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Magazine Emirates

for Human Rights
Emirates magazine for Human Rights



H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

President of the United Arab Emirates



Our confidence in People of Determination is as high as their ambitions. From them, we draw inspiration in willpower and perseverance to achieve greater national accomplishments



**A UAE Legislative Framework to
Protect the Right to Privacy**



UN Special Rapporteur Reem Alsalem

The time has come for
international accountability to
curb violence against women in
armed conflicts

**Expatriate Workers: "We do not feel like strangers, and we are
deeply grateful to this generous land... Thank you, UAE."**



Councillor Jaber Al-Marri

Arab human rights
legislations are outdated and
require continuous
development and updating



**Carla Khijoyan,
World Council of Churches:
The UAE... A Culture of
Dialogue Leading to Human
Fraternity**

«Human Rights in the Digital Era»

In September of last year, the Summit of the Future in New York adopted the Global Digital Compact, establishing a comprehensive international framework for the future of the digital age. The Global Digital Compact aims to enhance international cooperation to bridge digital divides in data and innovation across various societies. This initiative underscores the need to develop a shared vision for future international digital collaboration, ensuring that diverse communities—particularly developing ones—achieve meaningful progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The United Nations' commitment to adopting a compact that defines the trajectory and characteristics of the digital age stems from the growing integration of modern technology into daily life. Technology has facilitated access to information, enhanced communication, and empowered individuals with unprecedented freedom of expression. However, this digital era also presents significant challenges related to the protection and promotion of human rights, necessitating a thoughtful and balanced response from all relevant stakeholders.

Opportunities and Challenges

Digital technology has provided a unique opportunity to enhance awareness of human rights, as digital platforms serve as effective tools for disseminating human rights information, exposing violations worldwide, and advocating for humanitarian causes. Moreover, they empower individuals across the globe to express their views and claim their rights freely and transparently.

Nevertheless, this digital transformation has not been without challenges. Some of the most pressing issues include:

Privacy Violations: Personal data has become a valuable asset in the digital age. However, its misuse by certain entities constitutes a serious infringement on human rights. The risks to privacy have also escalated with advancements in artificial intelligence, which enables the analysis of personal data in ways that may be exploited unethically.

Misinformation: Social media platforms, due to their rapid dissemination capabilities, have contributed to the spread of false information, leading to public misperceptions and undermining societal stability. These platforms have increasingly become tools for the unchecked spread of inaccurate content without proper verification.

Cyberbullying: The internet has become a breeding ground for online harassment and personal attacks, adversely affecting the mental well-being of individuals, particularly young people and adolescents.

The Spread of Harmful Behavioral Norms and Cultural Patterns: Certain digital content promotes values and behaviors that may be inconsistent with the traditions and norms of various societies. In some cases, such content violates laws, threatens public security, or undermines the very fabric of communities, challenging the natural human values upon which societies are built.

Emirati efforts in the protection of digital human rights: The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has taken a leading role in addressing these challenges through pioneering initiatives aimed at safeguarding digital human rights. Key efforts include:

Strengthening Digital Legislation: The UAE has enacted laws to protect personal data and combat cybercrime, ensuring individuals'

security in the digital realm.

Community Awareness Initiatives: Nationwide campaigns have been launched to promote safe technology use and foster a culture of digital responsibility across all segments of society.

Digital Innovation: The UAE has embraced artificial intelligence (AI) and blockchain technologies to enhance transparency and protect individuals' rights across various sectors.

Towards a Sustainable Digital Future

Building a digital environment that upholds human rights requires collaborative efforts among governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. This cooperation should focus on:

Developing Comprehensive Policies: Establishing frameworks that safeguard human rights in the digital space and ensure the safe and ethical use of technology.

Education and Awareness: Enhancing individuals' digital literacy and equipping them with the skills needed to interact safely and effectively with technology.

Promoting Responsible Innovation: Ensuring that emerging technologies are developed and implemented in alignment with human values and ethical principles.

Ensuring Equitable Access to Information: Upholding the right to access reliable and accurate information, enabling individuals to actively participate in the development and progress of their communities.

A Call for Interaction

At the Emirates Magazine for Human Rights, we recognize the importance of discussing these and other human rights issues within a comprehensive framework that balances opportunities and challenges.

Therefore, we invite all experts and stakeholders to contribute their insights and experiences to broaden the dialogue on human rights in the digital age.

Together, we can build a sustainable digital future that upholds human rights and promotes the values of justice and equality.



Dr. Fatima Khalifa Al Kaabi

President of the Union Association
for Human Rights

Editor-in-Chief

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Magazine Supplement



Human Rights Quotes



The late **Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan**
(Founder of the United Arab Emirates):

"The human being is the most precious thing we possess, and we must provide everything that ensures a dignified life for them."



His Highness Sheikh **Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**
(UAE President):

Our confidence in People of Determination is as high as their ambitions. From them, we draw inspiration in willpower and perseverance to achieve greater national accomplishments.



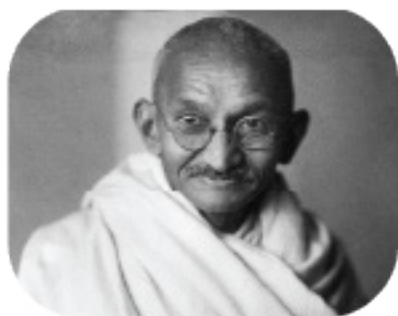
His Highness Sheikh **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**
(Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai):

It is our conviction that human rights constitute an essential element in the construction of progressive nations and communities, and should form the core of developmental action.



His Eminence Prof. Dr. **Ahmed El-Tayyeb**, Grand Imam of Al-Azhar
(head of Muslim Council of Elders):

Islam has defined the boundaries of human relationships in a manner that ensures mutual respect and upholds the sanctity of others' rights, thereby affirming the humanitarian dimension of this noble religion.



Mahatma Gandhi
(Spiritual Indian Leader):

People tend to forget their duties but remember their rights.

Eleanor Roosevelt

United States delegate to the United Nations and former Chair of the Human Rights Commission (now the Human Rights Council):

We stand today on the threshold of a great event in the life of the United Nations and in the life of humanity. This declaration may well become the paramount international charter for all people everywhere.



Nelson Mandela

(President of South Africa 1994 - 1999):

We can only be free when we liberate others, and human rights are what guarantee us this freedom.



Kofi Annan

(Former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate):

Human rights are the foundation of peace and development. They are values that uphold dignity and reduce poverty and conflict.



Mother Teresa

(Nun and Catholic, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate):

"If you want to change the world, start by loving people. Give them their rights and uphold their human dignity."



Ban Ki-moon

(Former Secretary-General of the United Nations):

"Human rights are not limited to ensuring the dignity of individuals; they are the foundation for building a tolerant and just society."



Represented in legislation ,decisions and governmental actions during2024

UAE and human rights ,a continuous journey of leadership and achievements

Since its establishment in ,1971 the UAE has succeeded in consolidating its leadership in the field of human rights through an integrated system that places the human being at the core of its policies ;committed to providing an environment that guarantees every individual his basic rights ,regardless of his religion ,creed ,sect ,sect ,race ,colour ,ethnic origin, gender or sex ,and thanks to advanced laws and legislation and pioneering humanitarian initiatives ,the UAE has become a role model in achieving sustainable development that balances economic and social progress and respect for human rights in various fields.

The State's efforts include the promotion and protection of economic ,social and cultural rights ,as well as civil,

political ,solidarity and digital rights ,with special attention to priority groups such as women ,children ,workers ,people with disabilities and the elderly.

The UAE is committed to applying the highest human rights standards in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and relevant international conventions ,while continuing to develop its policies to promote a more inclusive and just environment.

United Arab Emirates Legislation

In 2024, more than 2,500 government officials from federal and regional authorities, as well as private sector representatives, participated in 215 specialised national teams, resulting in the issuance and updating of more than 47 federal laws and more than 130 regulatory decisions.

This legislative system has been supported by a unified digital platform for all federal legislation, called 'UAE Legislation', which includes more than 1,000 federal laws and regulatory decisions in Arabic and English and attracts more than 500,000 visits per month, more than 40% of which come from outside the UAE.

The platform has also been linked to local government legislative platforms, providing an integrated and seamless experience for stakeholders inside and outside the UAE who seek to familiarise themselves with the country's legislative system.

The World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index 2024 reflects the UAE's leadership in protecting justice through an integrated and constantly updated legislative system that aims to establish a climate of justice and equality



among all members of society. The UAE ranked first in the Arab world and in the region, and 39th globally, reflecting its significant progress in the field of the rule of law.

The UAE ranked first regionally in several key areas of the index, including: (The absence of corruption, the prevalence of order and security, the effective application of regulations, the availability of civil justice, and the efficiency of the criminal justice system.)

Family and Community Empowerment Ministries

In December 2024, the UAE created the Ministry of Family, which assumes a number of competencies and tasks, most notably proposing, preparing and implementing policies, strategies and legislation related to building stable and cohesive families, enhancing the role of the family in sound education, reducing the risks of family disintegration and its negative effects on individuals, families and society, and implementing initiatives and programmes to protect the family and its members from violence.

The mandate of the Ministry of Family includes proposing, preparing and implementing policies, strategies and legislation related to the care, protection and welfare of children, securing their social, psychological, educational, health and educational rights, in coordination with the concerned authorities, and developing and implementing programmes, initiatives and services related to the care, protection and welfare of children to ensure their normal development and proper upbringing, especially during the early childhood stage.

The UAE has renamed the Ministry of Community Development as the Ministry of Community Empowerment. The new ministry's mandate is to develop an integrated social empowerment system that promotes community participation and provides sustainable solutions to support individuals and families.

The Ministry is responsible for managing social empowerment and

support programmes, ensuring the protection of low-income families and enhancing their financial stability and independence.

The ministry also works to empower and regulate the third sector by supporting public benefit institutions and civil societies and activating their role in promoting development. This modernisation aims to build a more cohesive and sustainable society that empowers individuals to actively participate in the development process and contributes to enhancing social and economic stability in the country.

Support and social empowerment

The UAE has witnessed continuous developments in promoting human rights. It has been keen to provide integrated care for people of high determination and low-income families to ensure a decent life for them, in addition to providing social protection for the most vulnerable groups, promoting a culture of shared responsibility by enabling

**Rule of Law Index 2024
: UAE ranks first in the
region and 39th globally .**

**By 2024, more than 47
federal laws and over 130
regulatory decisions will be
issued and updated .**

**Modernising the country's
legislative system in
multiple areas, including
family protection and
social support .**

**Promoting the rights
of people of high
determination, low-
income families and the
unemployed to ensure a
decent life and well-being
for all.**



beneficiaries to integrate into the labour market and contribute effectively to society, and providing support and relief in situations of crises and disasters. In this context, on 30 December 2024, the UAE issued Federal Decree-Law No. 23 of 2024 on Social Support and Empowerment, which aims to enhance the economic and social stability of the country's citizens through an integrated social support programme that includes:

- Providing support to low-income Emirati families to meet their living needs; enabling them to secure a decent life for their members.
- Providing social protection for the most vulnerable groups in society.
- Empowering beneficiaries economically to ensure that they achieve financial independence.
- Promote a culture of shared responsibility by helping beneficiaries to engage in the labour market and contribute to an effective and productive role in society.
- Providing support and relief in the event of crises and disasters.

Article 13 of the law stipulates that the Ministry of Community Empowerment shall open a bank account within the country in the name of the beneficiary of social support, which will be deposited monthly into this account, which contributes to achieving financial stability for beneficiary families; Article 22 stipulates that the Ministry shall coordinate with relevant federal and local government agencies to prepare an integrated programme to empower every beneficiary who has the health capacity and educational qualifications or skills that enable them to work, and the legal text reflects a comprehensive vision that aims to achieve financial independence for beneficiaries and enhance their role in society by linking social support to rehabilitation and employment programmes.

