields such as construction, aluminium, metals, heavy equipment, and food. Moreover, state-of-the-art facilities, competitive low labor and energy costs, favorable tax laws and political stability have all contributed to the growth of industry in the UAE. Today, the label of 'Made in UAE' can be found on many products.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, eds., *United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2001*, (2001).

<sup>268</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, *op. cit.*, (2006). P.76.

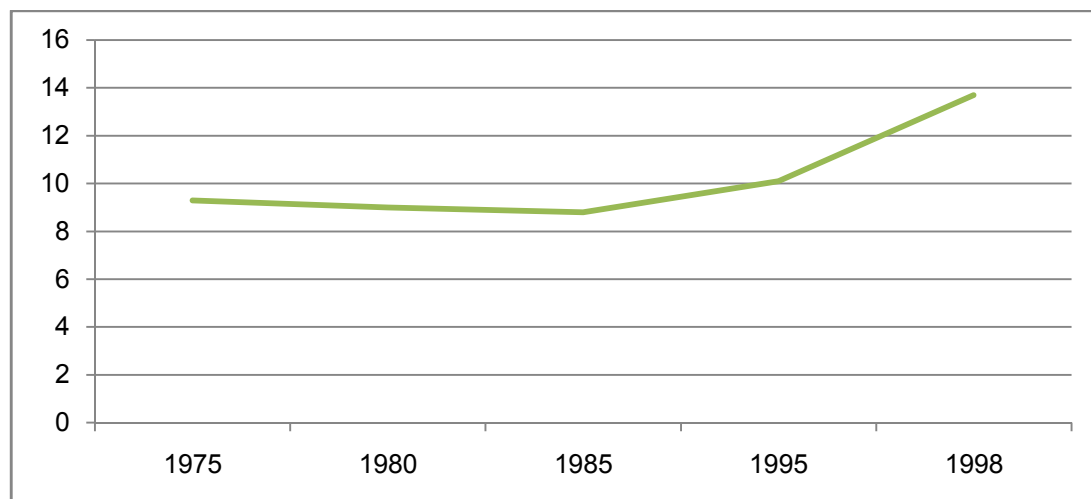
<sup>269</sup> UAE Ministry of Finance and Industry, *UAE Industrial Statistics 2004*[online] available at: [http://uae.gov.ae/mofi/English/industry/e\\_inddev\\_statis2004.htm#Number%20of%20Establishments,%20Labor,%20and%20Investment%20in%20All%20Emirates](http://uae.gov.ae/mofi/English/industry/e_inddev_statis2004.htm#Number%20of%20Establishments,%20Labor,%20and%20Investment%20in%20All%20Emirates) [accessed 17 March 2009]

<sup>270</sup> Omar Masood, Bruno S. Sergi., *Op Cit.* P. 242.

## Other Sectors

Virtually every economic sector underwent rapid development and expansion in UAE's non-oil economy. Thus, a notable sectoral growth and contribution to GDP was evident in other sectors such as services, commerce (wholesale and retail trade), tourism, transport, finance and insurance, real estate and government services. The service sectors' contribution to GDP increased from 22.3 per cent in 1975 to 44.1 per cent in 2004. Similarly, significant progress witnessed by the construction, commerce and other activities continued to fuel the UAE economy. (Table 1). Consolidating UAE's status as a commerce centre, trade continued to be an economic cornerstone. The numerous free trade zones established in the country have contributed enormously to the value of exports confirming the UAE's position as the third most important re-export centre in the world after Hong Kong and Singapore.<sup>271</sup> Therefore, the diversification drive embraced by the UAE government has proven its efficiency over the decades while building the national economy up to a global level and attracting foreign investments at an increasing pace.

Growth of Commerce (Percentage of GDP)



<sup>271</sup> Omar Masood, Bruno S. Sergi., *Ibid.*

## **Social Indicators**

The demographic structure of UAE society has been altered considerably by a sharp rise in population since the foundation of the state. The upward trend continued with a 7.6 per cent rate in 2003 when the UAE's population reached 4.04 million, and with a 4.7 per cent rate to an estimated 4.32 million at the end of 2004.<sup>272</sup> This represents a staggering surge compared to 1971 when the new state's total population did not exceed 287,000. This rapid growth is attributed to an improvement in life expectancy, a sharp cut in infant mortality and a steady influx of expatriate workers. Mindful of the lack of the medical services, Sheikh Zayed invited foreign experts to set up hospitals in Al Ain and Abu Dhabi. The number of hospitals and health centers began to increase nationwide until they reached 27 hospitals and 108 health centers across the country in 2004.<sup>273</sup> Among the other social services that were given priority by Sheikh Zayed was providing appropriate housing for citizens. Since 1973 and upon his instructions, a program was launched whereby citizens benefited from thousands of residential units. About Dh72 billion was spent on the housing sector. It included construction of 42, 000 houses and over 6, 000 financial grants were offered to nationals. The Zayed Housing Program is one of the most important housing programs, which serve all categories of the community. It covers all the UAE emirates with an annual budget of about Dh 640 million.<sup>274</sup>

## **Human Development Indicators**

During Sheikh Zayed's rule the UAE achieved impressive improvements in many of the human development indicators, which promoted the country to levels that in many

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<sup>272</sup> UAE Central Bank, Annual Report 2004.

<sup>273</sup> UAE Ministry of Health, 2004 statistics [online] available at: [http://www.moh.gov.ae/AdminCP/AssetsManager/Files/Statistics/Statistics\\_2004/index.html](http://www.moh.gov.ae/AdminCP/AssetsManager/Files/Statistics/Statistics_2004/index.html) [accessed 14 March 2009]

<sup>274</sup> WAM (2008) *Ibid.*

instances surpass international standards and even come close to some individual industrialized countries. In this regard, education and health care received special attention.

### **GDP 1990-1999**

Economic indicator	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1999
GDP at current price	125.3	126.0	128.4	131.7	135.0	143.9	181.5
Real GDP growth (%)	11.9	-2.4	-0.9	-0.6	-2.4	-0.8	6.7

### **Education**

Because education was viewed by Sheikh Zayed as major determinant of progress and a means towards increasing productivity, the UAE has been investing heavily in the education of its young citizens as a key to future prosperity. Moreover, education and training have been considered key elements in developing the necessary skill levels for growth and modernization in the federation. Therefore, the UAE Government offers free education to all UAE citizens, along with a sophisticated educational infrastructure that covers all academic and vocational levels. However, during the early years of the state, the government had to cope with the poor infrastructure and the limited number of students and the imbalance between the different emirates in terms of schooling facilities and staff. In 1971 the number of schools affiliated to the Ministry of Education did not exceed 47 all over the country, with approximately 30000 students during the academic year 1971-72.<sup>275</sup> Such figures multiplied many times in the subsequent years since in 1986 the number of students reached almost 251,000 and the academic infrastructure broadened to include specialized institutions and universities both public and private. Thus, the number of

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<sup>275</sup> Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Dawlat Al Imarat...* pp. 153.

schools reached 1137 in 2000 and then increased to 1208 in 2003.<sup>276</sup> Female enrolment rates in educational establishments also witnessed significant growth with female students outnumbering their male counterpart in higher education.<sup>277</sup> The Federal commitment to education led to an overall reduction in illiteracy. Thus, according to the 2004 Arab Economic Joint Report the illiteracy rate among citizens over 15 years of age substantially reduced from 29 per cent in 1990 to 14 per cent in 2003. Furthermore, the UAE leads Arab countries in meeting the goals set by UNESCO's 'Education For All' program. The overall illiteracy rate in the UAE stood at around 10 per cent in 2004, and it is estimated that the nation will achieve full literacy within the next few years.<sup>278</sup>

### **Healthcare**

Health services have received prominent attention in the UAE federal policy and budget. By the late 1990s, hospitals were located in every major urban area, mainly in accordance with the distribution of the population with clinics in smaller towns and rural hamlets.<sup>279</sup> This accomplishment was sanctioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which confirmed in its 1995 report that 99 per cent of the overall population of the UAE had access to health services. For its part, the private health sector has made a significant contribution to increases in the number of doctors and medical staff, in addition to hospital beds, which translated to a broader coverage of the population and better services. In 1975, for example, the number of doctors (general physicians) increased from 751 in 1975 to 2766 in 1997,

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<sup>276</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, *op. cit.* (2005). P. 227.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.* P. 230.

<sup>278</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2004. P. 225.

<sup>279</sup> Fatima Al-Shamsi, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

then to 4960 in 2002.<sup>280</sup> According to the Human Development Report 1995, there was one doctor per 1042 persons in the period between 1988 and 1991 (i.e. almost 10 per 10000 persons). In 2002 this number increased to 17 doctors per 10000 persons.<sup>281</sup>

Consequently, advanced health care has done much to lower mortality levels in the UAE and as a result mortality rates have declined substantially. Infant and maternal mortality rates have dropped remarkably and, regarding provision of health services in all parts of the UAE, there is a large number of private clinics, medical complexes, hospitals and pharmacies. The main noticeable growth in private sector health services has been in the number of general clinics. Hence, the number of private clinics not only has exceeded the number of public clinics, but has increased tremendously from 50 in 1975 to 174 in 1980, to 456 in 1985, to 675 in 1990, and to 896 in 1997.<sup>282</sup> The increase in the number of hospitals, public and private, has been associated with the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR). The UAE is one of two countries from the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that have successfully maintained maternal mortality rate at levels considered low by international standards.<sup>283</sup> Infant mortality rate, for its part, fell from 65 per 1000 in 1975, to 54 per 1000 in 1980, to 8.9 per 1000 in 2001. On the other hand, life expectancy at birth rose from 65 years in 1975, to 75 years in 1997, and to 78 years in 2004 thus reaching levels similar to those in Europe and North America.<sup>284</sup>

It can be argued then that the UAE, under the leadership of late President Sheikh Zayed, reached health standards comparable to other developing countries and even to some developed countries. Credit for continued improvement since its

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<sup>280</sup> World Health Organization, UAE Core Health Indicators [online] available at: [http://www.who.int/whosis/database/core/core\\_select\\_process.cfm?country=are&indicators=healthpersommel](http://www.who.int/whosis/database/core/core_select_process.cfm?country=are&indicators=healthpersommel) [accessed 11 March 2009]

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>282</sup> Mohamed Shihab, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

<sup>283</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, *op. cit.*, (2006). P. 246.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*

formation in 1971 belongs primarily to His Highness who accorded a high priority to improving the health of his people and their standard of living.

### **International Recognition**

UAE's achievements in both economic and social development have won her praise and respect from international specialized organizations and authorities such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the UNDP, the World Economic Forum, etc. which have highlighted in their periodical reports and reviews the Federation's exploits in such domains as commerce, retail, business environment, tourism, construction, Information Technology, etc. Thus, in its 2004 UAE report, the IMF said that: The UAE has made impressive economic progress over the years, by consistently pursuing an outward-oriented development strategy, prudent financial policies, the utilization of oil revenues to diversify the economy, and the strengthening of the financial sector. As a result, the role of the private sector has been enhanced, and the economy is among the most diversified in the GCC region. Openness and a sound record of macroeconomic management have contributed to the accumulation of a large stock of official foreign assets.<sup>285</sup>

Also, a number of global business indexes have recognized the advantages that the UAE has brought to international business. AT Kearney ranks the UAE as one of the top 20 places in the world for global service business. The UAE is also ranked in the top 30 of the World Economic Forum's "most-networked countries"—ahead of all other Arab nations, as well as countries like Spain, Italy, Turkey and India.<sup>286</sup>

Within this same domain, The Economist ranked the UAE eighteenth in the world in terms of its internet infrastructure in a report issued in July 2000. The country is

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<sup>285</sup> International Monetary Fund, United Arab Emirates: 2004 Article IV Consultation, June 2004. P.31

<sup>286</sup> UAE Embassy in Washington, UAE Economy [online] available at: <http://www.uae-embassy.org/uae/economy> [accessed 17 March 2009].



particularly well placed to focus on electronic communications, with its established telecommunications. There is no doubt that use of the internet, applied to this already vibrant business environment, will create new challenges and even greater competition, but also new opportunities for the UAE to maintain and further develop its trading links on a global scale. The UAE also gets positive rankings from Transparency International's corruption index, ranking in the top quarter as a lesser corrupt country. In 2005, for example, the country was ranked in the 30th position among 158 countries, faring better than countries such as South Korea, Italy, Malaysia, and Czech Republic, etc.

It is not only oil that has pushed the UAE into a new era of high financial and overall growth. Non-oil sectors are also growing fast and investors are rushing to some sectors, mainly real estate. The IMF acknowledged this in its annual report of 2005 when it stated that "an outward-oriented development strategy, a good record in macroeconomic management, and a business friendly environment have resulted in impressive economic growth in the UAE. Over the years, economic diversification has advanced rapidly, supported by an increasing role of the private sector, which has laid the foundation for further economic and social progress in the period ahead." The report added that the "Economic growth in the UAE is estimated to have been very strong in 2004 and is expected to remain so in the coming years.

For its part, the World Bank also highlighted the UAE's "marked success" in reducing its dependence on oil. The UAE's non-oil exports were 52.3 per cent of the total in the five years from 2000 to 2004 compared to 31.9 per cent in the 1970s and 29.5 per cent in the 1980s. "Greater diversification enables an oil exporter to more

readily mitigate some of the negative effects of oil price decline”, the report asserted.

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## **Conclusion**

Several factors were behind the impressive changes that have occurred in the United Arab Emirates since the first day of its formation. The oil and gas wealth including a surge in oil prices and the country's crude and gas production, a steady growth in the non-oil sector, mainly services and manufacturing, and a massive government economic diversification drive that was spearheaded by the late leader Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan have all contributed to the success story that is the UAE. The successful implementation of human development policy in the UAE, hand in hand with industrialization, urbanization and modernization, is one of the rare examples of a country which has successfully used income from its huge natural resources for long-term development over a very short period. It is clear that the UAE has achieved impressive improvements in many social and economic development sectors over the past three decades, a feat acknowledged by world organizations and the international community at large.

As ruler of Abu Dhabi and President of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan demonstrated unique skills of statesmanship and exceptional visionary capabilities making him a leader far ahead of his times. His Highness strived to galvanize a deprived backward society that was merely surviving within a context of international political and ideological storms. The dynamic force with which he modernized his country can be matched by only a few in terms of scope, speed and thoroughness. As a precursor to political advancement in the region, Sheikh Zayed

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<sup>287</sup>World Bank, Middle East and North Africa: 2005 Economic Developments and Prospects (2005), P40.

took a giant stride in leading the seven Emirates towards union. His enduring legacy as the President of the United Arab Emirates can be attributed to his charismatic personality and unique leadership style oriented towards innovation without overriding authentic traditional heritage. Furthermore, through his unionist philosophy and convictions, he was a driving force behind the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

In the face of many challenges and ordeals, Sheikh Zayed stood with firm determination and will because he had a clear vision for the future. He was ready to make sacrifices as far as the goals were for the benefit of his people and other nations' peoples. Thus, he continually grew in political stature and emerged as an outstanding regional political figure who inspired respect from his peers as well as from ordinary people all over the world. Sheikh Zayed's presidency was characterized by achievements unmatched in the annals of modern history. During a little more than three decades of rule, he guided his desert land and people from desperately harsh conditions to an era of unprecedented progress and prosperity. His focus on the human factor proved to be a winning formula through which he fulfilled his wishes and those of his people. Today, The United Arab Emirates stands as a successful example of a thriving and cohesive nation, existing in peace and harmony and providing a model for other nations to emulate. It has become so far the only successful federation project in the Arab world.

## Chapter Three:

### Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's Political Stances in The Face of Regional and International Crises

#### Introduction

Part of Zayed's concept of foreign policy was his unrelenting quest for the settlement of conflicts and crises through patient diplomacy and generous assistance. In fact, his very tribal upbringing was founded on the concept of "*tawassut*" (mediation) that the tribal chieftains should exercise in resolving conflicts amongst their subjects. This was one of the main attributes that characterized Sheikh Zayed from his early years as representative of the ruler in the eastern province of Abu Dhabi. He used to mediate between conflicting parties in matters related to water, grazing, trade, etc. He also had to use his conciliation skills on a larger scale when he played a significant role in negotiating and pacifying the tribes that were unhappy during the reign of his brother.<sup>288</sup> But as Head of state, he had to deal with new forms of conflicts that either bore geostrategic consequences to his immediate region or required political and humanitarian commitments due to their gravity or inadequacy of international interest in them. To these ends Zayed continued to resort to mediation, conciliation, consensus and consultation as diplomatic tools that he mastered to avoid confrontation, stop ongoing conflicts or at least alleviate the suffering of affected civilians.

Shortly after assuming his duties as ruler, Sheikh Zayed started to work at the wider stage of the Arab world. Through the Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development, which he established in 1971, Zayed involved himself significantly in

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<sup>288</sup> Rugh Andrea B. *Op. Cit.* p. 79

inter-Arab affairs, using the state's wealth to promote stability and contain radicalism. He was a staunch advocator of Arab and Muslim causes. He believed that it was his duty to use his personal and his nation's political weight in both Arab and international arenas to boost Arab causes and help in their settlement. Accordingly, foreign policy and humanitarian decisions regarding major regional crises reveal a clear use of constructive engagement in achieving UAE national goals. For example, under Zayed's leadership, the UAE continuously supported the Palestinians in their struggle against Israeli occupation. Also, UAE was an active member of the coalition that liberated Kuwait in 1991; it was a major contributor to the international peacekeeping forces in Kosovo, Somalia and Lebanon during their vicious civil wars. In the Balkans, as in other countries around the world, the UAE adopted a policy which clearly reflected Sheikh Zayed's desire to utilise the wealth of his country to provide assistance to the less fortunate.

During the 1990s, Sheikh Zayed recognised that the time had come for the UAE to play a more pro-active role in international peacekeeping operations. The UAE Armed Forces had already begun to establish a record in such peacekeeping activities worldwide. Sheikh Zayed's initiatives were not bound to borders or regions. Since its creation, the UAE contributed billions of US dollars as grants, loans and development programs in more than forty Arab and Islamic countries.<sup>289</sup> The UAE adopted a policy of unlimited support to the poor worldwide. For this purpose, Sheikh Zayed established several government charitable associations such as the Zayed Foundation, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, and the Red Crescent Society, among others. These organizations played a major role in the provision of assistance

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<sup>289</sup> Shujairi, No'man. & Ahmed, Alam Eldin *The Philosophy of Humanitarian Action in the Thought of Sheikh Zayed : A field Study of Iraq 2003-2007* (2007) pp.73-89

helping the UAE become an international important provider of aid for the development of infrastructure and humanitarian relief.

## **Section One: Tackling Crises in The Gulf Region**

### **Mediating the Oman-South Yemen Conflict**

After taking over as ruler of Abu Dhabi, Zayed's greatest concern focused on proximate crises in the region and, in this context, he carried out 'one of his most significant inter-Arab initiatives.' That is the mediation between Oman and its Marxist neighbor, the popular Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY)<sup>290</sup>. Together with Kuwait, he had from the late 1970s, sought to provide much needed economic assistance to the South Yemeni regime to soften its radical stances towards the Gulf monarchies and improve its relations with the Sultanate. He used foreign aid to encourage Yemeni leaders to end their aggression against Oman, stop support of efforts to overthrow the Omani government, and eventually enter into negotiations which led in September 1982 to a border settlement and a rapprochement culminating in the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two states.<sup>291</sup> These efforts were later lauded by PDRY's Prime Minister, Haydar Abu Bakr al-Attas, who in an interview with Dubai's Al-Bayan newspaper in October 1988, hailed UAE's role -in conjunction with Kuwait- in generating the *rapprochement* between the PDRY and Oman. He also emphasized the personal commitment of President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan to his country's relations with the PDRY.<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Reich, *Op. Cit.*, p.521.

<sup>291</sup> Peck, M. *Op. Cit.* (2001) p.149

<sup>292</sup> Cited in Amy Ayalon, Haim Shaked. (Eds) *Middle East Contemporary Survey*, Vol. 12:1988. P.670

## **Endeavors to Help End The Iran-Iraq War**

When the Iran-Iraq war broke out in September 1980, it was not expected to last long, however it went on for eight years. Zayed himself expressed his astonishment that it lasted so long<sup>293</sup> and on many occasions called for an end to the fighting. The war exacerbated UAE's concerns, especially when the 'tanker war' involved fighting close to UAE territory and threatened to spillover to the region's oil facilities. Sheikh Zayed was one of several heads of state who made significant efforts to mediate between Iran and Iraq to help end the war. Although his endeavors had little apparent impact on the course of events, as both warring parties stubbornly kept rejecting conciliatory initiatives, there is no denying the fact that in being able to credibly undertake such a mission Zayed gave evidence of the status he enjoyed in Gulf and Arab circles. Moreover, his ability to play such a role indicated how skillfully he had managed to steer his course between Iraq and Iran, thereby helping to safeguard UAE's security and preserve its political and economic relations with each gulf power in the post-war era. Consequently, almost throughout the 1980s, the UAE played the most prominent role within the GCC by talking directly to Tehran.<sup>294</sup> During the escalation of hostilities, Abu Dhabi played the most important role within the GCC in this regard. Thus various delegations visited the UAE during 1984 and 1985 discussing the situation in the war as well as the expansion of economic ties and their common opposition to any foreign interference in the region.

In January 1981, at the third Islamic summit in Mecca, Zayed expressed his hope that the Muslim leaders would find "a formula built on an Islamic foundation to end the Iranian-Iraqi war and to spare Muslim blood."<sup>295</sup> On the whole, the GCC put considerable emphasis on the UAE to break the stalemate in this conflict. Thus, in its summit at the end of December 1987 the GCC decided to negotiate with Iran and

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<sup>293</sup> Al-Siksek and Al Doaifi. *Leadership*, Abu Dhabi, (1987). pp.131-132

<sup>294</sup> Kourosh Ahmadi, *Islands and International Politics in the Persian Gulf: Abu Musa and the Tunbs in Strategic Perspective* (2008) p.141

<sup>295</sup> Al-Siksek and Al Doaifi, *Ibid.* p. 257

delegated UAE as mediator because of its good ties with Tehran. Zayed was mindful of his duties as conciliator in the crisis on behalf of the GCC countries. In this regard he said on one occasion that it was incumbent on the UAE to try to mediate between the warring parties to remove them and their neighbors from the damaging effects of war.<sup>296</sup> On another occasion, he called on the two great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, to assume their responsibilities to help end this war.<sup>297</sup> Even if Zayed showed support to Iraq, he made sure not to alienate Tehran either. But most importantly, he expressed his opposition to any foreign power's interference in the conflict.<sup>298</sup> He favored instead a solution negotiated within the Arab and Islamic context.

### **Zayed's Position Towards The Kuwait Crisis**

During the Iraq-Iran war, many nations such as Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union, UAE, and France provided Iraq with financial assistance to help in its weapons procurement drive. Beside its diplomatic support Kuwait provided Baghdad with some \$10 billion. However, signs of tension between the Iraqi regime and the Kuwaiti authorities began to emerge right after the war in 1988. When the war ended, Iraq accumulated a foreign debt of over \$80 billion, making economic reconstruction difficult.<sup>299</sup> Amid the difficulty to increase its revenues, Iraq claimed that Kuwait was undertaking actions that impaired its reconstruction drive, such as pumping oil from a field that is located at the Iraq-Kuwait borders and selling more than its allotted OPEC share. Consequently, Iraq demanded that Kuwait forgive its debt and help with other payments, which Kuwait refused.<sup>300</sup> It is noteworthy that the Sheikh Zayed tried to

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<sup>296</sup>Al Abed, Vine, Al Jabali, (eds)., *Chronicle of Progress. Op. Cit.*, (1996)., p.283

<sup>297</sup>*Ibid.* p. 277

<sup>298</sup>*Ibid.* p. 209

<sup>299</sup>Mark R. Amstutz, *International Ethics: Concepts, Theories and Cases in Global Politics* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc. (2004), p.113

<sup>300</sup>*Ibid*



promote reconciliation between the two countries in this matter. During the emergency Arab summit meeting held in Baghdad in May 1990, he urged Arab leaders to endeavor towards achieving 'effective Arab solidarity' in the face of challenges.<sup>301</sup>

On 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1990, Saddam Hussein ordered his troops to invade Kuwait. Within two days, the Iraqi army overcame the relatively small resistance they faced from Kuwaiti forces, and had full control over Kuwait city and the rest of the country. At a time when Sheikh Zayed was working to build an Arab unity, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was a serious blow that put an end to his dream as it brought an environment of separation and mistrust between Arab peoples. As a leader who rejected aggression against any country, Sheikh Zayed never condoned violence as a way to resolve disputes, and accordingly, he refused any compromise with Saddam.<sup>302</sup> Sheikh Zayed showed determination to fight in order to defend justice. As soon as he learned about the invasion, he cut short a visit to Morocco, and rushed to meet King Fahd in Saudi Arabia and President Mubarak in Egypt, calling for an urgent Arab Summit to help resolve the crisis. With an uncompromising reaction, he strongly condemned the invasion and demanded an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.<sup>303</sup> Accordingly, the UAE shut down the Iraqi embassy in Abu Dhabi.

Sheikh Zayed's efforts in rejecting the aggression and occupation of the sovereign Kuwait and defending the legitimacy of its government under the leadership of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, comprised intensive contacts he made on the regional, Arab and international levels.

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<sup>301</sup> *Chronicle of Progress. Op. Cit.*, p.320

<sup>302</sup> Al -Sakhni, *Op. Cit.*, pp.107-109

<sup>303</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey. *Op. Cit.*, pp.4 -5, and also pp 388-391

On 17<sup>th</sup> January 1991, and with Iraq's refusal to withdraw its troops from Kuwait, a US-led international coalition of 30 countries launched a massive military operation code-named 'Desert Storm', which executed an intensive campaign of missile strikes on Iraq. The Pentagon-released images of missiles heading towards their definite objectives were picked up by network stations and broadcasted throughout the world. Several Gulf-Arab countries, led by Saudi Arabia, also joined in this military operation.<sup>304</sup> Although Sheikh Zayed never supported the presence of foreign forces in the Gulf, he allowed coalition forces to use UAE bases as staging points for the liberation. He gave directives to units from the UAE armed forces to join the alliance formed under the United Nations' approval. American aircrafts used Al-Dhafra air base near Abu Dhabi. These planes included U-2 and Global Hawk surveillance planes as well as refueling tankers.<sup>305</sup>

Despite pressures from some Arab leaders such as Jordan's King Hussein and Yemen's President Saleh, who sided with Saddam Hussein in the crisis, to make Abu Dhabi to soften its stance against Iraq,<sup>306</sup> Sheikh Zayed did not waiver and allowed the deployment of foreign forces in UAE's territory. He also gave his instructions to UAE armed forces to participate in the war as part of Diri' Al-Jazira (Peninsula Shield) Force that was established by the GCC in 1981. The government of the UAE provided all the necessary means for the armed forces to accomplish the tasks under Peninsula Shield's control. Consequently, Emirati troops played a significant role in the liberation of Kuwait.

With the start of the war, voluntary military training was called in the UAE army. This had started in the first days of the invasion, the UAE armed forces

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<sup>304</sup>Khalid Al-Qasimi, *Op. Cit., Hakim Al-Arab..* p.185

<sup>305</sup>USA Today, (2003) "US wants to keep presence in Persian Gulf." [online] Available at: [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-04-27-us-troops\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-04-27-us-troops_x.htm) [accessed 4 December 2008]

<sup>306</sup>William Rugh, *Op. Cit., Diplomacy and Defense* p.57

established several volunteer camps and centres for training Kuwaiti volunteers in the UAE, and the first group graduated in November 1990 while new volunteers have joined the training centres since.

The UAE was the first Gulf state to propose combined military action to expel Iraqi troops from Kuwait. Hence, it provided great support to the 'Desert Shield Operation' by making harbors, airfields, storage facilities and backup available for military personnel.<sup>307</sup> Around 1,500 Emirati troops served in the war, 6 of whom were killed and none were recorded as wounded or missing in combat. In addition, the UAE military were the first of GCC troops to enter the liberated Kuwait in February 1991. During the invasion period, and as part of the Kuwait support, Sheikh Zayed launched a campaign to provide refuge and financial assistance to the Kuwaiti people. Upon his directives, UAE government institutions and the people of the UAE warmly welcomed 66,000 Kuwaitis who were accommodated in hotels, provided with housing, free medical care, schooling, jobs and business opportunities.<sup>308</sup>

After the liberation of Kuwait, Sheikh Zayed called on the GCC leaders to re-evaluate their positions by reviewing their relations with other countries including those who supported the Iraqi invasion to Kuwait. He warned that future relations and plans should be revised in light of the new situation and that there was a need to take wise decisions on the way forward. He also called on the Iraqi government to liberate Kuwaiti prisoners.<sup>309</sup> Sheikh Zayed was the first GCC leader to visit Kuwait after its liberation. This was an important visit after the crisis in terms of concerting efforts towards reevaluation and unification of the GCC stances, as well as taking lessons from the invasion experience to strengthen the relations between GCC

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<sup>307</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey. *Ibid.*

<sup>308</sup> Wheatcroft, *Op. Cit.*, p.242.

<sup>309</sup> Khalid Al-Qasimi, *Ibid.*, pp.345-346.

countries and find solutions to consolidate peace in the Gulf and the wider Middle East.

During his visit Zayed met the Kuwaiti Ruler, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, and discussed the reconstruction. Sheikh Zayed emphasised UAE's continued support to Kuwait in the matters of reconstruction and development. Zayed also visited the UAE troops stationed in Kuwait and thanked them for their efforts confirming that their contribution was to prove loyalty for Kuwait and to defend common history and heritage.<sup>310</sup> In a speech to UAE Army troops who participated in the Kuwait liberation operation, Sheikh Zayed noted: "Kuwait is your second homeland in which you should make all efforts to support, even if this requires doubling your numbers and arms. We are ready to supply you with all what you need in a matter of hours. In Kuwait, Kuwaitis are your families, your parents and your children. Do not feel that you are strangers or alone. Your task and duty is to defend your country and parents."<sup>311</sup>

Zayed's commitment to the security and peace of this Gulf nation was confirmed four years later, when he was one of the few Arab leaders to send his troops back to Kuwait in a deterrence move in response to Iraq's threatening military build up at the borders with Kuwait.<sup>312</sup> For Sheikh Zayed, the Kuwait crisis proved to be an experience with strategic implications that demonstrated the need for closer military cooperation with the United States for the security of the entire region. It is significant that after the war Zayed received US General Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander of US forces and Coalition forces in the Kuwait liberation battle, and decorated him with the Independence order in recognition of the role that the US

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<sup>310</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>311</sup> Khalid Al-Qasimi, *Ibid.*, pp 328-329

<sup>312</sup> *Chronicle of Progress. Op. Cit.*, p.381

military played in restoring sovereignty and security to Kuwait.<sup>313</sup> This move reveals much about Zayed's evolving strategic thinking amid the potential threats looming over the region.

### **UAE's Stance on The Iraq Crisis and The American Invasion of Iraq**

After the Iraqi forces were expelled from Kuwait, and contrary to UAE's expectations that the Saddam's regime would crumble and he would fall from power, the Iraqi leader showed his ability to stay on. Consequently, the UAE continued to fully endorse the international condemnation of the policies of the Iraqi regime and the UN-sanctioned embargo against Iraq during and after the conflict. Hence it allowed US planes to use some of its airbases during their missions to enforce air embargo on Iraq's southern zone. Sheikh Zayed called in 1995, for an end to Iraq embargo<sup>314</sup>. When Sheikh Zayed came to the conclusion that the general embargo imposed on Iraq was not working, He expressed his deep concern about the impact that the sanctions have had upon the country and its people, and subsequently extended humanitarian aid to the Iraqi people who were suffering material deprivation that was worsening as time went by. He stressed the fact that Iraqi people were unjustly paying the price on Saddam Hussein's behalf and called for an immediate lifting of the sanctions.<sup>315</sup> The UAE also feared that Iraq was severely weakened to the point that it would be less able to play a balancing role against Iran in the region.<sup>316</sup> In fact, since the pre-federation era, Iran has been looming as a potential geopolitical threat to the security and territorial integrity of the UAE and other Gulf

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<sup>313</sup> William Rugh, *Op. Cit.*, "*Leadership: Past, Present and Future*" p.259

<sup>314</sup> Al-Sakhni, *op. cit.*, pp.109-110

<sup>315</sup> Kamal Hamza, *Zayed, a Mark on the Forehead of History* (Arabic) (2006) p.168

<sup>316</sup> William Rugh, "*UAE Foreign Policy*" in *Perspectives on the United Arab Emirates* (Eds) E. Ghareeb & I. Al-Abed (1997) p.167

countries. With a weakened Iraq, the balance of power in the Gulf region would be dangerously fragile.

Consequently, Sheikh Zayed moved towards garnering support for the lifting of the sanctions against Iraq. He called for the rehabilitation of Iraq in inter-Arab and international politics. He also worked towards bridging the gaps that emerged between Arab countries in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In 1992, he was the first Arab leader to call for reconciliation with Arab countries that sided with Iraq during Kuwait's invasion and advocated a complete Arab reconciliation with Iraq in 1995.<sup>317</sup> He argued on many occasions that Saddam Hussein had made a mistake and that he was paying the price, that the Iraqi population was facing hunger and need, stressing that Arabs must not remain silent about the distress and hunger of 18 million Arabs whether this pleased the West or not.<sup>318</sup>

Despite Kuwaiti displeasure, Sheikh Zayed continued to argue for a lifting of the embargo. The UAE has, provided an extensive amount of humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi civilians, ensuring, as far as possible, that the aid reaches those for whom it was intended so as to ease their suffering. In 1998 the UAE restored the diplomatic relations with Iraq.<sup>319</sup> With regards to the escalation of the crisis between USA and Iraq in early 1998, Sheikh Zayed spoke out clearly in favor of diplomacy. He argued that a resort to military action against Iraq would have repercussions on the stability and security of the Arabian Gulf in particular and the Middle East region in general. He asserted that the war would also have a negative impact on the relations between the East and the West as he believed it would undermine the historical achievements built throughout the years based on mutual trust and cooperation, especially as Iraq was suffering from two past wars and was no longer a threat to the region, with a deep

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<sup>317</sup> Nayef A. Obaid, *The Foreign Policy of the UAE* (2004) pp.155-156

<sup>318</sup> Chronicle of Progress. *Op. Cit.*, p.398

<sup>319</sup> Raed Kassim, *Emirates: the Arab Miracle* (Arabic) (2007) pp.140-141

belief that the war would not end its problems. Zayed called on the Iraqi leadership to comply fully with the UN resolutions and to do everything possible to remove any excuse for war.<sup>320</sup> As the impending invasion of Iraq loomed in late 2002, Sheikh Zayed reaffirmed his belief that war would never solve the problem. In 2003, he hoped to avert the U.S. invasion of Iraq, as he tried hard to persuade Iraq's leadership to go voluntarily into exile, so as to prevent their country suffering from a third catastrophic conflict in just over two decades. He called on Saddam Hussein to step down, but his offer was rejected. That was probably the last chance to avert the catastrophe of overtaking Iraq.<sup>321</sup>

When the US-led coalition was preparing to invade Iraq, Sheikh Zayed declined to allow UAE bases to be used. Later, once the war had taken place, he expressed his disappointment. In fact, the UAE did not support the invasion of Iraq and endeavored instead to avert its consequences on both the people and the area. Zayed urged Saddam to resign and offered him asylum in the UAE to no avail. During the invasion the UAE was the first Arab country to receive members of the Iraqi Transitional Council. The UAE also cooperated closely with other Arab states for the sake of maintaining the unity of Iraq.<sup>322</sup> When the war ended, the UAE emerged as one of the major international donors to Iraq's reconstruction program. It has at the same time welcomed the restoration of sovereignty to Iraq that took place in mid-2004, and offered the hand of friendship and assistance to the new Iraqi government.<sup>323</sup>

The UAE continuously emphasised its support to the Iraqi people and provided them with aid and grants after the war. During the invasion, the UAE

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<sup>320</sup> Cited in William Rugh, *Op. Cit., Diplomacy and Defense* p.65

<sup>321</sup> Khalid Al-Mutawa, *Op. Cit.*, p.99

<sup>322</sup> Korany and Dessouki, *Op.Cit*, p.476

<sup>323</sup> Khaled Al-Qasimi, *Ibid*

hurried to provide assistance to the Iraqi people by providing medical and humanitarian support, which included building medical units and other forms of assistance such as installing water sterilisation stations, sending food and medicine shipments and providing many other forms of development support.<sup>324</sup>

The UAE supported the efforts of the Iraqis to rebuild their country and retrieve control over all their affairs. During and after the war, the UAE provided, air, onshore and offshore bridges to support the Iraqi people, Sheikh Zayed continuously warned the international community against delay in the reconstruction and building of Iraq and the UAE donated \$215 million at the Madrid Conference for the reconstruction of Iraq and supported all the efforts to ensure the return of stability and security to the country.<sup>325</sup> These stances taken by the UAE under Zayed's leadership generated appreciation among Iraqi people who expressed respect to him as a fervent Arab nationalist and considered him to be the most supportive Arab leader who felt their pains and their plight during the hard times that their country was experiencing.<sup>326</sup>

## **Section Two: Tackling Crises in the Arab World**

### **The Palestinian Cause**

While issues directly affecting the Gulf region remained central to Zayed's policy, the Palestinian question occupied a prominent place in the late President's agenda. In fact, the UAE perceived the Palestinian cause as a matter that directly impinged upon its interests and reaffirmed its staunch support for the broad concept of

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<sup>324</sup> For extensive details on the various humanitarian and relief actions taken by some of the UAE relief organizations in Iraq since the outbreak of the war in 2003, see Shujairi No'man. & Ahmed, Alam Eldin, *Op. Cit.* (2007). pp.103-199

<sup>325</sup> Khalid Al Mutawa, *Ibid*

<sup>326</sup> Kamal Hamza. *Ibid.*, p.167



Arab nationalism and defence of legitimate rights of peoples anywhere in the Arab and Islamic worlds. Moreover, the support of this cause is based on UAE's leadership's belief in the indivisibility of regional security and stability. Indeed, the United Arab Emirates tended to perceive Gulf security and stability as directly linked to the situation in Palestine and to the prospects of resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict. Peace in Palestine would mean a stable and prosperous Gulf region as well, while conflict and instability in Palestine would contribute to regional unrest.<sup>327</sup> This reality has been confirmed by many developments on the ground that involved Israel and some Arab countries such as the bombing of the *Osirak* nuclear facility in Iraq by Israeli warplanes in 1981, which sent ripples of concern across the Gulf region about Israel's threat to the vital installations of the Gulf states,<sup>328</sup> and the 1973 war that saw behind-the-scenes involvement of western countries against Arab interests, not to mention Arab nationalist feelings among the population that urged their government to act in this conflict. The problem represented, therefore, an entanglement of factors that could not be ignored by the UAE leadership vis-à-vis the Palestinian question.