This approach reduces reliance on government assistance and motivates beneficiaries to develop their skills and engage in the labour market effectively. It also promotes the principle of social justice by allocating support to the most vulnerable groups, while ensuring regular follow-up of beneficiaries' compliance with empowerment programmes, which limits the misuse of public resources. In addition, coordination between the Ministry and government and local authorities contributes to creating sustainable job opportunities and provides a supportive environment that helps beneficiaries achieve long-term economic stability.



In order to ensure the continuity of support for the categories covered by the law, Article 25 stipulates: "The Council of Ministers, based on the Minister's proposal, may decide to grant a temporary allowance called the 'inflation allowance for citizen families' in order to alleviate the financial burdens resulting from the rise in prices and enable them to meet their living requirements, provided that the decision specifies the value of the allowance and the rules and conditions for its entitlement."

The legal text is an important step in protecting citizen families from economic fluctuations and the rising cost of living; it gives the Council of Ministers the power to issue flexible decisions that adapt to changing economic conditions; this approach reflects an effective government response to support eligible groups and minimise sudden financial burdens, thus contributing to enhancing the economic and social stability of citizens. Defining the controls and conditions of eligibility for the allowance ensures that the subsidy is distributed fairly and effectively, so that it reaches the most vulnerable families, without harming the public budget or the sustainability of the state's financial resources.

In Article (26), support for the unemployed is stipulated, based on a proposal from the competent minister, the regulations for the decision to disburse social support to those who are unemployed from the private sector due to reasons beyond their control and other cases eligible for this support, provided that the decision includes a determination of the value of the support and the conditions for its eligibility. This legal text is an important social protection mechanism that ensures the provision of financial support to individuals who have lost their jobs for reasons beyond their control, which helps them meet their basic needs during the unemployment period and mitigate the economic and social effects resulting from the loss of income.

Article 27 stipulates that a decision by the Council of Ministers, based on the minister's proposal, shall specify the rules for the disbursement of social support to address crises and disasters. The decision shall specify the value of the support and the rules and conditions for its entitlement. This legal provision reflects the state's commitment to respond effectively to crises and disasters by providing rapid and flexible social support to affected groups, which contributes to protecting livelihood stability and minimising financial burdens on those affected.

In conclusion:

Through its modern legislation and integrated social policies, the UAE is firmly committed to empowering society and promoting family stability as the cornerstone of building a cohesive and sustainable society. The launch of the Ministry of Family and the modernisation of the Ministry of Community Empowerment reflect a strategic vision aimed at strengthening family cohesion, ensuring a decent life for all groups, supporting low-income families, and empowering individuals economically and socially.

The social support system and empowerment programmes embody an integrated approach that is not limited to providing assistance, but seeks to achieve financial independence and promote active participation in the labour market. Thanks to these efforts, the UAE continues to consolidate a supportive environment for every member of society, ensuring fair opportunities and social protection, which promotes sustainable development and social stability for current and future generations.

Ahmad Al-Falasi” The Hope Maker «Emirati Chivalry:»A Culture and National Identity Beyond Borders

Philanthropy and human solidarity are fundamental values within Emirati society. Emirati citizens recognize the vital role these values play in strengthening social bonds and cultivating a culture that resonates deeply with both current and future generations. This commitment is reflected in the words of the UAE President, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who has articulated the United Arab Emirates' ongoing dedication to humanitarian aid and relief efforts.

Since its inception, the United Arab Emirates has been a leader in humanitarian aid and global development. The nation has consistently championed inclusive progress, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries, and prioritizing service to humanity as a central tenet of its work. This dedication aligns with the vision of His Highness the President of the UAE, which is exemplified by the principle of "Human Fraternity".

The United Arab Emirates was a pioneer in supporting and achieving sustainable development goals many years before they became a focus of global attention.

This approach was clearly demonstrated when the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan established the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development as the first UAE aid donor institution in 1971, marking the beginning of numerous humanitarian initiatives aimed at supporting sustainable development goals.

Ahmad Al-Falasi, recognized as the "Arab Hope Maker", is one of the pioneers in humanitarian work with over 18 years of experience. In this interview with "Emirates Magazine for Human Rights" magazine, he shares his inspiring journey of philanthropy.



Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan was the first to support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) long before their official global adoption.

The UAE is a nation and society dedicated to humanitarian aid and the well-being of people everywhere, regardless of race, religion, gender, or color.

Could you tell us about the beginnings? How did your volunteering journey begin?

When discussing the beginnings of formalized volunteer work, it is important to acknowledge the period before its establishment. Like many others in the UAE, I grew up with a deep appreciation for volunteering and helping others, values instilled in me by my late father. He taught me the importance of compassion and assisting those in need. I embraced these values, which are deeply rooted in Emirati society, by participating in numerous charitable and humanitarian initiatives. Furthermore, I have endeavored to pass on this culture of giving and volunteering to my family, who have embraced it wholeheartedly and joined me in this fulfilling endeavor.

As for the institutional phase, it began approximately twenty years ago through the Ahmad Al-Falasi Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives. I was profoundly influenced by a personal experience with my mother, who suffered greatly from kidney failure. Throughout her long journey with the illness, I lived through her pain alongside her, searching for treatments that could help overcome this disease and provide comfort for her and others like her. During this research journey, I was shocked by the reality faced by millions of people worldwide who are forced to wait for extended periods to receive dialysis

treatment, particularly in African countries where kidney failure patients endure severely poor conditions and suffering.

This early experience inspired me to pursue volunteer and charitable work, focusing on providing medical, health, and relief services to patients and those in need. With the support and involvement of my family, this effort grew into a leading institution in the Arab world, becoming one of the largest family-based volunteer organizations specializing in relief, humanitarian, medical, and livelihood services.



A Milestone ..Winning the " Arab Hope Maker "title

In 2020, you won the title of 'Arab Hope Maker' in the third season. What did that moment of winning this award mean to you?

Undoubtedly, receiving recognition from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai is a source of immense pride and honor for both myself and my family. The "Hope Makers" initiative stands as one of the largest and most significant Arab initiatives launched by Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, which aims to honor pioneers of philanthropy who have established their humanitarian and voluntary initiatives, projects, and institutions to assist others and provide humanitarian and relief support to those in need. The initiative works towards alleviating the burden on the underprivileged and improving their living conditions, while also establishing a culture of hope and dedicating values of sacrifice and philanthropy.

I was the first Emirati to win the title of "Arab Hope Maker" in the third season, selected from among 92,000 hope makers who were nominated for this title. During the final qualification phase, I received the highest number of votes during the closing ceremony, which was attended by more than 12,000 participants and watched live by millions of viewers across various Arab countries.

In truth, beyond the feelings of joy from winning, there is another, more important aspect to this scene. Winning the title of Arab Hope Maker has placed upon me a great responsibility towards my nation, the UAE, its wise leadership, and towards the people of the Emirates as well. It has strengthened my commitment to continue working with more mature and advanced initiatives at the international level, and to ensure our work embodies the slogan that people chose as the title for my humanitarian experience. The Arab Hope Maker should always be a source of hope for changing the present and improving the future for millions of people who need support and assistance.



Mr. Ahmad Al-Nazar Al-Falasi

the Chairman of the Ahmad Al-Falasi Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives, officially registered under Ministerial Resolution No. 113 of 2020, with its headquarters in the Emirate of Dubai.

He was awarded the title of "Arab Hope Maker" in the third edition of the initiative in 2020 and was honored by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.



Kidney failure was the driving force behind my journey into humanitarian work.

We are planning well-drilling projects in Africa, the establishment of orphan shelters, and supporting small hospitals with advanced medical equipment.

Global humanitarian projects, from the UAE to the world

We understand the magnitude of responsibility that came with winning the 'Arab Hope Maker' title. Tell us about your experience and the projects and initiatives carried out by the Ahmad Al-Falasi Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives?

Initially, I undertook individual initiatives to contribute to humanitarian, charitable, and relief work, as part of the UAE community's cultural fabric. These efforts coincided with an earthquake in a region of China, where I established a shelter for children. The first group of children admitted to the shelter numbered approximately forty children. This was followed by opening a school to educate the sheltered children and establishing a fund to support impoverished families. The initiative encompassed providing comprehensive care and educational services, in addition to health and preventive services for them.

Subsequently, I expanded operations to numerous areas with diverse activities and initiatives, including Palestine, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, and Lebanon, as well as Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and Nigeria, where the Ahmad Al-Falasi Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives intensified its humanitarian and relief initiatives.

We launched our humanitarian initiatives in the African continent from Kenya, by establishing a dialysis center at Mombasa City Hospital in Kenya, to replace the single dilapidated center there. In addition to securing all necessary medical needs and equipment for the hospital, it has now become one of the best and most advanced centers in Kenya. The dialysis unit that we built and equipped with advanced medical equipment now serves 8,000 patients. We were also keen to enhance the development of health and treatment services for patients and those in need through contributing to the establishment of neonatal units comprising 30 advanced devices for newborn care, which include vital signs monitors, ventilators, and intravenous injection devices. The initiative continued to develop by introducing 570 beds and incubators for infants, providing services to more than 17,000 children.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we were committed to providing comprehensive services to patients and those affected by providing ventilators to hospitals and specialized centers in Lebanon and Kenya, along with sterilization and testing equipment, and livelihood support during isolation and quarantine periods in various African countries.

Perhaps one of the Foundation's most prominent health initiatives was the opening of the Sheikh Zayed Dialysis Clinic in Zanzibar regions in 2022, which specialized in providing health and medical care for kidney failure patients. The clinic was equipped with the best medical devices, in addition to providing environmentally friendly vehicles for patient transportation, and was supplied with a water desalination and purification station.

We also participated in rescue operations following the devastating



earthquake that struck Syria and Turkey in 2023, and were keen to contribute positively to improving the lives and living conditions in those humanitarian communities. This was achieved through the Foundation's initiative focused on well drilling to facilitate people's lives, alleviate their suffering, and enhance their prevention and health measures, as well as providing food baskets and student bags.

Future ambitions ..Towards a sustainable humanitarian action

Could you please enlighten us on your personal vision for the future development of the Ahmad Al-Falasi Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives humanitarian, charitable, and upcoming projects?

There is no doubt that civil society organizations face significant challenges on an international level. However, as Emiratis, we have drawn inspiration from our wise leadership in confronting challenges and demonstrating an unwavering determination to achieve the impossible. This drives me to expand the projects of the Ahmad Al-Falasi Foundation for Humanitarian Initiatives. In the near future, I aspire to elevate the foundation's efforts from national and regional initiatives to a global scale, contributing to the dissemination of the UAE's humanitarian model worldwide. This vision aligns with the values and principles that define the Emirati identity, which were deeply rooted by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan and continue to be reinforced by his honorable successors.

At the forefront of the foundation's priorities in the coming period is the acquisition of a fully equipped drilling truck to facilitate the construction of water wells in Africa. Additionally, we are committed to rebuilding and rehabilitating four orphan shelters, renovating and equipping several schools in Kenya, and enhancing small hospitals to better serve remote areas. Currently, we are also developing plans to establish two fully equipped medical centers in Uganda, along with the creation of three maternity clinics and a dedicated unit for child health and safety.

A message to youth.. How to become a Hope Maker?

What is the message that Ahmad Al Falasi wishes to convey to the youth and to those who aspire to be hope makers?

My constant message is: "The greatest humanitarian work is the one that creates a lasting impact." There is no better cause than striving to improve human quality of life and upholding human rights through a sustainable development approach aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

To my sons and daughters, my brothers and sisters from the UAE, my message is: "Be as our founding father taught us—do good, give selflessly, and always stand by those in need." The Emirati spirit of generosity has always transcended borders, defining our identity and culture. We are a generation raised on the values instilled by our founding fathers, led by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, may he rest in peace. He established within us the highest ideals of giving, compassion, and unwavering support for those in need. Long before sustainable development became a global goal, he laid the foundations for charitable institutions dedicated to achieving it.