Consequently, Sheikh Zayed unequivocally associated himself with the Arab view that strongly opposed Israeli occupation of Arab territory and, as early as 1967, before the formation of the UAE, extended financial support to the Palestinian liberation movements<sup>329</sup> and continued to do so throughout his reign. He also supported "the confrontation states" of Egypt, Syria and Jordan through many ways. In a significant decision taken in coordination of a relative Arab League resolution,

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<sup>327</sup> Khalil E. Jahshan, "The UAE and the Case of Palestine" in *A Century in Thirty Years. Op. Cit.* pp. 205-206

<sup>328</sup> Hassan H. Al-Alkim, *The Foreign Policy of the United Arab Emirates.* (1989) p.175

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid* p.172

Zayed issued in October 1972 a federal decree regarding UAE's adherence to the boycott of Israel.<sup>330</sup>

In the early years of the UAE federation, the support of the Palestinian question and the confrontation states against Israel confirmed its commitment to Arab issues and reinforced its recognition from Arab states, which helped to protect it from radical tendencies that were active at that time in the region.<sup>331</sup> Sheikh Zayed continued to assert that there would be no peace in the Middle East as long as the Palestinian people were deprived from their legitimate rights and land,<sup>332</sup> and as long as Israel did not reconsider its expansionist ambitions, violence and aggression against Arab territories.<sup>333</sup> In this context he described the role of the UAE has been calling for "the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on the withdrawal of Israel forces from all the occupied Arab lands and the restitution of the rights of the Palestinians, especially their right to return to their homes, to establish their independent state and restore their rightful sovereignty over their national soil".<sup>334</sup>

When the first *Intifada* (Uprising) broke out in 1987, Sheikh Zayed declared that such movements would succeed because of their just demands, and offered all the possible support to the Palestinians, stressing the necessity of supporting the Palestinian uprising and accelerating it.<sup>335</sup> On another occasion he argued for the *intifada* as an uprising of an unarmed people who reject slavery and wish for their freedom and human rights.<sup>336</sup> Zayed continued to show similar support for the second *Intifada* which erupted in 2000 following Ariel Sharon's visit to the Muslim holy site

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<sup>330</sup> *Chronicles of Progress*. p.31

<sup>331</sup> William Rugh, *Diplomacy and defense Policy.. Op. Cit. P.20.*

<sup>332</sup> Khaled Al-Qasimi, *Op. Cit., Zayed the Leader..*

<sup>333</sup> Al-Sakhni, *Op. Cit.*, pp.94-95.

<sup>334</sup> Al-Sakhni, *Ibid.*

<sup>335</sup> *Chronicles of Progress*. P.302.

<sup>336</sup> Al Doaifi and Al-Siksek, *Op. Cit.*,(1991). p.217.

of the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. Sheikh Zayed's view was that a solution to the crisis in Palestine and the Middle East could take place only after total withdrawal of Israeli forces from the territories occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem. In a message conveyed to the emergency 18<sup>th</sup> Arab summit on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2000, he asserted that "Just and comprehensive peace has always been our strategic choice and we have been consistently calling for a just settlement that will retain the Palestinians' right to set up their independent state with Jerusalem as its capital, [and] guarantee the return of all Palestinian refugees."<sup>337</sup>

UAE not only supported the Palestinian legitimate rights to restore their homeland by extending its political backing, but it also provided Palestinians with generous economic support to help them build their infrastructure and defend themselves from Israeli aggressions. In fact, during the first three decades of its existence the UAE contributed more than \$2.5 billion to the Palestinians.<sup>338</sup> The UAE was also an active participant in the Donors Conference pledging in 1 \$50 million in 1998. In 1993, after the Oslo Accords, it donated \$25 million for infrastructure projects in Palestine.<sup>339</sup> Subsequently, following the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in Gaza and on parts of the occupied West Bank, the UAE has provided substantial financial support and help for the building of a national infrastructure, including houses, roads, schools, hospitals. The UAE also financed the restoration of Muslim and Christian sites in the city of Jerusalem. As part of Sheikh Zayed's support, the UAE announced several major projects. Of these, the construction of a \$62 million housing project in Gaza in 1999 (completed in 2004), named Sheikh Zayed City provided housing, roads, mosque, hospital, market, sewage and

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<sup>337</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, P. Hellyer, *Op. Cit.*, (2001). P.93.

<sup>338</sup> Jahshan, *Op. Cit.* P.208.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*

telecommunication facilities.<sup>340</sup> Sheikh Zayed personally financed many health services, constructed hospitals, and special institutions for the handicapped people in North Gaza. When the Israelis destroyed the Jenin Camp in 2002, he gave instructions to rebuild the camp with costs estimated at \$70 million. In addition, the UAE also provided continued financial assistance to the widows and orphans at all Palestinian camps.<sup>341</sup> In general, after each Israeli destructive offensive, the UAE is among the first countries to intervene to restore the damaged infrastructure and provide humanitarian relief.

Regarding the United States, though Zayed recognized Washington's role as a mediator in the peace process between Israel and the Arabs, he nonetheless did not hesitate on some occasions to express his frustration toward the superpower whenever the Americans showed bias towards Israel and did not act according to their responsibility as a credible broker. For example in 1981, Sheikh Zayed wondered with astonishment why "the United States of America is persisting in furnishing Israel with finance and equipment" while Israel is the one who is committing aggressions against Palestinians.<sup>342</sup> Referring to the US administration's decision to move forward towards setting up a complete strategic cooperation with Israel, Zayed warned of a possible collapse of Arab-American relations due to American support to Israeli aggressions.<sup>343</sup> Similar criticism was conveyed to the Americans through the *New York Times* when he asserted that the United States was not acting fairly in the peace process as it favours the Israeli views against the Palestinians in all its initiatives and

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<sup>340</sup> Kamal Hamza, *Ibid.*, pp.162-163.

<sup>341</sup> Khalid Al-Mutawa, *Op. Cit.*, pp.214-215.

<sup>342</sup> Al Doaifi and Al-Siksek, *Op. Cit.*,(1991). p.266.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*

policies, reiterating his warning that if the deadlock continues it "will unleash uncontrollable forces that could get out of hand".<sup>344</sup>

### **The October War and Arab Boycott of Egypt**

The October War of 1973 that broke out between Israel on one side and Egypt and Syria on the other, was a milestone in UAE's foreign policy and Arab politics. It was the first occasion for the newly established federation to become directly involved in the Arab causes and was a political opportunity for the UAE to become fully accepted as integral part of the Arab world.<sup>345</sup> The UAE played an important political and economic role in this war. Sheikh Zayed's position in this conflict translated in providing extraordinary and unprecedented support to the 'confrontation states', namely Egypt, Syria and Jordan in their war that was designed to liberate their territories occupied by Israel since 1967, courageously declaring, "The Arab oil is not dearer than the Arab blood".<sup>346</sup> Thus Sheikh Zayed, after endorsing the Arab League's and the Islamic Conference's Pact against Israel, was the first Arab leader to announce an embargo on oil against the United States<sup>347</sup> as part of an Arab strategy to use oil as a weapon against western powers that sided against Arab interests.

The UAE's stand was firm, clear and specific. Though some Arab oil producing countries opted at first for a gradual cut in exports to Europe and the United States starting at 5 percent, Zayed considered this cut to be ineffective and advocated from the outset for the implementation of a 100 percent boycott. The decision for imposing an oil embargo on western countries, namely the United States and the Netherlands, was a critical and responsible decision, especially at the early stages of the establishment of the UAE federation. At such a stage, normally the

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<sup>344</sup> Republished by Gulf News, 2 December 1999.

<sup>345</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *op. cit.*, pp. 382-383.

<sup>346</sup> Al Sakhni, *Ibid.*

<sup>347</sup> Reich, *Op. Cit.*, P520.

countries' efforts are focused toward establishing good relationships with other countries especially the most powerful ones.<sup>348</sup> However, mindful of the strategic depth that the Arab world constitutes for the UAE and the seriousness of the conflict against the region, Zayed opted rather for a tactical alienation of Washington, as his immediate goal was the consolidation of ties with his neighborhood.

Subsequently his call for a total boycott was welcomed by the Arab nations and made the more cautious Arab oil exporting countries quickly fall in line behind his initiative. This imposed oil boycott proved to be a very effective weapon since the Western nations in general and the United States in particular, came to realize that irrational support of Israel carried a price.<sup>349</sup> Sheikh Zayed's resolution did not waiver, he was convinced of the efficiency of this bargaining weapon and even asserted that "the oil embargo would continue until the United States fulfilled its promises"<sup>350</sup> regarding the conflict. His great beliefs in justice and human rights made him take this step, which was followed by similar action by other Arab oil-producing countries and proved to be a crucial factor that made the balance of power in this conflict in favor of the Arabs for the first time in the Arab-Israeli struggle history.

Sheikh Zayed was the first Arab leader to provide financial support to the Arab countries fighting Israel. He donated a £100 million in support to Egypt and Syria.<sup>351</sup> As a representative of all Arab countries that had diplomatic representation in the United Kingdom, he called for a meeting with the British Prime Minister, Sir Edward Heath, and asked him to identify the United Kingdom's position with regard to the war.<sup>352</sup> Sheikh Zayed declared that the UAE support to the confrontation

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<sup>348</sup> Kamal Hamza. *Ibid.*

<sup>349</sup> Wheatcroft, *Op. Cit.*, pp.277-278.

<sup>350</sup> Chronicle of Progress. *Op. Cit.*, P52.

<sup>351</sup> Al-Alkim H. (1989:195) refers to reports that claim that 7.5 percent of UAE foreign aid went to confrontation states and the Palestinian Liberation Movement.

<sup>352</sup> Kamal Hamza, *Ibid.*

countries began before the battle and would continue until the goals of the Arab nations were achieved.<sup>353</sup>

Further support came in the form of medical teams and equipment. The UAE decided to send medical teams to the war fronts and to establish centers for blood donations. A team of 44 doctors, pharmacists and nurses with large quantities of medicine and medical equipment arrived Damascus on 15 October. Zayed instructed the UAE ambassador in London to buy medical equipment from Western Europe and send it directly to Egypt and Syria at his personal expense.<sup>354</sup> In addition, fully aware of the impact of the media on the international opinion and in order to ensure fair media coverage of the war in Arab and international media outlets, the UAE president invited around 40 reporters and journalists representing large media organisations in the UK and Western Europe to cover the war activities at his personal expense on both Egyptian and Syrian fronts.<sup>355</sup>

Sheikh Zayed's stance in dealing with the crisis attracted worldwide attention to the newly-born Federation, the United Arab Emirates. The country's voice became heard and respected in the rest of the Arab and Muslim world. Furthermore, Sheikh Zayed became renowned regionally for his political acumen and skills.<sup>356</sup> His attitude induced the world to give the Arab nation due consideration and pay it due respect. It also demonstrated the potential and scope of the power that lay in Arab hands. Sheikh Zayed stated that the great union of the Arab countries must continue to achieve the rights of the Arab nations whether in war or in peace.<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Ahmed K. Al Suwaidi, *Op. Cit.*, pp.37-48

<sup>354</sup> Hassan Al-Alkim, *Ibid.*

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>356</sup> Frauke Heard-Bey, *Ibid.*

<sup>357</sup> Ahmed K. Al-Suwaidi, *Ibid.*

After the October War, the Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat, signed a unilateral peace agreement with Israel, the Camp David Accord, in September 1978. This step divided the Arab world. The majority of Arab countries imposed a boycott on Egypt and ceased diplomatic relations with the country. Sheikh Zayed did not welcome Egypt's separation from the Arab world; as he believed that Egypt was part of the great Arab world and the Egyptian population represented a large part of the Arab nation.

On several occasions, Sheikh Zayed attempted to reconcile the opposing camps, and called Arabs to restore relations with Egypt with great belief of Arab solidarity and a common Arab destiny and because the return of Egypt to the Arab ranks served the interest of the Arab nation. Sheikh Zayed continuously took the lead in moves to reintegrate Egypt back into the Arab world. At the emergency Arab Summit Conference in Amman in 1987, Sheikh Zayed called on the Arab leaders to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt and declared that the UAE would restore full diplomatic relations with Egypt after the summit.<sup>358</sup> This step was the beginning of Egypt's return to the Arab ranks.

### **Lebanon**

The Lebanese crisis was another area of concern for Sheikh Zayed in all its aspects including the Lebanese-Palestinians conflicts and inter-Lebanese disputes. He always rejected fights and conflicts between the Arabs as nations and always worked hard with all parties and friendly countries to put an end to the disputes. He considered the crisis to be an obstacle that split the Arab nation.<sup>359</sup> He emphasized that this type of war leads to destruction, loss of lives and wealth with no reason and

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<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>359</sup> Al-Sakhni, *Op. Cit.*, pp104-105



continuously called all the conflicting parties to stop the war and save Arab blood. He highlighted that all efforts should be directed toward fighting the common enemy to liberate all the occupied Arab lands.

In an attempt to reconcile the disputes and bring an end to civil strife, the UAE played a more pro-active role in peacekeeping operations and joined the Joint Arab Deterrent Force in 1977 that sought for a few years to bring to an end the civil strife in Lebanon. This was the first time that the UAE armed forces took an assignment outside the UAE borders.<sup>360</sup> In this context, in one of his speeches Sheikh Zayed said, “The UAE stand is clear and direct toward the Lebanese tragedy. We support Lebanon morally and financially to help this country maintain its Arab authenticity... our stance, which we do not change, is that Lebanon is one land and one nation. We sent our armed forces to contribute together with the Joint Arab Deterrent forces in order to save Lebanon, the dear country to our heart, and some of our soldiers were killed defending Lebanon Arabism and its territorial integrity”.<sup>361</sup>

During the Lebanese civil war in 1986, Sheikh Zayed called the Lebanese parties to stop the war and approached them to opt for dialogue to solve their disputes. He urged all Arab countries to work seriously and loyally in order to assist Lebanon out of its bloody crisis and to prevent foreigners from interfering in order that Lebanon does not become another cause that will exhaust Arab efforts and strength. He also urged all peace loving countries to support Lebanon’s efforts to overcome the civil war crisis and put an end to the tragedy and suffering caused by this war.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>360</sup> Nayef A. Obaid, *Ibid.*.

<sup>361</sup> Al Sakhni, *Ibid.*

<sup>362</sup> Kamal Hamza, *Op. Cit.*, pp.164-165.

During the 1990s, Sheikh Zayed's political wisdom and tactical experience helped him manage the Lebanese conflicting parties and help them reach a compromise through the decisions of the Al Taef Agreement, in Saudi Arabia.<sup>363</sup>

After the Paris conference, the UAE also had directly contributed to rebuilding the Lebanese economy, by providing US\$ 500 million as financial support and by opening two fixed deposit accounts valued at US\$ 100 million each in Lebanese Central Bank in addition to joint projects and dual agreements which greatly encouraged investment opportunities for Emirati businessmen to invest in Lebanon.<sup>364</sup> Sheikh Zayed also took up the Lebanese cause into international arenas. When the Israeli troops withdrew from South Lebanon after 22 years of occupation, they left behind hundreds of thousand of mines, which killed many Lebanese people. In order to reduce and eliminate the casualties, Sheikh Zayed took a personal initiative by funding some US \$50 million and a mandate to clear the mines using laser technology, remote sensing equipment and automated devices.<sup>365</sup> The UAE army took another major international mission in removing land mines still present in South Lebanon in conjunction with the Lebanese Army and the UN, so that the Lebanese civilian population could return to their homes and land. By August 2004, around 56,470 anti personnel mines, some 1,640 tank mines and around 4,375 pieces of unexploded bombs were collected.<sup>366</sup>

Furthermore, numerous forms of support were provided to Lebanon, which suffered from several crises such as civil war and struggle with Israel, in addition to the peace keeping and political backup and support, substantial amounts of aid and

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<sup>363</sup> Khalid Al-Mutawa, *Ibid.*, p.16

<sup>364</sup> Kamal Hamza. *Ibid.* p.166

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 164-165

<sup>366</sup> Stuart Land, *Op. Cit.*, pp190-192

financial assistance have also been provided to Lebanon, to help it recover from the devastation caused by the civil war.<sup>367</sup>

## **Yemen**

Though the Republic of Yemen was declared in 1990 following the unification of the People's Republic of Yemen (Southern Yemen) and the Yemen Arab Republic (Northern Yemen), tensions remained threatening a potential spilt with armed confrontation. Shheikh Zayed sought to calm the situation, called upon the fighting factions to find a solution and offered his help to avoid civil war. In March 1994, Sheikh Zayed separately met with the Yemen President Mr. Ali Abdulla Saleh (a northerner) and with the Deputy President Mr. Ali Salem Al Baidh (a southerner), where he conveyed his deep anxiety over the conflict and urged them to exert all necessary efforts to maintain Yemen's integrity. He advised both parties to work towards resolving conflicts taking into consideration the interests for both the North and South noting that there was no time to be wasted and there was a great need for both parties to meet and resolve the conflicts and disputes peacefully.<sup>368</sup>

In May 1994, with the outbreak of civil war, Sheikh Zayed intensified his mediation efforts and appealed to the clashing leaders to let wisdom prevail instead of arms. He called on them to take the interests of their people into consideration, warning that they would bear responsibility for any spread of fighting. He also expressed the UAE's readiness to mediate so stability could return to Yemen on the condition of an immediate ceasefire.<sup>369</sup> Zayed spared no effort in trying to restore the spirit of reconciliation to ensure and end to the disputes and to bring stability and security to

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<sup>367</sup> Khalid Al-Mutwa, *Ibid.*, p.223

<sup>368</sup> Nayef Ali Obaid, *Ibid.* and *Chronicle of Progress, Op. Cit. P.376*

<sup>369</sup> *Chronicle of Progress, Ibid.* p..378

the region.<sup>370</sup> In July 1994, the northerners won and the clashes stopped, however tensions continued and prompted Zayed to continue his mediation efforts and called on Yemenis to engage in dialogue and national reconciliation.<sup>371</sup>

## **Somalia**

The conflicts in Somalia were another cause of concern to Sheikh Zayed. As per Sheikh Zayed's directives, the UAE supported international efforts for the assistance of the Somali people to overcome their distress and provided humanitarian relief to the suffering Somalis.

In 1992, the UAE played a pro-active role in international peacekeeping operations. The UAE Armed Forces participated in the joint Arab Deterrent Force and in the United Nations (UNISOM II) peacekeeping in Somalia.<sup>372</sup> The UAE's contribution was in the forms of providing military aid, setting up hospitals, drilling water wells and setting up relief centres. UAE military engineers also contributed actively in crucial operations such as clearing mines, building schools and infrastructure.<sup>373</sup> This participation was a reflection of Sheikh Zayed's belief in international solidarity and the UAE's commitment towards acting through goodwill and humanitarian initiatives on the international scene by providing relief, assistance and cooperation.

Consequently, the widespread respect and credibility enjoyed by Sheikh Zayed and the UAE's commitment to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and reconciliation among fellow Arabs have often positioned the country to play a unique role in mediating conflicts in the region. Such diplomatic efforts were made over the past decades to help mend conflicts that involved Arabs not only with foreign powers but

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<sup>370</sup> Al-Sakhni, *Ibid.*, pp.106-107

<sup>371</sup> Chronicle of Progress, *Ibid.* p..379

<sup>372</sup> Nayef A. Obaid, *Op. Cit.*, pp.170-171

<sup>373</sup> Christopher M. Davidson, *Dubai: The Vulnerability of Success.* (2008) p.172

also among Arabs themselves. Unsurprisingly, Zayed perceived this objective to be a top priority in his foreign policy when he declared in 1974 that the duty of the UAE leadership was "to persistently seek to reconcile our brothers because neglecting this duty leads to great loss and difficulties".<sup>374</sup>

### **Section Three: International Crises**

#### **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

After the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, conflict erupted between ethnic communities to establish their own independent sovereign states, which resulted in armed confrontations that in turn led to massacres committed against Bosnian Muslims during the 1990s. These events, though they caused international outrage, did not receive an adequate response from the big powers. For humanitarian reasons and in an act of solidarity with fellow Muslims, the UAE became involved in this conflict. Thus, Abu Dhabi continued to urge the international community to take serious steps to stop the aggression against innocent people.

When the Serbs were perpetrating attacks against Bosnians, Sheikh Zayed urged the international community to act; while receiving the UN Secretary General, Boutros Ghali, he requested that the UN deal more seriously with "the acute tragedy of the Muslim people of Bosnia."<sup>375</sup> Zayed was also outraged by the inaction of the international community and the arms embargo imposed on the Bosnians, especially when the Serbs in Bosnia had a clear advantage in terms of weaponry. He said that it was "incomprehensible that nothing was being done to protect this unfortunate country which, at the same time, was unable to obtain weapons for self-

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<sup>374</sup> Al Doaifi and Al-Siksek, *Op. Cit.*,(1991). pp. 30-31

<sup>375</sup> Chronicle of Progress, *Ibid.* p.366

defense”.<sup>376</sup> Subsequently, the UAE repeatedly called for the lifting of the weapons embargo and for an effective involvement of the big powers in the conflict. UAE citizens and residents were also urged to contribute with donations to assist the people of Bosnia.

Sheikh Zayed gave instructions to send relief supplies and medicines and participated in reconstruction projects in Bosnia. He went further than providing mere humanitarian support when he sent arms supplies and provided training on weapons in the UAE for Bosnian soldiers<sup>377</sup> in clear defiance of the arms embargo against the ill-equipped Bosnians. As soon as the international community succeeded to force the Serbs to cease their campaign of slaughter and aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sheikh Zayed promptly moved to ensure that substantial assistance and aid was provided to the Bosnian people to help them rebuild their society.

### **Kosovo**

In early 1999, another campaign of Serbian violence began against yet another Muslim population in the region; the Albanians of Kosovo. Sheikh Zayed was one of the first world leaders who expressed their support for the decision by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to launch its aerial campaign to force Serbia halt its genocidal activities against the Muslims in Kosovo. He decided that the UAE should play a more pro-active role in international peacekeeping operations in that region. Accordingly, Zayed ordered the UAE Armed Forces to participate within the framework of a peacekeeping force operating under the aegis of the United Nations. In 1999, the UAE gained international attention by being the first non-NATO country

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<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.* p.375

<sup>377</sup> William Rugh, *Op. Cit., Diplomacy and Defense..* p.100

and the only Arab and Muslim state to join the NATO-led peacekeeping forces in Kosovo (KFOR).<sup>378</sup>

This pioneering role played by the UAE received admiration from the international community, particularly from the United Nations. The most notable contribution was the participation of the UAE army in the reconstruction of Kosovo as well as in providing relief to displaced civilians. UAE forces built a refugee camp for Kosovans and embarked on a program to rebuild and operate Kukes airstrip. These achievements were commended by the United Nation and Kofi Anna described the assistance as the most help to the Albanians since the start of the crisis. He noted that without that airport, the UN-led relief assistance provided to the Kosovan people would have been very difficult to deliver.<sup>379</sup> In addition to sharing military forces, the Abu Dhabi Red Crescent Society played a vital role in the provision of aid, as well as in providing relief for Kosovo refugees. The UAE also sent a mobile medical team to treat exhausted Kosovo refugees, using mobile clinics and sent several planeloads carrying tons of supplies and aid.

### **9/11 Attacks and Terrorism**

Throughout his lifetime, Sheikh Zayed sought to promote tolerance and moderation as important principles prescribed by Islam to ensure coexistence among the peoples of various creeds. He continuously condemned and rejected all forms of extremism, violence and terrorist acts, irrespective of their motives or sources. He warned that the consequences of these acts pose great dangers and represent a threat against the safety, stability and security of all peoples and nations. The UAE repeatedly condemned international terrorism in all its forms stressing that it must be

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<sup>378</sup> Stuart Land, *Ibid.*, p.189

<sup>379</sup> *Ibid.*

combated.<sup>380</sup> Zayed deeply believed that terrorism was a phenomenon that is alien to Muslims and to the teachings of Islam.<sup>381</sup> Within that context, Sheikh Zayed has set his stance firmly against those who preach intolerance and hatred. He considered terrorists to be apostates and criminals who have nothing whatsoever that connects them to Islam, and always refused to provide donations or pay respect to any terrorist groups or to grant them with any form of political backup or asylum.<sup>382</sup>

Sheikh Zayed continuously recognised the necessity of not only eradicating terrorism, but also tackling its fundamental causes and, in particular, what he described as “the daily and continuous acts of terrorism being committed by Israeli occupation forces in the occupied Palestinian territories against the unarmed Palestinian people”. He believed that besides the international campaign against the various types of terrorism, there should be a strong international alliance that works, in parallel, to exert real and sincere efforts to bring about a just and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict and to stop the daily killings, deportations and destruction in the Palestinian occupied lands.<sup>383</sup>

Following the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 attacks against the United States, Sheikh Zayed noted that the UAE "clearly and unequivocally condemns the criminal acts that took place in New York and Washington, resulting in the deaths and injuries of thousands of people."<sup>384</sup> He also called for the need for a direct move and a strong international alliance to eradicate terrorism, and all those who harbour terrorists and provide them with assistance.

When it was reportedly found that two of the eleven hijackers were citizens of the UAE, and that some of the funds used by the terrorists had come from bank accounts

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<sup>380</sup> *Chronicle of Progress. Op. Cit.*, p.394

<sup>381</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>382</sup> Sheikha Mouza. *Op. Cit.*, p126

<sup>383</sup> Nayef A. Obaid, *Ibid*.

<sup>384</sup> *Ibid*.



in Dubai, the UAE government reacted swiftly, closing accounts and freezing the assets of anyone suspected of involvement in these tragic events.<sup>385</sup> The federation also cooperated with the United States in exchanging intelligence information about suspected individuals or organizations. These efforts earned the UAE praise from the US government, which considered the federation "a leading partner in the campaign against global terrorism, providing assistance in the military, diplomatic, and financial arenas since September 11, 2001."<sup>386</sup> Moreover, the UAE also broke off its diplomatic relations with the Taliban regime, which the Americans accused of harboring alleged Al-Qaida leader, Osama Bin Laden, who Washington accuses of being the main culprit behind 9/11.

Sheikh Zayed called continually for a better understanding between people of the world's faiths, as the eradication of one or more individuals will not end the terrorist acts in a permanent way when hundreds or thousands of others may step forward to replace them. He called for a true dialogue between religions as the real tools as he believed these are the means of the strong defense against fundamentalism and extremism. At an international conference on terrorism held in Abu Dhabi in January 2003, a paper was delivered on Sheikh Zayed's behalf, that noted: "We cannot accept any link between terrorism and a specific religion or race . . . Terrorism is an international phenomenon that has no religion or race . . . We categorically reject the deliberate attempts to link terrorism with the right of a people to resist occupation".<sup>387</sup>

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<sup>385</sup> David C. King, *United Arab Emirates*, (2008) p. 40

<sup>386</sup> US State Department, [online], available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5444.htm> [accessed 15 July 2009].

<sup>387</sup> Gulf News (2005), [online], available at : [http://www.gulfnews.com/profile/Sheikh\\_zayed/puffs/mid\\_right/189590.html](http://www.gulfnews.com/profile/Sheikh_zayed/puffs/mid_right/189590.html). [accessed 3 December 2008]

## **Humanitarian Interventions**

Sheikh Zayed was not just an Arab nationalist and a devout Muslim, but a humanitarian personality. He never failed to extend help and support to the poor, oppressed and deserving. Under his leadership, the UAE played an active role in supporting the Islamic nations and those in need through contributions in development, wealth and expertise. The UAE has a policy of sharing its wealth with less fortunate countries. Sheikh Zayed noted, "We offer aid to Third World Countries, believing it to be our humanitarian duty to help these poor nations to overcome their problems, particularly if they are involved in confrontations."<sup>388</sup> Peoples throughout the developing world have benefited from a steady flow of development assistance. Thus, for example, the United Arab Emirates was the third largest Arab donor between 1973 and 1989, having contributed a total of about \$9.6 billion. In its early years, the federation was one of the leading donors in terms of GNP, with its assistance exceeding 10 percent of GNP.<sup>389</sup>

Through bodies such as the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, the Zayed Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation, as well as through institutions like the Red Crescent Society, the UAE played a major role in the provision of humanitarian relief worldwide with a commitment to the assistance of countries in need. Billions of US dollars were provided in aid to over 40 countries worldwide.<sup>390</sup> The UAE helped to set up health and education services, as well as infrastructure developments like housing and roads worldwide. While ensuring that the UAE shouldered such international responsibilities, Sheikh Zayed also made it clear that the UAE's role has been focused on relief and rehabilitation.

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<sup>388</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, eds., *United Arab Emirates Yearbook 1999*, (1999).

<sup>389</sup> Pierre Van den Boogaerde, *Financial Assistance from Arab Countries and Regional Institutions* (1991) p.13

<sup>390</sup> Nayef A. Obaid. *Ibid.*, pp.206-207

The UAE extended more than 90 percent of its aid on concessional terms.<sup>391</sup> Most of it took the form of bilateral aid, primarily consisting of cash grants provided to countries for developmental projects or rehabilitation purposes. In addition to the announced donations and different forms of aid, most of Sheikh Zayed charitable contributions went unnoticed. For every act that was reported to the public, there were several relevant or less important contributions that went unreported in the media. As part of his vision to help other Arab nations, Muslim countries and assistance worldwide, the following are instances of humanitarian interventions and aid contributions undertaken by the UAE upon Sheikh Zayed's instructions around the world:

- In Yemen, Sheikh Zayed provided a grant to finance the reconstruction of the historical dam of Ma'reb; the UAE contributed to the reconstruction of housing units which were destroyed by the earthquake and floods that hit Yemen in 1982; Sheikh Zayed provided a grant to construct the Sanaa' – Ma'reb Road, and another to establish Sanaa' TV. Other forms of financial support were provided to the Ministry of Information and Education in Yemen through the financing of books and providing scholarships to students. In addition, many other financial grants were provided for different aspects of support to the Yemeni people.<sup>392</sup>

- The UAE had continuously supported Jordan in many aspects of business and charitable acts as well as in the arenas of education, society, religion and sport. The UAE provided Jordan with several financial

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<sup>391</sup> Pierre Van den Boogaerde, *Ibid.*

<sup>392</sup> Khalid Al-Mutwa, *Op. Cit.*, pp.225-226

generous grants, in addition to other donations in the form of constructing buildings, schools, houses, providing medical services and adopting orphans.<sup>393</sup>

- In Syria, Sheikh Zayed financed many development projects; including electricity and power generation, telecommunications, and irrigation, drain nets, and construction of roads and factories. He also provided loans to finance development growth projects in 1976, 1992 and 1998 and encouraged the development of a free zone between Syria and UAE in 2000.<sup>394</sup>

- In Egypt, the UAE Fund provided support to help in financing cultivation and irrigation projects to the lands, which do not have water. Sheikh Zayed also financed construction of a water canal project with a cost of around 3.1 billion Egyptian pounds. In 1976, he financed the construction of a project to provide housing for around 24,000 people. He also financed the construction of Sheikh Zayed City with full logistics of public and medical services.<sup>395</sup>

- In Morocco, Sheikh Zayed provided support and donations to build housing for people in need in various cities in Morocco; he constructed several charitable organizations that look after orphans; and supported many health services programmes. He also contributed to several development programmes such as financing the construction of water dams, drilling wells, roads. He encouraged agriculture, which provided

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<sup>393</sup> *Ibid.*, p.221

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.211 –212

<sup>395</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.209-210

great job opportunities to reduce unemployment rates among the Moroccan youth. Sheikh Zayed also gave directives to plant over one million palm trees. In addition, he provided several loans and grants to the government to finance several development projects in Morocco.<sup>396</sup>

- In Algeria, Sheikh Zayed provided several donations, grants and loans to the government to finance the construction of dams and housing units. Following the earthquake that hit Algeria in 2003, the UAE provided a grant to help in the reconstruction of 800 housing units that were destroyed in the earthquake. In addition, the UAE Red Crescent Association adopted some 100 orphans who were victims of terrorism in Algeria in addition to many other forms of donations.<sup>397</sup>

- In Tunisia, during his visit to the country in 1998, Sheikh Zayed financed around 45% of one of the big agricultural projects which covered 8800 hectares of land.

- After the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks and the US invasion of Afghanistan, the UAE Red Crescent provided help both by land and by air to the different Afghani villages, where more than 32 planes carried hundreds of tons of food and medical supplies to the Afghani people as a relief from the war.<sup>398</sup>

- In 1999, the UAE provided financial and humanitarian aid to victims of natural disasters in Turkey and Pakistan.

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<sup>396</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.217-218

<sup>397</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.219-220

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*, p.229.

- In the developed world, Sheikh Zayed funded a project developed by former US President Jimmy Carter to eradicate a type of parasitic worm.<sup>399</sup>

The UAE has also made substantial donations to a number of UN agencies and to the Islamic Solidarity Fund, based in Jeddah, in addition to numerous donations in the form of medical and food support to various countries in the world, during the natural catastrophes such as famines, earthquakes, floods, and civil wars. Other charitable donations worldwide reached Iran, Sudan, Somalia, Mauritania, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Tanzania, Benin, Nigeria, Bosnia, Kosovo, Chechnya, Albania, Macedonia, Greece, Colombia, Bolivia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and many other countries. The generosity of Sheikh Zayed was felt everywhere in the Arab and Islamic worlds, as he was a key aid donor. Upon his directives, several residential units and Islamic centers were constructed and several research studies at different Islamic countries were funded. In recognition of his devotion to making the UAE a civilized country and honoring his belief that humanity is the essence of civilization and that progress is measured by the development of human beings, Sheikh Zayed was conferred an honorary doctorate in Humanities in 1999 by the Cairo-based Arab Academy for Science and Technology.<sup>400</sup>

However, the importance Sheikh Zayed gave to such acts of generosity and assistance can be viewed not only from a purely humanitarian perspective but also from the point of view of diplomacy. In fact, the various solidarity campaigns that the

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<sup>399</sup> UAEinteract (2004), "Zayed 'steadily charted the course of UAE's destiny", [online]. Available at : [http:// www.the-emirates.com/docs/Zayed\\_steadily\\_charted\\_the\\_course\\_of\\_UAEs\\_destiny/14019.htm](http://www.the-emirates.com/docs/Zayed_steadily_charted_the_course_of_UAEs_destiny/14019.htm) [accessed 21 December 2008]

<sup>400</sup> Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2000), "fruits of a Pragmatic Leadership" [online] available: <http://www.adcci.gov.ae:90/public/media/Magazines/August2000/report.htm> [accessed 9 Nov 08]

UAE launched in favor of many nations had a great impact on the status of the UAE as a player which has a say at the international arena in terms of resolving crises, relieving the sufferings of peoples, and launching development programs in various deprived regions of the globe. This helped the UAE to rapidly raise its diplomatic stature in a relatively short span of time within a difficult geopolitical environment. As a result, the UAE, which in 1971, had been a weak fledgling state facing hostile neighbors and with almost no friends, had established strong alliances in the Gulf and the Arab worlds by 2002, as well as strategic ties with the great powers and the West, and a position of widespread respect and influence in the world.<sup>401</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Sheikh Zayed was not only distinguished for his achievements in the UAE, but also towards Arab and Islamic causes including his audacious calls for oil embargos against the West during the October War and the lifting of sanctions against Iraq. Other stances of similar importance strongly marked Zayed's political rule. These include an unlimited support for the Palestinian cause, generous aid campaigns during the Bosnia and Kosovo crises, assistance to Afghan refugees, and in general, continuous donations and financial aid to those in need in the Arab and Islamic worlds. It is characteristic of Sheikh Zayed that he favours conciliation and peaceful settlements of disputes, whenever possible. As in domestic matters, a prominent characteristic of his foreign policy was his ability to reconcile differing views, preferring diplomacy to the use of force, this characteristic helped bring international recognition to the UAE and raise its diplomatic stature in a relatively short span of

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<sup>401</sup> William Rugh, *Op. Cit., Diplomacy and Defense..* p.117

time within a difficult geopolitical environment. Thanks to Zayed's policy pragmatism and moderation the UAE started to play a positive role in world affairs. Under Zayed's directives, UAE's role has been focused on the worldwide provision of international relief and rehabilitation on one hand, and peacekeeping and development assistance on the other. Thus the country's funds reached most Arab and Muslim and non-Muslim countries, either in the form of donations and grants, or construction projects that involved whole cities, modern hospitals, mosques, schools, factories and other development projects.

It is worth mentioning that Sheikh Zayed's remarkable contributions and achievements earned him international appreciation as a head of state. An international organization (the French Man of the Year Agency) chose Sheikh Zayed as the personality of the year 1988 in recognition of his political stances and his numerous achievements on the Arab and International levels as an uncompromising upholder of the just cause.<sup>402</sup> In sum, UAE policy towards Arab and international issues from the political and humanitarian perspectives remains an effective example of how this relatively new, small country managed to leverage its assets of strategic location, economic weight, charismatic leadership and political stability to enhance its influence and reputation throughout the region and the world.

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<sup>402</sup> Abu Dhabi official Website, Available at : <http://www.abudhabi.ae/Sites/Portal/Citizen/EN/root,did=14768,render=renderPrint.html> [accessed 6 Nov 08]



## **Chapter Four:**

### **HH Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan: Architect of The Welfare State**

#### **Introduction**

Having taken the reins in Abu Dhabi on August 6th, 1966, Sheikh Zayed developed a clear vision of his country's need for development, becoming determined that his own people should benefit from all facilities and services that the state could afford. The new spirit of hope and optimism that Zayed induced, prevailed when oil was discovered in commercial quantities in Abu Dhabi provided the financial means to turn his dream of development into reality. Sheikh Zayed began to use the oil revenues to make sweeping changes in all aspects of life. With oil revenues growing year by year, Sheikh Zayed became more determined to use them in the service of his people and thus launched a comprehensive, construction program of schools, housing, hospitals and roads. Since 1966, billions of Dirhams have been spent on development and the services sectors in Abu Dhabi which turning it into a modern metropolis joining the ranks of the world's modern cities in record time.

Once elected President of the newly formed United Arab Emirates, Zayed put Abu Dhabi's wealth at the disposal of the entire Federation setting his sight on the development of the new state's structures and the improvement of his countrymen's lives. Sheikh Zayed always believed that the country's wealth should be managed by its own citizens and in accordance with the most sophisticated and advanced international standards. He asserted

that "The oil wealth that God granted to our nation must be used for the enhancement of the living of the citizens and the future of the nation... The first thing we must do to gain God's blessing is to wisely direct this wealth for the betterment of the country and bring welfare and high living standard to people."<sup>403</sup> To apply his belief, His Highness sought to build a new society based on prosperity, justice and dignity. His principle aim was the welfare of his country and people, envisioning the establishment of "a modern welfare state" carved out of the bedrock of Arab-Islamic traditions.<sup>404</sup>

### **Section One: Citizen Welfare in Sheikh Zayed's Thought**

Sheikh Zayed was an honest custodian for the country and its national resources, keen on the realization of his people's interests and well being. He believed that oil wealth should serve as a means of achieving well being and stability and bolster the nation's development. Thus, under the patronage of His Highness, the country witnessed huge development projects that were launched on the basis of utilizing oil resources. For Zayed, wealth was the property of everyone in the country and therefore, put it at the disposal of all the citizens either through state institutions that strived to meet their needs, or by way of direct grants that allowed them to raise their standard of living. In every case, the satisfaction and happiness of the people was the ultimate goal of the wealth distribution policy envisaged by Sheikh Zayed.

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<sup>403</sup> Al Doaifi , Al-Siksek, eds., *op. cit.*, *Zayed wal Bina' Al-Watani*. p.129.

<sup>404</sup> Maitra, *op. cit.*, P.95.

## Zayed's Concept of Wealth Distribution

As a leader that believed strongly in universal principles such as equity, honesty, integrity and generosity, Sheikh Zayed looked upon oil wealth as “the possession of the nation as a whole, not the possession of any individual.” For him, the leader is only “the custodian of the nation and its wealth”.<sup>405</sup> As a ruler, Sheikh Zayed made sure to make himself accountable with regards to the way the nation's wealth was distributed, because he felt that God had entrusted him with this responsibility: “God did not bestow this wealth on Zayed alone, though Zayed was entrusted with the nation's money. Zayed holds himself accountable first, and he is honest with his nation...I invite you to see for yourselves where oil money goes in this country. This money is directed to paving roads, building hospitals, expanding water and electricity services, constructing schools, so that they would be available to every citizen.”<sup>406</sup>

In order to achieve his aims and fulfill the aspirations of his people, Sheikh Zayed applied his famous dictum; “wealth in itself is of no value unless it is dedicated to the prosperity and welfare of the people”.<sup>407</sup> Therefore, Zayed regarded the allocation of wealth as a duty carried out for the ultimate happiness and satisfaction of the citizens.

Moreover, President Sheikh Zayed's dedication to social justice institutionalized the principle of equity among all the nationals in terms of the benefits from the welfare system. He stressed that he did not want to “see in the UAE any aggrieved or needy individual in any domain whether in his

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<sup>405</sup> Al Doaifi , Al-Siksek, *op. cit.*, *Al-Qiyada*. P. 32.

<sup>406</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, *op. cit.*, *Zayed: Ramz Al-Wahda* . . . p. 37

<sup>407</sup> *cited in* Joseph A. Kechichian, ed., *A century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and The United Arab Emirates*. (2000). P. 6.

living, education, health, or employment.”<sup>408</sup> This reflects the paternal care that Zayed extended to his people. His Highness made sure that all the needs of his people were catered for and that the means to their happiness were provided. This earned him the title “Father of the Nation”. For him oil wealth existed as a means – not an end *per se* - to be used to take the country’s development to new frontiers of a dignified and prosperous life.

Even before the specialized instruments of national wealth distribution were set up, Sheikh Zayed used to undertake this task by making money presents to all those he considered deserving. He distributed the wealth in two ways; directly by cash grants to most of the Bedu who called on him, and indirectly by providing them with work in the oil fields and development projects. Furthermore, his largesse spread to other neighboring states by direct government action.<sup>409</sup>

It is natural then that the very essence of Sheikh Zayed’s vision of welfare is reflected in the UAE Constitution itself. Thus, for instance, article 24 stipulates, “the basis of the national economy shall be social justice.” It aims, *inter alia*, to achieve economic development, “raising the standards of living and the achievement of prosperity for citizens”.<sup>410</sup>

### **Welfare in UAE Society**

Under the leadership of Sheikh Zayed, the UAE has emerged as a model welfare state where the citizen is assured of support and free state services from the cradle to the grave. These include, among other things,

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<sup>408</sup> Al-Kaabi, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

<sup>409</sup> Maitra, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

<sup>410</sup> UAE Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, The constitution [online] available at: <http://www.moca.gov.ae/arabic/constitution.asp> [accessed 3 April 2009]

high-quality health care, education, social security, family allowances, subsidized electricity and water, employment, and housing for low-income groups. As some of the social services provided by the UAE state were addressed in Chapter II, this section will highlight a few features of the welfare that Emirati citizens enjoy on account of the wealth distribution policy championed by Sheikh Zayed; namely in housing, social security, and marriage assistance.

### **Housing**

Providing housing for UAE nationals was among the chief concerns for Sheikh Zayed and the government, believing it to be “one of the essential requirements for a stable family life, and for society.”<sup>411</sup> This task has become even more difficult amid the rapid increases in the population growth rate, which created a high demand for new house units. To meet housing needs, ambitious plans and schemes have been implemented by federal and local departments along with private initiatives, for which government funding has been substantially increasing. Sheikh Zayed personally provided the funds for some housing schemes. Within this framework, Sheikh Zayed launched ambitious housing programs to provide appropriate housing to UAE citizens. Upon his instructions, the Ministry of Public Works (1973), launched the project, whereby many citizens benefited from over 17, 000 residential units. About Dh72 billion were spent on the housing sector including the construction of thousands of houses and financial grants offered to

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<sup>411</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine., eds., UAE Yearbook 1998, (1998) P. 124.

nationals.<sup>412</sup>

In line with Zayed's wish that citizens should be provided with accommodation that would permit them to "live a decent life, improve their standard of living and be guaranteed social security"<sup>413</sup>, the Zayed Housing Program was launched in March 1999. This program allocated an annual budget of more than 640 million Dirhams for the construction of houses for UAE nationals in all seven Emirates. It was deemed to be a first comprehensive step towards the establishment of the Real Estate Bank to help solve one of the biggest problems facing young people. It also contributed in reinforcing the Federal entity, reactivating the economic and service sectors and supporting social stability.<sup>414</sup>

Furthermore, within the framework of this policy, HH Sheikh Zayed, ordered the distribution of hundreds of plots of farming and residential land and low cost houses. Thanks to this new generous action, the number of units distributed to beneficiaries reached several thousand farming, residential plots and low cost houses between 1998 and 1999.<sup>415</sup> Aside from building residential units for low income citizens, the government has also been offering interest-free easy-term loans to those who have sufficient financial resources for the construction, completion and improvement of houses.

### **Social Security**

Despite the broad distribution of wealth that has taken place in the seven emirates, there are those who, for a variety of reasons, "remain at

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<sup>412</sup> WAM, November 1, 2008.

<sup>413</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine, *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>414</sup> Mowza Bint Mohammed Al Hamed, op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.* P. 170.

risk”.<sup>416</sup> Hence, the UAE has taken significant strides towards greater social development, through implementing instruments that provide social protection and security for less fortunate citizens and coming generations. Its commitment towards such social categories is mandated in the constitution. Thus, according to article 16 of the UAE constitution “Society shall be responsible for protecting childhood and motherhood and shall protect minors and others unable to look after themselves for any reason, such as illness or incapacity or old age or forced unemployment. It shall be responsible for assisting them and enabling them to help themselves for their own benefit and that of the community.”<sup>417</sup> Moreover, such commitments have been regulated by legislations that sought to provide better living conditions for these categories and promote their social integration. Therefore, since 1972, social assistance law has witnessed many amendments in accordance with evolving needs and circumstances.

Accordingly, in July 1999, the Federal National Council approved new legislation regulating social security benefits. Under the law, those entitled to monthly social benefits include national widows, divorced women, the disabled, the aged, orphans, single daughters, married students, relatives of jailed dependants, estranged wives and insolvents. Also eligible for social security benefits are widowed and divorced national women previously married to foreigners. The amount spent on social assistance has increased steadily since 1994.<sup>418</sup>

Furthermore, retirees have also benefited from welfare policies that guarantee a decent living for them. Thus, Sheikh Zayed's promulgation of the

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<sup>416</sup> Ibrahim Al Abed, P. Vine., eds., UAE Yearbook 2003, (2003) P. 216.

<sup>417</sup> UAE Ministry of Cabinet Affairs, *Ibid*.

<sup>418</sup> Al Abed, Vine., *Ibid*.

Social Security and Pensions Law in 1999 -which has been subsequently revised to a 70% increase-, evoked positive reactions on the part of all UAE nationals. They all confirmed that the law would provide nationals with social stability, and coming generations with safety and care, ensuring a dignified life for all. This is evidence that His Highness was determined to provide security, safety, reassurance and a prosperous life for society as a whole. It also proved that His Highness did not spare any effort in serving the public interest of all citizens who have priority over wealth.<sup>419</sup> The government has also encouraged and financed non-government social welfare associations that provide assistance to those in need in the UAE.

### **Marriage Assistance**

As the country's wealth grew tremendously, dowry expectations soared with equal rapidity, making marriage financially stressful for many young men and their families. Moreover, the price of wedding celebrations had also "spiraled out of control", which made it even more difficult for any couple considering tying the knot.<sup>420</sup> To address this problem, Sheikh Zayed intervened and decreed the creation of the Marriage Fund in 1992 to reverse the obstacles experienced by nationals wishing to marry. For this purpose, this institution, financed by the government, has undertaken the construction of marriage halls to facilitate more economical ceremonies and encourage mass weddings. It has also disbursed substantial grants to newlywed couples with limited income to assist them with costs. Simultaneously, the government launched a campaign calling for a reduction in dowry size. Since

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<sup>419</sup> Mowza Bint Mohammed, *Ibid.*.

<sup>420</sup> Al Abed, Vine., *Op. cit.*, (2004), p. 237.



then, an upper limit of Dh50, 000 has been set on dowry size and a prohibition on extravagant weddings is enforceable by law. In the ten years since its establishment, the fund has provided grants to 32,000 families and has organized 38 group weddings.<sup>421</sup>

### **Safeguarding Welfare for Future Generations**

Although known oil reserves, at current production rates, should last for at least one hundred years, Sheikh Zayed consistently stressed the importance of laying down firm foundations for the future prosperity and well being of the country and its citizens. His Highness emphasized on many occasions the need to secure a stable and continuous well-being for coming generations, whether in terms of founding adequate educational, vocational and other infrastructures or setting aside funds and investments that would yield enough wealth for future citizens irrespective of the availability of oil riches. In this regard, he said “we are developing our society and building for future generations until they find the road on which to proceed. We are endeavoring to realize more achievements so that coming generations will not need to start from scratch and will carry on the march of progress.”<sup>422</sup>

Since the early years of the Federation, Sheikh Zayed had a clear vision as to how resources should be preserved for future generations, either through setting up a solid economic base, or spreading benefits via programs that benefit young people. That is why he called for a wise diversification policy to be implemented. He also invited all societal actors to partake in this endeavor saying “when we look ahead to try to perceive an idea of the future

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<sup>421</sup> US Population Reference Bureau, *Marriage in the Arab World* (2005), p. 6.

<sup>422</sup> UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, op. cit. *Zayed Ramz al Wahda..* , p. 36.

that awaits us, we call upon all Government and non-government and civil organizations to pay more attention to the formulation and implementation of the diversified and widespread programs that will take care of our young people, and that will better prepare them for the future, at all levels.”<sup>423</sup>

### **The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority: A Welfare Instrument for Coming Generations**

Provision for future generations also includes financial savings by the state and resource management for sustainability. On account of its massive reserves of oil and gas, the UAE has been endowed with the financial resources sufficient not only to underpin its development programs, but also to permit setting aside large amounts for investment on behalf of future generations and, through the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) created by Sheikh Zayed, the country has financial reserves unofficially estimated at around USD 300 billion.<sup>424</sup> Some reports even estimate these assets at around USD 900 billion under management by ADIA.<sup>425</sup>

This wise approach to resource management and wealth preservation is founded on strong economic principles that call for the need to set up “stabilization funds” not only to shield the national economy from large influxes of oil revenues and, thus, avoid high rates of inflation, but also to protect it in case oil prices collapse. The excess revenues would be used to make investments abroad as a sustainable secure source of revenue in the future. In fact, renowned international organizations such as the World Bank and IMF have strongly favored the establishment of stabilization funds or funds for future generations; in order to “avoid the boom and bust cycle” that

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<sup>423</sup> Al Abed, P. Vine., *op. cit.*, (2003) ., p. 31.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid*, p. 16.

<sup>425</sup> Gulf News, 14 March, 2008.

is the inevitable consequence of fluctuations in prices.<sup>426</sup>

The UAE, among all the GCC states, has the highest level of net foreign assets as the most common form of savings in the region. It may not have a “formal” savings program similar to Kuwait’s Reserve Fund for future generations, but Abu Dhabi does have ADIA as an investment agency similar to Kuwait’s Investment Authority that seeks to diversify the investment portfolio of the state.<sup>427</sup> Using such funds to either set aside money or acquire real assets in the shape of infrastructure; both alternatives serve the interests of future generations, and potentially can stabilize revenue.<sup>428</sup> Therefore, whether in the form of investment funds or tangible investments undertaken in various social and economic sectors, the UAE has set up firm foundations for the well-being of its present day citizens, as well as for its future generations.

## **Conclusion**

The UAE has established an effective welfare system that guarantees a set of benefits for the nationals throughout their lifetimes. Thus, Emiratis benefit from state assistance and subsidies related, *inter alia*, to their housing, utilities, employment, social security, a high standard of social services such as health and education, which raised their standard of living to levels found only in developed countries. Moreover, achieving prosperity for the citizen is guaranteed by law as it is enshrined in the

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<sup>426</sup> Giacomo Luciani (2008), “Promises and Pitfalls of Sovereign Funds”, [online] available at [http://www.grc.ae/?frm\\_action=view\\_newsletter\\_web&sec\\_code=grccommentary&frm\\_module=contents&show\\_web\\_list\\_link=1&int\\_content\\_id=47582&PHPSESSID=c3d315444eb98eea5b9225fd6ce31c97](http://www.grc.ae/?frm_action=view_newsletter_web&sec_code=grccommentary&frm_module=contents&show_web_list_link=1&int_content_id=47582&PHPSESSID=c3d315444eb98eea5b9225fd6ce31c97) [accessed 18 March 2009]

<sup>427</sup> Mary Ann Tetreault, “The Economics of National Autonomy in the UAE”, in Joseph A. Kechichian, ed. *op. cit.*, p. 142.

<sup>428</sup> Giacomo Luciani, *Ibid.*

Constitution itself, which underlines the importance given to such a goal in line with the philosophy of His Highness Sheikh Zayed regarding wealth distribution.

Furthermore, this system has also set up a “savings account” for future generations in the form of reserve funds and investments that cover different sectors both nationally and abroad. Such investments are laying the adequate infrastructure for the prosperity and well being of these generations yielding stable profits which could be used a sustainable source of income for the country and its people.

## **Section Two: Political Significance of The Welfare Policy**

### **Introduction**

The welfare system that Sheikh Zayed established to provide a high standard of living for the citizens along with a multitude of other privileges has been subject to analysis and scrutiny within the framework of many academic studies and papers seeking to interpret its political dimensions. Thus, for instance, the literature has been dominated with concepts such as “rentier state” or “allocation state”, or again “patron-client system” that have been used to designate most oil-exporting countries, including the UAE. These states, such theories argue, have used their resources to improve the quality of life of their citizens and at the same time consolidate their grip on power and political life. In this section some of the political interpretations that have been elaborated to explain the motives underlying the welfare state will be explored.

### **Taxation Vs. Political Representation**

Among the benefits enjoyed by the citizens in the UAE welfare system is the lack of taxes. Local and federal budgets bear the high costs of the

welfare programs without the need to impose taxes on people to finance these programs as is the case in the western welfare societies.<sup>429</sup> However, many scholars see this practice – exempting nationals from paying taxes- as a dominant feature of what is referred to as the “distributive” or “rentier state”.<sup>430</sup> That is, a state that relies mostly on the income generated by exports of a natural resource – in this case oil or gas - as a dominant source of revenue for the state without the need to resort to production means. One can consider such revenues almost as a free gift of nature.<sup>431</sup>

A number of papers<sup>432</sup> suggest that since the governments of the Gulf states own oil resources, great power and wealth is concentrated in the hands of these governments; therefore, their main concern has been “how to spend money, not how to extract it from society”<sup>433</sup>, contrary to western countries that consider taxation as an important source of revenue. Thus, the Gulf states see no need in imposing taxes on the population as far as they already have substantial oil profits that guarantee the government and the ruling elite their independence from society with respect to finance. This, in turn, entails some political implications related to the degree of commitment from these states towards political demands from the people themselves.

Hence, since rentier states do not have to tax their citizens, they do not have to deal with serious demands for political participation, as well as with society's right to constrain rulers through elections and legislative

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<sup>429</sup> Yussuf Al Hassan, *Dawlat Arri'aya fil Imarat Al Arabiya Al Muttahida* (Arabic), (The Welfare State in The United Arab Emirates), (1997), P.55.

<sup>430</sup> F. Gregory Gause III, *Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in The Arab Gulf States*, (1994), P.43.

<sup>431</sup> Mahmoud Abdel Fadil, “The Macro-Behavior of Oil–rentier States in the Arab Region”, in Hazem Beblawi, Giacomo Luciani, eds (1987), P.83.

<sup>432</sup> Almost all papers and studies related to the theory of “ the rentier state” , especially those dealing with the Gulf states, have in a way or another tackled the taxation concept in these states.

<sup>433</sup> Gause III, *Ibid.*, p. 43.

institutions. Moreover, those groups that in the past had a substantial political role, like merchants and tribal chiefs, "trade in" their political power for a share of the state's wealth. The citizens, having experienced the relative penury of the pre-oil boom period, are happy to be receiving benefits and jobs from the government, and credit the improved conditions to the ruling families. They therefore do not see the need for political participation.<sup>434</sup>

In fact, the absence of taxation has reduced the need for the state to prove its legitimacy to the population through the establishment of democratic institutions. Instead, the state "buys" legitimacy by spending oil revenues. Furthermore, when the state does not impose taxes on wealth and income, the need for liberal and democratic reforms diminishes.<sup>435</sup> Therefore, oil revenues are considered by some to be the main culprit behind the absence of democracy in the Middle East region. These revenues even provided "a substitute for democracy" in the Middle Eastern oil exporting countries, according to some views.<sup>436</sup> Indeed, the rulers may implicitly reply to the demands for democracy by turning around the principle of "No taxation without representation"<sup>437</sup> to become instead "No representation without taxation". The oil rent becomes then a factor in "perpetuating authoritarian government",<sup>438</sup> which stands in sharp contrast to what is happening in the western states where income is based primarily through taxation of domestic economic activity, and where democratization is partly induced by fiscal

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<sup>434</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 80.

<sup>435</sup>Oystein Noreng, "The Predicament of the Gulf Rentier State", in Daniel Heradstveit, Helge Hveem, eds (2004), P.12.

<sup>436</sup>*Ibid.*, P.29.

<sup>437</sup>Hazem Beblawi, "The Rentier State in the Arab World", in Hazem Beblawi, Giacomo Luciani, eds., *The Rentier State*. (1987), P.53.

<sup>438</sup>Farhad Kazemi, Augustus Richard Norton, "Political Challenges to the Middle East Government in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" in Lenore G. Martin ed., *New Frontiers in Middle East Security*. (2001), P.82.

policy and political influence of taxpayers.

Therefore, one might infer that the very privilege of not having to pay taxes in countries such as the UAE is in itself a hindrance towards democracy since claims for political and economic reform are held hostage by the state's largesse towards its citizens.

### **Welfare in Exchange for Legitimacy and Loyalty**

Many scholars argue that the welfare system associated with oil wealth has been used in the UAE, in the same way it has been used in other Gulf States, to buy the loyalty of the citizens and guarantee legitimacy of the rulers. According to them, the provision of economic and social benefits under this system has a clear political intent: to “convince the citizenry that their own personal well-being is tied up with the existing political system”<sup>439</sup>. Thus, though each country has a specific political context, a common characteristic of all their politics is that the state's legitimacy has been built around its capacity to distribute rent to different segments of society. Hence, wealth is distributed not only to a regime's allies but also to its potential challengers, because dependence on the transfer of resources builds allegiance to the status quo<sup>440</sup>. States commit themselves to the regular allocation of subsidies, as well as to the administration of free public services, to the provision of jobs in the public sector, and so on. In exchange, the various sociopolitical groups “give their allegiance to the regime” without making demands for political representation.<sup>441</sup>

Furthermore, with oil money, rulers ceased to rely upon local groupings - tribal or urban - for financial support. Rather, they used the money to “bargain for

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<sup>439</sup>Gause III, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>440</sup>Valerie Marcel, John Mitchell, *Oil Titans: National Oil Companies in the Middle East*. (2006), p.107.

<sup>441</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 107.

political loyalty and service”<sup>442</sup>. Welfare services are granted directly to citizens, instead of through local tribe leaders, shifting thus their political focus and their political loyalty towards the state and away from the tribe.<sup>443</sup> This approach was used by Sheikh Zayed in the early years of the Federation to motivate the rural people in Abu Dhabi and citizens of other emirates to embrace the new state structure and show loyalty to it away from their traditional tribal structures. In fact, as Christopher Davidson suggests, oil wealth and oil-financed modernization drive could be seen as having greatly strengthened the traditional polity's legitimacy<sup>444</sup> in the UAE.

Therefore, the rulers of the oil-rich rentier states purchased political support by entering into “tacit compacts” with their subjects, whereby the latter renounced their full political rights against a share of the state’s wealth.<sup>445</sup> The terms of such exchange, from the point of view of the rulers, were simple: citizens would receive substantial material benefits in exchange for political loyalty, or at least political acquiescence. But the connections between state and society in this situation are unidirectional.<sup>446</sup>

While state institutions in the UAE do not function along democratic guidelines, from the western point of view, they are nonetheless accepted by the majority of citizens. The ruling families in all of the individual emirates enjoy a high degree of legitimacy in large part due to their successful promotion of “patron-client relationships” whereby the institutional stability is directly related to the preservation of social status and economic privileges among citizens. In addition, politics remain

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<sup>442</sup>Gause III, *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>443</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>444</sup>Davidson. Op. cit, (2005) P.88.

<sup>445</sup>Malcolm C. Peck, “Shaykh Zayed and the Passage of the United Arab Emirates into The Modern World: The Uses of the Past”. April 26, 2001.

<sup>446</sup>Gause III, *Ibid.*, p. 76.



very personally oriented with the ruler enjoying a special status as a symbol of guidance.<sup>447</sup>

Moreover, this symbol of guidance has taken almost paternal dimensions in society. Thus, just as the sheikh of the tribe assumed the function of a father of the tribe, the rulers of the Gulf States have assumed the role of fathers of their national communities. Continued legitimacy depended on protecting the position of the community vis-à-vis the outside world as well as providing protection and justice for members of the community. Like the head of a family, the Ruler was responsible for the material well-being of his constituents, which translated into construction of universal social welfare systems.<sup>448</sup> In this regard, Sheikh Zayed crystallized this concept in an excellent way in UAE society, due to the exceptional care and commitment he showed towards his people either in terms of providing them with security and justice or inundating them with his paternal generosity, which rightfully earned him the title of “Father of the Nation” among his citizens.

### **Welfare as a Means to Achieve Stability**

Since its formation the UAE has enjoyed political and social stability thanks to many factors, among them the sagacity of the leadership, the wise marriage between modern political structures and tribal society, but also the distribution of huge oil revenues in the form of social and economic infrastructure, and social services that raised the standard of living for UAE citizens and hence “considerably reduced the likelihood of internal political and social unrest.”<sup>449</sup> This achievement has been interpreted by the relevant literature as a good example of how social and economic

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<sup>447</sup>Bertelsmann Stiftung, Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2006 — United Arab Emirates Country Report. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2006. P.8.

<sup>448</sup>J. E. Peterson, “What Makes the Gulf States Endure?” in Joseph Kechchian, ed., *Iran, Iraq and the Arab Gulf States*. (2001), P.455.

<sup>449</sup>Mohamed Shihab, *op. cit.*, P.250.

welfare has been used by Gulf States, such as UAE, as a means to achieve stability amid internal and regional destabilizing factors.

Through highly adaptive policies, the UAE has become better placed than most of its neighbors in terms of internal security and social stability. It has managed to avoid sectarian and radical Islamic tendencies within local society and there have been no signs of major destabilizing tensions inside the ruling superstructure. The general public is quite satisfied and is not too keen to shift to a "chaotic democracy". Furthermore, the potential for any incubation of militant tendencies has been pre-empted by a combination of incentives. Such incentives include lifetime assistance for the nationals who enjoy "one of the most comprehensive welfare programs in the world". Moreover, UAE nationals have considerable freedom in determining their own economic future and, as a result, have not shown much interest in changing their political system - which is essentially viewed as benevolent.<sup>450</sup> As for the small educated local elite which expressed desires for formal participatory institutions, they were easily absorbed into responsible and high-paying government positions, mitigating thus their claims to reform.<sup>451</sup>

At the regional level, in spite of the fundamental changes and developments which have taken place in the Gulf region since the late seventies of the twentieth century such as the Islamic revolution in Iran, the First Gulf War between Iraq and Iran which lasted for about eight years, and the Second Gulf War which broke out after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in August 1990, and its various ramifications in the region, the GCC states managed nonetheless to weather such external turbulences and maintain their political stability.

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<sup>450</sup>APS Diplomat Redrawing the Islamic Map, (June 30, 2003). *UAE: How Radical Islam is Kept Away*. [online]. Available at : [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_hb6511/is\\_6\\_45/ai\\_n29014420](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb6511/is_6_45/ai_n29014420) [6 April 2009]

<sup>451</sup>Gause III, *op. cit.*, p.81

Such political stability was based to a considerable extent on many factors related to the oil boom, substantial oil revenues and the distributive welfare policies which led to the emergence of rentier states and consequently asserted the sources of traditional legitimacy as represented by the family, the tribe and religion as well as the interest of the ruling elites in preserving these sources.<sup>452</sup>

Moreover, the absence or weakness of representative political institutions did not affect the stability of these regimes, despite the “social upheaval accompanying the massive changes oil wealth brought and the political pressures” generated by regional geopolitical crises. Citizens did generally appreciate the improved life styles that came with the oil boom. Given the small populations of all these countries, a very large proportion of the local population saw real improvements in their material conditions. They credited the rulers, at least in part, with that improvement.<sup>453</sup>

Wealth has contributed thus not only to buffering the citizens from the chaos surrounding the Gulf region, but also to providing them with the material comfort that kept them away from enrolling in activities that might be considered “destabilizing” to the security and stability of the regime.

However, it would be unfair to say that Sheikh Zayed secured legitimacy and loyalty from his people only through his largesse. As discussed in Chapter Two, Zayed’s leadership qualities made him a respected statesman among the local tribal communities even before the advent of oil. To a large extent, it was Sheikh Zayed’s charisma, personal role and his great contributions as a leader that forged the

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<sup>452</sup>Gulf Research Center, (2003). *External Factors and Political Stability in the Gulf Cooperation Council States*[online]. Available at : [http://www.grc.ae/index.php?frm\\_action=show\\_event&frm\\_module=events&sec=Events&sec\\_type=d&PK\\_ID=83&frm\\_month\\_year=2006\\_03](http://www.grc.ae/index.php?frm_action=show_event&frm_module=events&sec=Events&sec_type=d&PK_ID=83&frm_month_year=2006_03)

<sup>453</sup>Gause III, *Ibid.*

“permanent bonds of loyalty and allegiance” between the ruler and the ruled and paved the way for the successful evolution of the Federation of the UAE.<sup>454</sup>

Also, it must be said that understanding such dynamics occurring in the region only within the prism of the rentier state theory is an approach bound to limited scope and does not give due credit to the leaders of these nations and their exceptionally remarkable endeavors to build states literally from scratch, as in the case of the United Arab Emirates. Therefore, other considerations should be taken to gain a comprehensive understanding of the underlying factors behind concepts such as legitimacy, stability, loyalty, democratic rule, etc. Furthermore, this study has demonstrated how Sheikh Zayed gave utmost priority to the diversification of the economic base, and how the non-oil sector grew substantially throughout the years to become a major contributor to the nation’s growth, which refutes some of the claims posited by these theories regarding the degree of reliance on energy resources in the nation’s economy, and the political impact of such reliance.

However, it goes without saying that developments and change are occurring in the region as part of the evolving dynamics that also occur in the globalized world. Therefore, in order to adapt to these changes and their implications, a reform of the welfare system is needed, in the same way as measures are needed to enhance the productive sectors at the expense of the rentier aspect of the economy.

### **Section Three: Reforming the Welfare System for Better Adaptability to Change**

Despite the benefits brought by the welfare system in the UAE and elsewhere in the Gulf region due to energy resources,, many evolutionary trends are gradually making it difficult for these countries to sustain such a system in the long term without reconsidering significantly the cost of this system on the state budget. Hence,

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<sup>454</sup>Maitra, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

oil price fluctuations in the international markets and the rapid growth of population generate considerable stress on expenses such as education, health care, infrastructure, housing, etc. and exert more pressure on governments to seek other sources of revenue than oil income. Moreover, Gulf populations are changing in more ways than just in sheer size. The expansion and encouragement of education inevitably changes perceptions of government-constituent relations. That is, increasing numbers of educated, middle-class and politically aware citizens are “no longer content with the father-child model”, and demand greater say in the increasingly difficult choices their countries must make.<sup>455</sup> Furthermore, insofar as oil is a depreciating asset, Gulf societies are required to evolve from rentier societies to productive ones<sup>456</sup> and thus avoid the state of extreme dependence on the government as the source of almost all income and the provider of the social welfare system.

The changes that the region is witnessing are leaving no other choice for countries like the UAE but to undergo a political, economic, educational, and social restructuring susceptible of generating a “political culture” and transferring society from a traditional rentier economy into an industrial economy that relies on efficiency and knowledge and which considers taxes as a source of state income.<sup>457</sup> In fact, with declining per capita oil revenues, Gulf oil exporters not only face the challenge of economic restructuring, but also that of political reform. Less oil money simply means that governments will have to tax wealth income, which raises the issue of representative government.<sup>458</sup>

Therefore, the dominant role played by the welfare state in distributing wealth either directly or indirectly to all the social segments needs to be reconsidered on

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<sup>455</sup>J. E. Peterson, *op. cit.*, p. 458.

<sup>456</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>457</sup>Yussuf Al Hassan, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

<sup>458</sup>Oystein Noreng, *op. cit.*, p.29.

many levels, because it has made society more and more dependent on the material largesse of the state. Consequently, the citizen found himself with no practical education to shoulder the responsibilities and duties that his citizenship requires, which means that a different kind of political and social education is necessary “to rid him of the illusion” of relying on the state’s charity and generosity without being able to assume his real citizenship duties.<sup>459</sup>

Another issue to be considered in this reform is the need to encourage privatization of public sector companies, not only because this would make them more efficient, but also because this would give the people more say in economic matters that have so far been controlled mostly by the state as a motor of economic development and a major employer. The private sector could thus play a key role in relieving the state of burdens related to employment, productivity and diversification of the economic base.<sup>460</sup> However, it must be said that the suggested reforms are by no means meant to be undertaken in radical political, social and economic shifts. Rather, they should be made within the framework of a gradual comprehensive strategy that takes place in the medium and long term and seeks to implement policies to restructure economy, and achieve sustainable growth relying on intensive investment in human capital and production technologies.

On the political level, there is a general consensus among all the major political actors in the United Arab Emirates regarding the need for gradual political reform and the continued development of a market economy.<sup>461</sup> But, this does not mean *per se* that the ruler’s legitimacy is at stake. In fact, the ruling leaders are essentially regarded as legitimate, and protests by intellectuals and others

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<sup>459</sup>Yussuf Al Hassan, *Ibid.*

<sup>460</sup>See Yussuf Al Hassan, *op. cit.*, for the benefits that could be generated from privatization of public companies, esp. pp202-2003.

<sup>461</sup>Bertelsmann Stiftung, *op. cit.*, p.16.

discontented with the political systems generally focus on the elimination of imperfection and injustice in the existing systems. Most are not demanding a change of systems.<sup>462</sup> It is clear that the public in these countries want more responsible government and greater participatory avenues. How governments continue to respond to those desires will set the political agenda in the Gulf monarchies for the next decade, and perhaps beyond.<sup>463</sup>

The introduction of a gradual election process in the UAE Federal National Council, in line with an “evolutionary rather than revolutionary democratization”<sup>464</sup>, marked the fulfilment of a life-long dream cultivated by Sheikh Zayed who championed principles such as consultation, people’s rights and public participation in decision-making bodies. It also reflected the awareness of the leadership vis-à-vis the imperatives of change that are gradually shaping not only the economic and social scene but also the political outlook of the whole region.

## **Conclusion**

Thanks to its abundant oil resources and the legendary generosity and fairness of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the United Arab Emirates developed into a modern welfare state where wealth was distributed through many channels to ensure that citizens enjoy all the basic needs and privileges to guarantee them a prosperous and dignified life. These included subsidized housing, free water and electricity utilities, employment, fiscal exemptions, and many more benefits.

The welfare system established in the UAE has embodied the very principles of equity, justice and sense of giving that characterized the founder of the nation even before he became President of the Federation. His care for his people surpassed the

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<sup>462</sup>J. E. Peterson, *op. cit.*, p. 453.

<sup>463</sup>Gause III, *op. cit.*, p.118.

<sup>464</sup>Maitra, *op. cit.*, p. 431.

formal bonds of ruler and ruled to take on paternal dimensions and display an unparalleled outflow of affection. The result was a healthy educated population, a sound economy and a stable nation.

Some studies interpreted such welfare features as a political means to control the society and force citizens into a deal whereby they relinquish political claims against a share of the state's wealth. Such studies claim that the oil-rich government buys support and loyalty and reinforces its legitimacy through granting economic and social privileges to the population.

However, contrary to such theoretical generalizations, the UAE has been a living model of complete cohesion between the rulers and their people not only because UAE leaders have committed themselves to improving the lives of their subjects, but also because they have endeavored to building a modern thriving nation founded on principles of equality and justice. While contemporary history is rife with examples of oil-rich countries that failed to build a successful social welfare system similar to UAE's, Sheikh Zayed considered that providing welfare for all citizens was the main goal for the ruler in order to ultimately achieve happiness for his people. He did not care about the nomenclature related to these endeavors as much as the goal in itself. That is why after enumerating some of the benefits and privileges nationals enjoy within the welfare system of the UAE, he asserted that "What matters is not the name of such system [...] but rather its goal [...] and the goal is to achieve a better life for the citizen [...] This is what our state is doing" adding that concepts such as justice and progress are part of the bases of the Islamic religion itself.<sup>465</sup>

Yet, due to evolving political, economic and social trends, either at the national or international level, the concept of the welfare state has been seen as a

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<sup>465</sup> Al Doaifi, Al-Siksek, *op. cit.*, *Zayed wal Bina' Al-Watani...*, p.79.



potential target for reform due to the strains it generates on public expenditures amid challenges such as demographic growth, decreases in oil prices, unemployment, international financial crises, etc. Therefore, change must be supported and reforms should be undertaken to ensure the sustainability of the exceptionally successful experience that is the UAE.