The UAE :A Culture of Dialogue Leading to Human Fraternity

Dialogue plays a crucial role in fostering understanding and peaceful coexistence between diverse religions and cultures. Grounded in mutual respect and a genuine effort to understand differing perspectives, dialogue facilitates the development of balanced relationships built on tolerance and coexistence. This approach seeks to mitigate conflicts and issues stemming from misunderstandings and cultural or religious differences.



Carla Khijoyan
World Council of Churches

Key components of a culture of dialogue include:

Active listening: Engaging with others' viewpoints in a fair and unbiased manner, creating space for open communication.

Mutual respect: Honoring cultural, religious, and intellectual diversity, and addressing disagreements through peaceful means.

Flexibility and tolerance: Demonstrating the ability to understand and navigate differences constructively, while upholding mutual respect.

Focus on common ground: Prioritizing shared values and areas of agreement over points of divergence.

The Document on Human Fraternity

The Document on Human Fraternity came as a historic declaration - signed by His Eminence the Grand Imam Dr. Ahmed El-Tayyeb, Sheikh of Al-Azhar, and His Holiness Pope Francis, Pope of the Catholic Church, on February 4, 2019 in Abu Dhabi - as a result of the efforts and leadership of the United Arab Emirates in tolerance and peaceful coexistence. The document stands as a landmark in the history of interfaith relations, highlighting internationally the unique Emirati experience that aims to promote dialogue, understanding, and peace among different religions and cultures, ultimately leading to the prevalence of a climate of peace, love, and fraternity.

I can therefore affirm that the Document on Human Fraternity reflects the culture of dialogue in a practical manner, as the document serves as a global framework aimed at promoting dialogue between religions and cultures according to the following:

Interfaith Dialogue: The document emphasizes the importance of dialogue between religions and cultures as a means to achieve peaceful coexistence among people, which aligns perfectly with the essence of the culture of dialogue that encourages communication and understanding.

Respect for Freedom of Belief: The document stipulates respect for human rights, including the right to religious freedom; this corresponds with the culture of dialogue that calls for complete respect for intellectual and religious differences.

Rejection of Violence: The document calls for the rejection of violence and extremism, which is consistent with the culture of dialogue that encourages conflict resolution through peaceful means, away from tensions and conflicts.

Joint Cooperation: The document calls for enhancing cooperation between

religions in humanitarian and social fields, which aligns with the philosophy of the culture of dialogue that seeks to unite efforts for the common good.

Consequently, I find it necessary to point out the importance of making human fraternity the foundation of our human relationships, not merely a slogan but a reality we live and practice, so that it becomes a beacon for international communities in their endeavors toward peaceful coexistence. The United Nations' adoption of an International Day of Human Fraternity confirms the importance of the document and supports its objectives that bolster international efforts to combat discrimination and religious intolerance, by translating its contents into national strategies for each country through educational curricula to ensure building generations that believe in dialogue and openness to others, and the adoption by media outlets of discourse that promotes understanding and combats hate speech.

Challenges facing the human fraternity endeavors

Doctrinal differences and their diverse interpretations continue to contribute to instances of intolerance and expressions of hatred in certain societies. This has fostered the spread of Islamophobia and sectarian intolerance within religious communities, creating conditions conducive to the growth of hatred and fanaticism.

Consequently, increased international efforts are warranted. Recognizing that understanding and peace are fundamental to sustainable development, I propose the establishment of a United Nations-affiliated Advisory Committee for Human Fraternity. This committee would be tasked with evaluating progress towards the goals outlined in the Document on Human Fraternity, and with initiating international programs and initiatives that reinforce its principles and objectives.

Carla Khijoyan, Executive Director of the Peacebuilding Program in the Middle East and Coordinator of Justice, Peace, and Interreligious Dialogue Programs at the World Council of Churches, has dedicated over fourteen years to various programs, projects, and initiatives focused on community peace and human dialogue. She has managed the Peace Through Interreligious Diplomacy project and led multilateral projects aimed at embedding peace values and principles within educational systems, fostering dialogue, and promoting community and human development.

Ms. Khijoyan, a specialist in sustainable peace science and conflict and crisis resolution, possesses extensive expertise in peacebuilding, national reconciliation, post-conflict interventions, programs addressing the aftermath of community conflicts, achieving social justice, and promoting acceptance of others. She pursues these objectives through community development initiatives, the advancement of dialogue and human knowledge exchange, the strengthening of social cohesion and solidarity, mediation, interreligious dialogue and tolerance, and the management of cultural and human diversity within society.

Ms. Khijoyan is an international expert in the fields of racial discrimination, xenophobia, and acceptance of others. She is committed to promoting human rights values and principles, and to establishing full respect for and adherence to them, thereby achieving justice, equality, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination.

In conclusion..

The International Day of Human Fraternity serves as more than a symbolic celebration; it is an annual reminder of our shared responsibility to cultivate a world characterized by understanding and peace. Echoing the sentiment of Pope Francis, fraternity is not simply a concept, but a duty that we must uphold and protect universally. Similarly, as emphasized by His Eminence the Grand Imam Dr. Ahmed El-Tayyeb, Al-Azhar Sheikh, achieving global peace necessitates a societal recognition of dialogue and tolerance as the essential pathways to peaceful coexistence.

Through international reports and indicators

The world is still far from achieving 'sustainability'

The UN's 2024 report on the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (at the international level revealed that only 17% of the goals are currently on track, while 53% are making little progress, and more than 30% of the goals are stagnating or going backwards! The UN report confirmed that an additional 23 million people globally suffer from extreme poverty, in addition to more than 100 million people suffering from hunger; nearly 60% of countries suffer from rising food prices; the same percentage (60%) of low-income countries suffer from rising external debt; the number of civilian deaths due to armed conflicts has increased significantly in 2023 and global temperatures are on track to rise by 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Progress in quality education remains a global concern, with 58% of students worldwide achieving minimum proficiency in reading by the end of primary school, and data collected in 2022 in 120 countries indicate that 55% of countries lack laws prohibiting direct and indirect discrimination against women, leading to disappointing results in achieving the goal of reducing gender inequality.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has called on the world not to give up on the Sustainable Development Goals, saying: 'With only six years to go, we must not abandon our 2030 promise to end poverty, protect the planet and leave no one behind'.

- **International indicators confirm: The UAE is a pioneer in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, second in the Arab world and first in the Gulf.**

- **Sustainability is at the 'heart' of the UAE's economic, social and environmental strategies, reflecting the leadership's vision and commitment to the welfare of society and the protection of the environment.**

Pressing Priorities

The UN report identified the urgent priorities at the present time as follows:

- **Financing for development:** The gap in investments to achieve the sustainable development goals in developing countries now amounts to \$4 trillion annually, and these countries need more financial resources and fiscal space.

- **Peace and Security:** The number of forcibly displaced people reached an unprecedented level, reaching an estimated 120 million people by May 2024, and civilian casualties rose by 72% between 2022 and 2023 amid escalating violence, highlighting the urgent need for peace.

- **Implementation breakthrough:** Massive investments and effective partnerships are needed to achieve progress on the food, energy and social protection goals.

Immediately, the United Nations mechanisms worked to find practical solutions to the problem of financing development by announcing the organization of the Fourth Development Conference, which is scheduled to be held at the end of June 2025 in the Spanish city of Barcelona, in a desire to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, which the United Nations officials described as an important opportunity to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and support the reform of the international financial structure.



9 years spent trying to implement the Sustainable Development Goals

Although 9 years have passed since General Assembly Resolution A/70/L.1, which included the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); represented by 17 goals adopted by the member states of the United Nations in 2015 as part of the Declaration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the world has witnessed, over the past years, a great disparity in the process of transforming them into reality, although they primarily aim to ensure a decent life for all people, and protect the planet from environmental degradation; as represented by the following:

1. **No poverty:** End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. **Zero hunger:** End hunger, achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. **Good health and well-being:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. **Quality education:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. **Gender equality:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. **Clean water and sanitation:** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation services for all.
7. **Affordable and clean energy:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable and modern renewable energy for all.
8. **Decent work and economic growth:** Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and decent work for all.

- **The UAE Climate Action Agreement is a mobilization of the international efforts of 198 countries to put the world on the right climate action path.**



**- UN report confirms:
30% of goals are halted
or regressing, others are
slowing down, and only
17% are on the right track!**

9. **Industry, innovation and infrastructure:** Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
 10. **Reducing inequalities:** Reduce inequalities within and between countries.
 11. **Sustainable cities and communities:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
 12. **Responsible consumption and production:** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
 13. **Climate action:** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
 14. **Life below water:** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.
 15. **Life on land:** Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of natural resources and terrestrial ecosystems.
 16. **Peace, justice and strong institutions:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective and inclusive institutions at all levels.
 17. **Partnerships to achieve the Goals:** Strengthen the means to implement global partnerships to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- The importance of the Sustainable Development Goals came in achieving a number of goals, which are:
- **Achieving social justice:** The goals seek to promote justice and equality in the world by eliminating poverty and hunger and promoting education and health care.
 - **Protecting the environment:** The goals aim to preserve the planet and protect the natural resources on which people depend for their lives.
 - **Achieving sustainable economic development:** The goals work to promote economic growth that includes everyone and improves the standard of living without harmful impact on the environment.
 - **Encouraging international partnerships:** The goals are achieved through cooperation between countries and organizations to achieve sustainable development at the global level.

International Sustainability Indicators

The pace of progress towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals has varied significantly across countries. The 2024 Sustainability Index, which included 193 countries, revealed that the Nordic countries are at the forefront of the world in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Finland came in first place with 86.35%, followed by Sweden in second place with 85.70%, Denmark in third place with 85.00%, Germany in fourth place with 83.45%, and France in fifth place with 82.76%.

African countries came at the bottom of the index, including 26 countries that have not begun to achieve any sustainable development goals at all. This has created an international need to provide support to them by pumping investments with reasonable return rates, targeting various areas of sustainability, most importantly investing in good education in an effort to spread awareness of the importance of sustainability and work to achieve its goals during the remaining six years.

UAE in the lead

While the United Arab Emirates came at the forefront of the Arab countries that achieved the most sustainability, as it came in first place in the Gulf, and second in the Arab world after the Kingdom of Morocco, with a slight difference; as the Kingdom of Morocco ranked 69th with a rate of 70.85%, while the UAE came in 70th place with a rate of 70.52%, as for the Arab countries, most notably the Gulf countries, they occupied subsequent ranks in the index; as the Sultanate of Oman came in 100th place with a rate of 66.11%, the State of Qatar in 102nd place with a rate of 64.93%, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 103rd place with a rate of 64.91%, then the State of Kuwait in 111th place with a rate of 63.76%, and finally the Kingdom of Bahrain in 113th place with a rate of 63.56%.

The UAE has placed sustainability at the heart of its economic, social and environmental strategies, reflecting the vision of its wise leadership and





its firm commitment to achieving community well-being and protecting the environment. The UAE Centennial 2071 was launched with the aim of continuously investing in the country's youth and providing them with skills and knowledge that respond to rapid changes, and working to make the UAE the best country in the world by the centenary of the founding of the United Arab Emirates in 2071. In this context, the UAE is committed to foreseeing the future, developing education for the future, and achieving a diversified knowledge economy based on a balance between economic growth and environmental conservation.

Energy Strategy 2050

The UAE Energy Strategy 2050 is one of the most prominent steps launched by the country to achieve sustainability in the energy sector. The strategy aims to:

- - Increase the proportion of clean energy to 50% of the total energy generated in the UAE by 2050.
- - Reduce energy consumption by 40%, which contributes to reducing harmful emissions to the environment.
- - Support innovation and renewable technologies such as solar energy and nuclear energy.
- Sustainability Initiatives
- The UAE is also an active country in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by supporting many initiatives, including the following:
- - Commitment to providing quality education for all, achieving gender equality, and contributing to poverty reduction.

- The 4th Development Conference in Spain looks for ways to unite globally 'so that no one is left behind'.