## **Chapter Five:**

### **A Comparative Analytic Study of The Rule Of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, UAE Founder**

#### **Introduction**

In this thesis, the theoretical aspect of the political thought that was followed by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, (may God have mercy on him), in establishing of United Arab Emirates has been reviewed as compared to the political thought for some samples of other Arab Countries founders. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Republic of Tunisia were used as comparative examples. In this chapter another integral aspect of the United Arab Emirates will be addressed, – the theoretical characteristics of the founders of both states in this comparison, i.e. the practical application of thinking supported and believed by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. This will be arrived at by focusing on the extent of achievements carried out by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan in all fields, and the effects of these achievements on the citizens and society of UAE in relation to its international position.

As a comparative case study, this study uses the comparative method, so it is not sufficient solely to explain the achievements and analyze state policies to clarify or assess the extent of success, but the nature of a comparison between two states looking at policies and development makes any observation more nuanced. This comparison will allow a complete picture of the best regime in comparison to be formed, while highlighting Arab experiences in the domain of political rule.

We have previously compared the regimes in the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Tunisia. We will assess these states in this section also. These states were chosen for reasons of scientific and documentary importance. The United Arab Emirates is of primary concern to this study, so the

advantages distinguished and surrounded factors were an initial reason for choosing the other two states in this comparison.

### **Reasons for Choosing the Three States in the Comparison**

The first reason is represented in the difference of the political regime for each of the three states in the comparison, as the State of UAE has followed the federal governance approach. This approach is a modern presidential regime in which the state's president undertakes governance in coordination with other foundations, while KSA follows a hereditary royal regime and all authorities are at the disposal of the king. The Republic of Tunisia is a secular parliamentary republic so the presidency is independent of legislative power.

The second reason is the geographical location for each of the three states separately; as the three states are distributed between the Asian and African continents. Both UAE and KSA are located on the Asian continent, distinguished by their proximity to the Arabian Gulf Region, while the Republic of Tunisia is located in Africa and belongs to the Arab Morocco Region.

The third reason is represented in the demographic factor, through which we desire to show the extent of influence of a state's size in terms of land area as well as in terms of population as one of the factors influencing the crystallizing of political thinking of the founders and leaders of the those states.

The United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Tunisia are relatively small states in terms of its geographic area as well as in terms of population volume in comparison to KSA, which is considered to be a big state on account of the wideness of its geographical area, and its population volume. I, as the researcher, think that these reasons enrich this study through comparison of three different regimes that

represent the most important political regimes. My choice of KSA as a comparative sample is a geographically neighboring state belonging to the same environment of the state of UAE. The Republic of Tunisia is a geographically remote state and is in a relatively different environment. This is to clarify the extent of the effect that geographical location can have on the nature of the political thinking of founding leaders and its effect on state policies.

The choice of these states has led us to consider the extent of success of their founders' thinking and to query whether there is utility in considering the thinking of founder of the UAE as an ideal sample for Arab political thinking in general. In addition, this study raises the question; why have these three leading characters been chosen especially? The study looks at a speech about Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, King Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud and President Habib Bourguiba particularly, because they are political characters who governed their states during different temporal periods.

### **Reasons for Comparing Sheikh Zayed, King Abdul-Aziz and President Bourguiba**

The first reason for comparing King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud and President Habib Bourguiba with Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, is that each of these three leaders established the state governed by him and has set the bases and pillars of the state on which it has been established and the operational methodology which has since been maintained. As they still were established till the date of conducting this research, not one of these three states has deviated from its substantial policies and ideas upon which it was established. If there were any changes, these changes were formal and have no effect on the structure, form, governance regime or pillars of the state.

The second reason is that the period of rule of each of the three characters under comparison is almost the same (three decades). This period is enough to apply their thoughts and gain observable results of those thoughts.

The third reason is that each country has witnessed a case of relative stability far from war, within the rule of each character in comparison. No country, during the reign of any of those three characters, entered any direct military war, which might have exhausted its resources or had an effect on its structure according to their leaders' foundational philosophies, unlike other Arab countries. These other countries are not included in the comparison having either entered directly military conflicts such as Syria, Egypt and Iraq or other states that suffered from civil war such as Lebanon, Yemen and Palestine.

The reasons include also that each character under comparison is considered to be a pioneer in terms of his political philosophy and outlook.. While Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan adopted a medial Islamic thought based on the principle of useful selectivity through taking from the other cultures what is useful for the state and citizen and doesn't breach the Arab cultural identity. The thought of King Abdul Aziz was trending to the Wahhabi approach that takes the Holy Quran and Sunnah as sole approach for him and that was featured with the strict application of Islamic Shariah and Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, and rejecting what is coming from the west. The President Habib Bourguiba was fully in contrary as he stayed away from the Islamic religion as an approach for governance regime and fixation for of state's pillars and depended on the secularism as basis for his governance. He cancelled many Islamic principles when establishing the Republic of Tunisia and trended to the west and its culture principally. Despite of this difference, there is similarity amongst the thoughts adopted by the three characters in comparison

such as idea of hierarchy and idea of dialogue, but the difference appeared again in the method of applying those principles. Therefore, we will handle this study from some aspects attempting to clarify the purpose of the same that is represented in realizing the best governance regime through determining the achievement, extend of society and position reached by each of states in comparison.

To begin, we will discuss Arab unifying experiences practiced in the Arab World with consideration that UAE is a model of union that is the sole unifying experience in the Arab world which has succeeded and is still continuous effectively and practically on the ground. We will demonstrate some achievements achieved by UAE in comparison with countries in comparison to bring out the actual value of those achievements. We will talk also about the UAE society, which is considered as the true reflection of the policy of Sheikh Zayed and the first beneficiary from achievements achieved by such policy in comparison with the Saudi society and Tunisian Society. We conclude this study with talking about the international position gained by UAE as result of policy practiced by Sheikh Zayed within period that is relatively short in comparison with many states, which required long periods to reach to a notable international position, and other states did not reach to such position.

### **Section One: Unifying Experiences in the Arab World**

We are not going to talk about the unifying experiences in the Arab world as for their establishment factors, their surrounding conditions when they were established nor about the reasons for success and failure of such experiences, but it is enough in this study to indicate to some unifying experiences to show these experiences with demonstrating some features of regulation related to each experience. The main rationale behind addressing these experiences is to remind that

no one of those experiences was destined to succeed or continue and any experience of them was faced with problems and hindrances within the period of its occurrence either this period was many or little. That is a sufficient evidence for the great success achieved by union of UAE, as it is the only Arabic experience that was destined to continue, remain and progress. This experience remained for four decades in case of development, growth and support for its establishment and continuity elements. Before looking at unifying experiences, we will talk briefly about the countries' types; as it is known that there are two types of states; United States "simple" and complex states "federal".

#### **- Simple state<sup>466</sup>**

Simple states are those states that appear to be one unit from both internal and foreign perspectives and are distinguished as one entity that manages its foreign affairs through one external representation. These states are distinguished internally with respect to the union in the political governance regime, i.e. one constitution applied throughout the territory of the state, one legislative authority undertakes the legislative function for the entire territory of the state, one executive authority to which all citizens are subjected equally and one judicial authority.

#### **- Federal state**

The federal state consists of a union between two countries, two states or two or more emirates under one authority or under the rule of one superior president and takes some forms differ from each others in terms of form of the governing entity.

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466 (Arabic reference) Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, Dr. Khairy Mahmoud Issa, Introduction of Political Science, Cairo, Egyptian Anglo Bookshop, 1959, Pp. 460.

Authority is distributed between the central entity and its constituent states and in terms of main basis on which it has been established.

- a) Personal union<sup>467</sup>: A union established between two states or more, so that each country from union countries becomes independent from other states. Each state has its independence from the external view to retain the full personality of Foreign Affairs and each state appropriates its internal governance regime, i.e. its constitution and its general legislative, executive and judicial authorities. This union does not establish a new state, but the form of union amongst these states is represented in the union of states' president. This is from the weakest federal connections.
- b) Confederal Union<sup>468</sup>: Each country retains its sovereignty, and its president. The Union appears here with alliance amongst the states and aims at organizing some common purposes such as coordination of economic or cultural affairs or issues of defence. These common issues are organized through an entity whose competence is limited to issues organized by international convention amongst these states.
- c) Actual Union<sup>469</sup>: A union formed through unifying two countries or more under one president. The governance entity in the union shall be the same in all foreign affairs and some internal affairs. There is a double entity for other internal affairs, i.e. the governing entity practices foreign affairs and external political representation, in addition to the appropriation of each country from the member countries with its special internal political regime.

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467 Previous reference , P. 498

468 Previous reference , P. 510

469 Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, Dr. Khairy Mahmoud Issa,, previous reference, p. 501



d) Central Union "Federal"<sup>470</sup>: A constitutional union amongst countries or states from whose totality appears superior federal authority that governs i.e. these countries or states have mutually agreed to the union under a unified flag in exchange for transferring part of their sovereignty to the Superior Federal State that represents one country. Consequently, the federal union is a federal state that has full external sovereignty in which the federal units retain part of their internal sovereignty.

The constitution of federal state is based on two principles<sup>471</sup>:

- 1- Desire for union in order to achieve common interests between the member states "Federal units".
- 2- Retaining the original independence – within limits – concerning the internal affairs of federal units.

Accordingly, there will be one government, the federal government to which the state's affairs will be entrusted. The constitution ensures the federal units autonomy for its local governance and entrusts for them local competences to practice the same while they are independent from federal government. We can address briefly some examples of unifying experiences in the Arab world, taking into consideration that there is some other experiences didn't exceed the project phase and didn't reach to the stage of experience. These experiences have been concealed in their beginning for various and different reasons differ from one case to another any may agree at some times on some reasons.

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470 Previous reference , P. 526

471 Dr. Shafei Mohamed Bashir, the theory of unity amongst States and their applications amongst the Arab countries, Alexandria, knowledge establishment, 1963, p. 317.

## **1- United Kingdom of Lebanon**

The United Kingdom of Lebanon is a federal state established as per the Lebanon constitution issued on 7 October 1951. It was determined in the second article of this constitution that “Lebanon is a Royal Hereditary state in federal form with parliamentary regime and named as United Kingdom of Lebanon “. The Third Article constitution stipulated that the "United Kingdom of Lebanon shall consist of the Barkah, Traplos Al-Kharb and Fazzan states.

The constitution has founded federal governance in addition to the local governances of the three states and allowed each estate to set its own bylaw, provided that such bylaw does not contradict with the provisions of the federal constitution. In addition, the constitution has entrusted federal governance of the state with the three legislative, executive and judicial authorities. The constitution has determined the competences of federal governance, limited in articles 36, 37 and 38 and left the rest of those competences to the state governance as mentioned in article 39 and article 176 of the Lebanon constitution<sup>472</sup>. The federal regime ended in the United Kingdom of Lebanon with Al-Fateh Revolution on 1 September 1969, overthrowing the royal regime in Lebanon and declaring a Lebanese republic in addition to the termination of the royal regime.

## **2- United Arab Republic “Egyptian – Syrian Unit”:**

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 1958, the Syrian Council of Ministers, under the presidency of “Skukri Al-Kotly” President of Republic of Syria issued a unanimous resolution that the union of both states “Egypt and Syria” shall be made on the basis of establishing one state, one executive authority and one legislative authority.

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472 Fathi Topgi, unit movements in the Arab world, Cairo, Dar Nahdat Al-Arab, without the year of publication, ps 61-70. See also: Dr. Shafei Mohamed Bashir, previous reference, p. 323.

Namely; the United Arab Republic is a united “simple” state. In early February 1958, the president issued a statement declaring the final agreement on the unit and named the union between Egypt and Syria as the United Arab Republic. After a referendum on union and presidency on 21<sup>st</sup> February of the same year, the establishment of the United Arab Republic was declared. Gamal Abdul Nasser was declared the first president on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1958 and a temporary constitution for the United Arab Republic was issued on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1958.<sup>473</sup> The first article of this constitution stipulated a republican and democratic governance regime and clarified the three legislative, executive and judicial authorities and determined their purviews. Additionally, this constitution was concerned with the rights and obligations of the citizens<sup>474</sup>.

On the 28th September, a military movement broke up the Northern Territory from the United Arab Republic, i.e. in Syria (military coup), which led to the dissolution of the union between Egypt and Syria.

### **3- United Arab States**

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 1958 Yemen signed the Union Charter with the United Arab Republic which stipulated in its first article “a Union named the United Arab States shall be established and shall consist of the United Arab Republic and Yemeni Kingdom of Al Mutawakkil as well as the Arabic states which accept to join to such union”. The second article of the same charter stipulated “Each state shall retain its own international personality and governance regime<sup>475</sup>”. The Union Charter included 32

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<sup>473</sup> Fathi Topgi, previous reference, p75

<sup>474</sup> See stipulation of the Interim Constitution of United Arab Republic issued on 5 March, 1958 Dr. Yousef Khoury, Drafts of Arab Unity 1913 - 1987, Beirut, Centre of Arab Unity Studies, 1988, ps 364-367

<sup>475</sup> See Charter of United Arab States, Dr. Youssef Khoury, previous reference, Ps. 367, 368

articles based on the retention of each state with its sovereignty as well as establishing joint entities to dispose of union affairs stipulated in the charter.

Supreme Council<sup>476</sup>: This is the official entity of the union and consists of the presidents of member states. The Supreme Council supervises union affairs in general, sets the primary policy agenda of the union on political, defensive, economic and cultural issues, appoints the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Union, issues the General Budget for the union and ratifies the resolutions of the Union Council.

Union Council<sup>477</sup>: The permanent entity of the Union and comprises an equal number of representatives from member states. Its primary task is to assist the Supreme Council in undertaking its authorities, to examine political affairs and set the annual agenda including regimes and procedures leading to union achievement. The resolutions of the Union Council shall be submitted to the supreme council to be approved, as these resolutions are not final. There are three councils under this council: Council of Defence, Council of Economy and Council of Culture. This union is a special type and referred to as a “Union of Agreement”, established to coordinate the work, activity and approach of both states as far as possible in the different political, military, economic and cultural fields. The union has set a charter of joint entities that include representatives for member states with the task of coordinating efforts in those fields without imposing obligation on any member. Accordingly, the purpose of the union, as shown for us, is to coordinate the efforts in the different

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<sup>476</sup> Articles Nos. 13, 17, 19, 20, 22, from Charter of United Arab States

<sup>477</sup> Articles Nos. 15, 21, 22, 23 from Charter of United Arab States

fields and achieving the understanding, approximation and finally agreement amongst the same<sup>478</sup>.

In spite of the fundamental differences between this union and the confederal union, which appear through the work nature of its main entity, the supreme council, which issues its resolutions unanimously, the union comprises two states and the objection of any of both of them is enough to veto any resolution for the union. That means that the unanimity is obligatory for the issuance of any resolution, which is different from a confederal union, which issues its resolution with a majority and is binding for all member states. This union is a confederal “contracting” union, because it became clear that the charter, which establishes the union, is temporary and provisional<sup>479</sup> and is an open system for other Arab States that desire to do the same. Thus it would be a confederal union if a third member joined to it, the system of voting on the resolutions issued by the superior council differed and it was destined to continue.

But this union terminated on 27<sup>th</sup> December 1961 when the government of the United Arab Republic declared officially the termination of the union, because experience showed there to be a difference in the natures of government of both states which resulted in the difference of consideration of each of them to the matters as mentioned by the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

#### **4- Arab Union**

On 14<sup>th</sup> February 1958, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Iraq declared the establishment of the Arab Union. The first article from the

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478 Dr. Al-Shafey M Besheer, previous reference, p. 341

479 article 23 from Charter of United Arab States

charter, which established the union, stipulated “The union shall be open for other states which desire to join it<sup>480</sup>”.

The union charter held that the organization of union affairs would be detailed in a constitution to be issued within three months. This constitution was issued on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1958, which handled union provisions in detail, clarifying the method of forming the government of the union and its competences and the stature of both states of the union. The Jordanian Parliament on 26th March 1958 and the Iraqi Parliament approved this constitution on 12th May of the same year.

The union government consisted of the union president: a position occupied by the king of Iraq, provided that he can be superseded by the King of Jordan in case of his absence<sup>481</sup>. The president had broad powers, as he approved the legislations of the legislative entity. In addition, the union president was considered to be the executive authority and it issued federal orders, appointed the prime minister and ministers, concluded the international agreements and conventions related to the purview of union government and was the Supreme Commander of the Army.<sup>482</sup>

**Legislative Authority:** Undertaken by the union council and union president and the union council is the legislative entity of the union, as it issues union legislations and submits the same to the union for approval.

**Executive Authority:** Undertaken by the union president who exercise authority through the union board of ministers which undertakes the responsibility of managing

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480 See the stipulation of the statement of terminating the union between the United Arab Republic and the Mutawakkilite Kingdom of Yemen on 27 December, 1961, Dr. Youssef Khoury, previous reference p. 378.

481 First article Charter of United Arab States, Dr. Youssef Khoury, Previous reference, p 381

482 Article 5 Charter of United Arab States, Dr. Youssef Khoury, Previous reference, p.384

all union affairs, within the purview set forth in the constitution or any its laws or statutes. The council of ministers also executes the general policy of the union and finally there is the judicial authority: as the union is a supreme court and has federal courts<sup>483</sup>.

The Arab union did not continue for more than five months and was terminated the same year it was declared, on account of the Iraqi Revolution, which overthrew the royal regime and declared the establishment of the Republic of Iraq on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1958. Abdel-Karim Kassem, Prime Minister of Iraq, declared the withdrawal of Republic of Iraq from the Arab Union on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1958, which was not enough time in which to execute the union provisions completely with ability to control the same. But when considering the constitutional stipulations of the union, we will find that it is a federal constitution in almost all of its stipulations, i.e. it has adopted the regime of a federal state constitution. However the establishment of a federal state cannot be approved, because this constitution did not achieve the establishment of one state in place of the member states, as the second article of its constitution stipulated that “subject to provisions of the constitution; each state from members of union shall retain its independent international personality and the governance regime existing in the same”. In addition; the paragraph (c) from article seven stipulated, “Each of the member states shall retrain its own work”.

It is clear that the union constitution has taken the union finally from the framework of the federal state as it has retained for the member states their international personality and exceeds the provisions known about the confederal union. It can be considered as an example of actual union.

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483 Articles 51, 52, 53 from the constitution of State of Arab Union

## **5- Tripartite Federal Unit of Egypt, Syria and Iraq**

The Tripartite Federal Unit has been signed on 17 April 1963 A.D. after brokered from the 5<sup>th</sup> March 1963 revolution in Syria which has raised the slogan of returning to the union with Egypt. A union state under the name “United Arab Republic” on basis of the free union amongst Egypt, Syria and Iraq was established. It was a federal union, as it had been agreed to establish a federal state as per the regime of the federal union, to create complete international sovereignty for the federal state and one nationality for citizens of the federal state (Arab) under one flag and one capital (Cairo). The authorities of the federal state were charged with the international affairs of all aspects, issues of defence and national security, economy, economic planning, media, culture, finance and judiciary. In addition, the union stipulated that the union should have the competence of all authorities which were not under the jurisdiction of the federal state.

The entities of the federal state consisted of; the Parliament, Council of Ministers and Federal Supreme Court.

The parliament practices the legislative authority and comprises two councils:

- Parliament: Number of members is in proportion to the populations of each country.
- Union Council: Number of members in each country is equal to the other country.

The parliament elected the president and vice-president for an office term of four years. Both councils discussed issues related to national and international state policy and development. In addition, the union has a Federal Supreme Court whose members are appointed by the Parliament through a nomination from the president. But the



charter items were not applied and the reason therefore is that the members of the tripartite union did not agree on the issue of the unified political organization which is the basis of the union.. After the failed coup attempt in Syria on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1963 and the execution of a number of coup suspects, Gamal Abdul Nasser declared the withdrawal of the United Arab Republic from the covenant on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 1963. On 4 September 1963 A.D. accused the Ba'ath Party of breaching the charter of tripartite union, while the Ba'ath Party responded him on 13 of the same month with accusation of Abdul Nasser of withdrawal from the union, overthrowing its charter and conspiracy against the Revolutionary Government in Syria.

#### **6- Arab Republics Union**

The presidents of Egypt, Syria and Lebanon has agreed on 17 April 1971 A.D. to establish a federal states named “ Arab Republics Unions” and this union shall be a core for a comprehensive Arab union. The fundamental provisions have been issued and included the achievement of the comprehensive union, protecting the Arab Word and its independence, building the unified Arab socialistic society, supervising the foreign policy, peace and war, organizing the defence for the union and economy planning and setting an federal educational and informative policy.

The entities of Arab Republics Union consist of<sup>484</sup>:

- Union Presidency Council: It is the supreme authority in the union and comprises the republics presidents and this council elects its president from its members.
- Federal ministerial council: it is a number of ministers appointed by the Presidency Council and the persons in charge before him.

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484 Dr. Youssef Khoury, Previous Reference, p. 436

- Parliament: It undertakes the task of legislation for the union.
- Federal Constitutional Court: It is appointed by a resolution from the Union Presidency Council.

On 30<sup>th</sup> August 1971 the Draft Constitution of State of Arab Republics Union and the referendum has been performed on March 1972 and it was declared in the same that a federal state has been established under the name “ Arab Republics Union” as stipulated in its first article. The fourth article of the same constitution indicated that the governance is republican, democratic and socialist. Article 58 stipulated that the member republics should have the competence of things that aren’t under jurisdiction of the union as per the constitution provisions. Namely; the Arab Republics Union is a federal union.

On 16<sup>th</sup> March 1972, a resolution with establishment of entities specialized in affairs of foreign policy, culture, education, transportation, scientific research, information, services, economy and planning<sup>485</sup>. But this union was not applied practically amongst these three states, due to the difference of agreement items even some federal entities existed but they didn’t enjoy with great activity. The union terminated after the visit of Anwar Sadat “President of United Arab Republic” to occupied Jerusalem and his call for peace with Israel in March 1977

## **7- Yemeni Union**

After the armed conflict between the two parts of Yemen on September 1972 the agreement of union between both parts of Yemen on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1972 and stipulated the integration of both parts of Yemen in one state which has one government and unified entities under democratic republican regime. But the

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485 Ahmed Tarbeen, previous reference, p. 436

differences between both political regimes “North and South” led to a military confrontation on February 1978 and it was settled, then a draft constitution for the Yemeni Unified State has been signed and the economic and social principles on which it based on September 1981 This is considered as the most important achievement in the way to the Yemeni Union from the beginning of union in 1972. It was announced in the beginning of 1983 in Aden about the agreement of both parts of Yemen to draft constitution aims at the integration of them on one state named “Unified Republic of Yemen”. Then in was agreed in August 1983 to the headlines on the foreign policy for unified Yemen undertaken by joint ministry of foreign affairs.

But the Yemeni Union was hindered when the present of the southern part has been overdrawn as result of revolution on January 1986 after that the unifying efforts resumed again between both parts. It was agreed to the full obligation to execute what is has been reached before the events of January 1986 in all fields<sup>486</sup>. The union has been achieved actually on 22 May 1990 as the first article from the constitutions which establishes the Yemeni Union stipulated that complete integral union shall be established including the international personality for each of Yemeni Arab Republic and People's Democratic Republic of Yemen “ both parts of Yemen” in one international personality named “ Republic of Yemen” which shall have one legislative, executive and judicial authorities<sup>487</sup>. That means the Republic of Yemen in a single state “simple”. This republic remained four years at most, as the war has been declared on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1994, which led to the termination of the union officially on 21<sup>st</sup> May of the same year.

To sum up; it is known that the unifying experiences includes a unifying entity in which the entities or states agreed to the union are integrated. The grade of union

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486 Ahmed Tarbeen, previous reference, p. 349

487 Diaries and documents for Arab Unity 1989 - 1993, Beirut, Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1995, p. 696.

and integration with the amount achieved on road on union from determining the utilities, entities, laws and regimes of states after their union referring to the union of the new entity.

All unifying experiences in the Arab World either those experiences which were before the establishment of United Arab Emirates or those which occurred after it, didn't include any experience completed or fulfilled what is agreed upon in stipulations of charters and constitutions which established the same, with exception of the experience of united Arab Emirates which has completely fulfilled all what is stipulated by the constitutions that established the same.

The main reasons for failure of Arab unifying experience include the absence of social power, which has interest in the union and is able to achieve such union and if this power disappeared, the union will fail.

We note that this power absented in all Arab unifying experiences, which have failed. If we looked at such power as in case of United Arab Emirates, we will found that it appears through its support and assistance on success and remaining of the union in addition to its full support to the union president and its entities. On the other hand, that refers to the deep awareness and full understanding at the UAE society that its success, remaining, following to the developed nations isn't and won't be achieved unless through the union and preserving the same.

## **Section Two: Achievements**

The ruler of each state practices his tasks and powers as per the stipulations of the constitution regulating the governance affairs. This ruler performs some acts, which hold his impression and these acts differ from one ruler to another as per the difference of his thought, and faith and belief in his state. Before we handle the UAE

and begin to talk about Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, (may God have mercy on him) and the achievements executed by him for its state during his reign, it should be noted that the United Arab Emirates has been established within many issues which influence on the success of this state or eliminating it and declaring its termination like all unifying experience preceded it in the Arab world. Perhaps the most notable of these issues are: The issue of extent of using a modern constitutional regime, extent of affectivity of the federal establishments within the state, problems related to development process with its all aspects and problems related to necessity of unifying the army and security in addition to the trend of the state in its relations with the external world at the Arab, regional and international levels.

When the United Arab Emirates was declared a Federal State, its constitution has been declared, which is considered as permanent constitution on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1996 after deleting the expression “provisional” from stipulations of constitution provisions – which organized the form of regime and modern state. Through this constitution a new state has been established which has one international personality and established modern federal entities in addition to preservation of the privacy of each emirate within the competences that weren’t mentioned in the union competences<sup>488</sup>.

Sheikh Zayed thought that “ the process of development and building doesn’t depend only on the persons in charge only, but in needs cooperation of all efforts for each citizen within this state”.<sup>489</sup> He established an important concept that is based on that the continuity of each emirate depends initially on the continuity of the union and that any defect in the structure of the federal state will reflect passively on the structure of each emirate.

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488 Yusuf Hassan, a welfare state in the United Arab Emirates from economic deprivation to welfare to participation, Sharjah, Emirates Center for Strategic and Development Research, 1997, pp 57.58.

489 Mohamed Khalil Siksik and Shams al-Din Al.Daefy, leaders: seeking help of religion and God in the religion and world and loyalty to the nation and the homeland, Abu Dhabi, the president's office, 1981, p. 155.

Accordingly; the federal state began to be established. The result of this state appeared within a few years by the executing great achievements achieved within a record time according to all intentional standards and rates for the development. It has witnessed, thanks to Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, radical changes on the path of progress and prosperity, as within the framework of successive plans for the compressive development, hundreds of projects of development, update and services have executed at the same time. These projects have began from setting the first modern plans for the development of the state on modern bases which reconstruct and reorganize the society in urban, social and political formations and set the basis for construction of modern strong state.

To confirm the Union and its existence as a fact on the ground, Sheikh Zayed said in an interview with Kuwait TV on 2nd January 1972 “ In fact, the union has been established, because it is a necessity required by many conditions and reasons and the most important of them is the urgent desire to reunite and collect the decision in the region, through considering that the consistency, cooperation and unifying the intentions was the only road to reach to the power of which we were and are in dire need to do our mission. For all these reasons, the union was a necessary requirement from all aspects either from the Gulf Sheikhs or peoples. So we had patience for along time and did continuous efforts to adopt the rules and bases of this union, however some persons thought that the union will not be established, but our faith was unlike what they thought so we have exerted the precious and valuable for the sake of Union establishment<sup>490</sup>.

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490 Ahmed Galal Tadmoury, "His Highness Sheikh Zayed and the way of unity for the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States", in: Jamal Sanad Al-Suwaidi, the Cooperation Council for Gulf Arab states in the beginning of century twenty one, Abu Dhabi, Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, i 2.1999, p. 572.

The constitution has determined from the beginning the form of the state, that it is federal state and the governance regime is presidential and mentioned at the same time the federal authorities for the state which are the supreme council of the union, the Union President and his Vice-president, Board of Ministers of Union, National Council of the union and the federal judicature. The constitution has determined the governance with supreme authority performs the executive function and is assisted in performing this function by the council of ministers. It performs also the legislative authority and is assisted in performing this function by legislative entity, which is the federal national council. Therefore; the supreme council of the union and its president have the two legislative and executive authorities. The judicial authority is independent from the aspect of membership and function and in addition to these authorities; the constitution has ensured and determined the rights and liberties of the individuals<sup>491</sup>. The governance regime in United Arab Emirates is a modern presidential regime, which is unique and has its special stature.

In Saudi Arabia, King Abdul Aziz has set up a new regime, which is in conformity with the provision of Islamic Shariah, extracted from the essence of faith and emitted from the Arab originality. This regime observes the Saudi customs, traditions and social values with the extent that agrees with the new facts and without contradiction with the public interest. On this base, the constitutional and administrative organization has been established, the form of government has been determined and the responsibilities of entities created for this purpose have been appointed as well as the amount of power of each of them.

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<sup>491</sup> Mohsen Khalil, the constitutional system of the State of the United Arab Emirates, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates University, 1989, p. 191.

The start point was through practicing all of that in the region of Al Hiiiaz then circulating the same in all regions of the kingdom after reviewing the first experience and entering the required amendments to ensure its validity and affectivity<sup>492</sup>.

The National Council has been established in 1924 A.D. and the Shura Council began to be established in 1925 A.D., then the Kind Abdul Aziz issued the fundamental instructions for the Kingdom of Hijaz on 30 August 1926<sup>493</sup>. The organizational national and international responsibilities have been determined according to these fundamental instructions, as follows;

- All regions of the state shall be undividable integral unit.
- Its capital is Makkah and its official language is the Arabic Language and it is Islamic language that is independent in its internal and external policy.
- The President is HM King Abdul Aziz Al Saud who is the reference point for all authorities and is restricted to provisions of Shariah law.
- The provisions are extracted from the Shariah and its laws are followed as per the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet Mohamed and his followers and Ancestors.
- The King has a viceroy in the Arab Kingdom of Hijaz to manage its affairs on his behalf, in his name and to appoint managers and presidents to assist in managing the affairs of the Kingdom according to needs.
- State affairs are divided into six sections: legislative affairs, internal affairs, external affairs, financial affairs, the directorate of public knowledge and military affairs<sup>494</sup>.

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492 Abdullah Bin Mohammed Alshahyl, Period of Establishment of modern Saudi Arabia 1333 – 1351/ 1915 – 1932 A.D. analytic historic study, Riyadh, Dar Al-Watan Publishing and Media, 1987, pp 201 202.

493 Latifa Abdul Aziz al-Salloum, political and cultural developments in modern Saudi in 1344 AH / 1926 AD 1352 AH / 1932 AD Historic and documentary Study, Riyadh, Obeikan Library, 1996, ps102 103.

494 Mohsen Khalil, the constitutional order of United Arab Emirates, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates University, 1989, p. 191.



Many amendments, variations, developments and cancellations were performed recently on these fundamental instructions, as required by need, although these instructions remained as an approach to governance until complete integration occurred when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was declared.

KSA was the first state to experience democracy in the Arabian Gulf region in 1924 through an initiative from the king Abdul Aziz by creating the national Shura Council. The purview of council was determined in enacting regulations and laws of municipalities, education, general health, Islamic courts and internal security. But this ambitious experience continued for only four years and in 1928, the number of council members decreased and its tasks became solely consultative when required by the King. Following the construction and declaration of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932, discussion regarding consultation and popular participation was terminated until the Shura Council was established in 1994 by King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz<sup>495</sup>.

The Republic of Tunisia's constitution determined the form of the state to be central (unified) and with a parliamentary and republican governance regime. This constitution stipulated a separation amongst the three legislative, executive and judicial authorities and stipulated also the liberty of messages, communication, liberty of establishing parties, liberty of transportation, liberty of expression and liberty of organization. The constitution of June 1959 was distinguished in that it was a progressive constitution that included all the gains of civilizations of the Western peoples, as a formal interface only rather than a political application. The field of justice particularly was contrary to the spirit of the constitution's stipulation. Tunisia did not know liberties granted to the citizen in any modern state as Habib Bourguiba controlled all authorities and dominated all aspects of life through one party.

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<sup>495</sup> Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Civil Society in GCC", Jamal Sanad Al-Suwaidi, the GCC in the beginning of twenty one century, previous reference, p. 289.

## **Infrastructure**

The most important indicators of state strength include the availability of infrastructure required for the continuity of such strength, which provides suitable chances for investing the resources available in the same. In this field, the UAE has acquired many initiatives from Sheikh Zayed. It witnessed a great construction boom, as the oil revenues assisted in providing the financial capacity required for executing large construction projects, which are considered to be a method of raising the living level of the employees. Suitable housing is provided for all employees; new cities and popular houses have been established for people with limited income. The state granted land for accommodation for employees who were able to build their houses with their own abilities and granted them long-term loans with low interest. The old cities have been connected to the new cities through an advanced road network. The state has opened and developed a number of marine ports to keep up with comprehensive improvement. These ports are equal to the marine ports established in the developed states. Airports have been established all over the UAE.<sup>496</sup>

In KSA, King Abdul Aziz began to execute its reformative programs to promote the state through social and economic work named “Abandonment” aimed at transforming desert society into a stable and peaceful society, and a man who is familiar with the principles of religion and Islamic law was appointed for each group to ensure the preservation of faith and adherence to what is imposed.

The first abandonment occurred in 1912 and was subsequently established all over the kingdom establishing villages and small cities. The King took considerable time to execute and establish a modern infrastructure for the state following his visit to Egypt in 1945. He decided that a transportation network should connect Saudi

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496 Omar Ibrahim Al-Khatib, "limits of possibilities of unity in the UAE," in: Group of Authors, modern Arab unitary experiences: the experience of United Arab Emirates, researches and discussions of the intellectual seminar organized by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 2d, Beirut, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1985, p. 681.

cities and thus he established modern ports on its state coasts. King Abdul Aziz paved modern roads between cities established a railway connecting Riyadh and the oil wells of the Eastern in 1951. He also built the ports on the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea and established the management for Saudi Arabian Airlines under the name “The Aviation Authority” in 1948. After the Civil Saudi Aviation Company appeared, airports were established in many cities in the kingdom and the wire and wireless communication such as the telegraph, post and telephone entered which had hitherto been objected to because they were considered to constitute magic, forbidden by Islam. Many telegraph centers were established and reached at the end of his reign to 100 centers. He also permitted the entry of the wire and wireless telephone, allowing employees to use it internally and externally by the end of his reign. The transportation sector developed the economy of the state. In addition, the development assisted in providing the security and political stability in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Construction development in KSA resulted from economic development following the introduction of electricity to Saudi cities and means of transportation such as telegraph, post, telephone and wireless.

Tunisian infrastructure remained weak, there were some airports but they were not enough and which presented a challenge for Tunisia in the field of air transport. Tunisia’s one marine port activity is very limited in comparison with international ports. In the field of land transportation, modern roads connect the cities of Tunisia and there are some railway lines. The transportation sector was nationalized in 1958, The National Transportation Company was established in 1963 undertaking the task of urban transportation in Tunisian cities and suburbs.

## **Economic Development**

With the conviction that there is no political independence without economic independence and real development, the founder of UAE worked to achieve economic independence through maintaining his control over most oil companies operating in the state. Under the comprehensive development and update witnessed by UAE, the state has experienced economic growth at unprecedented rates. This is because the economy of UAE used to depend on one source for production, making oil the only source of national income. Oil revenues form about 48% of total annual income. The main marker for volume of annual income in UAE is that oil represents the greatest and primary resource<sup>497</sup>.

This does not mean that oil forms the only economic lifeline in the state, natural gas and agricultural and animal production and financial and commercial services have now formed main resources, developing national cadres able to understand scientific and engineering developments. The state realized that the developmental process would progress in three trends. Firstly, by the establishment of new economic and productive sectors, the second trend is establishing a national workforce that realizes the risks of depending on coming labor<sup>498</sup> from different social environments. The third trend is represented in the adoption of the state of various economic policies, which aim at training national operating manpower to supersede the coming manpower. The economy of UAE exists through some resources other than oil. The economy of UAE has achieved great jumps towards internationality through the execution of many great projects within UAE. These projects vary amongst the great industrial projects and great commercial projects. Many states have

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497 Omar Ibrahim Al-Khatib, "limits of possibilities of unity in the UAE," in: Group of Authors, modern Arab unitary experiences: the experience of United Arab Emirates, researches and discussions of the intellectual seminar organized by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 2d, Beirut, Center for Arab Unity Studies, 1985, p. 681.

498 Maitha Salem Al Shamsi, immigration and workforce development: a study of the services sector in the society of United Arab Emirates, Dubai, Culture and Science Symposium, 1996, Ps 161 162.

competed to have commercial offices in UAE, Dubai city is considered to be the largest economic city in the world with the centralization of many great industrial and commercial projects.<sup>499</sup>

UAE prioritized manufacturing to correct production structure and decrease dependence on crude oil and natural gas. Exclusive reliance on one sector left it open to great influence from the international market and external factors, which cannot be controlled, by the state. UAE varied the manufacturing sectors to vary income sources and establish a sound base for the state economy. The concentration was on industry because it is, according to economic international standards, the qualified sector, for which all efforts of development should be made to provide factors that assist with the establishment of different industries such as amassing enough capital, the availability of raw materials, energy, labor and other main factors<sup>500</sup>. Through directing large investments to this sector in addition to government encouragement of the private sector to build industrial units, industrial production has doubled within the period between 1972 and 1990.. The state, besides its fulfilment of the local market from manufactured goods, exports many industrial goods abroad through a process of importing and re-exporting<sup>501</sup>. In spite of the great efforts undertaken by the state to vary its economic base and income sources, and in spite of development and growth in the non-oil sectors, the oil sector is still the most important sector for national economic sectors and is the main source of income. For this reason, the expansion process in the productive capacity of oil in addition to the development of oil sector became an important strategic priority for the state to ensure continuity in providing a

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499 Ahmed Abdullah bin Said, the foreign policy of United Arab Emirates towards the Arab World 1971-1990, Abu Dhabi, Cultural Foundation, 2003, p. 102.

1Ministry of Information and Culture, United Arab Emirates fifteen years on the road of construction and progress, Abu Dhabi, 1986, p. 22.500

501 Maitha Salem Al Shamsi, immigration and workforce development: a study of the services sector in the society of United Arab Emirates, Dubai, Culture and Science Symposium, 1996, Ps 177 - 178

suitable amount of the revenue required for economic and social development in addition to fulfilling the needs of the international market.<sup>502</sup>

Guided by the principal of internationality in economy, Sheikh Zayed considered an open economy to be a guarantee for development and he took countries, which adopted a policy of nationalization, which reflected passively on them and became importing states after they were exporting states, as his inspiration. He opened up the UAE market to foreign markets and encouraged national, pan-Arab and foreign investment within the state. Sheikh Zayed indicated that foreign investments play an important role in moving the economy cycle, because they reflect confidence, giving citizens the experience of participating in technology transfer; “We are against economy nationalization, as states have preceded us in nationalization and became importing states after being exporting states. We open the field towards all national, Arab and foreign investments and all of that shall be within the planning framework. We definitely want the national economy to enter a phase, which is more effective, strength and stability. We believe in giving the full opportunity to the man and citizen of this state to manage his economy by himself. We welcome foreign investment at the Arab and foreign levels because it has advanced technological knowledge, which we need. We have the ability to know what is for our interest and there is no doubt that our economic relation is the basis for rapidity of our movement”

Therefore, the developmental experience of UAE represents an example of development, which equilibrates between economic liberalization and the modernization role of the state. Economic liberalization achieves an economic takeoff for society and allows capital to move internally and externally, in addition to permitting liberty of investment. It creates a climate of confidence through which

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502 Jamal Sanad Al-Suwaidi, the UAE society United Arab outlook, Abu Dhabi, the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 2003, p. 33.

internal savings grow as well as the growth of economic initiative and adventure in investment processes. The modernization role controls the process of economic liberalization, setting the legal formulas for it from one side and performs an effective role in the establishment of pillars of the economic environment, building necessary economic structures and providing social and cultural services which achieve welfare for the society from the other side<sup>503</sup>.

In KSA, King Abdul Aziz holds an agreement for granting franchises for oil excavation. On 15<sup>th</sup> April 1931, the American mission reached Jeddah to execute a geological study for KSA and to discover the possibility of earth resources. A petrol agreement was concluded with American company "Standard Oil Company of California" on 29<sup>th</sup> July approved by royal decree no. 1135 dated the 7<sup>th</sup> July of the same year. The company drilled its first well on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1938.<sup>504</sup> After some structural amendments of the American company, it was re-named in 1944 as the Arabian American Oil Company "Aramco", which has comprehensively amended its agreement with KSA, so that the company shall pay rates of 50% from its profits for the Saudi government since 1951. The company recognized the right of the Saudi king to impose taxes on company revenues as the absolute president of KSA. Through this agreement, a great American petroleum company was subjected for the first time to the requirements of the government applicable in its state and put itself under power of its laws.<sup>505</sup>

The dominant feature of Saudi industries was that these industries were traditional, handcraft and simple and dependent on individual professions from labor and manufacturers<sup>506</sup>, until the petroleum industry entered. The kingdom began to

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503 Dr. Mozah Ghobash, Human Development in UAE 1971 – 1994, Abu Dhabi, Cultural foundation, 1996, P.27.

504 Dr. Abdul Fattah Hasan Abu Alyah, previous reference, Ps. 175 & 177

505 The previous reference, previous reference, P. 197

506 Latifa Abdulaziz Salom, Previous reference, P. 207

enter a phase of mechanical light industries instead of manual heavy industries<sup>507</sup>. The discovery and development of oil was the primary factor of economic development for the company, which led to the occurrence of comprehensive development at the level of all aspects.

Under his application of Islamic Shariah, we can discuss some of the practical applications for provisions of Islamic Shariah in the economic field; for example he has banned the importation of anything that contradicts with the provisions of Islamic Shariah. As stipulated in the executive regulation of customs statute issued by royal decree no. 425 dated on 05.03.1372 A.H. – 23.11.1952 A.D. in the seventh chapter, article 88, it is banned to import items, including all alcoholic beverages and drugs and poppy with its all names, clocks on which the two testimonies or verses from the Quran and alike are written, cinematic machinery and movies with exception of the cultural, agricultural, industrial movies and alike in addition to machinery required for displaying the same. The required acknowledgment shall be taken on the competent authorities not to use the same in other than the educational purposes and their photographs, CDs and music instruments with the exception of the cultural, agriculture, industrial and health CDs and alike in addition to machinery required for operating with taking the required acknowledgment on the competent authorities not to use the same in other than for educational purposes and tools of play such as dice, chess. There are other matters mentioned in the stipulation of the article<sup>508</sup>.

In Tunisia, the bourgeoisie has dominated the thought of Habib Bourguiba. He made the Tunisian economy run on the principle of free economy; Bourguiba has transferred to the principle of directed economy in 1961<sup>509</sup>. Although the state

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507 Dr. Abdul Fattah Hasan Abu Alyah, previous reference, Ps. 212

508 see stipulation of article : Dr. Al Aziz Bin Mohamed Bin Abdulkhal Al Haglan, Islamic jurisprudence in the era of King Abdul Aziz, may God have mercy on him from 1319 until the year 1373 AH, Riyadh, Islamic University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud, 2000, Ps. 60 & 62.

509 Dr. Salah Al-Acad, Maghreb: Algeria - Tunisia - Morocco, i 2, Cairo, Egyptian Anglo Library, 1966, p. 503.



recognized the respect of the private sector obligating it to work within the general policy of the state in addition to his call to transfer from trade and real estate speculation to productive activities.<sup>510</sup> Bouguiba cancelled directed economy and constitutional socialism in 1970 and confirmed the principle of economic liberalism. Many legislation and laws were issued which assisted the transformation to the economic liberalism, e.g. Laws of April 1972 and Laws of August 1974, which opened the field of investment liberty towards local and foreign capital. The law of December 1973 was related to the creation of the fund for development and industrial decentralization. This was followed by the generation of an agency to promote investments, industrial real estate company and a center for promoting export. All these generations in total assisted in the establishment of hundreds of establishments and provided many work opportunities for the Tunisian citizen. However, the Tunisian economy did not depend on the free economy, but was an internationalized economy, i.e. the state disposed directly of the economy through the bureaucratic system and ideological thinking approved by the Government and the citizen did not bear the responsibility of production and investment. The Tunisian economy, which is fully integrated in the international capital markets that are dominated by the importing model (develop and marketing products for foreign markets) has suffered from severe economic problems. It entered deep crisis in the mid-seventies as a result of the global capital economy. Therefore, foreign capital represented a great part of the Tunisian economy and the projects belonging to this foreign capital served the interests of the foreign capital at the expense the national Tunisian economy. There were attempts by the Tunisian regime to confront its economic problems, through resisting unemployment, policy of austerity and pressure on prices. Bourguiba took

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510 Abdul Latif Harmasi, *the State and Development in the Maghreb: Tunisia as a model*, Tunisia, Dar SARS for Publishing, 1993, p. 89.

decisions, which had passive results on the Tunisian economy, e.g. making military deals that were only wasteful of Tunisian public money<sup>511</sup>.

Bourguiba's policy was unwise and contradicted with the diplomatic practice when he discharged Libya's foreign minister and ambassador of Libya to Tunis from his office. The reaction of Libya resulted in the discharge of 33 000 Tunisian workers from Libya in August 1985, in addition to the cancellation of deals signed between Libya and a number of Tunisian contractors and traders. There was no policy to act as the guarantee and main mover of economic invulnerability and to give it the confidence and credibility abroad to attract investors. There was no confidence in Tunisia from the side of Tunisian and foreign investors, because they were not sure of the fate of Tunisia as a result of the political deterioration.<sup>512</sup> That has led to duplication of the number of unemployed persons and a decrease of investors and manufacturers because of loss of confidence and as a result of abuse, hastiness in fastening false accusations and taking unfair trials. Factories were closed, projects cancelled and the level of investments decreased particularly in of the construction, cars and other sectors.<sup>513</sup>

In addition, the Tunisian economy lacked strategic planning since beginning of the seventies, as the socialist regime founded by Ahmed Bin Saleh, who attempted to promote the economy of the state through cooperation<sup>514</sup>, with the consideration that Tunisia is primarily an agricultural country. But since the beginning of 1971 the experience of cooperation was cancelled under the banner of fighting its many mistakes after Bourguiba dismissed Bin Saleh from his position as Minister of

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511 Mohammed Mzali, an open letter to Bourguiba, Cairo, Al Ahran Center for Printing and Publishing, 1988, Ps. 96.97.

512 Previous Reference, P. 98

513 Qusai Saleh Darwish, previous reference, P. 128

514 Hamad Bin Saleh, Tunisia, development, society and politics, Beirut, Dar al-Kalima Publishing, 1980, pp 109 110.

Education and discharged him from the party and parliament in November 1970.<sup>515</sup> A new economy was established which was not based on agriculture, but on both sectors of tourism and services. The tourist areas, where hotels and tourist products were built, were activated. Hence, cultivation, which takes 39% of labor in Tunisia, began to take only 21% from the national income, while the service sector took 42% from the national income against 30% from labor. The tourism sector is seasonal, so seasonal unemployment has created many social and moral problems. Unemployment has increased with high rates within the last years of the reign of Bourguiba and Tunisia began to export labor in a chaotic manner. In the meantime, the agriculture sector has retreated with great rates<sup>516</sup>. The industry sector in Tunisia remained limited to some of the old centers and did not witness great growth because of the relatively small size and weak possibilities of Tunisia.

### **Education**

Education plays a key role in the development and progress of societies in addition to its cultural role. Education is the most important constituent of economy promotion and it participates in raising social and political awareness. It leads to the spread of knowledge and the transfer of cultural heritage from one generation to another. Through education, Sheikh Zayed said, “We can provide a generation from the citizens who can supervise the establishment of factories, manages projects which began to be established in different areas of the state’s union. Therefore, no strong and permanent national industry may be established unless by the citizens of the state”<sup>517</sup>.

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<sup>515</sup> Tahir Belkhdja, Habib Bourguiba, biography of leader ... A testament to the age, Cairo, Dar-Al-Thacafah, 1999, p. 90.

<sup>516</sup> Qusai Saleh Darwish, previous reference, P. 171

<sup>517</sup> A letter from Sheikh Zayed when he visited the second general gallery for the schools of Abu Dhabi on 14. April 1971. At: d. Yusuf Mohamed artillery, previous reference , p. 219.

Education also raises the value of the human being in the age of renaissance and progress. For this reason, Sheikh Zayed considered money to have no value without education and knowledge and that the greatest investment for money is related to the creation of a generation of educated persons, so he observed the spreading of education and the establishment of culture throughout his reign.

Regular education in UAE was limited before the establishment of the union. There were Arab initiatives, which participated in the development of UAE educationally in addition to the local departments for education in some emirates such as Abu Dhabi, which established the first education department in 1966. After establishing the union, UAE witnessed a great leap in the education process, as education developed as for the quantity and quality, obtained continuous care and unlimited material and moral support from Sheikh Zayed. He provided schools, institutes, military and technical establishments and determined, by ministerial resolution no. 83/7/1989, a period of nine years for literacy. The number of literacy centers exceeded 54 in 1972 to 140 centers in 1996<sup>518</sup> as evidence of older generations venturing into the education. The education system in UAE comprises six types; public, religious, special, technical, adult and university or higher education<sup>519</sup>.

The education policy, began by Sheikh Zayed, provided some institutions of higher education; including government institutions for higher education, special institutions for higher education, branches of external institutions for higher education, centers for university services to register the students abroad in addition to the establishment of some centers of applied scientific research to remedy the

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518 Previous reference , Ps. 226 & 227

519 Rashid Ali Saeed Bin Alwan Al Habsi, social development in the United Arab Emirates 1971 - 2004, Master Thesis, Department of Research and historic studies , Cairo, the Institute of Arab Research and Studies, 2006, p. 64.

problems of environment and society<sup>520</sup>. The process of higher education began with opening UAE University in Al Ain city on 10<sup>th</sup> November 1977. Sheikh Zayed determined the mission of this university as “This Islamic Arabic University strengthens values, promotes the nation’s constants, refines the abilities of the Youth, lets them gain the skills of the age and rehabilitates them for the service of their society.”<sup>521</sup>. Education is comprehensive cultural building according to which the national Islamic Arab personality is built and promoted. Openness to the technical and reception of scientific innovations of the age is performed through education. Sheikh Zayed confirmed the Islamic personality of the university to achieve the principle of educating UAE nationals as per Islamic principles similar to the founding principles of all states institutions.<sup>522</sup> The education policy in UAE leaned on several general principles:<sup>523</sup>

1. Education enables the individual to practice their personal and general rights.
2. Education is the means that melts the groups and cleaves individuals into a cohesive social and political unit.
3. The institutions of education provide a means for society to transfer its intellectual and spiritual heritage.
4. Education allows society to prepare and provide human powers and efficiencies at their different levels.
5. Science and faith are the basis of for social progress and growth.

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520 Dr. Yusuf Mohamed artillery, previous reference, p. 230.

521 UAE Al-Itihad Newspaper, 11/03/2007, citing from: Dr. Yusuf Mohamed Almadfaey, previous reference , p. 230 .

See the University's goals and functions of: Dr. Naji Sadeq Shrab, United Arab Emirates, study in politics and governance, i 2, Al Ain, University Book House, 1987, p. 374.

522 Sally Venlo, the United Arab Emirates, Arab Nationality and Identity - Islamic, Abu Dhabi, the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Researches, 2001, p. 33.

523 Dr. Naji Sadeq Shrab, previous reference , p. 362

In Saudi Arabia, King Abdul Aziz desired to establish a state, which endorses reasons of renaissance and progress in different fields that pose no contradiction with the Islamic religion. His subsequent interest in education raised the overall profile of clerics. The religious scholars were given pride of place by King Abdul Aziz who gave them precedence over his brothers, senior companions, listening to their views and exaggerated in honoring them.<sup>524</sup> Article 23 of the fundamental instructions of the Kingdom of Hijaz determined public knowledge as “Disseminating the sciences, knowledge and trades, opening the libraries and schools, protecting the educational institutes and imposing the accuracy and caution of assets of the true religion in all.”

Modern education did not appear in until KSA after the unification of the kingdom and the beginning of age of reformation and renewal. Education increased in the kingdom after the discovery of oil resulting in increasing the budget for education. The beginning of modern education was through the establishment of the Saudi Department of Knowledge in 1926, which undertook the task of supervising the different affairs of education. A limited number of new government-regulated schools emerged initially. Education in KSA remained fully dependent on religious principals as natural extension to Islamic culture<sup>525</sup>. In order to achieve this target, King Abdul Aziz established the Faculty of Shariah in Mecca to teach the religious sciences and the Hanbali School in order to graduate judges, forensic counsellors and preachers<sup>526</sup>. The interest of the kingdom in religious education resulted in the establishment of a general directorate for religious faculties and institutes in 1950, Religious studies have remained the basis of educational and cultural policy in the Kingdom. Teaching intellectual materials and English language also began and the schools began

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<sup>524</sup> Khair Alddin Zarkali, the brief in biography of King Abdul Aziz, Beirut, Dar al-Ilm for millions, 1977, p. 197.

<sup>525</sup> Latifa Abdul Aziz al-Salloum, previous reference, p.180.

<sup>526</sup> Dr. Abdel Fattah Hassan Obualliah, previous reference, p. 241.

gradually to be provided with scientific laboratories, chemical laboratories and devices required for them from the modern educational means. King Abdul Aziz made education free for the different members of Saudi society and provided universal educational opportunities for all Saudis, who desired to complete their scientific education abroad, as there were no universities in the kingdom. He has assigned financial rewards for students of religious faculties, Faculty of Shariah and Faculty of Teachers and for students of teaching training institutes. The Kingdom was interested in opening night schools for the education of adults and children who did not attend day school in a project to combat illiteracy i.<sup>527</sup> Schools were founded to teach typing and teaching English language. Female education was only available in Hijaz and was limited to teaching the Holy Qu'ran and the principles of writing and accounts. These schools included School of Disciplining the Ethics (1929), School of Fatma Hanim (1931), School of Achievement and Success (1939).<sup>528</sup> The first appearance of government primary education for girls was in 1960 during the reign of King Saud bin Abdul Aziz, who issued a royal decree in October 1959 to form an official authority independent of the Ministry of Education under the name General Presidency for Girls' Education. This delay is because of some social conceptions about female education in Islamic society<sup>529</sup>.

In general, education development in KSA was very slow but after the end of Second World War in 1945 and the entrance of KSA into a new phase of economic development generated by international interest in Saudi petrol education began to take progressive steps and developed rapidly.<sup>530</sup> It should be noted that the

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<sup>527</sup> Latifa Abdul Aziz al-Salloum, previous reference, p.186.

<sup>528</sup> Dr. Abdel Fattah Hassan Obualliah, previous reference, p. 244.

<sup>529</sup> Dr. Abdul Mohsen Bin Saad Al-Dawood, building of the ambitious renewed person, Riyadh, Arkan Group Advertising, 2002, Ps. 148 & 149..

<sup>530</sup> Dr. Mohammed bin Abdullah Salman, unification of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its impact on the intellectual, political and social stability, Jeddah, al-Madinah Press Establishment, 1996, p. 73.

Kingdom's first university, King Saud University, opened on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1957 in Riyadh during the reign of King Saud bin Abdul Aziz.

Habib Bourguiba allotted the largest proportion of the budget for the Ministry of Education in comparison with other ministries, so Tunisia has a technical specialized elite sector of the workforce. But this education has faced a great problem in the face of the issue of Arabization and Tunisiation, i.e. replacing French teachers with Tunisian teachers, Arabization of the Tunisian education curricula and teaching subjects in Arabic. It was opposed and fought against by the ranks of the ruling party<sup>531</sup>. French language teaching returned in 1986 from the second year of primary education as it was before independence.<sup>532</sup>

In light of its limited natural resources, Tunisia has concentrated on developing its human abilities during and after Bourguiba's reign, taking the position that human resources are the most important resources source of national wealth. For this reason, the state focused its efforts since independence on social development and the most important of them is the education sector, which is considered to be a sector of primary importance, so it was spread equally between both sexes. The results of these efforts are clear in today's generation, because in 2008/9 Tunisia has one of the highest rates in the world 99.1% for the age of six. Rates of female education sometimes exceed that of boys in the universities of Tunisia.

The secular-oriented approach was permanently sewn into Bourguiba's educational policy through a law passed on March 26<sup>th</sup> 1956 on the radical reform of an educational institution (Al-Zaytunia), a religious institution that was considered to be traditional institution, which offered a traditional education based primarily on

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531 Mohammed Mzali, an open letter to Bourguiba, previous reference, Ps. 79-81.

532 The previous reference, p. 164



religion, appropriating the Zaytuna mosque for purely religious education.<sup>533</sup> A regulation law was then issued in 1958 by which the order to organize the University of Tunisia was later issued on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1960 to be the first University in Tunisia.

### **Cultural and Religious Services**

The clear commitment of the United Arab Emirates to the well-picked mixture of cultural idea - the selection of the best of everything – was shown gallantly, stressing on the one hand the process of taking what was needed from the West and rejecting those parts that are mentally unpalatable. It also rejected the beliefs of the Islamization school that saw everything as saturated values. The UAE is regarded as an open society strikingly unlike other Arab states where to maintain the status quo takes a great deal of attention. ( ).

The UAE was keen to spread knowledge and culture through media to citizens. The first television channel in the UAE was the Abu Dhabi station, opened on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1969, which began broadcasting, by satellite on November 15<sup>th</sup> 1992. On February 25<sup>th</sup> 1969 Abu Dhabi began broadcasting and then turned out to be the United Arab Emirates radio voice of Abu Dhabi. The newspaper Alittihad (the Confederation) was set to be published daily since April 1972 after having been published on a weekly basis since its inception in October 1969. Public and specialized academic libraries were established, to preserve folk heritage, as were creating popular arts associations, giving high priority to the art movement advised by the Ministry of Information and Culture, which was responsible for overseeing the movement of fine art across the country, forming sports federations for the care of

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(<sup>533</sup>) Mustafa Kareem's " Bourquiba's personal contemplations ", Abdul Jalil al-Tamimi's (Arabization), Habib Bourquiba and the establishment of the national state of scientific readings Bourquiba, Tunisia, Al-Tamimi's Foundation for Scientific Research and Information, 2000, p. 16, and Dr. Salah al-Akkad, op.cit, p. 498.

young people and their cultural and social development and has also given attention to the dissemination of culture, Islamic knowledge, religious awareness development, and mosques construction. The State also opened the Quran Radio station from Abu Dhabi in 1981, as well as developing an interest in publishing Islamic books<sup>534</sup>. The number of mosques in the emirate of Abu Dhabi has reached only 1350 mosques in 2001.<sup>535</sup>

The religious associations "reform and religious instruction societies" are one of the most active and influential associations in public life (<sup>536</sup>), this diversity is due to society's development, which has tried to keep religion and the inherited Islamic civilization together with Arab customs and traditions. The first association, an association of reform and social guidance, established in Dubai in 1971 was the first Assembly to get official publicity after the enactment NO. 6 of 1974 regarding the establishment of public benefit associations. There were some associations declared by special decree from UAE rulers, the most important of these associations was the "Zayed Bin Sultan Charity," aiming with other religious associations to encourage acts of kindness and morality.

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the king made great efforts to flourish publishing, where he published several books selected by an elite group of scientists in the fields of advocacy, interpretation, literature, modern Islamic history, collections of some poets and others, to bridge the gap in views on various intellectual issues,

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(<sup>534</sup>) D. Maitha Salem Al Shamsi, immigration and manpower development study of the community services sector in the United Arab Emirates, op.cit, pp 209-211.

(<sup>535</sup>) Abu Dhabi, Statistical Year book 2001, Statistical Division of the Department of Planning, Abu Dhabi, No. 30, November 2002, p. 282.

(<sup>536</sup>) Rashid Ali Saeed Bin Alwan Al Habsi, op.cit, p. 196

providing them to students of science <sup>537</sup>, propagating ancestral Islamic advocacy in favor of all Muslims and disseminating Islamic culture across the Islamic world (<sup>538</sup>).

The king also had also achievement in media, having issued the first newspaper in December 1924 Om Elqura in Mecca, where it had a great role to play in this Kingdom.<sup>539</sup> A group of public and civil libraries were established, the first was in Riyadh in 1943. The Saudi government also established the Saudi Arabia Broadcasting Bureau in Mecca in 1949, and thus radio entered into the country for the first time. At the outset, it was limited to Qu'ranic recitation and hadith with related interpretations for the gratification of Salafi fundamentalists. It has become a means of cultural dissemination of religious and civil factors but is still less open than other Arab neighboring radio stations, in line with the of the Kingdom's <sup>540</sup> social and political conditions. Thus, King Abdul Aziz made great effort in the dissemination of culture and education despite the many obstacles encountered in favor of the country's advancement, which suffered from the Muslim Brotherhood and strict Salafi ideology.

In the Republic of Tunisia, a culture from Tunisia's secular approach has clearly emerged, gallantly shown by the content of the first speech of the current President Ben Ali after the 7th November 1987, in which he declared Tunisia's Arab and Islamic identity, having begun broadcasting the call for prayer on television. There was no relationship between the Tunisian National State and Islamic Arabism during the rule of Bourguiba, although the first item of the Tunisian Constitution explicitly recognizes that Islam is the religion of the Republic of Tunisia. Bourguiba's

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<sup>(537)</sup> Latifa Abdul Aziz Al-Salloum, op, p192.

<sup>(538)</sup> Ibid, p. 258

<sup>(539)</sup> Dr. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Hugail, the process of reunification and reconstruction of historical profiles, Riyadh, without a publishing house, 1999, p. 21.

<sup>(540)</sup> D. Abdel Fattah Hassan Obuallia, op.cit, p. 251

attitude to the clergy and removing their popular charisma in addition to accusing them of traitorous dealing with the French circulated the idea that the religious factor in Tunisia did not exist within official services.

Although secular trends under the Bourguiba's rule, he supported the engagement with the Muslim religion at more than one level, that was in his political speeches supporting Islam, quoting Qu'ranic verses, talking about the Hadith and celebrating religious holidays<sup>541</sup>, making religion a key reference in political discourse<sup>542</sup>, but Bourguiba as a Muslim can be described as a Muslim of Protocols characterized with some of expediency and pragmatism required to win over public opinion at the local level and gain the support of the political, financial and economic circles in Islamic countries. The eighties witnessed an imbalance in cultural, intellectual and social values that guide the culture of individuals and its practices.

Cultural work within Tunisia was characterized by weakness and restriction, as was the case in most other sectors, according to Bourguiba's tendencies. In several areas, allocating 1% of the State's budget to the cultural sector in 2008 was considered a qualitative leap in the cultural sector.<sup>543</sup> Dealing with intellectuals and artists was based on handling new initial options considered as a support for changing, framing, protecting, and honoring. This was represented particularly in a number of measures and incentives, including many aspects such as ensuring free creativity and empowerment of thinkers and artists, approving monthly financial aid to a large number of artists and their families in line with the artists' status and dignity, calling upon the Tunisian national culture to express its distinctive identity, being extremely

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(<sup>541</sup>) Mohamed Habib Alhelp, "Bourquiba and Islam", in: Abdul Jalil al-Tamimi (Arabization), Habib Bourquiba and the establishment of the national state of scientific readings Bourquiba, op.cit, pp 180 181.

(<sup>542</sup>) Oalia Alani, Islamic movements in the Arab world study compared to the situation of Tunisia, Cairo, Egypt House unguarded, 2008, p. 39.

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(<sup>543</sup>) The October 14th, Yemen newspaper, 03/20/2010.

open to human experience in the context of a positive relationship based on the maintenance of national principles on the one hand, and dialogue with other cultures on the other.

## **Healthcare**

The United Arab Emirates has made great efforts since it established a system of healthcare, providing the best possible health services to its citizens in order to secure a healthy climate for citizens and to protect them from diseases. This field was the most important channel used by the state to improve the standards of living, with large sums allocated to develop and deploy health care, either the preventive or curative, in all State's places, that the transfer of services to citizens and not the transfer of citizens to benefit from services (<sup>544</sup>), has been constant for the State's internal policies.

During the Union's first years, the focus was on building hospitals, clinics and health centers in the different regions of UAE, providing them with physicians and technicians. In the eighties, the focus was on developing the quality of these services, in addition to increasing the construction of health institutions to meet population needs, also general public spending was high and sustained, exceeding its proportional ratio in 1990, which was urged by the World Health Organization (WHO) and identified by a value of 5% of GDP, reaching 9% in 2000 across the country.<sup>545</sup>

The UAE was successful in health improvement having a significant impact in providing high quality services testified by international organizations, reflected in the government ranking first in the world for health system capacity to respond to the

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(<sup>544</sup>) Ministry of Information and Culture, the United Arab Emirates fifteen years on the road construction and progress, Abu Dhabi, 1986, p. 24.

(545) Dr. Youssef Mohamed Almdfa'y, op.cit, p.213.

community's needs, according to the World Health Organization's annual report in 2000.

In Saudi Arabia, under the reign of King Abdul Aziz, the Kingdom created many options for health insurance and treatments for the Kingdom's population, having approved in 1932 to accede to the Rome Convention on Hajj pilgrims' health, participating in the Paris Medical Convention 1934 and 1935, and joining the World Health Organization in 1948. The Kingdom's local achievements included the establishment of the Directorate of Public Health, which became a ministry in 1951 A.D.<sup>546</sup>, also established hospitals and health centers in addition to quarantine's other stuffs, having been the first hospital in Riyadh in 1928 A.D, also the Kingdom suffered from providing health services due to the Kingdom's wide geographic area, but has attempted to address this by providing mobile health units to do mission trips in areas where there were no health services.<sup>547</sup>

While the health sector in the Republic of Tunisia was given a special concern from Bourguiba, systems and personal status law by deploying health education, implementing birth control and a contraception program, with compulsory sterilization for each woman who gave birth to eight children.

### **Social Welfare**

The UAE focused on providing care for society's different categories, having set up development centers and social welfare in the various emirates, promoting the establishment of public interest associations and social clubs, women's societies, as well as the education and social guidance and institutions role in the different care

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(<sup>546</sup>) Dr. Mohammed bin Abdullah Salman, the Saudi Arabia and the beginnings of cultural renaissance, op.cit, p. 116.

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(547)Latifa Abdul Aziz al-Salloum, op, p. 230

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such as the rehabilitation of the disabled and elderly peoples' care <sup>(548)</sup>. It also has provided a monthly aid to citizens who are unable to work such as some categories of widows, divorcees, unmarried and abandoned, the elderly and people with disabilities, orphans and students with no reliable sustenance and financially incapacitated, encouraging them to continue their education, raising their cultural level <sup>(2<sup>549</sup>)</sup>, so that they could have a role to participate in the economic and social development witnessed within the State. These categories have been identified in the Social Security Act of the State's Union; then, the UAE has been featuring by this sector as well as many others.

However, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia there was no social welfare in the term of organizational concept for long years, where the debut of social affairs regulation affiliated to the program of the labor and Social Affairs Ministry within the Five Year Development Plan in 1970 - 1975 A.D <sup>(550)</sup>, while it was launched under the rule of King Abdul Aziz from the Islam's religious approach, which urges the parish's affairs accomplishment, "you are a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock" with the leadership's full recognition and its emphasis to honor this responsibility.

As well as the case in Tunisia where there was no indication of any real interest from the Tunisian government in either social categories or vulnerable children, however Ben Ali's government has shown later its concern within the stat's policy general framework.

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<sup>(548)</sup> The Ministry of Information and Culture, op.cit, p.25.

<sup>(549)</sup> Dr. Youssef Mohamed Alraf'y, op.cit, p. 209.

<sup>(550)</sup> Dr. Abd Elmohsen Ben Dawo'd op.cit, p. 134

## **Agriculture**

The experience of the United Arab Emirates in this field is considered as a pioneering experience in the world, having enabled Sheikh Zayed to overcome the desert nature and turn them into green gardens, just as the towns and villages across the country covered by greenery. Sheikh Zayed has managed to provide his country with water in various ways, adopting the device of wells' drilling, creating a large number of dams, and working on the Gulf's desalination, accordingly, the UAE became the second producer to water available for its population, scoring the highest level of fresh water's consumption per capita in the world after the United States of America <sup>(551)</sup>, drawing the agricultural productivity's attention into the innovative approaches to increasing and meet almost all population's needs, and thus achieved the goal addressed by Sheikh Zayed in one of his visits to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries on August 20, 1973, where he said "all what we are aiming and striving to achieve is the establishment of agriculture in a great deal of efficiency and specialization, to meet the needs of the citizen from agricultural crops. "

In Saudi Arabia, the King Abdul Aziz showed prominent attention to agriculture that he was providing aids to farmers, having entrusted in the financial Agency by an agreement with a company in 1932 to import a large amount of farming machinery and sell it to farmers on easy terms with installments basis <sup>(552)</sup>, Then on the discovery of oil, a new era of a modern economy has emerged in the Kingdom, on the basis of modern techniques for irrigation, agriculture and agricultural machinery. King Abdul Aziz has begun the first project in 1930 A.D, by Iraqi Farm mission, and then the project followed by the Egyptian mission, then extended and developed in 1940 to include water pumps and irrigation channels that reached eleven under the

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<sup>(551)</sup> Dr. Mohamed Youssef Almdfa'y op.cit, p.265

<sup>(552)</sup> Latifa Abd AL-Aziz Al-Salloum op.cit, p.206



American Mission's Agricultural experts supervision, in association with Aramco and the Saudi government. In the end of 1946, Aramco has directly oversaw the project ushered in a range of projects which later spread in many regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (<sup>553</sup>).

In 1948 A.D, the Department of Agriculture has been established, and expanded much more on farmers' lending to purchase modern agricultural machinery as well as boreholes drilling and model farms establishing and some fruit and vegetables trees purchasing with free distribution to farmers (<sup>554</sup>). The Department of Agriculture was affiliated to the Ministry of Finance, and after the death of King Abdul Aziz, it now has a special ministry, that the Prince Sultan Ben Abdul Aziz was the first minister.

However, the Republic of Tunisia as an agricultural country was concerned with agriculture at the time of socialist economy in 60s, but it neglected this sector with the transformation of the economy to another direction at the beginning of 70s, to be interested in the services sector, especially tourism.

### **The Armed Forces (Army)**

As the strong army is a key element of state's power, Sheikh Zayed has worked on the formation of armed forces of the United Arab Emirates since the beginning of the Union, having issued a Federal Law No. 7 in 1971 H.D on the formation of the armed forces of the State's federation. The law provides that "the United Arab Emirates is set to institutionalize the Federal Armed Forces Of Defence, called the federation's defence force, be such a force under the auspices of the Federal Minister of Defence and obey His commands, in accordance with the provisions of

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<sup>(553)</sup> Dr. Abd El-Fattah Hassan Abu Alia op.cit, p.205,206

<sup>(554)</sup> Dr. Mohamed Ben Abdullah Salman, the KSA and the beginning of the cultural renaissance op.cit,p.113

the Interim Constitution of the Federation and other federal laws. ". The Constitution's Article NO.142 of the UAE has passed Provisionally the members of emirates right to create equipped local security forces that may be joined to the federal force in case of necessity, however Sheikh Zayed was stickled to the idea of unitary work on the armed forces of the UAE, by issuing decision to unify the armed forces of the Emirates members on May 6, 1976 A.D, under one central command called the "General Command of the Armed Forces". In November of the same year, the constitutional article NO.142 of the Interim Constitution has been repealed through a constitutional amendment <sup>(555)</sup>. Thus, the federal government became the only body having the right to establish armed forces of land, sea and air capabilities to be developed basing on the contribution of these forces to protect the country on the one hand, and the contribution of the state to achieve security and stability in the region.

The King Abdul Aziz formed the first regular army for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, trained on the best military regimes, after it had been divided into four sections each section of which had its own task and multiple methods, but the army was developed after the annexation of the Hejaz's territory. In coincidence with the issuance of the basic instructions in 1926, such amendments have been introduced to the military branches until Royal Decree passed to configure management charged with organizing the military service that was called "the Department of Military Affairs" in 1930, a precursor to the composition of the modern regular army <sup>(556)</sup>, followed by the formation of the Defence Agency in 1935, then the General Staff of war in 1940, replacing the Department of military affairs, Finally, the integration of

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<sup>(555)</sup> Khaldoun Sate' Al-Hosary" The UAE confederation: The constitutional text and practice, in: Group of authors, experiences of contemporary Arab unionist: The experience of the UAE, op.cit,p.627  
<sup>(556)</sup> Latifa Abd Al-Aziz Al- Salloum, op.cit,p.153

military organization and the establishment of the Ministry of defence in 1946 <sup>(557)</sup>. The King Abdul Aziz also has drawn the road towards the establishment of defensive plants making use of Arab experts and recruiting all his best efforts and money <sup>(558)</sup>.

The Tunisian Army was established on July 24<sup>th</sup> 1956, generally as a simple army, using neither sophisticated nor modern weapons, that Tunisia has accounted on the West to set the army, particularly France and the United States of America, instead of putting the military to its core mission of safeguarding the state's security and meeting the appeal in the event of natural disasters. Bourguiba has used army to protect his regime and suppress the citizens, which was appearing in more than one case during his reign, the first time in 1967 to quell protests on Israeli attack launched against Egypt and Syria in 1967, but the second time was during the incidents of Ksar Helal on 14<sup>th</sup> October 1977, then against the General Union of Tunisian Workers, which has sought to be a counterweight to Bourguiba and opened fire on the civilian population on the January 26, 1978 with ten Scores of dead <sup>(559)</sup>, also in the events of Qufsa in January 1980, as well as the events of Alkhobz (bread) in January 1984. It should be noted that each foregoing incident was a confirmation of the collapse and failure of the Bourguiba's policy and his regime, which ensures its fragility within the Tunisian society which also refers to repressive practices exercised by the regime against its own citizens, thus violating the Tunisian constitution and international laws related.

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<sup>(557)</sup> Youssef Ibrahim Salloum, "the military regime in the reign of King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al-Saud 1319 - 1373 A.H" on: Researches of the World Conference on the history of the King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al-Saud, held at the University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University in Riyadh from 1st to 5th December 1985, Volume III, Riyadh, University of Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University, 1985, pp 1023.1024.

<sup>(558)</sup> Dr. Ibrahim Abdo, Man of the island: A new presentation for the biography of King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, 2b, Riyadh, King Abdul Aziz public Library, 1419 A.H / 1998, p.137.