- - Participation in international development initiatives, such as humanitarian aid, and its investments in supporting sustainable development projects in many countries.

The UAE has also sought to mitigate the effects of climate change by keeping pace with the Paris Climate Agreement and pledging to reduce carbon emissions, or by investing in new and renewable energy, whether through a source of solar energy complex, which is one of the largest solar energy projects in the world, and achieving sustainability in natural resource management by developing policies aimed at preserving biodiversity and protecting land and water from degradation; such as water management through desalination projects and using smart irrigation technologies to increase water consumption efficiency, and preserving the environment by ensuring that ecosystems do not deteriorate by implementing integrated programs to preserve wildlife and expand nature reserves. In addition to this, the UAE has been interested in encouraging innovation and investment in sustainable technologies such as clean technologies, alternative energy, and sustainable transportation, in addition to investing in sustainable infrastructure projects such as sustainable public transportation projects, green buildings, and smart cities.

The UAE crystallized its efforts in the sustainability journey through the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), which the country hosted in 2023; where it witnessed the launch of the "UAE Agreement" for climate action, which represents a mobilization of international efforts from about 198 countries; to achieve a historic consensus that puts the world on the right path of climate action; and establishes new standards for global climate action by the parties to the agreement reaching a fair and equitable agreement that is in line with scientific findings and contributes to reducing the risks facing countries most vulnerable to the repercussions of climate change, achieving a balance between development requirements and climate action.

Conclusion:

the UN reports have reflected that there is a very important challenge facing the process of achieving the sustainable development goals at the present time, especially since the rate of progress in this regard does not match the international vision that aims to draw the features of a bright future for future generations, and humanity must unite to correct its situation on the path to sustainability. International indicators have also revealed the leadership of the United Arab Emirates, both regionally and internationally, in the process of sustainability, with the great and tangible progress it has achieved in various fields; from renewable energy to environmental protection and sustainable economic development; through its commitment to a clear strategic vision, implementing ambitious projects, and its interest in innovation, human welfare and care for human rights.

UAE... Delivering Uncompromising Biosphere Analyses & Ideas (2)



Dr. Paulo Casaca

Preceding the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in the United Arab Emirates, Dubai, in November/December 2023, I presented the 21st of March in Geneva, the paper 'Delivering Uncompromising Biosphere Analyses & Ideas' (DUBAI) that was itself an updating of several previous writings, namely the paper titled 'REINVENTING RIO – For an inclusive, sustainable development strategy' presented at the side conference to the 21st COP, called 'Reinventing Rio', promoted by the South Asia Democratic Forum.



Two years later, it is fair to acknowledge how the UAE has continued previous initiatives and nurtured new ones, always delving further into the human civilisation adventure of promoting a humane development that preserves our biosphere. Abu Dhabi annually hosts the 'World Future Energy Summit' gathering during three days of conferences and exhibitions, business people, academics, and environmentalists worldwide. Its numerous universities and research centres, getting together local and foreign scientists and researchers, present an ever more diversified and complex set of projects encompassing fundamental and applied research, linking all elements of the biosphere and our social and political tests.



Near Abu Dhabi airport and numerous top research centres, Masdar City is one of the world's most significant urban development, demonstration, and dissemination hubs for friendly biosphere practices. Created under the sponsorship of the Abu Dhabi authorities in 2006, it shows an impressive array of achievements. It is one of the most promising live laboratories for the future of Cosmopolis.

Reaching out across the Emirates, visitors will continue to find countless initiatives and institutions orbiting from different angles these challenges, sometimes as offsprings of institutions from other countries, as is the case of the Dubai Energy and Sustainability Center or the American University of Sharjah, but mainly as a result of public or private initiatives as is the case of the Fujairah Research Center or the 'Healthy and Sustainable Built Environment Research Center' (HSBERC) at the Ajman University. These UAE achievements are, first and foremost, the success of the country's ingrained bottom-up approach and its imbrication with the global human sphere. And this is why one should pursue them.

Dubai in "Belém"

For its thirtieth edition, the COP annual gathering returns to Brazil, this time to the capital city of Pará, within the Amazonian biosphere region. Today, this region is quite different from the UAE Arabian ecosystem.

We must remember, though, that looking back five or six thousand years—quite a small period within our biosphere history—we probably had similar environments in both areas. The lowland Amazon Basin was 'dominated by savannahs and/or semi-deciduous dry forests', and the Arab peninsula, like the Sahara, had much greener coverage than today.



The UAE has continued to implement its previous initiatives and launched new initiatives that continue to embark on the journey of human civilizational development to enhance sustainable development that preserves our vital environment.

In the last centuries, humanity has profoundly altered the previous natural cycles of key elements of our planet by throwing fossil carbon elements out of their relative calm in the underground into the core of biosphere activity. The process was repeated in different circumstances and shapes with mineral nitrogen, phosphorus, or potassium; it created new challenges through the exploitation and refining of radioactive minerals and is still going on even when we are thinking of renewable energies that indirectly require lithium or cobalt, to name two elements whose present exploitation is devastating our biosphere.

That being said, we should not forget the challenges posed by older human activities, such as deforestation—an acute problem still today in the Amazonian region—or salinisation, an issue impacting tremendously semi-arid areas to which I have dedicated much attention in the past, for instance, in 'Dubai.'

Our collective attention has been far too focused on the 'difficult exercise of making predictions, in particular when they concern the future' equating tonnes of carbons with degrees of temperature as if our ecosystems could be summarised in such simplistic terms when ecosystem precautionary principles based in reasonable assumptions would be far more advisable and productive. Otherwise, the best alternative is a decision-making process with a complex set of objectives—eventually translated into a point system in an initial phase, as I suggested in Dubai.

No centralised human construction can provide a simple key to assure victory or prevent doom. Our best bet is human multifaced ingenuity, able to spot parallels and strive on singularities, from Dubai to Belém.

Adapting to a new geopolitical environment

We are approaching the new COP annual gathering in a troubled geopolitical environment marked by a profound crisis in the institutional framework we experienced in the last Jubilee, creating important dilemmas for all of us.

This should not paralyse us but rather lead us to consider new opportunities and environments. Belém is a new opportunity for all of the UAE's potential and diversity to be used to answer our biosphere equilibria, inviting other political realities to follow its example and inviting external actors to invest in its reality.

Finally, it can be said that the challenges and risks imposed by climate change on the world are serious and extremely dangerous, and there are those who believe that they are the greatest and most dangerous challenge to humanity. These are challenges and risks that cannot be faced by one party or a specific country. They are challenges that require all of us, countries, individuals, institutions, companies, and international bodies, to work together, in concert, partnership, and integration, and to put our collective interests before our personal interests, and to put the countries and communities most in need at the forefront of attention and care, and for our work to be characterized by complete responsibility. Only in this way can we face these challenges, and any failure or negligence may sweep us all away, and put us in front of challenges that will swallow us whether we like it or not. I am not pessimistic here, but rather optimistic that our voice will be heard and our work will be perfected.

Dr. Paulo Casaca

Paulo Casaca is founder and Executive Director of SADF, South Asia Democratic Forum. He is also the founder of the international co-operation association ARCHumankind, "Alliance to Renew Co-operation among Humankind", of the "Euro Reform Initiative" and of the consultancy company on sustainable development, Lessmeansmore, Land and Energy Sustainable Systems. He was a fellow of the German Marshall Fund of the US in the first semester of 2010. Mr Casaca was a Member of the European Parliament from 1999 to 2009 where he chaired the delegation for relations with NATO Parliamentary Assembly. He is the author of several books and reports on economics and international politics.



From 10 to 12 June "UN conference seeks responsible' artificial intelligence 'that respects the rights of people with disabilities"

The eighteenth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) COSP18 (will take place in the US state of New York from 10 to 12 June.2025

Representatives from 192 countries that have ratified and acceded to the CRPD" United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) CRPD "(will participate in the conference to discuss promoting international awareness of the rights and contributions of persons with disabilities to social development ,a few months before the Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha ,Qatar) ,WSSD2 (from 4 to 6 November.2025



The next edition of the conference will continue to discuss the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities to decent work and sustainable livelihoods ,as well as how artificial intelligence can be used as a tool to support and promote the rights of persons with disabilities ,ensuring that they are able to contribute to sustainable development by.2030

The international interest in' Participation of persons with disabilities in sustainable development 'came after reports revealed that progress in international awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities remains slow and uneven ,they still face high levels of discrimination ,especially in access to employment ,especially women with disabilities and those with mental disabilities ,or the poor ,a reality they suffer from both in developing and



developed countries alike ;as a result of limited employment opportunities, many of them work in precarious jobs without social protection and in conditions that are not at all decent.

International reports have pointed to a number of challenges facing people with disabilities in the future ,most notably:

- **Unemployment and decent work:** While the International Labour Organization (ILO) reports for 2022 revealed that unemployment rates among persons with disabilities globally have risen to 7.6% compared to only 6% for other people, statistics from 91 countries and territories indicated that young people with disabilities suffer from discriminatory practices both during the recruitment process and in the workplace afterwards!.
- **Responsible Artificial Intelligence:** Despite the global trend of expanding the use of 'artificial intelligence', the effects of its use on the rights of persons with disabilities have not been effectively studied, in order to create responsible and disability-sensitive artificial intelligence.
- **Discrimination in the labour market:** Despite the efforts made by some governments to open the labour market to persons with disabilities, there are significant challenges in providing inclusive employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in some fields due to discrimination or lack of appropriate qualifications.
- **Invest in supportive technology:** Advocate for significantly increased investments in supportive technologies that enable persons with disabilities to access education, earn a living, and participate fully in their communities.

While the use of artificial intelligence(AI)is expanding internationally, the effects of its use on the rights of persons with disabilities have not been effectively studied.

International awareness of the rights of people with disabilities is still slow and unequal, as they suffer from discrimination, especially in obtaining suitable employment opportunities.

The UAE is 7 years ahead of the world in ensuring decent work and sustainable livelihoods for people of determination.

The General Assembly

During the 17th session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention, the United Nations General Assembly sent a message to the conference participants - through the President of the Assembly - stressing that there are more than 1.3 billion people worldwide with disabilities, 'who are among the most vulnerable groups, suffering disproportionate levels of poverty, marginalisation and discrimination.' With 192 states having acceded to the CRPD, its near universal ratification reflects growing global solidarity and commitment to the rights of persons with disabilities.

UAE's efforts to support people with disabilities in all fields

The UAE and its wise leaders have paid attention to the rights of persons with disabilities, whether at the level of national legislation represented in Federal Law No. (29) of 2006 on the rights of persons with disabilities, and its amendments in 2009, in addition to the issuance of the National Policy for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in the UAE in 2017, which included 6 main axes: health and rehabilitation, education, social protection and family empowerment, vocational rehabilitation and employment, accessibility, public life, culture and sports.

Through Cabinet Resolution No. (43) of 2018 on supporting the employment of persons with disabilities (Persons of High Determination), the UAE has taken action to:

-Enable them to access opportunities in the labour market in a manner that



ensures the exercise of their rights to work on an equal basis with others;

-Clarify the obligations of the concerned authorities to realise the rights of persons with disabilities) persons of determination (as stipulated in the legislation in force in the UAE;

-Provide the necessary support for them to seek equal employment opportunities in various sectors, and for those who are already employed and wish to establish their own business.

Article 3 of the law stipulates the obligation of the concerned authorities, each in accordance with its powers and as appropriate, to protect the rights of persons with disabilities) Persons of High Determination, (the most prominent of which are:

-Ensure the right to work on an equal basis with others;

-Ensure their access to equal employment opportunities in a manner that achieves their enjoyment of the highest level of justice and fairness;

-Providing them with safe and healthy working conditions by ensuring that they are not subjected to any harassment or exploitation and establishing appropriate mechanisms for their qualification and training;

-Do not terminate their services or refer them to retirement due to disability or its occurrence after appointment;

-Encourage the private sector to integrate them into its organisations and grant them special exemptions and privileges;

-Establish special projects for their training and employment, especially for those who find it difficult to join the labour market due to their disability, and work to integrate them into these projects.