<sup>(559)</sup> Quasi Saleh Al-Darwish, op.cit,p.71

## **Human Rights**

Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan said that "The enterprise of the European Union in which our country has engaged is a new and unique experience, that our belief in the welfare of our citizens has led us to this confederation, so we must join hands to compensate ourselves for the underdevelopment and poverty, and work to provide our society with the requirements of all fields to ensure the happiness of these people who are working for this confederation ".<sup>560</sup>

Sheikh Zayed has clipped all concepts, laws and international Islamic conventions related to human rights, having already overcome them thanks to his wise decisions and good initiatives that were developed through his sharp insight and political thoughts to keep the most valuable assets owned to home, which was seen as the real wealth on this earth, the most expensive potentials of this country (<sup>561</sup>), that there is no development without human development at first hand, as the basis of any cultural process (<sup>562</sup>), hence all UAE efforts and dedications were in order to ensure human rights, liberty and welfare, also to provide all possible ways to promote his abilities to the better, having facilitated all requirements, which was able to pose this man at the forefront of their plans currently or in the future, formulating so many constitutional laws enacted for the sake of all rights and freedoms, and supported by ministerial laws. These efforts sought, with all they have, to develop laws for the public interest, Sheikh Zayed also has sought since the federation's establishment to make such a constitution to this country, expressing his beliefs about the people and reflecting their aspirations as well as his highly hopeful ambitions beset for them to ensure civil and political rights, with no any aspect of these rights missing.

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<sup>560</sup>) Ahmed Galal Al-Tadmery, op.cit,p.572

<sup>561</sup> Mohamed Khalil Al-Siksik and Shams El-Dean Al-Deify, The leadership: Beseeching of god on worldly and religious matters and devoting to the country and home, op.cit,p.156

<sup>562</sup>) Shams El-Deen Al-D'efi and Mohamed Khalil Al-Siksik, Zayed and the national foundation twenty five years of giving op.cit,p.118

The Constitution of the United Arab Emirates came to express a real dignity of human being, and the most key points in the maintenance of human rights: the independence of the judiciary, the right of citizens to address public authorities, the right to incorporate associations, and respecting for property, the right to have a political asylum, the Constitution itself did not ignore the key two elements of family, women and children, stressing on the maintenance of their rights and providing all ways of care from hospitals, schools, kindergartens and family care centers and ensuring their rights in the constitutional law of the State respecting them.

More than 20 articles in the Constitution including personal freedoms of human beings as well as intellectual freedom, economic, political and social rights, derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on civil, political, economic and social (<sup>563</sup>) rights. The constitution considered that equality, social justice and equal opportunities for all citizens are of the society's essential pillars, as the Constitutional text stipulates that the family is the foundation of society to be ensured and protected by the existence and maintenance of law.

Any legislation in the United Arab Emirates witness to the progress and civilization of this state that respects human rights, releases these rights and freedoms and is hardly constrained through the adoption and approval of various guarantees for human rights and freedoms in all fields and circumstances. The UAE is among few Arab countries committed to submit an annual report for the meetings of the International Convention on the elimination of all types of racial discrimination and apartheid, participating actively and positively in international dialogue on human rights through international conferences organized by the United Nations. Both The

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(<sup>563</sup>) Dr. Abdul Khaliq Abdullah and others, civil society and democratization in the United Arab Emirates, Cairo, Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies, Dar Al-Ameen for Publishing and Distributing, 1995, p. 60.

Arab and international reports of international organizations also did not record any violations of human rights in the UAE (<sup>564</sup>).

Thus, the notion of tolerance that has emerged from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulated that "the right of everyone to get all rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration without distinction of any kind, especially discrimination based on race, sex, language or religion, opinion, political or national origin, property, birth or other status ", showing this idea clearly in the policy, Sheikh Zayed, who considered the tolerance as an individual and social responsibility basing on a real ground through the federal laws' function to impose tolerance and its attitude towards the women's rights and all the state's social categories, as well as it appears in the education's curricula of the UAE which incite the racial discrimination, xenophobia, using the media to disseminate a culture of religious tolerance with civilizations' cross-fertilization among the world cultures, dialogue and acceptance of others, reaffirming that the principles of human rights in all international Islamic norms and conventions are worthless if not applied to the real ground, so that tolerance has become not only laws but also the spirit of the UAE.

The UAE Joined a group of United Nations key conventions on the human rights, namely as: The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1974, the Convention on the Child Rights in 1997 and the Treaty on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 2004. It also was acceded to be number six in the eighth International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions on human rights, are namely as: The conventions of removing the forced and compulsory labor NO. 29 and 105 in 1982 and 1997 respectively, the Conventions of eliminating discrimination related to employment and occupations

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(<sup>564</sup>)Zayed Centre for Coordination and Control, Human Rights in the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi, the Zayed Center for Coordination and Control, 2001, p. 107.

NO.100 and111 in 1997 and 2001 respectively, and Conventions of Child's Labor Cancellation No.138 and.182 in 1997 and 2001, respectively.

In the course of loyally meeting the Think of Sheikh Zayed on the field of human rights as in the other fields, the UAE had signed under the rule of Sheikh caliph bin Zayed, the Convention on the Prevention of Genocide and Punishment in 2005, and the Protocol to Prevent, curb and Punish Trafficking of human beings in 2009, the Convention of persons with disabilities rights in 2010. The State had several laws and legislation on human rights, such as the Federal Law No. 51 of 2006 to become the first country in the Middle East making such a law, which was characterized by tightened sanctions against the perpetrators of such crimes, also it has set up shelters for women and children victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

It is evidently shown from the above that a true image of the reality of democracy and human rights that has been existed in the UAE is sufficient for refutation the Western view of democracy, which is a sharp attack on Islam as a unitary religion, dealing with the notions of democracy based on freedom of opinion, thought and belief. Perhaps the writings of Bernard Lewis, Samuel Huntington, and Fukuyama - which believe that the Islam itself is anti-democratic, and closer to the concepts of fascism and Nazism - an expression of this vision, where these writings see that the Islamic culture is an anti-democratic, that the dictatorship is always matched by the political Islamic system, and the governance history of Islamic countries demonstrates this trend , and there is no room to call upon the Islamic states to adopt the concepts of Western democracy due to a lack of common ground between the values and culture of Western democracy and Islamic culture. However, the political and humanitarian thoughts of Sheikh Zayed, may God have mercy on him, to

renounced such these unjust accusations, making the UAE leadership and people refuting all the hostile allegations and providing more than vast tracts of territory to connect with the other with all forms of freedoms for all members of humanity everywhere without conditions or any discrimination of race, color, thought or belief.

The beginnings of the primeval development of the Renaissance under the auspices of human rights in Saudi Arabia have evolved, drawing attention to the entrenchment and dissemination of Islamic values, concerning with the person as a foundation and focus of development platform, maintaining the security, social stability, prosperity and educational cultural advancement to citizen, striving to bring about real change in the economic infrastructure of the Kingdom through the continuing shift towards diversification of the productive base (<sup>565</sup>).

Although all countries allocated a great importance to the individual construction and assigned this commitment to the institutions and bodies to provide all services to the citizens of the country, but those countries are different and vary in the provision of such services in some communities. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has launched a religious approached purely Islamic construction of the human being, as the policy of King Abdul Aziz in his kingdom's establishment providing policies and programs to set a religious, educational, cultural, and health features, as well as socially set.

King Abdul Aziz has established the Promotion of Virtue bodies, as a result of the Muslim Brotherhood violence and severity when they enter the Hejaz's territory, and pose each one of them as a governor suing people based on what he sees as consistent with his personal beliefs, but King Abdul Aziz was afraid of the exacerbating state to the extension of being reached the pilgrims' dignity, so as to

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(<sup>565</sup>) Dr.Abd El-Mohsen Ben Saad Dawo'd op.cit,p.30



order the establishment of Virtue and Prevention of Vice bodies, reviewing what is happening from the Muslim Brotherhood's encroachment, and some peoples' practices coming from some customs contrary to the fact of Islamic religion, doing so through preaching and legitimate arguments (<sup>566</sup>). These bodies have been evolved over time to become the major state institution in the Kingdom.

King Abdul Aziz also supported the democracy of fighting for freedom, upholding the Community and saving mankind from slavery, but the concept of democracy is not as it is in the Western concept, but it is the democracy of Shura (consultancy) and secures freedom in accordance with the concept of Islam (<sup>567</sup>). He also sponsored state in a religious context, that he didn't involve in such a work without the light of this religion, which included matters related to religion and all forms of life, feeling that he should not impose his views on religion or life, and if there are such confusions on the citizens' opinions that need to ask for and, if they do not like a certain view, a provision, cited in the Book of Allah and the Sunnah (<sup>568</sup>) of the Prophet, will settle the matter raised between the sponsor and his parish.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia consider the human rights under the political and institutional approach which is systematically based on Islamic law, as human rights are regarded as a manifestation of the real-life in a system ruled by legislative law (Sharia) and invoked by it on both small and large issues (<sup>569</sup>). The presence of human rights in the political and media discourse of the Kingdom was demonstrated at both internal and external levels, following the entry of King Abdul Aziz to the Hejaz's territory, he said; "You have and you have been owed, to advise you either

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(<sup>566</sup>) Abdullah Ben Mohamed Al-Shaheel, The establishment of the KSA contemporary state 1333 – 1351 A.H – 1915 – 1932 A.D, An analytical historical study, Riyadh, Dar Al-Watan for Publishing and Media, 1987, p.80

(<sup>567</sup>) Dr. Ibrahim Abdo op.cit,p.89

(<sup>568</sup>) op.cit,p.118

(<sup>569</sup>) Izzat Abdul Aziz Murad, the KSA and the human rights, Jeddah, without publishing house, 2001, p.54.

apparently or not respecting your blood, honor and your wealth that it is your right, only the right of law, while our right is to be advised by you as a Muslim mirror of his brother, believing that you should provide us suitably on a religious or worldly matter, if raised, that if it is religious it should be referred to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, peace be upon him, but if it is related to a worldly matter Justice will be given away by god willing, for all alike. " This has been applied under the reign of King Abdul Aziz and witnessed evidently across the Kingdom to safe and secure throughout the country by dealing each one of people with a uniform principle securing their rights, maintaining their dignity, providing them with justice and freedom, and saving their lives, wealth and honors.

Regardless of the West's different concept on the human rights from provided on our Islamic religion, which is the main reason behind the many accusations imposed on our Arab Muslim communities, however, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is not considered one of the countries ranked on the top of countries' list that violate human rights in accordance with United Nations system. Its membership in the Commission of Human Rights in Geneva affiliated to the United Nations Economic and Social Council has been held from 2001 to 2003 showing evidently its stature at the international level on respecting the human rights. However, we can address some things that are specialized in human rights, such as the judicial system that governs according to Islamic law, where Article NO. 48 of the main rule Statute has provided that "courts would apply the provisions of Islamic law to cases given before them in accordance with what is indicated by the Quran and Sunnah, and issued by the Crown's command related to the systems that do not conflict with them ". Many systems have been issued, taking care of human beings and showing respect to him such as the Preventative Law that contains the Preventative assets of arrest such as

temporary detention, pre-trial detention and conditional release giving the right to suspended to appeal and object at any time. As well as the Bureau of Investigation and Public Prosecution, the system of annual amnesty of prisoners, and the system of rehabilitation for those who had already been sentenced in order to return as an active member in society ... And other many systems (<sup>570</sup>).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has set its systems and instructions in accordance with the Book of Allah and Sunnah of the Prophet, Muhammad peace be upon him, in order to preserve the human dignity, personal liberty together with the good treatment, provided in Article 36 of the statute that "The State shall provide security for all citizens and residents, that people may not be restricted, or ceased or detained or imprisoned except under the provisions of the system."

A system has been set for work and workers released in 1947 and included a lot of things that govern the use of workers and prevent their exploitation, in line with international human rights law, prohibiting use of the Saudi children of ten years from working, and imposing on the employer the decent provision of housing, working hours, rest times and prayer, the organization of wage-fixing methods, firing and injuries' compensations(<sup>571</sup>) for workers.

In the Republic of Tunisia, the Tunisian, Bourguiba, has been titled as the "major worshipper" and " the Tunisians' Father ", the maker of Tunisia's independence from France in 1956, known for his revolutionary leadership of women's freedom and personal status, giving Tunisian women's exceptional rights and freedoms distinguishing them from the rest of the Arab women (<sup>572</sup>), and this goal can be considered as a revolutionary accomplishment only achieved by Bourguiba.

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(<sup>570</sup>) Ibid, pp 68.69

(<sup>571</sup>) Dr. Saleh Saad Al-Shabeeb, op.cit,p.149

(<sup>572</sup>) AlZaher Bel-Khoja, op.cit,p.13

Bourguiba was diligently working on improving the internal conditions of the country, having tightened hard his grip on power, changed domestic policy following the General Conference held by the ruling party in 1979, having been able to normalize the domestic situation so that the most important opposition leaders have declared their approval and support the government's steps that were culminated by the release of trade union movement's leader and legislative elections held in November 1981. However, the Bourguibism trend continued, having increased social tensions that led to the strained relationship between the government and the opposition, accordingly, having bolster the domestic arena through national reconciliation and inter liberal reforms carried out as the first task of the new era under the chairmanship of Zane El Abidine Ben Ali on November 7, 1987, who issued a presidential amnesty for all politician prisoners, and the new government has sought to normalize the relations with the General Federation of Labor, having released Ra'ed Ghannouchi, the leader of the Islamist trend, and issued an amnesty for Ahmed bin Saleh exiled outside the borders <sup>(573)</sup>. This evidently implies the deteriorated conditions of the Republic of Tunisia under Bourguiba's.

Tunisia has suffered under the rule of Bourguiba from the ambiguous relations between openness and extremism, liberalism and closeness all at once, having closed the windows of renewal within the party, turning the party to a closed institution <sup>(574)</sup>, which has exacerbated the crisis and mistrust between the ruling regime and the opposition party, also led to the continuous deterioration of Tunisia at various levels, and marched the country to further constitutional institutions' arteries hardening and weakness of prestige of the state and lower reputation of a citizen abroad, having

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<sup>(573)</sup>Jamal Abdel Gawad, *Struggling democratic transformation in Egypt and Tunisia*, Cairo, the Cairo Center for Human Rights Studies, 1998, pp 15.16.

<sup>(574)</sup>Quasy Saleh Darwish, *op.cit*, pp 72-74

suffered greatly from the denial of basic civil and political rights, the collapse of their purchasing potentials and the blockage of prospects for future generations (<sup>575</sup>). Also Tunisian regime has practiced the selectivity against the opposition, making the opposition according to their own conditions, and this selective situation is necessarily opening up possibilities of confrontation. Although this approach allowed some relative freedom to the press, having endowed forty-two licenses to newspapers and magazines, all of them were active scope of autonomy and opposition, but Bourguiba ordered the closure of every newspaper opposing the policies and methodology of intellectual property, which has happened with al-Manar (Light-house) newspaper where it has been mentioned on March 20, 1981 that there were many popular Tunisian leaders having paid a heavy price for independence, that led to the decision of having closed on 24th of the same month, after four days of this publication (<sup>576</sup>).

Habib Bourguiba did not accept any political or trade-union organization unless it has agreed with the personal orientations, and throughout his reign he was establishing this methodology in the system's constitutional party and the State's constitutional party, having singled out with the rule through the institutions created for his sake, and worked on the party's resources development under the grip of his hands. The evident for that, his decision during the opening of the party's extraordinary congress on April 10<sup>th</sup> 1981 opening the doors for the socio-political pluralism and movements to appear in the national scene as well as the Socialist constitutional party and its national organizations (<sup>577</sup>), which is a critical turning-point for the Tunisian political life and a direction opened to democracy characterized, typically but not really essential, by a free and just form (<sup>578</sup>) of

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<sup>(575)</sup> Mohamed Mzali, an open letter to Bourquiba, op.cit, p.155.

<sup>(576)</sup> Mohamed Mzali, an open letter to Bourquiba, op.cit, p.39

<sup>(577)</sup> Alia Alani op.cit, p.136

<sup>(578)</sup> Mohamed Mzali, an open letter to Bourquiba, op.cit, p.18 and AlZaher Bel-Khoja, op.cit.p.206

democracy. Despite the multiple parties' legislative elections held in November 1981, the ruling party gained all the seats (<sup>579</sup>), which mean that the democratic experience has been aborted since its beginning but also exposed to further stifling freedoms, political parties' harassment and free press restriction.

This means that the democratic turn in Tunisia was a formal procedure, the real goal was to secure the continuation of Bourguiba and his ruling party in government by ensuring the imposition of many restrictions that prevent political parties from accomplishing their role to the full, issuing a number of laws surrounding these parties, and the ruling party, monopolizing the video-audio media and interfering in the affairs of trade unions and Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs). The opposition powers helped to pre-empt the democratic transformation through their participation and acceptance to continue their activity in light of these restrictions which would deprive the democratic process of its content (<sup>580</sup>).

Also, Bourguiba has adopted a politicized system to control the community and the possibilities' directions of freedom within it, that was a rigid and violent mode of governance supported by means of intimidation, torture, kidnapping and even killings in some cases, as reported by International Amnesty Organization (IAO) and International Human Rights Association (IHRA), by which citizens were turned out to be concerned with his life, honor and property (<sup>581</sup>).

In February 1963, Bourguiba declared that "the battle against underdevelopment is a struggle for human dignity and pride of a citizen..., and that fact compels us to put a limit to the freedoms and privileges of ownership" moreover, in July of the same year, he has come to say that "Those who defend the individual

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<sup>(579)</sup> Tawfiq Al Madani, the Tunisian opposition: its origin and evolution, Damascus, the Arab Writers Union, 2001, p 38.

<sup>(580)</sup> Abdul Ghafar Shokr, " Democracy is a process of historical and societal issue" in: Gamal Abdel Gawad, op.cit, p.59

<sup>(581)</sup> Mohamed Mzali, an open letter to Bourquiba, op.cit, p.159

freedom and private sector with a free economic activity, we would tell them that the planning is for the benefit of all, that is in our current situation no efficacy but only for a collective action "<sup>(582)</sup>. He then announced in a speech on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1967, "democracy would be a disaster if they threw us back into chaos, uncertainty and disputes of the past which were the reason of colonialism's advent." In reference to democracy will be according to his interests and selectivity depending on his mood as a way to further his governance uniqueness and force's acquisition.

Thus, Bourguiba has actually affirmed his enmity towards democracy and human rights, leaving a very clear imprint on giving free rein to single-party control, having rejected any form of multi-party system, on the basis that his party is the only one that protects the public interest, and no other party could gather around the supporters of the Tunisian people especially when the parties or political pluralism cause conflicts and sabotage as he claimed, as well as his vision that Tunisian people were behind the requirements of democratic practice.

With Bourguiba's full control on Tunisian society, he has headed for the interpretation of the Islam's parameters, as required to his governance interests from his point of view such as his invitation for the famous breakfast (Iftar) in Ramadan in February 1960, and deliberately juice drink while addressing a speech on the same topic in March 1964, and his argument In that invitation that the fight for progress and economic development, which he called the greatest jihad (warship), requires breakfast (Iftar) (<sup>583</sup>). This invitation followed by disposing the Mufti Sheikh Abdul Aziz Djait when he refused to issue a fatwa for breakfast having kept the post of the Republic's Mufti vacant for two years. This made him lose the confidence of large

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<sup>(582)</sup>AlZaher Bel-Khoja, op.cit,p.62

<sup>(583)</sup> Lotfi Hajji, Bourguiba and Islam: leadership and Imamate, Tunisia, South House Publishing, 2004, p. 92.

Tunisian segments. Then the structure of the ruling party has been cracked after the departure of more than one group forming independent opposition parties since the early seventies, accordingly, the party's area receded, having lost a great part of its rules and impact, to increase the overt and covert opposition to the rigor Party, and this what was inspired to the world that Tunisia is a freedoms suppressive state, crushing the trade union action, and governed by a uniquely repressive party for policies (<sup>584</sup>).

Bourguiba took advantage of founding and monopolizing the state to aim at terminating the Islamic institution "Zaytounia" despite its weakness, chasing those who were known as yousefism that stood with General Secretary of the Party, Salah Ben Youssef, taking advantage of the coup attempt that has targeted him in 1962 to freeze the Communist Party on the political map of Tunisia in January 1963, suspend the magazines' "vanguard" and "renewal" publication (<sup>585</sup>), block the opposition and independent newspapers, and eliminate the fundamental freedoms, and maintain only one-party system, using the General Union of Tunisian Workers who allied with the Constitutional Party.

Bourguiba and his party were dominated by a comprehensive exclusionary ideology. It's noteworthy that Bourguiba's battle with the Islamists has lasted for nearly ten years, and gained cultural, ideological and political dimensions. This battle was the most important battle lost by Bourguiba, which was the main reason for the local and international collapse. The trial that a number of Islamic trend group has experienced on July 31st, 1981 had a significant impact on the souls of those who were relating to the will of openness and democracy (<sup>586</sup>). The trial of members of

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(<sup>584</sup>)Mohamed Mzali, an open letter to Bourquiba, op.cit, p.14

(<sup>585</sup>)AlZaher Bel-Khoja, op.cit,p.61

(<sup>586</sup>)Mohamed Mzali, an open letter to Bourquiba, op.cit, p.40



the Islamic Renaissance Party in 1987 has marked the end of Bourguiba's rule and a declaration of political pluralism.

After all, we believe that Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the founder of the United Arab Emirates, could turn from wanting a thing to be able to do it, where there has been many of his leading accomplishments, that he has established the political, executive, legislative institutions, he has also founded the welfare and services state, having institutionalized the foundations of economic and social renaissance in an unprecedented record time compared to leaders of other countries, Some of whom have managed to lay the foundations of the state such as King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, but it took a long time to achieve, but his initiatives was the beginning of the road which has been affiliated by his sons coming after him. While some others have completely failed to achieve anything for their states neither at the internal nor the international level such as the President Habib Bourguiba, the founder of the Republic of Tunisia, whose career ended with a coup and disposition.

### **Section Three: Society**

Man is the basis of society and its main support. If humans are virtuous the community is also virtuous, if corrupted is corrupted in turn. In order to create a powerful and successful society with clear strong characteristics, it is necessary to provide all appropriate circumstances and to try to overcome all difficulties, which block the way to the superiority and the promoting of man in all fields. This task rests upon the government as the ruling and organizing organ for its citizens and community. The human has to play an assisting role within this task. As emphasis for this Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan said; "The state gives first priority over

attaching importance to the building of man and the care for citizens everywhere in this state, since the citizen is the real fortune for this country and its most expensive resource". This was not only a motto of Sheikh Zayed's, but it was more a principal in which he believed and which he tried hard with all possible means to put into effect. Taking into consideration the progress of the federation, we can see how this principal applies to reality, for the human was, still and will last as the basis and main focus of the development process in the UAE, and also the mould around the progress of which the policies take their place to shape the care of him, towards a better future, which the federation was established for. Starting with this, we consider the achievements carried out since this country was established. It is also necessary to evaluate the development and construction that came about since the annunciation of the federal state.<sup>587</sup>

Sheikh Zayed took responsibility for development out of his compliance with the customs of his family and tribe, turning back to his origins in the senses of belonging, social cohesion and national solidarity. The orientation of this country to western civilization was only made in the sense of making use of the fields of scientific progress and technical development, since he refused and combated the foreign invasion, which relies on moral corruption and social chaos, which western communities are witnessing at present.<sup>588</sup>

Man is the real active fortune of the homeland, and so Sheikh Zayed has paid attention to health and cultural, experimental and educational care for the human, considering the human to be the basis of any civilizational process. In that regard, he said, "money is not fortune; man is the fortune, since he is the real power to be appreciated, they are the plants under the shadows of which we shelter". The UAE

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<sup>587</sup> (Arabic reference) Ministry of culture and information, previous reference, P. 3.

<sup>588</sup> (Arabic reference) Ahmad Dgalal Al- tamry, prev. ref., P. 576.

was and is still working in accordance with the mentality of its founder and the defender of its renaissance and believes that the greatest investment of money is to invest it in reproducing generations of educated and well-cultured people.

Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, founder of the UAE has devoted all his interest to the UAE citizen to build his scientific, practical and national character and to encourage him to integrate with all fields of progress and development. There is now a chance for every citizen to profit from this healthy and appropriate atmosphere in order to achieve all that any reasonable person who seeks self-promotion could desire; as a result, the distinction of the UAE citizen in all fields becomes evident.

In Saudi Arabia, King Abdul al-Azīz Al Saud depended in the first place on the building of the human as a support on which the development movement was based. He worked on the implantation of a sense of patriotism in the hearts of his people and of the rising generation, and on promoting and developing the sense of belonging to his land, depending on a strong foundation of the values and constants, which derived their constitution from the holy Qu'ran and the Sunnah of the messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

The Tunisian president, Habib Bourguiba, concentrated and focused his interest in the Human particularly on the care of women as half of society, with whom he was fair, with issuing the Tunisian magazine for personal affairs, issued 13th August 1956. This magazine dealt with important issues such as marriage, divorce, period of waiting, alimony, custody, kinship, foundling, inheritance, taboo, adulthood, will and donation. Under these were many laws included that influenced the citizen of Tunisia, in general, and women, in particular.

## **The Structure of Civil Society**

Life in the UAE community is based in its social terms on two main bases, Islamic morals, and Arab generosity. Therefore, UAE citizens realized the meaning of social solidarity and practiced all its aspects in the most wonderful examples.<sup>589</sup> Out of its interest in building the UAE person as opposed to investing solely in modernizing urbanism, and developing organizations and services, the government was keen in the era of its founder, Sheikh Zayed, to define the social status of the UAE citizen in his community and his homeland. Thus, the standard of living has improved and the circumstances of the past life has changed, and so arose the class structure of the society.

UAE society is considered to be a multi-class society, as the class structure of the community has become more evident than in the past, through the emergence of the upper classes which are most bound with rent economies and oil revenues, the middle class, and the new class with modern education which manages the administration of the federal and local organizations.<sup>590</sup> The citizen becomes then a contributor in the renaissance of his community and of his homeland, scientifically and practically, man and woman together. This is not the end of his ambition. With receptiveness to global civilization and progress, the chance has been given to every citizen to represent his country abroad, whether a political or a businessperson, a seeker of knowledge or even a tourist.<sup>591</sup> So the spirit of receptiveness, discovering and the passion of learning from other systems, has dominated the process of building of the nation, i.e. the UAE community is characterized by explicit modernity while

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<sup>589</sup> (Arabic reference) Salem Rashed Bin Tris Alqomzy, the UAE society between past and present, Alshareqa, Dar Aloloom library, O.d, P. 22

<sup>590</sup> (Arabic reference) dr. Abdelkhalek Abdollah and others, civil society and the democratization in the UAE, prev. reference. P. 71

<sup>591</sup>(Arabic reference) Mohammed Yasser Sharaf, social life in the UAE, Abu Dhabi, Almotanaby for publishing, 1995, p. 31, 32.

maintaining the chosen traditions, asserting through this its Arab Islamic identity.<sup>592</sup> It is the community that attaches a great importance to many groups, including educated students, young employees and senior officials. The members of these groups consider their responsibilities as in the national interest. It is the same outlook of the community, which believes in the necessity of supporting it with all available means. The UAE citizen is proud of himself. He considers himself a contributor to the building of his nation, its renaissance and growing, so that it could last as a civilized country in the modern term.<sup>593</sup>

As the education process in the UAE has the character of leadership and development acquired and as the Arab league was established, the social relationships between members of society is becoming more mature at all levels, educationally, culturally, professionally, economically and politically. Today the students of the UAE University have become its professors.<sup>594</sup> Cultural and educational awareness includes all members of society. Even the older generation spares no effort to go to the education centers to receive knowledge, not only the primary but also the university education through the centers of direct university admittance.

Society's view towards the most important branches of life in our modern terms has changed. The members of UAE society, especially the educated, have a clear vision about these fields. They have now the intellectual perception of all fields of life. Any work undertaken by society is to be done only after proper study before its implementation. The UAE citizen adopts the method of debate if there is any disagreement, discussion or handling with any matter related with the society. The

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<sup>592</sup>(Arabic reference) Sali fendlo, prev. refer. P. 47.

<sup>593</sup>(Arabic reference) Salem Rashed Bin Trees Alqomzy, prev. reference, p. 43.

<sup>594</sup> Arabic reference) Salem Rashed Bin Trees Alqomzy, prev. reference, p. 43

UAE citizen has the ability to influence others, to be convinced with their opinions and to convince them, if necessary.<sup>595</sup>

In order to build a harmonious society, Sheikh Zayed has made a lot of effort, had patience and wisdom in the process of resettlement of nomads, and succeeded in leading them to change their lifestyle and to educate their sons and daughters. Sheikh Zayed has built over the state many cities equipped with all the requirements of a civilized life and with the free services, to encourage his people to achieve more construction and development. This is reflected directly in the people of the UAE, who have turned from nomadic to modern life. The citizen has also contributed to change the urban picture of his home so that it could take the shape and features of modern civilization while maintaining the authenticity of the past, its virtues and simplicity.<sup>596</sup>

In family life, the changes included patterns of the family, its structure and marriage customs as well as its various functions, especially socialization in some positive ways and other negative ways. Once this change had taken place, it was reflected in the cases of late marriage contradicting what was dominant before the state was established where the marriage was at an early age for both genders. This social phenomenon was considered a healthy filtering of the cultural aspects of UAE women. The marriage of both genders is to be held only at the appropriate age for reasons related to women's education, their working outdoors side by side with men, and the high social level, which led to the identification of persons who they could marry according to the levels of their social and economic development. This was linked by a further change in the criteria of how to determine marriage, dowry, or ceremonies of the wedding party, an inevitable consequence of the economic and

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<sup>595</sup> prev. reference, p. 61.

<sup>596</sup> prev. reference, p. 61

social change that had taken place in society. Society's receptiveness to the cultures of other peoples, in addition to the cultural openness and an information revolution, which implemented many changes in habits and traditions and even in the lifestyle of the UAE citizen, such as changing the new family of its residence to live in a house separate from the house of the family. The nuclear family (father and children) has become the most common form, which casted its shadows on the culture of UAE women.<sup>597</sup>

In spite of the independence and the separation of the new family house from the great family home, considered to be one of the requirements of the new age, the social relationships has been strengthen, influenced by the features of modernity and civilization. The family has made use of this through the spreading awareness in all fields and in many ways, making it more capable of using a suitable method in managing all matters of life, in its civilized sense, and without any complications.<sup>598</sup> So the interest of UAE citizens in raising their children and preparing them for the bright future of this country becomes clear. The family played a new role in the development process through preparing young children and helping them to have a stable life in society, depending on the new circumstances and variables.<sup>599</sup>

The United Arab Emirates has a relatively limited population size. It is known that the population factor affects the nature of social reality in any country in terms of coherence and solidarity of the society. Population density, the nature of the national character and its characteristics and cultural standards as well as demographics are all factors that influence policy, whether internal or external, and draw the appropriate policies to deal with the population status in case of large or small population. The

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<sup>597</sup> (Arabic reference) dr, Maitha Alshamsy and dr. Abdollah Lolo, Changing roles of women in the United Arab Emirates, analytical critical study, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates University, 2001, p.

<sup>598</sup> (Arabic reference) Salem Rashed Bin Trees Alqomzy, prev. reference, p. 41

<sup>599</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Yaser Sharaf, prev. reference. PP. 65, 66.

UAE suffers from the small population problem. The spreading of tribes with their traditions and historical common heritage has already contributed to strengthening of the union between the principedoms, to encourage the entire society to overcome the traditional and to the transition turn to the modern. In this way, the tribal and familiar solidarity become a more positive factor rather than a negative along the history of the federation.

UAE society has witnessed great progress. With the ambitious development plans carried out by the UAE, there was an urgent need to the influx of large numbers of workers from outside. The number of UAE citizens doubled. The numbers of expatriates increased, which led to a rise in the UAE population. This increase was not a natural result of increased births and fewer deaths but was the result of an influx of immigrants from different nationalities into the Emirates, making the demographics of the UAE differentiated by three key elements: citizens, Arab expatriates and foreign expatriates. Non – Arab represents the majority of the UAE<sup>600</sup>. In spite of this significant increase of foreigners in the UAE and the many social, economic and political negative issues caused by their presence, the decision makers in the UAE are fully aware of this and working hard to find solutions and provide alternatives to deal with any imbalance that result from this problem.

In Saudi Arabia, the development of the state and the organizing of its affairs have led to change the perceptions of the other within Saudi society. The members of the community have found, within the frameworks of the state, controls for positive interaction between them in accordance with stable rules, that determine the obligations and the rights within the kingdom in a cooperative abstract manner, which

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<sup>600</sup> (Arabic reference), Nader Fargany, situations of population and the labor power in UAE, in group of writers, " current unionism experiences: the experience of the UAE, prev. reference , P. 274-279.



resulted in satisfying their sense of belonging to the Kingdom and working within its interest.<sup>601</sup>

Saudi society has been affected by discovering oil. There was a rise in the wages of workers and their standard of living was improved. The number of national cadres working in the governmental offices increased, and the concomitant changes, whether direct and indirect, of the social, economic and political situation in this country were reflected in Saudi society, which has started to change radically its life style. Through the development of the economic situation in the Kingdom, the concept of life has changed in the eyes of Saudi society leading to the existence of a social group with a purely economic character, which included capitalists, business owners, contractors and traders. It was characterized by the wealthy; forming a national rich class, interested in developing the Kingdom's economy and so became a factor in the cultural openness within the Kingdom. It had exceeded the local to the global scale, in its economic transactions, with regards to its economic transaction and the need to hire employees and technicians from outside Saudi Arabia.<sup>602</sup>

In addition to the educated class, a new class has emerged in the Saudi society, which was known as new farmers who used modern agricultural methods and its scientific methods, increasing agricultural projects in the Kingdom. Civil and military sections of the kingdom expanded to take large numbers of Saudis who devoted themselves entirely to civil and military governmental work. This group has been depending on regular income and increased with the admittance of new organizations to the government agencies.

As King Abdul Aziz began his attempt to develop the Kingdom, he followed the system of Hedgr development, in order to shift his people from a nomadic and

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<sup>601</sup> (Arabic reference), dr, Saleh Saad Alshayb, prev. reference, p. 163.

<sup>602</sup> (Arabic reference), dr. Abdellfattah Hasan Abu-Alia, prev. reference, p. 231.

unstable situation, and in order to and get them out of ignorance and backwardness. He built the Hedgr, development, for them so that they could settle down and learn the life of stability and agriculture, and receive knowledge. Afterwards he got houses built for them, which suited the economic and social development that accompanied the new life. Saudi Arabia is a vast country. Its citizens are distributed in the desert and in major cities. It still maintains the shape of the major family. In spite of the attempts of King Abdul Aziz to merge Saudi society, a huge numbers have refused this integration.

Tunisian society has witnessed many demographic changes since the birth control policy stabilized the community and daily life of the population. Birth rates have rapidly declined. The population growth rate in the year 1987 was 2.34% , which resulted in a change in the nature of the composition of the family, which consists of four members. Because of the decrease in the number of the children, the ability of families to spend more money in the field of education has increased which explains in turn the late age of marriage, in addition to the relative increase in numbers of females compared to men which in turn contributes to increasing spinsterhood, a phenomenon inconsistent with the dominant culture in the community of Tunisia. The increase in educated and workingwomen, and even the increased divorce rates explain why the women refuse inappropriate marriage, and this was a kind of luxury that was not available before the law of personal status was introduced.

The traditional Tunisian family that included three generations has declined in favor of the nuclear family structure, which is the structure most suited to the urban lifestyle in the city. This recession of the expanding family resulted in a recession of the types of traditional social solidarity, which took place within these expanding structures. This nuclear family has a negative effect that emerges in a divorce

phenomenon in society, which has led Tunisian women and girls, under the high costs of living, to trade with their bodies, a phenomenon that has been expanding in Tunisia, but cannot be limited because of the ban imposed by the Authority on studying or discussing such phenomena. Because of the high level of education achieved by the young Tunisian, there is big gap between parents, who are mostly illiterate, and their children. This has led to the collision between the old life style and the modern one influenced by Europe. For this reason, one of the main bases of education became absent. Dialogue is difficult and mutual trust between both sides is impossible. The liberation tendency of youth included even the sense of national authenticity, which they regarded as something of the past.<sup>603</sup> In the sixties, Tunisian society witnessed a serious structural crisis. It was a social and ideological crisis, which put forward at the same time two major issues: the first was the conflict between the ideological option of westernization and the cultural heritage of the Arabs and Islam. The second issue was the expansion of class contradictions over the social level and the increasing engagement of the youth in the class conflict.<sup>604</sup>

With the complete openness of the Tunisian society towards Western culture, religion is becoming a private cult; its spirit has been distanced from the structure and features of the state. There are indicators that prove the development of Tunisian society and especially women, but it is not enough, especially when compared to what other communities have reached such as UAE society. The Tunisian community has distanced itself from the Arab identity – and preferred western culture to Arab and Islamic culture. It did not practice democracy in its proper sense and was subject to procedures of repression and prevention from practicing the freedom of political belief and of expression.

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<sup>603</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Mozaly, situations, tunisia, Tunisia company for publishing, 1984, p. 28, 29.

<sup>604</sup> (Arabic reference), Tawfik Almadany, prev. reference, P. 237

## Women

In the era of Sheikh Zayed was the UAE policy concentrated on the promotion of family members and its construction depending on proper bases, as it is the support and the basis of the society, with all its values, traditions and morals. Sheikh Zayed attached great importance to women and to their responsibilities in all stages of life, because a good woman is the basis of family development and consequently society. With the care of the state for women, feminist clubs and associations were established. The state gave priority to these associations with regards to the government support program supplied to associations with common use out of the evident focus on the promotion of women and childhood and on supporting of their institutions and associations. The importance of the continuation of this support bears no doubt in order to increase the contribution of women to the development process and to confirm their role in building civil society in UAE,<sup>605</sup> in addition to giving all women the chance of learning in all fields and awarding prizes for ideal mothers and distinguished students.<sup>606</sup> Consequently, UAE women have achieved important gains at the level of education, labor, women rights and the confirmation of their contribution to the development process, under the care of the UAE government for supporting of the policies and planning programs, which aim to promote the family in general and the woman in particular. The UAE woman has taken part with her intellectual and practical abilities in the implementation of many development programs through undertaking many service and production jobs. There were even some development jobs in which the performance of women was more effective than men such as health and education jobs. The practical reality shows an increase in the contributions of women in many professional fields in the federal ministries and

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<sup>605</sup> (Arabic reference) dr. Abdelkhalek Abdollah and others, civil society and the democratization in the UAE, prev. reference, p. 77.

<sup>606</sup> (Arabic reference), Ahmad Galal Altadmoty, prev. reference, P. 577.

institutions within the country. In 1995 the ratio of UAE women working in the governmental section was 50% of the total workers.

These jobs were concentrated in the education and health sectors, since its ratio reached 80% of the governmental sector in which UAE women work.<sup>607</sup> That means that the UAE woman left no field in which she could prove her superiority and her role.<sup>608</sup>

According to statistics issued by the Department of Personnel in 2000, the percentages of contributions of UAE women to state ministries were distributed as follows: the Ministry of Education amounted to 54.9%, the Ministry of Health, 48.5%, the Ministry of Electricity 22.3%, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs 41.2%, the Ministry of Agriculture 2%, the Ministry of Interior of 22.3%, the Ministry of Public Works and Housing 17.7%, the Ministry of Transportation 16.9%, the Ministry of Foreign 21.4%, the Ministry of Justice, 10.6%, the Ministry of Finance and Industry, 22.9%, the Council of Ministers 23.7%, the Ministry of Planning 16.2%, the Ministry of Economy and Trade 22.2%, the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources 17.8%, the Ministry of Youth and Sports 13.6%, the Ministry of Higher Education 43.1%, the Ministry of Information and Culture, 16.1%, the presidency of the Council of Ministers 5.4 %, in the protocol 1.3%, and Islamic Affairs and Endowments 3.5% .<sup>609</sup>

Women contributed to the development of economy of the society through indirect engagement in the field of investment in a way that enabled them to take part in expanding the base of ownership and in developing local financial markets. They have their own money, for example as inherited properties, and have the complete

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<sup>607</sup> (Arabic reference), General Women Union, national strategy to promote women in The UAE, Abu Dhabi, O.d. P. 25.

<sup>608</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Yaser Sharaf, prev. reference, P.90.

<sup>609</sup> in: General Women Union, prev. reference , P. 25,26.

freedom to invest them. In addition, women manage indirectly many investment activities, which enable them to make profit from their properties and to invest their revenues.<sup>610</sup> We should notice that the contribution of UAE women in the private sector is still limited, for many factors including: dependence on and the preference of expatriate workers, cultural restriction limiting the association between both genders and social restrictions, which hinder the work of women in that sector.<sup>611</sup> UAE women waited for a long time, before they could occupy leading positions and the jobs of decision- makers, in addition to her small political contributions.

However, the state is witnessing a good improvement in this regard. But this improvement is not commensurate with the long way which women have walked in the field of education and the acquisition of various skills which enable her to occupy this high position, thus to participate effectively in making decisions and to play an effective role in social and political development.<sup>612</sup> This could be achieved through overcoming difficulties, which prevent increased access of UAE women to these senior positions, in compliance with Sheikh Zayed, who has given UAE women the right to work in all areas, so that they could play their role in promoting the community.<sup>613</sup> He said, "Nothing could make me happier than to see a woman occupying her privileged position in society, nothing should prevent her promotion. Woman has the same right as men to occupy senior positions, depending on their qualifications."<sup>614</sup>

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<sup>610</sup> Arabic reference) dr, Maitha Alshamsy and dr. Abdollah Lolo, Changing roles of women in the United Arab Emirates, analytical critical study, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates University, 2001, p.164, 165

<sup>611</sup> prev. reference, p. 164.

<sup>612</sup> General women Union, prev. reference, P. 59.

<sup>613</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Khalil Alsoksok and Shams Aldeen Aldheify, Leadership: ask god for help in matters of life and religion and loyalty to nation and homeland, prev. reference, P. 172.

<sup>614</sup> Arabic reference) dr, Maitha Alshamsy and dr. Abdollah Lolo, Changing roles of women in the United Arab Emirates, analytical critical study, Al Ain, United Arab Emirates University, 2001, p.5.

This was done after the death of Sheikh Zayed, where the General Women's Union played a central role in the political affairs in the UAE. It strived for greater participation of women in national policy and was therefore, effective in paving the way for these participations. These objectives and ambitions were partially achieved, as women were granted in December 2006 the right to participate in the elections of the Federal National Council, where they managed to get 9 seats out of 40 seats in the Council - a proportion which is one among the highest globally – one woman through election and another eight were appointed as members of the Council, in addition to occupying of four ministerial periods in the seventh cabinet in February 2008. In this regard, it should be noted that Sheikha Lobna Bint Khaled Al Qasimi was the first woman who occupied the position of minister in November 2004, as the Minister for Economy.

In Saudi Arabia women's rights were maintained in accordance with Islamic Sharia. Islam is keen on the cooperation between men and women in all aspects of life. Sharia assured equality of rights and differences in duties due to the nature of the physical structure of each of them. The role of women in Islam is not confined to maternity. They have their independent financial entity and the absolute freedom to dispose her property without her husband's permission, because they are equal to men.<sup>615</sup>

However, we can say that Saudi society is in the first place a male community. Traditions and customs of this society have controlled in general the position of women that was limited to the house and care for husband and children in general.

Habib Bourguiba changed the position of women in society, when women in Tunisia granted many rights under the Personal Status Law issued on August 13<sup>th</sup> 1956, which

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<sup>615</sup> (Arabic reference), Fatima Abdelsalam Nor, political, social and economic rights of women between global theories and other traditional theories, Bin Gazi, international centre for studies and research of the green book, 2007, P. 109.

determined women's rights and systems of relations within the family in Tunisia in accordance with an interpretative vision adopted by Bourguiba. This was the only area in which he achieved a real breakthrough. Under this law polygamy was abolished, women were given the right to request divorce, the right to conduct their personal and sexual life, the right to compulsory education, the right to work, the right to equal remuneration, and the right to vote. It was the law that was initially rejected by the conservative side in Tunisian society. Then it became a reality imposed on people who mostly coexisted with it. Under which the National Association of Women was set up in Tunisia in 1956, which became later known as the National Union of Tunisian Women. It is considered one of the national organizations associated with the ruling party. It issued Al-Elham magazine, the first woman magazine in Tunisia, in the same year of its establishment.

What confirms the successful experience of Bourguiba in promoting women is the Arab and international testimonials for the experiences of Tunisia in the field of the advancement of women. These testimonials are: the testimonial of General Secretary of the Arab Organization for family during a seminar organized by the National Union of Tunisian women on December 27<sup>th</sup> 2005 under the title "The Tunisian family from the dream of Al-Haddad to the achievements of Ben Ali", where she asserted that the law of Tunisia, in the field of family, is still most advanced, most recent and most appropriate for spirit of the age and logic of events.<sup>616</sup>

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<sup>616</sup> Tunisian women attended at least one third in some occupations and sectors that were with the beginnings of independence monopolized by men. In public life in 2007, there was an increase in their political presence in the (parliament) to 228%, in the chamber of Councilors to 15.2%. They represented as well more than 25% of members of the Central Committee of the ruling party, and similarly in the municipal councils by more than 27%. Tunisian women were engaged into the Tunisian labor, material, and intellectual production fields, representing 51% of cadres of primary education, 48% in secondary education, 40% in higher education, 42% in medical professions, 31% of lawyers, and 27% of the judges, and about 57% of the total students at universities and institutes of higher education.



## **Institution of Civil Society**

Article 33 of the Constitution of the UAE is the cornerstone of the legislative structure related to institutions of civil society in the UAE. A considerable amount of legislation has been issued to regulate the work of non-profit associations such as the Federal Law No. 6 of 1974 on the associations of public utility and its amendments by Federal Law No. 20 of 1980,<sup>617</sup> which regulated the establishment of associations and defined their objectives and their methods of financial and technician supervision.

Associations can be divided into women's associations – associations for folk arts, cultural and public services associations - professional associations - humanitarian associations – theatre associations - associations and communities. This law contributed to increasing of the number of associations, which have been experiencing significant growth later. In the first year after the issuance of this law, eleven associations were established, including four women's associations, four associations for Arab communities and expatriates, one religious association, another for folk and cultural arts and a public service association. This number continued to increase until it reached 119 associations in 2004. Associations for folk arts achieved the highest percentage, as they reached 29 in the same year, then associations for public services, which reached 23 in the same year, while religious associations were the fewest, there were only three associations licensed by the ministry of social affairs.<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>617</sup> (Arabic reference), dr. abdelkhalek Abdollah and others, civil society and the democratization in the UAE, prev. reference, P. 61.

<sup>618</sup> (Arabic reference), ministry for social affairs, statistics of general assembly with public utility 2008, research and study department, 2008, P. 10. see also: Rashed Ali saed Bin Olwan Alhabsi, prev. reference, P. 166

The civil association is one of the most important forms of the development of civil society. In 1967, the first civil association was established in Ras- Al-Khaimah in the UAE, i.e. five years before the federal state was established.<sup>619</sup>

The institutions of civil society "associations with public utility" in the UAE have exceeded their traditional roles to play more effective roles, especially in the development field, which reached the extent of taking part in drawing policies and in determining of development plans, projects and services supplied in the field of education and qualification, the field of care for people with special needs and the field of humanitarian aid, e.g. General Women's Union. This was founded in 1975 under the chairmanship of Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, last wives of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who played an active role in promoting development programs in this community.

The best evidence for this is her ratification of "The Document of National Strategies For the Advancement of Women in the United Arab Emirates," as the President of the General Women's' Union.<sup>620</sup> The General Women's Union is a major player in creating a suitable environment for achieving gender equality through dealing with many issues related to UAE women, childhood, motherhood and family. With the advanced needs of women, there was an increase in the responsibilities of the Women's Union and the areas of its interest and experiences. It began to play an important role in women's affairs at both the regional and international levels, and participated in all international conferences concerning with women's affairs, which are held under the supervision of the United Nations. It is known that the entities of civil society in the UAE are considered as meeting places for internal, regional and

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<sup>619</sup> (Arabic reference), Saad Aldeen Ibraheem, civil society in golf countries, in: Gamal Sanad Alsweedy, Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States at on the outskirts of the 21 th century, prev. reference, P. 228.

<sup>620</sup> General Women union, prev, reference, P. 8.

international interaction. They are sensitive, responsive and insist on roles that are more political. The UAE is doing better in this regard than Saudi Arabia, although the two countries belong to the Gulf region, in terms of allowing other forces to participate in governance. This situation has real and concrete indicators. The increase in the number and membership of civil society organizations in the UAE, compared to Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Tunisia, allowed the increasing demand for political participation.<sup>621</sup> Consequently, UAE women are now playing many of their roles in the UAE with absolute freedom. They play an increasing political role, for there is a dialectical relationship between civil society and the process of democratic development. Democracy is a framework for the revival of civil society. Civil society is also a basic support for the stabilization of the democratic regime. A powerful civil society does not mean a weak state.

Associations and social development centers were set up, and spread across the country, which adopted thoughts of individuals related to issues of society, solutions to its problems and the expression of its views. These associations have expanded the circle of social relations, and introduced patterns and methods of these relations, which deal with freedom of thought, diversity of work, serious planning and making use of leisure. They opened many doors for women to get themselves, half of society, out of their isolation and to take advantage of their leisure and their participation in serving their homeland through abilities they possess.<sup>622</sup>

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<sup>621</sup> (Arabic reference), Saad Aldeen Ibraheem, presenting of the civil society and the future of democratization in the Arab world, in: Samuel Hantgon, democratization in the last years of this century, translated by Abdellwahab Alob, cairo, Ibn Khaldoon center and Saud Alsabbah for publishing, 1993, p. 53.

<sup>622</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Yaser Sharaf, prev. reference, P 62, 63.

Associations for reform and religious guidance, which aim to combat vices and social illnesses, and seek to promote good morals,<sup>623</sup> occupy a great position in the UAE community in terms of the multiplicity of their functions. Some of which were established by the ministry of labor and some by private decrees of UAE governors such as the Zayed Bin Sultan society for charity. This association and its equals aim to encourage charity and good morals, introducing Islam and its virtues and building of mosques, schools and clinics in poor countries.

During the reign of King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia, civil work and civil association were non-existent. Civil voluntary work started with the establishment of a women's' association for charity in Jeddah in 1983, then, in the same year, another society was founded in Riyadh. In the nineties, they reached 18 associations. These women's' associations are the only religiously and socially acceptable legislative access of Saudi women to public work. Many of these associations have developed their activities to include women's' banks, and literacy classes and teaching of theology in seminars held by women.<sup>624</sup>

Bourguiba's ruling party dominated completely all facilities of civil society and its institutions, through a political party with a comprehensive character. Hundreds of institutions of civil society were wholly eliminated. Of around 50 newspapers, only four or five newspapers remained. In general, Tunisian civil society was deprived in this way from practicing freedom of expression. Civil society organizations were subject to the dominance of dictatorial organs of the state.<sup>625</sup> The new constitutional party concentrated its policy on the positions of its leader

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<sup>623</sup> prev. reference, p. 67

<sup>624</sup> Arabic reference), Saad Aldeen Ibraheem, civil society in golf countries, in: Gamal Sanad Alswedy, Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States at on the outskirts of the 21 th century, prev. reference, p. 228.

<sup>625</sup> (Arabic reference) Alsafi Saeed, Bourqiba is a semi-taboo, Beirut, Ryadh Alrayes for publishing, 2000, p. 225, 226.

Bourguiba, which were characterized by intransigence against civil society. He deprived the Communist Party from any public political activity from January 8th 1963. Its newspapers were prohibited and its members were restricted.<sup>626</sup> Many members of the General Union for Tunisian Agriculture were shot and imprisoned. In 1976, the National Farmers Union took its place.

The year 1964 witnessed the beginning of the one-party regime. The party controlled all the components of civil society. The Tunisian community has witnessed many trials such as the trial of members of the Communist Party in 1968, the trial of a group of members of the Union of Tunisian Workers and trials of students in 1972 and 1974. Hundreds of cultural associations and the national press were controlled through the issuance of laws such as the law of 1959 for the foundation of associations, the law of 1975,<sup>627</sup> which organized the press and how to practice led to its retreating and its intellectual and political absence. The primary focus of the press was President Bourguiba, his photos, speeches and his travels inside and outside the country.

The dominance of the ruling party under the leadership of Bourguiba on the components of civil society led the Republic of Tunisia to dictatorship, which had very negative consequences. This situation led to the emergence of democratic opposition in the ranks of students, intellectuals and within the ruling party itself, calling for the launch of freedoms and respect for the Constitution. Since that day, different political plans began to take shape on the political scene e.g. Salafi Islam, represented in the Movement of the Islamic trend, then the movement of the Renaissance, which introduced religion to politics, as well as the modernization and progress current e.g. the movement of renovation and its allies, which considered

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<sup>626</sup> (Arabic reference), Altaher Balkhokha, prev. reference, p. 61.

<sup>627</sup> (Arabic reference) Arab organization for human rights, human rights in the Arab world, 1987, P. 35.

itself an extension of the movement of Tunisian reform that was initiated since the nineteenth century. It desire to preserve the gains achieved in the era of Bourguiba such as the magazine of personal status, focused on women's freedom and the prevention of polygamy, in addition to other achievements in the fields of education and health, developed in a time when these gains are threatened.

Tunisia did not witness in reality any real practice of democracy. However, there were only two resolutions which were adopted during the reign of Bourguiba and which could be considered democratic procedures. The first resolution was to recognize a Tunisian Association for Defending Human Rights" the Tunisian League for Human Rights" with real independence, in May 1977. This was the first such association in the Arab world and Africa. The second resolution was to allow some defectors from the party to launch the opinion (Ra'i) newspaper, the first opposition newspaper in Tunisia, in October 1977.<sup>628</sup>

These two events reflect the rapid maturation of civil society that refuses the domination of the ruling party and the one party state which led later to the emergence of the Association of Democratic Women in 1984, and to the independence of the Tunisian Union of Labor from the control of the ruling party.<sup>629</sup>

Within the political conflicts between the authorities and the Islamists, many restrictions were imposed on cults. Religious rituals become an indicator for political orientation. The authorities increased domination over religious life, through the subjugation of institutions and imams who became just an extension of the official media, which contributed to providing legitimacy to official decisions.<sup>630</sup> This policy

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<sup>628</sup> Altaher Bilkhokha, prev. reference, p. 227.

<sup>629</sup> (Arabic reference), dr, Monsef Marzoky, the democratic reform between the flexibility of society and the inflexibility of authority and the nature of external effects, in: Gamal Abdelgawad, prev. reference, p. 73.

<sup>630</sup> (Arabic reference), dr. Almonsef wanas, the state and the cultural issue in Tunisia, Almithak for publishing, 1988, p. 62.

resulted in a religious life, stripped of all spiritual dimensions able to satisfy the needs of believers. In addition to that, the authorities resorted to controlling all areas of intellectual and artistic production, imposing trivial hybrid cultural and artistic patterns, which had nothing to do with society and its needs, resulting in the blockade of all types of qualitative culture, capable of creating reasonable self and surrounding awareness.

### **Education**

The educational policy adopted by Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, aimed to upgrade the position of UAE citizens to the level of civilized and developed nations. It led to the development of the UAE community and progress in the field of education after the issuance of the compulsory education law July 1972. There was an increase in the number of the students admitted to schools at all levels. Even the adults turned to literacy schools.<sup>631</sup> The UAE young people turned to higher education and witnessed a breakthrough that started with the establishment of the UAE University in October 1977, the first step towards the establishment of universities, and other specialized colleges in different areas within the UAE.<sup>632</sup>

This was accompanied by the emission of large numbers of citizens to study outside the UAE. That is what distinguished the UAE community from other communities of the Arab world in terms of the rapidity of society in catching the train of development and education in all its levels. The university is one of the institutions that provide direct services to the community. Universities of UAE have worked on self-promoting and did not stop at the aims of their establishment, but developed and inaugurated more modern schools and scientific research centers. They had strong

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<sup>631</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Ghanem Alromehy, Oil and the social change in the Arab Golf, Alwehda institution, 1975, p. 105.

<sup>632</sup> (Arabic reference), Abdelaziz Albassam , educational policy in the UAE, its fact the attitudes of its promoting, in group of writers, " current unionism experiences: the experience of the UAE, prev. reference , P.134.

relations with universities globally in order to exchange scientific experiences and education.

Education, to which the state attached great importance for the promotion of everybody, gave the people the opportunity to receive political, legal and administrative knowledge. Therefore, society believed that the care for safety of the state, the compliance with its constitution and the observance of the regulating rules of public affairs was a duty of every individual in society. This allowed the existence of a political cadre that managed the different organs of the state and drew their internal and external policy.<sup>633</sup>

The political awareness of the UAE citizen increased. He has become aware of and interested in the intellectual and material invasion that threatens the state in light of globalization. This appears in particular in the spreading of clubs and associations with a cultural character, which took in the past the form of companies. Through these clubs, UAE citizens exercise their rights in treating current issues through visual and written media, expressing their opinions and thoughts. The aim of this cultural association is to raise the cultural level in the whole society.<sup>634</sup>

However, the educated class did not have a real opportunity and an effective role in development and did not take advantage of that what came from abroad, because of the rooted traditions of Saudi society, a barrier which stands in the way of modern intellect carried by these educated young people. The current situation has changed for better through the effective role of this educated class.

In the Republic of Tunisia, the left opposition has increased in the second half of the sixties. It swept across universities as an indicator of the gap between

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<sup>633</sup> Salem Rashed Bin Trees Alqomzy, prev. reference, p.63

<sup>634</sup> Mohammed Yaser Sharaf, prev. reference, p. 68.



Bourguiba and the young people, which become larger over the era of Bourguiba. This period witnessed violence in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities in April 1986, upon which Bourguiba made a decision to close the college for an indefinite period.<sup>635</sup> Exactly as the educated academics were treated with violence and suppression, educated people, intellectuals in general and those who are distanced from politics faced the same destiny of restrictions, blockade and strict controls that were imposed on them.

### **Culture**

When we talk about the concept of cultural identity of UAE society, we must talk about the essential pillars which support this identity and through which we can recognize the superiority of UAE society over others or its similarity to them. The first one of these pillars is the Islamic religion; despite social changes that appear in UAE citizens' lives, UAE society stays attached to its Islamic belonging. The second one is language, although western foreign languages like English, French and others have spread, the UAE citizen stays proud of his Arabic tongue which highlights the originality of his Arab identity, and his belonging to the Arab World which in turn expresses at the same time a pillar of UAE society. These pillars affect other pillars forming the personality of UAE society such as heritage, values, customs, traditions and regional privacy as well, as they are almost the same all over the Arab World, which is Muslim, and talks in Arabic.<sup>636</sup>

United Arab Emirates witnessed many cultural events and activities since its beginning. Features of culture in UAE society appear clearly through many cultural

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<sup>635</sup> Mohammed Mozaly, opened letter to Bourqiba, prev. reference., p. 53.

<sup>636</sup> (Arabic reference), Dr. Saeed Hareb, "The Cultural Identity of The UAE Society", in: the cultural move seminar in UAE under union, previous reference pp 69-80.

programs organized by cultural formal institutions established according to protocols and systems confirm their goals. In spite of this expansion, the UAE citizen keeps his Islamic Arab originality and values.<sup>637</sup>

UAE life is generally characterized by the aspect of state of institutions including cultural institutions because of the completion of institution building and expansion in popular participation and promotion of independence. The evidence is the rise of modern cultural institutions in United Arab Emirates such as; the cultural circle in Sharjah 1981, the cultural academy in Abu Dhabi in 1981, the UAE writers and authors union in Sharjah in 1984, the culture and science seminar in Dubai in 1987,<sup>638</sup> and these are the most important institutions in UAE leading the cultural movement, its influence and its effective interaction in UAE society.

The cultural academy contributes to organizing and carrying out distinguished leading activities addressing all social classes and ranks including those activities, which directly aim at developing the artistic, and the cognitive senses.

For children, it contributes in raising the cultural life in UAE and provides them with varied, fixed and continuous activities; achieve some cultural stability and accumulation, which in turn deepen the track of primary modernity i.e. in its primary stage.<sup>639</sup> It also provides appropriate facilities and sophisticated artistic abilities before various cultural activities of Arab and foreign states and of regional and international

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<sup>637</sup> (Arabic reference), Mozah Abeed Ghobash, " Social Transformations and Their Influence on the cultural move in UAE " in: the cultural move seminar in UAE under union, Dubai, previous reference, p 23.

<sup>638</sup> (Arabic reference), Dr. Abdelkhalek Abdullah, "The Cultural Institutions between Theory and Practice", in: the cultural move seminar in UAE under union, previous reference, p 88.

<sup>639</sup>(Arabic reference) Dr. Yousif Alhassan, Cultural Foreign Relationships of UAE 1971 – 1996, Dubai, culture and science seminar, 1998, p 96.

institutions, along with civil activities – collective and individual – Arab and foreign.<sup>640</sup>

Although there are many cultural institutions, which provide various cultural services including art, literature and thinking, the most prominent institutional improvement of the cultural movement in UAE was the rise of private cultural institutions established by UAE businessmen, such as Gomaa Al Maged Center for Culture and Heritage in 1988 which contains one of the biggest specialized heritage libraries in the Arab region, in addition to a center for national heritage and Arabian Gulf studies, and it also documents all annual cultural activities in UAE. Another is the Sultan Bin Ali Alowaes cultural institution in 1994 which presents the Alowaes cultural prize that is now distinguished by its Arabic and international feature after it was regional in the past as it gives financial grants to Arab thinkers, writers and authors for literary, intellectual and creative production.<sup>641</sup>

This variety in cultural institutions in UAE shows that the cultural movement in UAE entered a new stage of cultural privatization because of the convergence of businessmen and thinkers in the same society, which lead to more success in the shape, and content of modernity in UAE society. The existence of cultural institutions stresses the existence of formal interest in culture and cultured people, and it is proof that cultural work in UAE has surpassed the stage of individual random work and reached the stage of cultural work that is established, organized and planned according to an administrative structural base.

As for Saudi Arabia, there were not cultural institutions like these in the era of King Abdul Aziz. Despite the spread of cultural awareness in the kingdom which lead

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<sup>640</sup>(Arabic reference) Dr. Abdelkhalek Abdullah, "Cultural Institutions between Theory and Practice ", in: cultural move seminar in UAE under union, previous reference, p 91.

<sup>641</sup> Dr. Abdelkhalek Abdullah, "Cultural Institutions between Theory and Practice" , in: cultural move seminar in UAE under union, previous reference pp 94, 95.

to emergence of an educated category of youth who were affected by neighboring Arab countries cultures through Arab teachers working in Saudi Arabia or through scholarship in other Arab or foreign countries. This cultured Saudi category was fighting with every old and traditional thing calling for renewal and reform, but the strength of customs and traditions was one of the strong factors that formed an oppositional trend, so this category tried seriously to manage kingdom affairs.<sup>642</sup> The cultural move in Tunisia suffered a crisis in the era of Bourguiba when tens of magazines appeared then disappeared quickly and did not last for a long time. The cultural Tunisian life was characterized by losing literary press and ideological magazines.<sup>643</sup> That is because Bourguiba forced Tunisian society to sanctify a single unique charismatic leadership, which did not allow others to appear. He imposed his principals and thoughts over Tunisian society through this charismatic character and he made society get used to a single-party system. The ruling party is the party which rules, prescribes and also opposes. It is also the public syndicates and institutions. So society became convinced that he who achieved independence, will never demand anyone to participate in his ruling, administrating or prescribing. In other words Tunisian society turned into a band (chorus) decorating Bourguiba on public occasions such as presidential, legislative and local campaigns, his visits and speeches in public occasions and his private parties in which concerts are held and poetry is said, especially folk poetry.<sup>644</sup>

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<sup>642</sup> (Arabic reference) Dr. Abdelfattah Hassan Abou Olayah, previous reference, p 223.

<sup>643</sup> (Arabic reference) Mohammed Mezally, Situations, previous reference, p 192.

<sup>644</sup> (Arabic reference), Mohammed Althowady, " The Relationship between Bourguiba character and The Identity Crisis in The Modern Tunisian Society ", Arabic studies magazine, Altaleeah publishing house, Beirut, issues 11/12, September/October 1996, p 116.

## **Economy**

The important role of UAE in leading the experiment of development indicates that the economic policies of the state form the social and the economic styles and behaviors of UAE society through varied spending and support programs for both family and production sectors. Changes in these programs became effective on the the productive ability of the private sector in UAE as government spending represents the basic engine of private economic activity. The state became a major bowl of national employment as a result of oil wealth. The UAE government vigorously encouraged all citizens to participate in establishing a self-sufficient economy and infrastructure through many formal projects in addition to encouraging the ideology of commercial institutions.<sup>645</sup>

UAE citizens benefit from participation principals which the state raised and tried through which to make citizens participate in the economic activities, privatizing some projects in order to expand the private sector and push it into a more important role in development which also depended on some economic and commercial legislations prescribed by the Ministry of Economy and Trade to provide citizens with stability and assurance, such as federal Law no. 1 1979 regarding organizing industrial activities, federal Law no. 4 1979 against fraud and bribery and federal Law no. 8 1980 regarding organizing work relations. UAE citizens have exploited this proper atmosphere to trade freely and compete with others till UAE society has reaches a high level of world competition.

UAE citizens benefit from building with commercial and housing using which the state has built on citizens' lands provided that they pay the government from avails of these buildings that commercial buildings administration are supervising their

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<sup>645</sup> (Arabic reference) Sally Fandlouh, previous reference, p 30.

maintenance. So the government has raised citizens' standard of living and enabled them to save some of these avails in order to invest them in other economic projects.<sup>646</sup>

UAE citizens turned to investment in building and reconstruction using sophisticated equipments to construct huge projects to benefit all people in general. As a result, citizens have become convinced that science and money in the economic field are the real wealth for nations' progress and establishing civilizations.<sup>647</sup> Thus aspects of economic activity have varied in UAE. The public services field is considered the major field that citizens are working in, but it has moved back before the list of citizens working in technical and scientific jobs. This is because education focuses on the technological and practical aspect.<sup>648</sup>

Commercial development appeared in Saudi Arabia when the kingdom opened up to the Arab and the foreign worlds by signing commercial conventions with them and organized the passage of goods and customs. In addition national commercial institutions for import and export appeared at different areas of the kingdom as it is an importer state and this has been an attempt to fill its need for foodstuffs and heavy industrial tools.

King Abdul Aziz encouraged national projects funded by civil capital in order to develop the kingdom; civil banks, such as The Civil Company for Trade 1938, a combined civil company, carried out commercial and banking work. It changed its name in 1953 to Commercial Civil Bank.<sup>649</sup> Many national companies have been

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<sup>646</sup> (Arabic reference) Dr. Yousif Mohammed Almadfay, previous reference, p 215.

<sup>647</sup> (Arabic reference) Salem Rashed Bin Treas Alkomzy, previous reference, p 65.

<sup>648</sup> (Arabic reference) Rashed Ali Bin Saeed Alhabssy, previous reference, p 53.

<sup>649</sup> (Arabic reference) Dr. Abdelfattah Hassan Abou Olayah, previous reference, p 221.

established such as Saudi Contractors Companies in order to carry out economic jobs relating to oil like structural works, maintenance and transportation.<sup>650</sup>

Values, living styles, and consumption models that were taken from the west have broken into almost all sectors of Tunisian society according to the standard of living of people in this society. Tunisian society suffered a state of exile and from playing any important roles for the economy of its state in the era of Bourguiba, under a constitutional socialism slogan the formal goal of which was comprehensive development, but in fact it was a tyrannical adventure aimed at nationalizing economic activity and dominating social life under a pretence of prosperity and progress.<sup>651</sup>

The economic policy which has been taken by the country after the socialist experiment led to poverty and marginalization of many social segments which had a large effect on the increase of unemployment and displacement and the emergence of tin districts – random districts (slums) living in tin huts – surrounding the capital and the big cities. The Tunisian bourgeoisie controlled the Tunisian economy as they worked on integrating it with the international capitalist economic system which had shown the subordination of the national Tunisian economy and even its emergence for the international capitalist market, all these factors led to an inevitable result; the deepening of differentiation between social classes and categories. This shows the country as a power controlled by external relations with the society and the weakness of its distributional abilities with the emergence of new requirements in the quality and quantity of public mass consumption and the growth of citizen indifference and alienation as a result of the unavailability of job opportunities in the major cities because of migration from the countryside to the city.

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<sup>650</sup> (Arabic reference) previous reference, p 227.

<sup>651</sup> (Arabic reference) Altaher Balkhogah, previous reference, p 56.

The difference between the societies of the three countries under comparison is clear: Emirati society is considered a civilized, advanced and coherent society, it is educated, participating in the organization of the civil society such as volunteer and community work and keeps its original customs and traditions through the maintenance of its Arabic and Islamic identity in spite of the cultural globalization.

Saudi society moved very slowly from the nomadic phase to the urban civilization phase, unlike Emirati society and kept its customs, traditions and concepts. The case was completely different in the Tunisian Republic as its society opened up completely to western culture, went so far from the Islamic Arabic identity, did not practice democracy in its proper form and was subjected to repression and prevented from practicing freedom of political thought and expression.

### **International Stature**

The distinguished stature and the respect that the state of United Arab Emirates internationally enjoys are the result of the situations, principals and values that were adopted and planned with unique accuracy by its founder: Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan. He gained the respect and appreciation of the international society and also became popular among the peoples of the world, making the name and stature of the state rise very high, which led to the existence of honest will and good intention in its international relations from all the external sides when dealing with the state of Emirate, which in turn helped and facilitated the tasks of the state in its efforts and pushed them to success in most cases.

The UAE acquired great international personality and stature as a distinguished Arab country in the Arab Gulf and has its importance and respect both



on the Arab level and internationally, during the period of union. The state walked steadily and achieved many of the goals for which it was founded on all levels: political, economic, social, cultural, and even on those of security and humanity within its international relations.

It became a state of regional importance, international presence and global commercial, financial and economic status, taking such a significant political and economic role that it cannot be seen as one of the marginal countries whether on the Gulf and Arab levels or even internationally<sup>652</sup>.

The wisdom of the founder of this country, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, and his deep sight towards current events and issues around him made him able to read the data of international policy correctly and accurately. This made him realize the real orientations of the age in which he lives and the orientations of major powers that control international policy, the unity of the Arab nation for him meant strength and leadership in a world governed by power and controlled by strong people. In order that the Arab nation has a strong entity, this nation must be strong as the world recognizes only the strong. So he founded his country on this general international theory, realizing that unity and collaboration between the Arabs are the basis of their power and the common good way between them and that dispersing leads only to weakness.<sup>653</sup> He always invited his Arab brothers to unity and invited all Arabs on both the official and public levels to achieve the requirements of Arab unity and bring back the serenity and harmony between the peoples of the nation in the face of difficult situations that the Arab nation had been through. Religious and

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<sup>652</sup> Dr Abdul Khaleq Abdullah, the initiatives and responses in the external policy of UAE, Abu Dhabi, the Emirati center for strategic studies and researches, 2001, page 25 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>653</sup> Ahmed Jalal Altadmory, previous reference, page 566 (Arabic Reference).

national duty imposed unity and enhanced the entity of the nation, pushing it towards the path of goodness and righteousness.<sup>654</sup>

Sheikh Zayed (may God have mercy on him) did not stop at the limits of this invitation only, but he exceeded it and made many initiatives among his Arab brothers. The first initiative was that UAE joined the Arab League on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1971, four days after the announcement of unity, then the participation in the foundation of the Gulf Cooperation Council in 25 May 1981. UAE believes in the importance of these organizations to help the Arab case and interests, supporting Arab unity and interfering to solve Arab disputes<sup>655</sup> for the benefit of the whole Arab nation and to make it strong.

Although King Abdul Aziz, invited unity for the Arabs, the conditions in which the Arab region lived and its subordination to colonization were not suitable to go ahead in his invitation. He also did not find supporters and confronted many competitors and opponents. As a result of his quest for Arab unity<sup>656</sup>. Saudi Arabia was one of the countries that founded the Arab League in March 1945.

As for Habib Bourguiba, the founder of the Tunisian Republic, he did not make his external policy exceed the general path of his internal policy. He depended on a tactical shuffle as well as some basics with psychological origins in his thinking. He tried to turn his back on the geographic – cultural belongings of Tunisia to attach it to political – cultural ambitions towards the west. This was clear in many of his internal resolutions that took an advanced form in the social and economic fields and aimed to exceed Arabic Islamic identity<sup>657</sup>. He announced his hostility to the east in general and the Islamic Arab world in particular because of its backwardness – as he

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<sup>654</sup> Ahmed Jalal Altadmory, previous reference, page 583 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>655</sup> Ahmed Abdullah bin Said, previous reference, page 177 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>656</sup> Dr Ibrahim Abdo, previous reference, page 180 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>657</sup> Qosai Saleh Aldarwish, previous reference, page 79 (Arabic Reference).

believed - considering Tunisia as the point of meeting between the east and the west. This is not strange for a person who absorbed western culture and did not find it wrong to make a comparison between him and the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him and claim that he is superior to the Prophet peace be upon him<sup>658</sup>.

Tunisia was not in good relations with the Arab countries during the government of Bourguiba, he engaged so much in criticizing the Arab governments' systems concerning Palestine and called for a more lenient way of direct negotiation with Israel regarding the division approved by the United Nations in 1948. This led to strained relations with some Arab countries that reached to break with the United Arab Republic in the era of Gamal Abdul Nasser and relations did not improve until after the war of 1967. Besides his situation towards the Palestinian case, Bourguiba denied the Arabism of Tunisia, disclaimed its national obligations, and denied it to the Arab League<sup>659</sup>, so the system of Bourguiba lost confidence from most Arab countries<sup>660</sup>.

Meanwhile the UAE did not neglect its duties towards the Arab nation and has good relations with all Arab countries with no exclusion. One of the most important manifestations of these good relations is the intensity of governmental visits, which in turn helped in the enhancement of bilateral relations, strengthening brotherhood among Arab peoples, developing cooperation in all fields and promoting Arab solidarity.<sup>661</sup>, This maintains stability in the region and prosperity for its peoples. This was the aim of Sheikh Zayed for which he lived, died, sought and worked to achieve and make real during all the period of his rule.

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<sup>658</sup> Mosatafa Karim, previous reference, page 13 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>659</sup> Tawfik Almadani, previous reference, page 20 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>660</sup> Mohammed Mazali, an opened invitation to Bourguiba, previous reference, page 159 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>661</sup> Alsayed Abdul Hafez Abd Raboh, Zayed and the Arab unity, Cairo, modern Islamic Publisher, 1989, page 461 (Arabic Reference).

UAE solved many disputes and differences between Arab countries and made convergence of the views between them through quiet diplomacy.<sup>662</sup> Mediation did not come from nothing, as the reputation of the leader Sheikh Zayed preceded his person and affected the status of the country as it became of a special stature among countries and peoples of the Arab nation and the whole world. Sheikh Zayed acquired a wide public love in the whole Arab world thanks to his honest situations and the national gains and the federal achievements that he achieved locally and on the level of Arab Gulf which made him gain a high stature in his leadership. The Arab peoples too looked forward to his steady and cautious situations towards events that faced the nation, so this stature was not only because of his being a president of UAE but also because because of the clarity, originality and faith of his personality<sup>663</sup>.