Conclusion

At a time when the world is searching for a means of decent work and sustainable livelihoods to overcome the low availability of suitable employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, the UAE was more than 7 years ahead of the world in ensuring this, as it placed the rights of persons with disabilities among its national priorities, through advanced legislation, specialised institutions, and government initiatives, and its efforts to improve the daily lives of this group and enable them to participate effectively in society are still ongoing.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) conference to be held in Abu Dhabi' The world 'is looking for ways to protect the planet from the UAE

Reaffirming the UAE's leading role in nature conservation and climate action, the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, will host the IUCN World Conservation Congress - Abu Dhabi 2025, organised by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi and the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment from 9 to 15 October 2025, to lead the global dialogue on biodiversity, climate action and sustainability issues and develop the global conservation agenda to help protect the planet in the face of climate change.



The conference is one of the most prominent environmental events in the world. It is held every four years and attracts around 15,000 participants from more than 160 countries, including heads of government, environmental experts, and international organisations. This session is particularly important as it takes place ahead of the deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Biodiversity Targets by 2030.

Conference Objectives and Key Themes

The conference aims to discuss issues of nature conservation, including environmental protection, biodiversity, and combating climate change; it also seeks to identify practical strategies to address environmental challenges and develop sustainable solutions that can be applied at the global level. The agenda will be centred around five main themes:

- **Protecting biodiversity:** Examine improving international efforts to protect species and biodiversity, recognising that international action must be flexible and well-governed to meet the ever-changing challenges that climate action is currently facing.
- **Climate change and its impact on nature:** By shedding light on the ongoing effects of climate change on the environment and how to deal with the challenges associated with rising temperatures, emphasising the reduction of emissions harmful to the environment, and encouraging the application of modern technologies to mitigate the effects of these changes.
- **Sustainability of natural resources:** Discuss strategies for sustainably managing natural resources such as water, renewable energy, and forests to achieve some degree of climate justice.
- **Technology and Innovation in Environmental Conservation:** By demonstrating the use of technology and innovation in solving environmental issues, with a range of modern tools and techniques that contribute to environmental protection.
- **International cooperation in the field of nature conservation:** Demonstrating cooperation among countries and international organisations in addressing environmental crises and participating in global efforts to protect the planet.



Events associated with the conference

A number of events are scheduled to take place on the sidelines of the conference:

- An exhibition of environmental innovations and technologies:

The exhibition will be held in three halls at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) for five days from Thursday 9 October to Monday 13 October 2025 to showcase the latest environmental technologies and sustainability solutions, such as renewable energy, smart technologies, and sustainable agriculture projects.

- **Workshops and interactive sessions:** To discuss the progress of environmental technologies, such as green technology and how to apply sustainable environmental planning strategies.

The UAE's role in protecting the environment

The Nature Conservation 2025 conference in Abu Dhabi is part of the UAE's ongoing efforts to promote sustainability and preserve the environment. Hosting this conference is part of the UAE's ongoing efforts on climate change, including its hosting of COP28 and the launch of the UAE Climate Agreement. The hosting of the Nature Conservation Conference is an affirmation of its leadership in climate action and its commitment to sustainability and biodiversity protection, which is in line with the country's national strategies such as "We Are the UAE" 2031 vision and the Emirates Climate Change Strategy 2050, as the UAE is one of the leading countries in the field of environmental protection with its unprecedented efforts in the field of renewable energy, solar energy projects and initiatives to preserve wildlife.

Emirati leadership at the International Union for Conservation of Nature

Her Excellency Razan Al Mubarak, Managing Director of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi and the Mohamed bin Zayed Fund for Species Conservation, has been President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) since September 2021, the first President from West Asia and the second woman to lead the organisation in its 72-year history. Its membership includes representatives of government sectors and civil society organisations from around the world, with nearly 1,400 members from environmental organisations and more than 18,000 global experts; the UAE has full membership through the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, the Mohammed bin Zayed Wildlife Conservation Fund, Emirates Environment Group, Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve, and the International Houdara Conservation Fund (IHCF).

5 main themes of the conference aimed at achieving climate justice and discussing the effects of climate change on the world's nature.

15,000 participants from more than 160 countries around the world to discuss biodiversity and the effects of climate change on nature.

Conclusion

The IUCN 2025 conference in Abu Dhabi is a global opportunity to promote joint action in protecting the environment, achieving sustainability, and addressing environmental challenges, reinforcing the UAE's position as a leading force on climate issues in the international arena.

UN Rapporteur Reem ALSALEM: It's time for international accountability to reduce violence against women in armed conflict.

Since 2021 she has been exerting UN efforts to reduce violence against women and girls, especially in armed conflicts in which women were used as a weapon between warring parties, which prompted her in her interview with Emirates Magazine for Human Rights to call for international accountability for violations of women and girls' rights, along with the need to develop a global plan dedicated to eliminating violence against women and girls, noting that such a measure would also be a global plan to eliminate violence against women and girls. She noted that this action would also be in line with the UN Secretary-General's call for an emergency plan to combat violence against women.



The UN Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, Ms Reem Alsalem, stressed that despite the progress made in women's political and economic participation, these gains are threatened by a serious setback that has manifested itself in recent years. This is clearly reflected in the total disregard for the safety, dignity and humanity of women in armed conflicts, and the disregard of warring parties for humanitarian and international law that protects civilians, including women, in armed conflicts.

She also noted that during her visits to many countries, she has observed the devastating impact of reducing programmes and services for the most vulnerable groups in society, including women from ethnic and minority groups, as part of the austerity measures adopted by many countries.

It was a deep and revealing interview about the current human rights violations faced by women and girls at the international level in light of the spread of armed conflicts, making it an integrated journey between the ideas, visions and proposals of the UN Rapporteur as follows:



In 2021, you were appointed by the UN Human Rights Council as the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls. Can you explain the nature of this mandate and its importance in strengthening the international protection of women and girls?

In March 1994, the United Nations Human Rights Council (formerly the Commission on Human Rights) decided in its resolution 1994/45/ to appoint a Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences. The mandate was extended by the then Commission on Human Rights in 2003, at its 59th session in resolution 2003/45/. The same resolution included a number of tasks to be carried out by the Special Rapporteur as follows: Seek and receive information on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences from Governments, treaty bodies, specialized agencies, other special rapporteurs responsible for various human rights questions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, and to respond effectively to such information; Recommend measures, ways and means at the local, national, regional and

international levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women and its causes, and to remedy its consequences;

Work closely with all special procedures and other human rights mechanisms of the Human Rights Council and with the treaty bodies, taking into account the request of the Council that they regularly and systematically integrate the human rights of women and a gender perspective into their work, and cooperate closely with the Commission on the Status of Women in the discharge of its functions; Continue to adopt a comprehensive and universal approach to the elimination of violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, including causes of violence against women relating to the civil, cultural, economic, political and social spheres, as well as transmit urgent appeals and communications to States regarding alleged cases of violence against women and girls.

Achievements and challenges

How do you assess the international reality regarding violence against women in general, and what the Arab countries are experiencing in particular, and can real progress be detected in terms of strengthening the protection of women from violence in all its forms and manifestations?

Arab countries have witnessed progress in the process of protecting women from violence, most notably in achieving a degree of gender equality, including in education, as girls' enrolment rates in schools and universities have increased in many Arab countries, which contributed to reducing the educational gender gap, in addition to promoting women's health; as reproductive health and health care indicators for women have improved. In terms of political participation, it has also seen some improvement with some Arab countries supporting the representation of women in political positions, such as the appointment of women as members of parliament or government, and some legislation and policies that aim to protect women from violence have been adopted.

However, there are ongoing challenges that hinder this progress, which can be summarised as follows:

Violence against refugees: Arab countries are located in the Middle East region, which is one of the hotspot



Reem ALSALEM

Ms. Reem Alsalem is the United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, and its causes, since August 2021.

She is an independent consultant on gender issues, the rights of refugees and migrants, transitional justice and humanitarian response. She has consulted extensively for United Nations departments, agencies and programmes such as UN-Women, OHCHR, UNICEF and IOM, as well as for non-governmental organizations, think tanks and academia.

Previously, she worked as an international civil servant, serving with the UNHCR in thirteen countries. During her service, she has planned, implemented, and monitored programs that served to protect persons that were survivors of gender-based violence, particularly women and girls.

She has been a visiting professional with the Prosecutor's Office of the ICC from January to March 2009.

She has also been a visiting researcher with the Feinstein International Center of Tufts University in December 2008.

She has collaborated with the Investigation Unit of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, the Netherlands, between January and March 2009.

She holds a Master's degree in International Relations from the American University in Cairo, Egypt (2001) and a Master's degree in Human Rights Law from the University of Oxford, UK (2003).

Suggestions to further activate the role of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

Despite achievements, significant challenges remain, including incomplete implementation of laws and policies in some countries, negative reactions to women's rights in some political and cultural contexts, and a lack of funding for gender equality initiatives.

Last year, in collaboration with other international and regional mechanisms on preventing violence against women and girls, I made suggestions to further activate the role of the Commission on the Status of Women in a letter to the Chair of the 69th session of the CSW, including:

The need to establish a dedicated working group aimed at revitalising the CSW and enhancing its impact in addressing violence against women and girls.

Establishing a three to five year timeframe to monitor and complement the progress of the CSW, particularly in the context of the Beijing+30 Review.

The importance of engaging civil society and survivor-led organisations in the Commission's processes.

In addition, the letter called for the adoption of more rigorous reviews of States' commitments to gender equality and combating violence against women and girls, drawing on the experiences of other mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review. It was also recommended to include violence against women and girls as a standing item on the CSW's agenda and to strengthen cooperation with expert mechanisms such as the special mechanisms of the Human Rights Council.



areas in the world. This has made the Arab countries a transit and destination area for refugees. And as we know that the vast majority of refugees are women and children, the efforts of Arab countries to prevent violence against women and girls cannot fail to integrate in their national policies and general legal frameworks the elimination of violence against women and girls among refugees, which is something that can be done at the Arab level; especially since Arab countries have long experience in receiving refugees and providing protection and basic services according to their specific needs.

Economic participation: In some Arab countries, women's participation in the labour force remains low, with 23.7% compared to 84.2% for men. In terms of wage gaps, women face large gaps in wages compared to men, as women earn only 12.5% of men's income, which is the lowest rate globally. Women are also underrepresented in leadership positions, as they hold only 11% of managerial leadership positions compared to a global average of 27.1%.

Gender-based violence: Violence against women, including domestic violence, remains a major challenge affecting the health and well-being of some women in Arab countries, and restrictive family laws continue to limit women's rights, providing little freedom to make decisions about marriage, divorce and inheritance.

Therefore, despite the progress made, the region faces persistent challenges that require concerted efforts from governments and civil society to achieve full gender equality.

The Beijing Declaration as a guide to protect women from violence

This year, the Beijing Declaration was celebrated as a guide to protect women and girls from violence, as part of the "Orange Campaign" to raise awareness on the elimination of violence against women and girls. How have the Beijing Declaration and these awareness-raising campaigns contributed to reducing violence against women?

Over the past 30 years, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) has been a cornerstone in promoting women's rights globally. It set an

ambitious agenda for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in various fields, with a focus on eliminating violence and discrimination against women and girls.

The Beijing Platform for Action contributed to raising global awareness of women's issues and bringing about fundamental reforms in policies and laws. It provided a clear framework for governments and organisations to work towards eliminating discrimination against women in areas such as education, health, political participation, and economic empowerment.

It also inspired the establishment of national gender equality institutions, such as women's commissions and specialised ministries, to promote gender-sensitive policies.

On the other hand, the Beijing Platform for Action increased women's representation in leadership and decision-making; quota policies were encouraged to promote women's participation in government and the private sector.