This is the same for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the Hejaz entered into the Saudi state with the most important Islamic sanctities, in which are the two holy mosques in Mecca and Madinah. King Abdul Aziz and the Saudi state acquired a great Islamic reputation and a high stature<sup>664</sup>. King Abdul Aziz called for holding an Islamic conference in 1926 considered to be the first of its type in the history of the Islamic peoples. He received struggling Muslims and protected them from the chasing of major powers, he also exploited the season of Hajj to ensure that the kingdom cared for the conditions of Muslims and corrected wrong concepts about the citizens of the kingdom. In addition, the kingdom made friendship and cooperation agreements with a number of Islamic countries including Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan,

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<sup>662</sup> Ahmed Abdullah bin Said, previous reference, page 167.

<sup>663</sup> Ahmed Jalal Altadmory, previous reference, page 563 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>664</sup> Dr Mohammed bin Abdullah Alsalman, King Abdul Aziz entering Hijaz, historical study from 1326-1344 H / 1908-1925 AD, Medina company for publication, Rajab 1419 H /1998 AD, page 140 (Arabic Reference).

hence the kingdom acquired the respect of peoples and the countries of the Islamic world<sup>665</sup>.

Here we notice that after the entry of Hejaz, King Abdul Aziz began to organize relations between his country and the other countries in the right way based on reciprocity and mutual friendships. The number of countries that had an embassy, commission or consulate in Saudi Arabia reached 26 until 1950.<sup>666</sup> In addition, many agreements and treaties were held based on the principal of friendship and good neighbouring<sup>667</sup>.

Meanwhile the stature of the Tunisian Republic and its relations with its neighbors were mostly complicated and not in favor of Tunisia in addition to the stalemate that dominated these relations during the rule of Bourguiba, especially in the late period of his rule. His relations with Nasser was marked by continuous tensions, they disagreed in speech and ideology in cases such as unity, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict. He was also cautious about the Ba'ath party and worked hard to prevent its extensions in Tunisia, then his conflict with Gaddafi renewed again. Bourguiba tried hard to make the most of the Arab conflicts by being closer to Algeria when relations between Algeria and Egypt were strained. He thought that he could approach Algeria as long as there were signs of rapprochement between Algeria and Morocco, his relations with Algeria improved slightly when the relations between Algeria led by Boumediene and Nasser were strained, even unity with Libya came in a climate of tension between Egypt and Libya<sup>668</sup>.

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<sup>665</sup> Dr Saleh Saad Alshabib, previous reference, page 168 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>666</sup> Dr Mohammed bin Abdullah Alsalman, King Abdul Aziz entering Hijaz, historical study from 1326-1344 H / 1908-1925 AD, previous reference, page 144 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>667</sup> Dr Fahad bin Abdullah Alsmay and others, the diplomatic history of King Abdul Aziz, Riyadh, the public library of King Abdul Aziz, 1999, page 211 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>668</sup> Qosai Saleh Darwish, previous reference, page 81(Arabic Reference).

Within the efforts of Sheikh Zayed to gather the Arabs together, he tried to convince them that the unity of Arabs would lead to strength that could be achieved through the foresight in the affairs of the nation and moving to get rid of the political diseases that damage Islamic and Arab societies.<sup>669</sup>

UAE succeeded in performing a positive role in the fair international cases, supporting the cases of Arabism and Islam, defending the legitimate interests of all Arab and Islamic countries and enhancing the relations of friendship and cooperation with the countries and peoples of the whole world based on the principles of the United Nations charter and international morals and ideals<sup>670</sup>, which ensured the international personality of unity in two fields, Arab and international, and made UAE acquire a high stature internationally.

In addition, King Abdul Aziz made great efforts to achieve Arab interests and support the Arab case, so he met Roosevelt and Churchill during the Second World War for the benefit of Arabs to keep their freedom and independence. He also made good relations with a number of Arab countries and provided them with money and equipment to realize the principal of cooperation. He defended Arab issues, especially the Palestinian case, through his representatives in international organizations even if this had an effect on his relations with the major countries whose companies held oil projects in the kingdom<sup>671</sup>.

On the contrary, the president of the Tunisian Republic, Habib Bourguiba, claimed in his media statements that; "we are a part of the Arab nation" and sometimes admitted the right of this nation in a political unity, but this was solely a way to gain the support of several Arab leaders and officials. This was similar to his

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<sup>669</sup> The ministry of media and culture, previous reference, page 14 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>670</sup> Shams Eldien Aldoaify & Mohammed Khalil Alsksk, Zayed and the external policy, previous reference, page 24 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>671</sup> Dr Ibrahim Abdo, previous reference, page 91,92 (Arabic Reference).

way of using Qu'ranic verses and Hadith for the same goal, so these statements that superficially supported Arabism and Arab unity were political exploitations. Bourguiba announced many times his refusal to Arabism and any thing related to it, he said, "if I had the choice between the Arab League and the NATO, I would choose the latter". He did not care for Arabs nor for Arab unity, and there was a situation that showed this his carelessness; when the presidents and kings of Arab countries agreed on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1965 to withdraw their ambassadors from Bonn, the capital of West Germany, as a reaction to withdrawing its ambassador from Egypt because of the visit of the president of the socialist republic of Germany to Egypt. Bourguiba was the only opponent as he refused to comply with Arab resolutions and kept his ambassador in Bonn, stating; "the Egyptian president must bear the results of his invitation alone"<sup>672</sup>. Then, Bourguiba cut relations between Tunisia and the Arab League in May 1965<sup>673</sup>, and then it was the war of June 1967 after the improvement of relations between Tunisia and Egypt.

There were many cases that showed the positive situations of UAE, which resulted in more respect and for a higher international stature for UAE. An example of this is the situation of UAE towards the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian issue; it has supported the Palestinians since the first moment of founding the federal state and stood by those countries that confronted Israel, giving it a kind of protection against the hard competition between the radical and conservative camps in the Arab nation<sup>674</sup>, Sheikh Zayed used oil as a political weapon when war broke out between the Arabs and Israel on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1973 and stood by the choice of the overall boycott, he had a famous statement " Arab oil is not dearer than the Arab blood".

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<sup>672</sup> Altaher Blkhoja, previous reference, page 16 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>673</sup> The previous reference, p 117 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>674</sup> Dr William Ro, the characteristics of diplomacy and defensive policy of UAE, Abu Dhabi, the Emirati center for strategic studies and researches, 2003, p 27 (Arabic Reference).

When Sadat visited occupied Jerusalem and met Israeli leaders with whom he later signed the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, the UAE joined the Arab countries in their position against Egypt to preserve Arab solidarity and condemned the treaty of Camp David in the emergency Arab Summit held in Baghdad between 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> November 1978. They then adopted the resolution of the Arab boycott of Egypt announced by Sheikh Zayed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1979 which lasted until the end of 1987 when relations with Egypt returned after the resolution of the Arab Summit held in Amman in November 1978.<sup>675</sup> When Israel attacked Lebanon in September 1982, Sheikh Zayed ordered all necessary actions to provide necessary potentials to facilitate transporting the volunteers who wanted to go to the battlefield in Lebanon to support joint Palestinian and Lebanon forces against the Zionist invasion.<sup>676</sup> After the Israeli attack on the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunisia in September 1985, the UAE required the Security Council in October 1985 to take actions against terrorism and mentioned the name of Israel as a terrorist state. Then in November 1988, the UAE supported the resolution of the Palestinian National Council to declare an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, asserting in a letter sent to the Security Council that their support for the Palestinian people would continue until Jerusalem was liberated. Sheikh Zayed then supported the resolutions of the Madrid Conference held in October 1991 because of the participation of all the concerned parties in addition to that it adopted the principal of peaceful settlement of disputes.<sup>677</sup> And while the Arab position was divided concerning the Oslo agreements, the first and the second of 1993 and 1995, UAE took a middle way as an approach when dealing with the general situation. It sought convergence with the position adopted by most Arab countries towards peace, and

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<sup>675</sup> Dr William Ro, previous reference, p 34 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>676</sup> The previous reference, p 61 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>677</sup> The previous reference, p 103 (Arabic Reference).



hence achieving the thought of Sheikh Zayed based on waiting and not to rush in making decisions and jumping to conclusions, and it continued on the middle way where it stopped the boycott of the second and third degrees of Israel and kept the boycott of the first degree.<sup>678</sup> The Emirati support of Palestinians continued with the continuance of their problems without reaching a fair resolution until now.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well, did not hesitate to provide help to the Palestinians and supporting them on the Arab level and internationally, King Abdul Aziz took every possible chance to defend Palestine and support its case<sup>679</sup>.

Habib Bourguiba, the president of the Tunisian Republic, called in his famous speech in Jericho on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1965 for the recognition of the decision to divide Palestine then the recognition of Israel.<sup>680</sup> After that, he agreed to host the leaders and fighters of the Palestine Liberation Organization following their exit from Lebanon on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1982, after the diplomatic role played by Tunisia on the international and Arab levels after the moving of the headquarters of the Arab League from Cairo to Tunisia after Camp David in 1979 and which lasted in Tunisia until the year 1990. However his reception of the Palestinians in Tunisia after consulting the United States was only an attempt to restore his dignity before himself and before those who accused him of national treason, and even an attempt to revenge those who disagreed with his opinions and criticized him. It was the same when he was received at the headquarters of the Arab League having ignored its previous secretary Azzam Pasha<sup>681</sup>. So it can be said that the relations between Bourguiba and the Palestinians were dual.

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<sup>678</sup> The previous reference, p 105 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>679</sup> Ahmed Abdel Ghafor Attar, Ibn Masaod and the Palestinian case: the history-plot-case, Beirut, the publications of contemporary library, 1973, p 140 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>680</sup> Altaher Blkhoja, previous reference, page 17 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>681</sup> Qosai Saleh Aldarwish, previous reference, page 86,87 (Arabic Reference).

We can say that UAE realized the sensitivity of its position and its importance for major countries so it followed a balanced external policy towards international parties, and made serious attempts and to make the region far from failure which meant losing some security, leadership and independence, and though UAE established diplomatic relations with USA which were made clear when it opened an embassy in 1972 in the USA, and these relations were strong. However it did not allow the USA to control it or impose its guardianship, and when it developed its relations with the Soviet Union and established diplomatic relations with it in 1985, it did not intend to admit it to the region. Sheikh Zayed refused guardianship from both the east and the west and said "we do not need any interference and we can not accept any interference, we can manage our matters without any guardianship or interference from the east or the west, we are a nation which does not accept any method that makes us far from the responsibility for our internal matters and interests. We answer any question and we are keen on making our relationships with all countries a friendship relationship<sup>682</sup>". So UAE followed a policy of balance in its relations with all countries in order to maintain its security and the security of other countries of the region and to participate in supporting the factors of national security in general<sup>683</sup>, within the mutual respect of regional safety and common interests, which directly affected international peace and security. Sheikh Zayed referred to this in his speech when he described his relationship with France saying that; "the strong relations between us depend on strong basics, which are mutual respect and the common faith in the highest ideals<sup>684</sup>".

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<sup>682</sup> Shams Eldien Aldoify & Mohammed Khalil Alsksk, Zayed and the external policy, previous reference, page 323 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>683</sup> Ahmed Abdullah bin Said, previous reference, page 137 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>684</sup> Shams Eldien Aldoify & Mohammed Khalil Alsksk, Zayed and the external policy, previous reference, page 417 (Arabic Reference).

Saudi Arabia also established political relations, friendship and commercial relations with 11 countries which recognized the government of King Abdul Aziz until February 1932 which included the former Soviet Union, Britain, Germany, France, Iran, Turkey, Netherlands, Switzerland, Poland, Italy and USA.<sup>685</sup> In 1948, the kingdom had political relations with most Arab and foreign countries and made agreements with international institutions and organizations within the limits of the direct interests of the kingdom including health, agricultural, organizational, social, cultural, technical and ethical fields<sup>686</sup>. In addition, the kingdom joined San Francisco conference in 1945, which established the United Nations organization<sup>687</sup>.

While Bourguiba, the president of Tunisia Republic, is considered the first to welcome American presence in the region as a necessity to keep peace and stability, in a speech made by him in May 1968, he said "We consider that the power of USA constitutes a factor of stability that protects the world from the repressive systems", he cooperated with the west, his ideal, without any dispute with the Soviet Union from which he went far. It is clear that he did not visit the Soviet Union, even once, nor did he receive any invitation except one, which he spoiled, and then he continued to push the policy of openness to the west.<sup>688</sup> He enhanced his relations with France and the USA, as he believed that this was for the benefit of Tunisia to protect it from Arab neighbors, and this happened when an armed group of Nassery orientation supported by Algeria, controlled the city of Qafsa in January 1980. Bourguiba asked Paris and Washington for help and they provided him with military and logistical aids,<sup>689</sup> which enabled the Tunisian system to put an end to the rebellion at lowest cost.

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<sup>685</sup> Dr Fahad bin Abdullah Alsmay and others, previous reference, page 121 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>686</sup> Dr Saleh Saad Alshabib, previous reference, page 169 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>687</sup> Dr Fahad bin Abdullah Alsmay and others, previous reference, page 206 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>688</sup> Altaher Blkhoja, previous reference, page 15 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>689</sup> Previous reference, p 201 (Arabic Reference).

Sheikh Zayed realized the importance of the geographical location of his country and asserted this in many of the media statements in which he always repeated; "The large importance of the location of our country, whether strategically or economically, adds special importance to external policy which we follow and use in our dealings with all other countries and peoples, close or far."<sup>690</sup>

As a result, UAE offered help to the countries and peoples of the world based on the policy of friendship to support the right of peoples to restore their freedom, determine their destiny and to keep the safety of their lands. So it provided aid to support the African peoples who struggled against racial discrimination and repression, UAE condemned the racist system in South Africa, and took a similar position in its condemnation of the racist system which existed in Rhodesia as it applied a comprehensive economic boycott to both systems until it stopped it in Rhodesia on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 1980 after its independence with the name of Zimbabwe.<sup>691</sup> It was the same with the end of the racist government in South Africa in 1994 when Mandela won and became the first president of South Africa after the end of the racist period. UAE also supported Arab-African cooperation to achieve the common interests t was keen on supporting relations of brotherhood with the Islamic world in Asia and Africa, participating in the foundation of the Islamic world and supporting the Islamic news agency and the institutions that work in the field of Islamic Dawa. In addition, it tried to develop Arab – European relations to open new doors to the economic and scientific cooperation between the two parties, which

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<sup>690</sup> Shams Eldien Aldoaify & Mohammed Khalil Alsksk, Zayed and the external policy, previous reference, page 19 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>691</sup> The ministry of media and culture, previous reference, page 61 (Arabic Reference).

contributed to the development of the humanitarian civilization and the enhancement of international peace<sup>692</sup>.

When the United Nations asked member governments to provide it with a copy of the constitutions of their countries, King Abdul Aziz, ordered a copy of the Holy Qu'ran sent to the United Nations, attached with a letter where he asserted that the Holy Qu'ran is the only constitution of Saudi Arabia and its provisions are applied all over the country.<sup>693</sup> He said: "my constitution, law, and system is the religion of Mohammed, peace be upon him, so either happy life with it or happy death".<sup>694</sup> Thus determining that all the policies of the kingdom internally and externally are based on the Holy Qu'ran and the Sunnah of the Prophet, (peace be upon him).

Contrary to the orientations of Sheikh Zayed and King Abdul Aziz, Bourguiba wanted to be closer to the west and far from the Arabs. Tunisia announced on 12<sup>th</sup> January 1974 that Tunis and Libya would be united in one state called the Islamic Arab republic, with one constitution, one flag, one president, one army and one legislative, executive and judgmental powers. Bourguiba would be the president of the state and Gaddafi would be his representative, and that the referendum for unity would be on 18<sup>th</sup> January 1974.<sup>695</sup> After only two days, the project failed, cancelled by a personal decision from Bourguiba, and Mohammed Al Masmody who suggested the initiative of unity with Libya had been resigned from his position, who was the minister of foreign affairs of Tunisia at that time, then he was dismissed from the political chamber on 11<sup>th</sup> February of the same year.<sup>696</sup>, After the Tunisian situation

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<sup>692</sup> Shams Eldien Aldoaiify & Mohammed Khalil Alsksk, Zayed and the external policy, previous reference, page 23 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>693</sup> Dr Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed bin Abdullah Alhojailan, previous reference, p 57 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>694</sup> Abdul Aziz Sharaf & Mohammed Ibrahim Shaaban, Abdul Aziz Al Saud and the genius Islamic character, Cairo, Dar Almaaref, 1983, p 279 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>695</sup> Altaher Blkhoja, previous reference, page 168 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>696</sup> Mohammed Mazali, an opened invitation to Bourguiba, previous reference, page 20 (Arabic Reference).

and refusing the Libyan invitation to establish a unity, relations between the two countries were strained and stayed in this condition until improving in the era of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 1996 after two meetings between Gaddafi and Ben Ali. And after mutual visits between Tunisian and Gulf ministers, the relations between the two sides began to improve after the events of the Second Gulf war and liberating Kuwait from Iraqi occupation.

We can say that there are various factors, which affected the external policy of UAE and had a direct effect on its acquirement of an international position such as:

First: It has large oil reserves that can be extracted at low costs, and it has large amounts of natural gas, this fortune enabled it to take an important role in international commerce and financing, and helped it to contribute to the programs of external aid.

Second: UAE occupies an important geographical location strategically, which allowed it to be an important center in international commerce and to be a major party in regional strategic considerations.

Third: UAE is characterized by the limitation of its citizens compared with the volume of the natural resources in the state, which resulted in financial surplus, which has been used within the tools of implementing its external policy<sup>697</sup>.

UAE was able to be one of the richest countries in the world in a short term because of its important geographical location in the Arab Gulf and its oil reserves.

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<sup>697</sup> Dr William Ro, previous reference, p 4 (Arabic Reference).

This led Sheikh Zayed to settle the concept of fairness in dealing with all and gave UAE international respect and strengthened its relations with the major countries, which in turn tried to deepen their economic, political and strategic relations with it.<sup>698</sup> Hence Sheikh Zayed protected the country from the dangers that threatened the safety of the region, and acquired confidence in dealing with the major powers in the region of the Arab Gulf as well.

Sheikh Zayed preferred reconciliation to the use of power, and preferred rational and logical discussion to violent confrontation; he also helped others to settle their disputes. He declared before the Federal National Council in February 1972, a short time after the announcement of the federal state, that his external policy is based on "supporting the relations of friendship and cooperation with all countries and peoples based on the principles of the UN Charter and the international ideals". In addition, Sheikh Zayed stabilized the concepts of tolerance and mutual respect between peoples whatever the difference between their social cultures, religions and orientations, including the arrivals working in UAE. He supported cooperative relations and personal reaction and he showed his continuous readiness for generous giving from the financial Emirati resources to support the diplomacy of his country and his human concern for other peoples outside<sup>699</sup>.

Beside the commitment of UAE to participate in all Arab institutions and intensify communication relations through dual agreements with Arab countries, UAE provided financial and economic aid to many Arab countries by financing and investing various projects in the Arab countries that needed help and implemented these projects based on preferential terms. The UAE did not give any attention to romantic ideas about Arab unity, but instead insisted on the importance of working

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<sup>698</sup> Dr Yusuf Mohammed Almadfai, previous reference, p 310 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>699</sup> Dr William Ro, previous reference, p 6,7 (Arabic Reference).

and applying.<sup>700</sup> Its policy referred clearly to its obligation to support Arab unity. The development fund of Abu Dhabi continued financing Arab projects; it provided since its foundation in 1971 to 2000 loans 13,5 billion Dirhams to these projects<sup>701</sup>.

Thanks to the political and humanistic thought of Sheikh Zayed, UAE occupied the top position among the countries that have the ability to make benefit of their natural resources and make use of them to support its external policy. It employed the economic potential of the state including oil resources basically in activating the role and ability of the external policy of UAE and giving it more credibility and effectiveness whether nationally or internationally<sup>702</sup>.

The economic power of the state made it acquire a high international position and an international economic pillar, but it did not stop at this point as the world in continuous competition and survival is for the strongest. So UAE made great efforts to maintain and even develop its position, this was declared many times by the prime minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoom, governor of Dubai, when he said: "Dubai has many potentials that is able to provide the conditions suitable for the success of works in the new economy, we have the experience that is recognized internationally in the field of the international commerce and we have also building structure and infrastructure of the highest international levels and the modernist technologies represented in the construction of the first free area in the middle east for the electronic commerce which is Dubai Internet City, opened in October 2000, but despite all our achievements, we still need to enhance the quality of all services if we want to be in a leading position in the new economy, not only locally and regionally,

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<sup>700</sup> Saly Fendello, previous reference, p 32 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>701</sup> Dr Nayef Ali Obaid, the external policy of UAE between the theory and application, Beirut, the university institution for studies, publication and distribution, 2003, p 172 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>702</sup> Ahmed Abdullah bin Said, previous reference, page 97,98 (Arabic Reference).



but also internationally, so we will always work on making the community of works find in Dubai what it cannot find anywhere else in the world” .<sup>703</sup>

This is what gave UAE its position and stature in the international economic field, which is ensured every day by opening new economic projects.

When UAE built its policy towards developed countries based on the initial call for the establishment of a new international economic system through the invitation of Sheikh Zayed for major industrial countries to establish a new international economic system<sup>704</sup>, and his criticism of the major industrial countries for its small aids provided to the poor countries; it did not only announce this situation in the world to be recorded but also helped a large number of developed countries with aids and loans provided by the development Fund of Abu Dhabi for the Arabic economic development. It also participated with the other concerned countries through the regional and international specialized institutions and organizations such as the OPIC Fund, the Arabic Fund for economic and social development, the Arabic bank for economic development in Africa, the Arabic fund for technical aid for Arab and African countries, the Islamic bank for development, etc.<sup>705</sup>

The state also founded, expanded and reformed or supported activities, programs and cultural centers in a number of world countries, especially in Africa and other developed countries, through its various governmental institutions, especially Zayed Institution for humanitarian charity. This charity took responsibility for human

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<sup>703</sup> Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoom: my vision..the challenges in the race of superiority, Dubai, Motivate company, Beirut, the Arab institution for studies and publication, 2006, p 26 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>704</sup> Shams Eldien Aldoaify & Mohammed Khalil Alsksk, Zayed and the external policy, previous reference, page 269 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>705</sup> The ministry of media and culture, previous reference, page 67 (Arabic Reference).

work since 5<sup>th</sup> August 1992 after it was the responsibility of the authorities of the president and the Diwan of the president<sup>706</sup>.

The Zayed Institution for humanitarian charity aims to continue humanitarian help, carry out tasks that have public benefits inside and outside UAE to raise the social, cultural and scientific level of Islamic societies. It also contributes to eliminating human suffering, participating in building and supporting cultural centers, schools, education institutes, scientific research centers, public libraries and professional training institutions, providing scholarships and supporting the efforts of writing, translation and publication, in addition to building and supporting the hospitals and orphans institutions and taking care of children and the categories that are marginalized in their societies.

These goals came to be realized in many countries whether developed or advanced for the settlement of the principals of dialogue, understanding and cooperation among the peoples and countries with different cultures, races and religions. there are many examples for this, such as, without limitation:

The Zayed Institution for humanitarian charity helped to build or reconstruct schools, centers, scientific associations and mosques in the Philippines, Nepal, India, France, Spain, London, Munich and Brussels in addition to a number of Arab countries. It also provided aid to the Islamic European college in Sinoe Chateau in France, the International Studies center in Shaw University in America, the Islamic College in Australia and the University of Sciences and Deonid University in India, it also founded the Emirati center for Islamic and Arabic studies in Beijing.<sup>707</sup>

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<sup>706</sup> Dr Yusuf Alhassan, the external cultural relations of UAE 1971-1996, previous reference, p 66 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>707</sup> Dr Yusuf Alhassan, the external cultural relations of UAE 1971-1996, previous reference, p 67-69 (Arabic Reference).

The state also implemented many social and cultural projects through the Development Fund of Abu Dhabi in other different sectors such as transportation, industry, agriculture, power, sanitary services and education.<sup>708</sup> All this gave the UAE the right to acquire the love and respect of these countries, which affected its position among these countries and made it higher.

In addition to the direct aid and loans provided by UAE, there is considerable private aid that flows from untraditional channels such as the aid provided to help the victims of natural disasters to build sanitary, educational, religious and housing installations which help to reduce the difficulties that face the peoples of these countries, there are many forms of this aid which are uncountable<sup>709</sup>.

Asserting that he is convinced that it is important to make financial benefits and common economic interests joint between countries, Sheikh Zayed said; "All the economic problems of the world must be solved as an integrated unit and it is important to establish kinds of cooperation between the countries all over the world, we are always ready to search all these problems with our neighbors and with industrial countries to reach a solution, provided that dialogue is based on mutual respect and not resulting from threats"<sup>710</sup>.

So UAE worked on the achievement of major projects within the state first then outside, thus this policy led to the settlement of the name of UAE in the minds of officials in a large number of countries thanks to the policy of convergence with all countries. The state of the United Arab Emirates acquired a high stature internationally on account of the wise policy that was followed and settled by its founder Sheikh Zayed (may God have mercy upon him).

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<sup>708</sup> The previous reference, p 77 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>709</sup> The ministry of media and culture, previous reference, page 69 (Arabic Reference).

<sup>710</sup> Dr Yusuf Mohammed Almadfaei, previous reference, p 283 (Arabic Reference).

## **Conclusion**

This comparison previews several of the policy characteristics followed by Sheikh Zayed in the foundation, building and settlement of the union of the United Arab Emirates, through a statement of ideas, principals and thoughts which he used to achieve some of his dreams for the nation and serving its interests. The study also demonstrates his ability to move from the desire to found a strong state taken as an ideal to his ability to achieve this desire and turn it into a reality. This study also previewed the achievements of Sheikh Zayed for the nation and citizens, as well as the position that the UAE reached in comparison with the achievements of two other Arab leaders who founded two Arab countries in different historical, geographical and political climates, conditions and periods. As for King Abdul Aziz, he founded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia then his sons succeeded him for more than an era until the kingdom reached its current position in time. Habib Bourguiba is considered a unique model in the Arab world by following a modernizing and a secular policy based on a special philosophy of his own which led an entire state behind him, he exceeded the basics, ideals and traditions that marked modern Arab policy in general.

The comparison showed that Sheikh Zayed was completely distinguished through making Arab cultural ideal followed by the entire Arab nation. UAE represents an ideal of tolerance, straightness and wise government, an ideal that has become so rare in the whole region of the Middle East. UAE achieved the comprehensive goal of development plans initiated from the first moment of its foundation, believing that man is the centre of the comprehensive goal planned by it and through which it can implement and achieve its goals.

The UAE has survived and continues as a united state independent with its decisions internally and externally, based on the personal commitment of Sheikh Zayed in its construction, as he was creative in the foundation of his state using technical political thought. It started from a state, which had a distinguished position in the infrastructure in his era, which put it among modern countries. Sheikh Zayed was also concerned with the stability of citizens through building projects and the implementation of regular programs to provide suitable housing. In addition, he was very interested in the education of citizens in all levels and fields even Adult Education for literacy, .He was also concerned with them physically, sanitation services which had been semi-existent at the beginning of his rule became available in all regions of the country. He also settled the pillars of a multi resourced economy with a momentum of its own that enables it to continue development, and did not forget the agricultural sector as he put strategic basics for its development in place so that the state reached high rates of self-sufficiency in many agricultural products, meats and fish.

UAE has been marked by a strong, coherent and productive society full of prosperity, justice, safety and freedom. It is an Arab Muslim society which is tolerant and open in a quiet and balanced way to all religions and cultures, thus realizing the balance between originality and modernism in a way that made it maintain its original values and enjoy the advantages of the modern life at the same time. Sheikh Zayed always asserted that the complex of modern construction in UAE could attach traditions to modernism in a strong and harmonious way.

He also supported the spirit of cooperation and solidarity on the Arab level, regionally and internationally; he acquired the respect of Arab leaders and the international family. UAE had the freedom of moving to be in line with the international cultural development and to contribute to the human condition whether

through special, individual, official or civil efforts or by joining regional and international organizations and international specialized organizations as well. It now has a high position among the countries of the world thanks to this wise policy, which loves peace and justice, and there is evidence that proves the ability of the UAE to participate positively with other countries in working on the settlement of principals of the true faith and a culture of tolerance.

In summary, UAE which moved from locality to regionalism is an ideal for the best place to learn how to develop a nation, and proves that the political and human thought adopted and used by Sheikh Zayed as an approach to founding a state can be followed by the best leaders in the world to manage their governments and to serve the people in every place and time.

## General Conclusion

This thesis highlights the major factors that forged and subsequently influenced the political thought of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan following his rise to power for the first time as the Ruler's Representative in Al-Ain. Such political thought, as this study sought to demonstrate, evolved according to the general local, regional and international environment in which Sheikh Zayed grew up and interacted. Moreover, Sheikh Zayed also had some personal character traits that made His Highness' vision of rule and governance unique among his peers referred to by some as "rare genius."<sup>711</sup>

Thus, Sheikh Zayed developed a comprehensive political philosophy that allowed him to assume his political responsibilities commensurate with his natural leadership skills and a full understanding of the political, economic and social environments. The remarkable accomplishments of his rule have been mainly the result of his integrated doctrine of governance that bore his "humane" signature.

In this regard, whether at the domestic or foreign level, Sheikh Zayed's political decisions and acts were conducted with a unique approach. For instance, internally, in almost all his development strategies, His Highness always held up the human factor as his main focal point. Therefore, he not only gave top priority to building the country's human resources by providing all the necessary means to succeed, but also enveloped his people with care through an exemplary welfare system and provided them with a sophisticated

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<sup>711</sup>UAEInteract (2004) Statement of Sheikh Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan 33<sup>rd</sup> National Day [online] available at [http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Nation\\_takes\\_comfort\\_from\\_Zayeds\\_deeds/14342.htm](http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Nation_takes_comfort_from_Zayeds_deeds/14342.htm) [accessed 11 April 2009]

infrastructure, not to mention the special attention he reserved to the special needs people and the less fortunate citizens in the country.

Externally, Sheikh Zayed always handled foreign affairs with a style that reflected the humane dimension of his political philosophy. Here again, the well-being of his fellow human beings was his main concern even if they belonged to foreign nations. This is the rationale behind why he did not hesitate to dispatch humanitarian aid to countries struck by natural or political crises, while highlighting the need to relieve the suffering of the people in such areas. Moreover, he instituted foreign assistance programs to help such countries provide basic services and utilities for their citizens (such as drilling wells, building dams, roads, hospitals and schools).

Sheikh Zayed took to the international political scene with humanistic approach towards tackling the most complex affairs. Thus, he always opted for diplomatic resolutions and offered mediation initiatives to solve political disputes between Arab or Muslim countries reminding the concerned parties that it is their citizens that suffer the most from such crises. This same concern was undoubtedly behind Zayed's stances towards problems relating to UAE's territorial sovereignty, insisting on good neighborly relations and peaceful settlement instead of confrontation.

Zayed's regional unionist ambitions and endeavors also reflected the humane focus of his political strategies. As a shrewd statesman, he saw this as a way to enhance the stability, security and prosperity of the peoples of the region. In matters of governance, Sheikh Zayed's policy of maintaining a close relationship with his people won him their loyalty and allegiance. This was recognized first by his governorship in the Al Ain region, his accession



as ruler of Abu Dhabi and then by his election on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1971 to the office of the first president of the UAE the foundation of which was due largely to his unparalleled vision, efforts and inspiring leadership.

From the outset, Zayed promised his people to make use of all the resources available to build a modern state and improve their standards of living. This clearly defined vision provided the basis of his approach to governance. Sheikh Zayed was firmly convinced that truthfulness, honesty and devotion were essential traits a leader should have to serve his people.

His style of leadership was characterized by two distinct features, his own personality as a charismatic leader setting an example of how responsibilities should be discharged, and his belief in the principle of '*shura*,' the concept of democratic consultation from the Islamic perspective. This democratic approach is deeply rooted in UAE society, as it has been for centuries. He also invited the people to participate themselves in sharing national responsibilities.

Zayed's approach to justice and equality, whether practiced at home in the United Arab Emirates, or abroad, characterized his unique style of governance and remained fundamental to his view of the role of a leader and has provided the basis of the way in which, with great success, he founded his country and brought progress to his people.

Furthermore, in his nation-building program, Sheikh Zayed made sure his people also participated in the development process, believing that the people were not only the fundamental component of development but also "the real wealth of the nation". His style of leadership was based on his unique philosophy of rule that blends tradition and modernity in a harmonious way, endowing the UAE with cultural resilience and openness to progress.

Zayed's unionist philosophy knew no boundaries as he dedicated his efforts and means not only to establishing the UAE federation, but also to contributing significantly in the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council. He also played an important role in the search for greater unity within the Arab and Islamic worlds and had been, for more than thirty years, a powerful advocator of the need for reconciliation and solidarity among the Arab and Muslim nations.

In the relatively short span of time since its establishment, the UAE has witnessed a dramatic transformation, and its people have led a lifestyle that was formerly just a dream. Through his great generosity, he contributed effectively to the country's maturity and prosperity.

As a result of such great statesmanship, the UAE today is unified, stable and booming. The United Arab Emirates owes much to him and the effective leadership that steered the federation through challenging times to become a secure and prosperous nation occupying a prominent place among world nations.

## **Recommendations**

United Arab Emirates owes much to Sheikh Zayed and the effective leadership that steered the federation through hard times and challenges to become a secure and prosperous nation occupying a prominent place among world nations. However, while UAE's stable status and remarkable progress are a cause for optimism for the future, there are challenges that might jeopardize such status if not dealt with robustly.

Thus, despite the benefits brought by the welfare system, many evolutionary trends are gradually making it difficult to sustain such a system in the long run without significant rethink of its cost to the federal budget. Hence, oil price fluctuations in the international markets and rapid population growth have generated stress on such welfare expenses and exerted more pressure on the government to seek sources of revenue other than oil income. Moreover, increasing numbers of educated, middle-class and politically aware citizens are no longer happy with the "father-child model", and demand greater say in the increasing difficult choices their countries must make. This model itself suffers from deficiencies in terms of equal distribution of wealth among all the emirates of the federation. Indeed, there are still disparities between them in terms of development plans and economic infrastructures that leave the poorer emirates with no means to provide employment to a significant portion of their populations. Furthermore, insofar as oil is an unstable asset in terms of its value, Emirati society is required to evolve from a rentier society to one of production and thus avoid a state of extreme dependence on the government as the sole source of income and guarantor of the social welfare system.

The changes that the region is witnessing and the commitments towards international bodies, such as the WTO, are leaving the UAE no other choice but undergo a political, economic and educational restructuring to generate a 'political culture' and

to transfer the society from a traditional rentier economy to an industrial economy that relies on good governance, efficiency and knowledge, that considers tax to be a source of state income. Less oil money simply means that the government will have to tax wealth income, which ultimately raises the issue of representative government. The dominant role played by the welfare state in distributing wealth either directly or indirectly to all social segments needs to be reconsidered on many levels, because it has made society increasingly dependent on the material largesse of the state. Consequently the citizen found himself without practical education to shoulder the responsibilities and duties that citizenship required which means that a different kind of political and social education is necessary to change the habit of relying on the state's charity and generosity without being able to assume his real citizenship.

Another issue to be considered is the need to encourage privatization of public sector companies, not only because this would make them more efficient, but also because this would give the people more say in economic matters that have so far been controlled mostly by the state as a motor of economic development and major employer. The private sector could play a key role in relieving the state from burdens related to employment, productivity and diversification of the economic base.

On the political level, there is a general consensus among all major political actors in the UAE regarding the need for gradual political reform and continued development of a market economy. It is clear that the population wants more responsible government and greater participatory avenues. The introduction of a gradual election process in the UAE Federal National Council (FNC) reflected the awareness of the leadership vis-a-vis the imperatives of change that are gradually shaping the political outlook of the whole region. However, more openings are needed in this respect as the 2006 elections were limited in scope and impact; the FNC

continues to exercise a merely consultative role with no authoritative say on larger national issues. Therefore, there is a growing need to give the council more power and credibility in discussing the people's concerns and examining government policies and performance; this would not be possible unless the council's members are elected through universal suffrage involving the entire UAE national population.

One other main problematic feature of the federation is the absence of any guiding strategy that would grant each emirate an economic leverage in terms of its resources and potentials. Hence instead of a sector division among the sheikhdoms there is an overlapping, a redundancy of similar projects being implemented everywhere in the federation, which creates competition between the emirates and reduces the overall benefits generated at the emirate level. Ultimately, this failed to reduce the wealth gap between the rich emirates (i.e. Abu Dhabi and Dubai) and the poorer northern emirates. Ras Al-Khaimah could be encouraged to orient its economic strategy towards developing its infrastructure as a tourist hub that features the beauty and the variety of its natural attractions and its peculiarity as a balneotherapy destination on account of its hot springs; while Fujairah could be geared to become a major export outlet of the federation due to its strategic access to the Indian Ocean.

Finally, because Sheikh Zayed was instrumental in the creation of the federation and its continuing success, and because his political thought was unique in terms of its influences and its effectiveness, there is a strong need today to implement this great leader's model of political thought and style of leadership in schools and universities in special governance programs. The present and future generations of UAE leaders and citizens need more than just documentary material and publications to understand Sheikh Zayed's philosophy of rule. They need to examine it in

specialized academic courses that highlight its distinctiveness within Arab and international political thought.

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