The Beijing Declaration also highlighted violence against women as a human rights issue and a public priority, leading to the adoption of international and regional legal frameworks, such as the Istanbul Convention. It also encouraged the establishment of dedicated services to support survivors, such as shelters, helplines, and legal aid, and promoted awareness campaigns that challenge harmful cultural norms, such as underage marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Patriarchy and societal traditions

You talk about the issue of the negative impact of the patriarchal system in society and its role in limiting women's ability to live without being exposed to violence, especially since there are societal traditions and ideas that reinforce such violence. How can these issues be projected onto the reality experienced by women and girls in many countries around the world?

The Committee on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, considers gender-based violence as the ideology of men's entitlement and privilege over women, social norms related to masculinity, and the imposition of masculine control or power. These factors contribute to the explicit or implicit social acceptance of gender-based violence against women, leading to widespread impunity. There is a need to modify and change such ideas, which will not happen overnight. Article 5 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women requires States to take measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men with a view to eliminating all societal practices which are based on the idea of the superiority or inferiority of either of the sexes.

Let me say very clearly that States cannot invoke religious or cultural reasons to delay the elimination of discrimination against women or to end violence against women under any circumstances.

Multiple barriers

These barriers include harmful social stereotypes, pervasive sexism in sport, lack of role models, unequal distribution of care responsibilities, and limited access to training facilities, infrastructure and resources. Girls are particularly vulnerable to neglect in certain sports such as gymnastics, and women and girls who face discrimination based on intersecting factors, such as religion, ethnicity and disability, may also face complex barriers and challenges in sport. The report also describes the most common perpetrators of violence and their enablers, which include coaches, professionals, family members, managers, fans and policymakers, so it can be argued that states are complicit when they fail to prevent, prosecute or punish acts of violence against women and girls.

I welcomed the positive actions taken by many governments, sports bodies and civil society organisations to improve the participation of women and girls in sport, especially as communities have been able to use sport to bring about social change to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Time for accountability

For example, the international community failed for 15 months to achieve a ceasefire in Gaza, which was primarily a war on women and children, as well as to stop sexual violence against women in Sudan, terrorism against women in Haiti, or the marginalisation of women in public life in Afghanistan. It can be said that it is time for accountability for violations of the rights of women and girls during armed conflicts, especially since most victims are women, girls and children. What will it take for Member States, including those that place gender equality at the centre of their foreign and domestic policies, to demonstrate that women's lives actually matter.

The international community must recognise that protecting the lives of women and girls is of paramount importance, especially during wars.



A pivotal and serious issue

In sport, women and girls experience a lot of violence and violations of their rights. Opportunities for equality, protection and support for what can be described as “victims of sports violence” are diminishing. You submitted a report that discusses and addresses the legal framework in this regard. How did the report contribute to highlighting the issue of sports violence against women and promoting opportunities for equality and justice?

The UN rapporteur's mandate includes advocating for equality and integrated means of protection for women and girls in sport. Last year, I presented a report on violence against women and girls in sport during the 79th session of the General Assembly, in which I emphasised that violence against women and girls in sport is a serious and systemic human rights issue that requires immediate attention at all levels.

It is certainly true that women and girls in sport face multiple forms of violence.

Throughout this report, I have pointed out the structural causes of violence against women and girls in sport, including male-dominated cultures, inadequate representation of women in leadership positions, and unequal investment in women's sports. These challenges are exacerbated by intersecting forms of discrimination, including gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion and disability.

The report also outlines the systemic barriers that prevent women and girls from participating in sport on an equal footing with men and boys.

Women's rights are an essential part of the international system

Women and girls face many forms of violence in the contemporary world, such as statelessness, domestic violence, economic and cultural violence. How can these challenges be addressed at the international level, and what mechanisms can you implement through your international mandate?

As I stated last year in several international forums, we must always remember that women's rights are an essential part of the human rights system - but I am sure I am not alone in feeling that we are at a critical crossroads with regard to this legal reality and the ambition we seek to realise.

While progress has been made in women's political and economic participation,

these gains are threatened by a serious setback that has manifested itself in recent years: the complete disregard for the safety, dignity and humanity of women in armed conflicts, and the disregard of warring parties for humanitarian and international law that protects civilians, including women.

Technological exploitation of women

This also applies to the alarming proliferation of technological platforms that are used to facilitate exploitation, violence and sexual assault against women and children, especially marginalised groups, as we have failed to keep pace with their continuous development and harmful use.

The international community must adopt a global plan dedicated to eliminating violence against women and girls, a measure that would also be in line with the UN Secretary-General's call for an emergency plan to combat violence against women.

Through my visits to many countries around the world, I have seen the devastating impact of reducing programmes and services for the most vulnerable groups in society, including women from ethnic and minority groups, as part of the austerity measures adopted by many countries. I have also observed how funding for frontline women's and women's rights organisations is sacrificed, which is short-sighted and detrimental to the groups concerned.

We stress the importance of committing to provide the necessary funding for women, especially the most marginalised, to ensure they are empowered and lifted out of poverty. In addition, we must ensure that women's rights organisations are involved in decisions related to public finance and tax policies.

Finally, governments must improve gender-related outcomes by reforming tax systems, removing existing biases, and designing tax policies that promote gender equality.

Violence against women 'weaponised' in armed conflicts

As an independent UN expert, how would you characterise the double standards based on the reality of women and girls in many countries around the world that are exposed to wars and armed conflicts?

With the prevalence of brutal conflicts in many countries around the world, I am deeply concerned that women and girls continue to be subjected to violence and bear the brunt of armed conflicts around the world. Women and girls are often the main targets of warring parties, repressive groups and regimes, subjected to repeated violence and untold tragedies during wars.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence, including forced prostitution, forced pregnancy and sexual slavery, have been documented as a weapon of war. Sexual violence is deliberately used to subjugate and destroy the opponent and terrorise the population. These atrocities may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. There is a need to work towards including sexual and gender-based crimes in a future treaty on crimes against humanity, to ensure that States are held accountable and commit to preventing and punishing gender-based violence in times of peace and conflict, and to ensure that appropriate provisions in line with international human rights standards are included in domestic laws.

Safe haven

Women should be able to seek asylum and find safe haven, especially when fleeing rape and other forms of violence such as dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, arbitrary forced displacement, trafficking, slavery, child marriage and forced labour, among others, as well as enjoy other basic rights afforded to displaced persons, including the rights to education, freedom of movement and access to information, as well as sexual and reproductive health rights.

It must be ensured that women survivors of violence in conflict have equal access to national measures to assist and protect victims of violence, rather than being marginalised in parallel procedures and services.

The international community must not only pressure warring parties to respect human rights, humanitarian and refugee laws, but must also facilitate and fund life-saving humanitarian relief.

Protecting Workers' Rights :An Emirati Priority

Embodied in legislation and laws ensuring their well-being

The United Arab Emirates ranks among the world's top destinations for migrant workers, driven by its policies of tolerance, diversity, coexistence, and human rights protection. The country's efforts go beyond attracting talent; it prioritizes workers' welfare and rights, reinforcing its position as one of the most competitive labour markets globally.



98.8% of private sector workers are covered under the "Labour Protection Programme."

A comprehensive social protection strategy ensures safeguards against unemployment.

In this context, the UAE has introduced a comprehensive framework of legislation and policies aimed at safeguarding workers, ensuring job stability, and providing a secure and balanced work environment that upholds the rights of both employees and employers. These efforts extend beyond national borders through collaborations with international organizations and labour-sending countries, ensuring the highest standards of worker protection.

Commitment to Worker Protection Locally and Globally

In recognition of the importance of protecting the workforce, the United Arab Emirates has ratified nine core International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, covering workers' rights, occupational safety, and wages. Additionally, the country has modernized its labour laws through Federal Decree-Law No. (33) of 2021, which clearly defines employment relationships, rights, and obligations, including regulations on hiring, wages, housing, and health provisions.

The decree-law and its executive regulations set the maximum regular working hours at eight hours per day or 48 hours per week. Workers may not exceed five consecutive hours of work without a break, with rest periods totaling at least one hour.

Furthermore, the decree-law guarantees at least one paid weekly rest day, as specified in employment contracts or workplace regulations. It also grants



entitlements to annual leave, bereavement leave, parental leave, and other forms of leave as determined by the UAE Cabinet.

Protection of Domestic Workers' Rights

Federal Decree-Law No. (9) of 2022 on Domestic Workers establishes a comprehensive framework for safeguarding the rights of domestic workers in the United Arab Emirates. The law outlines key protections, including: Prohibition of recruitment or employment of domestic workers under 18 years of age.

Ban on discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, national or social origin, or disability.

Prohibition of forced labor, any form of human trafficking, and verbal or physical harassment of workers.

The decree-law further mandates adequate accommodation and sustenance for domestic workers, ensuring that wages are paid in full and through official payment channels designated by the Ministry.

Moreover, employers are required to cover medical treatment costs in accordance with the national healthcare system or provide health insurance as per applicable UAE regulations. The law also emphasizes respectful treatment, ensuring workers' dignity and physical well-being is upheld at all times.

A Globally Competitive Labour Environment

As a result of these developments, the United Arab Emirates ranked 7th globally in the 2024 World Competitiveness Yearbook, moving up three positions from the previous year.

The UAE also secured 2nd place globally in employment indicators and the absence of labor disputes, outperforming several major economies.

These achievements reflect the country's successful strategy in fostering a stable and competitive labor market. According to the Labour Market Observatory of the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE), the UAE's workforce growth rate has exceeded 10% annually, while green jobs account for 11% of total

100% health insurance coverage for all workers, with equal access to comprehensive healthcare packages.

10% annual workforce growth, with 11% of jobs classified as green employment.

The UAE ranks second globally in employment indicators and absence of labour disputes, according to the 2024 Global Competitiveness Index



employment, reinforcing the transition toward a sustainable labour market. Insurance Programmes Designed for the Protection of Workers and Ensuring their Rights

The United Arab Emirates is committed to protecting workers and fostering a stable, secure work environment that supports a sustainable labor market. This commitment is reflected in its comprehensive worker protection strategy, which includes a range of advanced insurance programs. These programs provide comprehensive social protection, covering areas such as wages, unemployment, health, and end-of-service benefits through an innovative savings scheme.

First: Unemployment Insurance: Ensuring Job Stability

In a pioneering initiative for the region, the United Arab Emirates introduced the Unemployment Insurance Scheme, a comprehensive programme that provides financial support to workers in both the public and private sectors in the event of job loss. This ensures temporary income security until they secure new employment.

Total Subscribers to Date: Over 6.7 million

Eligible Beneficiaries: All employees in the public and private sectors

Objective: Provide workers and their families with income stability during job transitions and strengthen the resilience of the labor market

Impact: Enhances the UAE's ability to attract top global talent and boosts labor market competitiveness, aligning with the country's vision for a knowledge-based and globally competitive economy

Second: Labour Protection Programme :Strengthening Workers' Financial Security

The Labour Protection Programme is one of the most advanced global systems designed to safeguard workers' rights, ensuring that private sector employees receive their wages on time in accordance with their employment contracts.

98.8% of private sector employees are covered under the programme.

24,000 workers have benefited from the programme over the past five years.

Total disbursements through the program exceed AED 202 million.

Key Services Provided:

Protection against wage delays or non-payment.

Ensuring timely disbursement of end-of-service benefits and entitlements.

A fast-track mechanism for resolving wage-related disputes.

Impact: The programme enhances workers' confidence in the UAE labour market, fostering a transparent and equitable work environment, which in turn boosts productivity and market stability.

Third: End-of-Service Savings Scheme: A Future Investment for Workers

In a groundbreaking initiative, the United Arab Emirates —through the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE) and the Securities and Commodities Authority—has introduced an optional savings scheme that transforms end-of-service gratuities into a sustainable investment tool. This allows workers to generate financial returns, helping them plan for their financial future.

Mechanism: End-of-service benefits are invested through trusted and regulated investment funds.

Eligible Beneficiaries: Private sector employees and companies enrolled in the scheme.



Key Benefits:

Long-term wealth accumulation for employees.

Enhanced financial security post-retirement or upon service termination.

Boosting the economy by attracting financial investments.

Impact: The scheme strengthens workers' financial sustainability and ensures a balanced transition from employment to future financial stability. It also provides employers with a competitive advantage in attracting top global talent.

Fourth: Comprehensive Health Insurance: 100% Workforce Medical Coverage
As part of its commitment to ensuring universal healthcare access for all workers without discrimination, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has expanded its health insurance coverage to include all employees, whether in private companies or domestic labour, in accordance with a Cabinet resolution.

Implementation Date: Mandatory enforcement begins on January 1, 2025.

Coverage Rate: 100% of the workforce in the UAE labor market.

Eligible Beneficiaries: All private sector employees across all Emirates.

Key Features of the Health Insurance Scheme:

Basic health insurance package at a competitive rate of AED 320 per year.

Policy Validity: Two years, with refund eligibility for the second year if residency is canceled.

Comprehensive Medical Coverage, including:

Treatment for chronic and pre-existing conditions with no waiting period.

Telemedicine services, including remote consultations via phone or online.

A wide healthcare network, comprising 7 hospitals, 47 clinics and medical centers, and 44 pharmacies.

Family Coverage Option: Employees can extend the same benefits to family members at competitive rates.

Impact: The programme ensures a safer and healthier work environment, reduces financial burdens on both workers and employers, and enhances productivity and overall well-being.

Conclusion:

The United Arab Emirates has aligned its commitment to workers' rights with its broader human rights agenda, continuously enhancing national laws and regulations to ensure fair labour conditions. The UAE also makes significant efforts to improve working conditions, create new and decent job opportunities, and foster a competitive labour market.

As a result, the UAE ranked first in the Arab world in the 2024 Global Labour Market Index, according to a report by Whiteshield, which highlighted the UAE's high labour market flexibility—attributed to pro-business tax policies and investment-friendly regulations. Moreover, the UAE ranked first regionally and 22nd globally in the 2023 Global Talent Competitiveness Index, published by INSEAD Business School. The country also secured top global rankings in several labour competitiveness indicators and recorded a 11.43% increase in workforce participation compared to 2022.

With continuous legislative advancements and innovation-driven labor policies, the UAE is shaping a more sustainable future, where human capital remains at the heart of progress and development.

"We don't feel like foreigners .We are grateful for this good land"

Migrant workers :Thanks to the UAE and to its wise leadership

A number of workers residing in the UAE expressed their appreciation to the UAE and its wise leadership through the "Emirates for Human Rights" magazine .They stressed that the State continues to take care of labour rights in a way that made them feel a sense of belonging to this good land .They also praised the unemployment protection system, the initiative to settle the status of irregular residents ,as well as the implementation of the "Tawjeeh "system through the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization ,which contributed to educating workers and making them fully aware of their rights.



New health insurance system

Michelle Jayne ,a Filipino national ,expressed her" gratitude and thanks to the UAE for the new health insurance system ,saying that she can now visit doctors and get any medical tests for very little money.
(Michelle Jayne)



Unemployment

"I would like to thank the UAE government for the unemployment insurance programme ,this insurance provided me with two months 'salary until I got a new job after my company terminated my services ,so I would like to thank again and reiterate my gratitude to the UAE government ",said Yassin Abdullah, from Bangladesh.
(Yassin Abdullah)



Residency incentives and privileges

"I would like to thank the UAE for its efforts in facilitating the issuance of residency permits ,where a resident can bring his family at the lowest cost even if his salary does not exceed 4,000 dirhams ,in addition to the huge amount of facilities and privileges available to residents ,which makes everyone not feel like outsiders in this good country ",said Abdullatif Abdul Hagag Khalafallah ,an Egyptian national.
(Abdullatif Abdul Hagag)

Good salary system

"I just want to thank the UAE and its wise leadership for implementing a very good salary system ;I don't find any trouble in getting my salary correctly every month ",said Januka Tamung ,from Nepal
(Januka Tamung)



Visa system

"Thank you for the new visa system rules .I have been given two months instead of one month to find a job anywhere in the country ,which is quite enough time for me .So ,I thank the UAE for this system that supports foreign workers ,it is a great help for everyone ",said Rahis ,an Indian national.
(Rahis)



Tawjeeh system

"The Tawjeeh system ,which is implemented by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization ,allowed me to know the number of annual leave days and the number of working hours .It is a system that provides me with all the information about the rights available to foreign workers in a very efficient and clear manner .Thank you ,UAE ",said Aynalem Meskelj.
(Aynalem Meskelj)



Safeguarding the rights of foreign workers

"Thank you to the UAE for looking after the rights of foreign workers ,especially regarding passport retention .Previously ,the passport was with the company, but now with the new law the passport is with me ,so I feel comfortable and everything is good ",said Mohammed Asif ,an Afghan national.
(Mohammed Asif)



Initiative to regularise the status of residency violators

"With the launch of the initiative to regularise the status of irregular residents in the UAE for the year ,2024 I am pleased to have contributed and been part of this humanitarian initiative .I have witnessed first-hand the tears of joy that many have shed over their vulnerability and helplessness .Life circumstances have forced many to stay in our country illegally .However ,the UAE is a home for humanity ,safety ,mercy and the only hope for this group ,and has provided benefits through this initiative for everyone .Therefore ,all thanks ,appreciation and gratitude to our government and our country for these kind initiatives that are attributed to the source of humanity ,our father Sheikh Zayed - may God have mercy on him - and raise our value and increase security and safety among us, citizens and residents in the UAE ",Hanifa Mohammed(Hanifa Mohammed)



By law, the right to education is compulsory for citizens and residents The UAE's education of the future has been in the making for years

The UAE has been keen to make the right to education available to all citizens and residents on its territory without discrimination, based on its commitment to establishing the principle of equality and ensuring equal opportunities in access to education, as part of its comprehensive vision for the protection and promotion of human rights.

In fact, the UAE is ahead of the world in developing the education process to keep pace with technological developments, digitisation and artificial intelligence. In November 2024, education system officials from 79 countries held an international conference in Brazil at the invitation of UNESCO to outline the future of education in the world, in light of the international quest to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The conference issued a number of recommendations through which it emphasised that education is one of the strong drivers of achieving the SDGs, and that equality and inclusion in education is indispensable to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, noting the importance of investing in the development of education systems worldwide and the continuous professional development of teachers and education policy makers, ensuring the importance of continuing the educational process in emergency situations, making schools safe, embracing cultural diversity, combating racism and xenophobia in education systems, eliminating barriers to gender equality in education, ensuring gender equality of opportunity and non-discrimination, as well as the importance of investing in science, technology, innovation and digital transformation in education through a human-centred and human rights-based approach to leveraging modern technologies and artificial intelligence in education. Although these recommendations were issued by the end of 2024, they are already in place in the UAE and are fully articulated in the National Education Strategy 2030.

National Strategy 2030

The National Education Strategy 2030 aims to equip students with the technical and practical skills to drive the economy in the public and private sectors, and graduate generations of specialists and professionals in vital sectors, to be a key pillar in building a knowledge-based economy and actively participate in entrepreneurship and the labour market.

This strategy aims to develop an educational system based on four main pillars: Quality: By supporting higher education institutions to compete globally by applying high-quality accreditation standards, providing incentives to institutions and qualifying distinguished faculty. Efficiency: through reaching higher education institutions with high productivity, high student completion rates and



integrated academic programmes supported by effective funding mechanisms. The pillars also include innovation, which is the development of a stimulating environment for scientific research that qualifies and attracts the best researchers, and provides competitive funding that focuses on achieving research results that impact a knowledge economy. The other pillar is harmonisation, which is preparing a generation of graduates qualified to compete in the labour market in the public and private sectors by building partnerships with the private sector at all stages of higher education and designing and offering programmes and training.

Right to education in the UAE (compulsory)

Article 17 of the UAE Constitution stipulates that "Education is a fundamental factor for the progress of the society. Education is mandatory in its primary stage and is free of charge at all stages in the UAE. The law lays down the necessary plans for disseminating and spreading everywhere all levels of education and for eradicating illiteracy".

National legislation in the UAE also stipulates that education is a right for all and is compulsory for citizens and residents alike, in accordance with the State's approach to supporting equality among all. Article 3 of Federal Law by Decree No. (39) of 2022 Concerning Compulsory Education - which became effective in the UAE as of January 2023 - stipulates in its first clause that "Education is a right for every citizen or those who are treated as citizens of the State in the education sector by virtue of a decision issued by the President of the State, and the state provides it free of charge in all its stages within

the State." This clause explicitly stipulates that education is a right for citizens and those treated as citizens, and is free of charge at all stages, based on the fact that it is an inherent human right.

The Federal Law by Decree did not neglect foreign residents. The second clause stipulates that "Education is a right for every resident of the State, and the resident child caregiver child must enrol him in primary education, in accordance with the controls approved in this regard by the Ministry after coordination with the Educational Authorities." This clause emphasises the right to education for resident children by stipulating that it is a "right of every resident" without discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion or nationality. Article 4 of said Law by Decree stipulated that "Education for citizens shall be compulsory from



the primary stage until the end of school education, and it shall be compulsory for non-citizens until the end of the primary stage." It is compulsory for non-citizens until the end of the primary stage. This confirms that education is compulsory for children up to the primary stage for citizens and residents, which is the age during which a child's awareness and perception of the world around him is formed.

Follow up duties of Caregiver

In Article 5 of said Law by Decree, the State's commitment to the right to education does not stop at mere enrolment in educational institutions, but requires the child caregiver to "Follow up on the academic achievement and behavioural performance of the child, and contribute positively to raising the level of learning outputs." Clause 4 of the Law by Decree stipulates, in the context of ensuring the right to education for all in the UAE, that "the child caregiver is obligated to enrol the disabled child in school education, in accordance with the assessment and diagnosis report of the child's condition issued by the concerned authority and follow up on the implementation of the educational plan and the academic performance of the child." This provision confirms the State's integrated care and concern for children with disabilities in order to achieve the highest levels of education and scientific achievement. Because the UAE is a country built on and dedicated to knowledge as a right for all, Article 7 of the Law stipulates that "if the child caregiver fails to enrol him in school education or does not abide by the period of compulsory education, the Ministry or the Educational Authority shall warn him in writing within five (5) working days as of the date of verifying the fact that the child is not enrolled in education or that the period is not abided by. If the caregiver does not commit to returning the child to compulsory education, clause 2 stipulates that "the Ministry or the Educational Authority, as the case

The state's comprehensive care and attention to children with disabilities providing them with comprehensive care that achieves the highest levels of education and academic achievement.



may be, must notify the Public Prosecution." This confirms that the State is determined to make education available and accessible to all without distinction, whether the child is a citizen or a resident, while notifying the Public Prosecution to investigate the matter.

Penalties

Article 8 of the Federal Law by Decree provides for penalties for those who neglect a child's right to education: "The child caregiver who, after being warned, fails to enrol the child in education in accordance with the provisions of Article (7) of this Law by Decree, shall be punished with imprisonment and/or a fine not less than 2,000 AED and not exceeding 50,000 AED." The same article also stipulates that the competent court shall obligate the child caregiver to enrol the child in education during the period specified thereby. If he fails to do so, the penalty and fine will be doubled by the competent court. This article indicates the extent to which the State and its wise leadership are committed to ensuring that all children enjoy the right to education, to the extent that penalties of imprisonment and fines are prescribed, up to a maximum of 50,000 AED, based on the fact that the right to education is one of the rights that cannot be overlooked.

Education Quality Indicators

Higher education in the UAE is just as good and integrated as compulsory education. The Arab Universities Ranking 2024 included two national universities topping the index, represented by the United Arab Emirates University and the University of Sharjah. Three other universities were among the top Arab universities: RAK Medical and Health Sciences University, Al Qasimia University in Sharjah, and Gulf Medical University. In terms of education quality indicators for 2024, according to the Davos Education Quality Index, the UAE ranks second in the Arab world and tenth globally. This confirms that people in the UAE enjoy the highest advanced level of enjoyment of the right to high-quality education at all stages and levels, to be able to positively influence the future.

Conclusion

The right to education in the UAE reflects the vision of its wise leadership, which believes that education is the cornerstone of society's progress and guarantee of a bright future for all. The UAE has succeeded in building an integrated educational system that guarantees high-quality education for every citizen and resident, with a commitment to equality and non-discrimination.

The UAE is not only applying international standards, but is ahead of the world through advanced strategies, such as the National Education Strategy 2030, which focuses on promoting digital transformation and innovation and qualifying future generations to be able to face the challenges of the future and participate actively in the global economy.

The UAE's commitment to the right to education is not just a legal text, but a tangible reality that reflects the country's global leadership in the quality of education and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By integrating technology into education, empowering vulnerable groups and imposing penalties for failure to provide education, the UAE is setting a global example in achieving justice and equality in education and ensuring a brighter future for generations to come.

A UAE legislative system to protect the right to privacy

The UAE attaches great importance to protecting the right to privacy as a fundamental pillar of human rights and a guarantee of personal freedom for citizens and residents on its territory. This attention reflects the UAE's firm commitment to promoting human values and creating a safe environment that guarantees privacy, while keeping pace with developments and challenges arising from rapid developments in the fields of technology and digital systems.



The right to privacy is a fundamental right that guarantees the protection of personal data and private information of individuals from any intrusion or unlawful exploitation. In this context, the UAE has enacted an integrated legal system that includes legislation and regulations aimed at ensuring the confidentiality and protection of information in various fields and sectors, reflecting its firm commitment to preserving privacy and enhancing trust in the digital environment.

The UAE's efforts in this area reflect its commitment to international standards of privacy protection, as it adopts the latest technologies and advanced legislation that strike a balance between maintaining information security and protecting individual rights. This approach is evidenced by pioneering laws, such as the Personal Data Protection Law and the Cybercrime Law, that aim to establish a secure digital environment that enhances the trust of individuals and keeps pace with the growing challenges of the digital age.



Personal Data Protection Law

Federal Decree by Law No. (45) of 2021 Concerning the Protection of Personal Data, which establishes a strong framework for the protection of personal data, stipulates in Article 2 the scope of application of the Decree by Law, which is important because it clarifies who is subject to personal data protection requirements in the UAE. The article is comprehensive and is not limited to individuals or companies within the UAE, but extends to overseas entities that process the data of individuals residing in the UAE, enhancing data protection even in cross-border transactions. In addition, the text is in line with international legislation, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in the European Union, by requiring controllers and processors outside the UAE to comply with the law when dealing with the data of individuals in the UAE.

The article also clarifies the difference between Data Subject, Data Controller and Data Processor, which is necessary to define responsibilities and ensure compliance.

Article 4 of this Decree by Law prohibits the processing of personal data without the consent of the data subject, except in cases of public interest, judicial proceedings, or preventive health care. This article sets a balanced framework between protecting the privacy of individuals and the practical and legal necessities that may necessitate the processing of data without the prior consent of the data subject.

Article 5 provides for the Personal Data Processing Controls, which are as follows:

Processing shall be carried out in a fair, transparent and lawful manner.

Personal Data shall be collected for a specific and clear purpose. It shall not be processed at any later time in a manner incompatible with such purpose. However, it may be processed if the purpose is similar or close to the purpose for which this data is collected.

Personal Data shall be sufficient and limited to what is necessary in

Personal data in the UAE is safeguarded securely, including protection from any violation or breach.

Deterrent penalties against those who disclose personal data up to AED 100,000.

Violation of privacy, whether by overhearing or transmitting conversations by any means, is a 'full-fledged crime' according to the Crimes and Penalties Law.



accordance with the purpose for which the processing is carried out. Personal Data shall be accurate and correct and shall be updated whenever necessary.

Article 5 defines the criteria for processing personal data in the UAE in a way that ensures fairness, transparency and security, while maintaining the accuracy and confidentiality of the data. This article enhances the confidence of individuals and organisations in how their data is handled, reflecting commitment to international standards.

Clause 6 of this Article stipulates that personal data shall be kept securely, including protecting it from any violation, penetration, or illegal or unauthorized processing. This clause is pivotal in protecting the privacy of individuals. It defines the criteria that make a data subject's consent to data processing valid and lawful and ensures that consent to data processing is informed, free and revocable. It is aligned with international standards such as the

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), enhancing transparency and control over personal data.

In clause 7, it is stipulated that personal data shall not be kept after the purpose of its processing has been exhausted. It may be kept if the identity of the Data Subject has been concealed using the "Anonymization Mechanism".

This clause is comprehensive and imposes strong obligations on data controllers to follow strict security standards, comply with the law and take responsibility for the protection of personal data, thereby strengthening the protection of the privacy of individuals and the security of their data.

This Decree by Law also focuses on protecting the rights of data subjects through several Articles, including Article 13 - Right to Receive Information. This Article guarantees data subjects the right to know how their data is used, with whom it is shared, and for how long it is kept, thus promoting transparency. Article 14 clarifies the right to request the transfer of personal data and grants the possibility of transferring the data to another controller, giving individuals more control over their data and enhancing its portability. Article 15 grants the right to correction or erasure of personal data and strengthens the right of individuals to amend or delete their data if there is no longer a need to process it. Article 16 defines the right to restrict processing and clarifies the cases in which the data subject can temporarily stop the processing of their data, a right to limit any unwanted use and ensure greater control over personal data.

Article 17 of the Decree by Law stipulates the right of the data subject to object to and stop the processing of his/her personal data if it is aimed at direct marketing or statistical surveys, which limits the unlawful or unwanted use of personal data. This Article strengthens individuals' control over their personal data, reflecting the UAE's commitment to protecting privacy in accordance with international standards.

Article 20 of the Decree by Law clearly provides for the security of personal



data information, which includes encryption of personal data and the application of pseudonymisation, and applying measures which ensure the continuous confidentiality, safety, accuracy and flexibility of data processing systems and services. The Article obliges controllers and processors to apply strict security standards that are commensurate with the potential risks and are in line with international practices, which enhances confidence in the security of digital data in the UAE.

The Decree by Law also regulates cross-border transfer of data. Article 22 provides for the transfer and sharing of personal data for processing purposes if a proper protection level is available and clarifies when data can be transferred to other countries with guarantees to protect privacy. Article 23 addresses cross-border transfer and sharing of personal data for processing purposes if a proper protection level is not available. It sets out the conditions under which data can be transferred even if there are no data protection laws in the receiving country.

Article 24 also allows individuals to file complaints. This is a human rights protection mechanism that gives the data subject the right to file a complaint if they feel that their data is being processed unlawfully. It also guarantees the existence of a supervisory body (the UAE Data Bureau) that will investigate and take appropriate action when violations occur. Article 25 also guarantees individuals and organisations the right of appeal and grievance if they are dissatisfied with the Bureau's decisions, which promotes transparency and justice.

It is notable that the Decree by Law pays great attention to governance and compliance oversight. Article 10 requires companies to appoint a competent officer to ensure compliance with the Decree by Law. Article 11 defines the responsibilities of this officer to ensure data protection and ongoing compliance with the Decree by Law. In addition, Article 21 requires companies to conduct a comprehensive assessment before using technologies that may affect the privacy of individuals, enhancing the protection of sensitive data and minimising potential risks.

Federal Decree-Law on Countering Rumours and Cybercrimes

Federal Decree-Law No. (34) of 2021 On Countering Rumours and Cybercrimes provides for penalties for violations of personal data and information. Article (6) of this Decree-Law stipulates the following:

Whoever acquires, possesses, modifies, destroys, reveals, leaks, cancels, deletes, copies, disseminates, or re-disseminates any personal electronic data or information using the information technology or any ITE without permission shall be punished with imprisonment for at least (6) six months and/or a fine of not less than (AED 20,000) twenty thousand dirhams or more than (AED 100,000) one hundred thousand dirhams.

If the data or information aforementioned in Clause (1) of this Article are related to examinations, diagnosis, medication, healthcare, medical records, bank accounts, or e-payment information and data, this shall be deemed an aggravating circumstance.

Whoever receives, keeps, or stores the data and information referred to in Clauses (1) and (2) of this Article, or accepts to handle or use them despite knowledge of the illegality of acquiring them shall be punished with imprisonment and/or a fine.

This Article is necessary to protect personal data and

sensitive information. It imposes severe penalties on anyone who unlawfully accesses, modifies, deletes, illegally discloses or otherwise misuses electronic data. It is in line with many international practices and standards such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and US data protection laws such as the CCPA, thereby enhancing digital security in the country.

Article 44 of the Federal Decree-Law on Countering Rumours and Cybercrimes provides for penalties for revealing secrets and invasion of privacy as follows: "Whoever uses an information network, an IS, or any ITE with the intention of invading the privacy or sanctity of private or familial life of someone without his consent in cases other than those authorized by law through committing any of the following actions shall be punished with imprisonment for at least (6) six months and/or a fine of not less than (AED 150,000) one hundred fifty thousand dirhams or more than (AED 500,000) five hundred thousand dirhams:

- Eavesdropping, intercepting, recording, transmitting, broadcasting, or revealing conversations, communications or audio or visual materials.
- Taking photos of third parties in any public or private place, or preparing, transferring, disclosing, copying or keeping electronic photos.
- Publishing news, electronic



photos, images, scenes, comments, data or information, even if it is true and genuine, with intention of harming the person.

- Taking, transmitting, or publishing photos of the injured, the dead, or the victims of accidents or disasters without permission or consent of the parties concerned.
- Tracking, monitoring, revealing, transmitting, disclosing, copying or keeping the geographic location data of third parties.
- Moreover, whoever uses an IS or ITE to modify or process any record, photo or scene with the intention of defaming or insulting another person shall be punished with imprisonment for at least one year and/or a fine of not less than (AED 250,000) two hundred fifty thousand dirhams or more than (AED 500,000) five hundred thousand dirhams."
- This Article is comprehensive and decisive in protecting the privacy of individuals and the sanctity of their personal lives by imposing strict penalties for any unlawful use of information technology means to invade privacy or publish personal information without consent.
- Crimes and Penalties Code

Federal Law by Decree No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law, specifically Article 431, emphasises the importance of protecting privacy and family life. Said Article stipulates that "a penalty of incarceration and a fine shall be imposed on anyone who violates the private or family life of individuals by committing any of the following acts:

Eavesdropping, recording or transmitting by any device of any kind whatsoever conversations made in a private place or by way of telephone or any other device.

Taking or transmitting by any device of any kind whatsoever a photo of a person in a private place. If such acts as set forth in the preceding two cases during a meeting in front of those present at the meeting, the consent of such persons shall be presumed.

The same penalty shall apply if a person publishes, by any means of publicity, news, photos or comments related to the private or family life secrets of individuals, even if they are true.

A penalty of incarceration for a period not exceeding (7) years and a fine shall be imposed on any public servant who commits one of the acts stated in this Article exploiting the authority of his job.

In all cases, it shall be ruled to confiscate the devices and other items that may have been used in the crime. It shall also be ruled to erase or destroy the recordings obtained."

The Article is therefore a key element in protecting privacy and family life, as it criminalises eavesdropping, recording, photographing or publishing personal information without permission, even if it is true, thus ensuring that the data is not exploited to harm individuals. It also increases penalties for public officials who abuse their authority in these offences and enhances deterrence by confiscating the tools used in the violation. Article 433 emphasises the privacy of written communications and imposes fines for opening letters or telegrams without permission and eavesdropping on telephone calls. "A penalty of a fine not less than (3,000) three thousand AED shall be imposed on anyone who opens a letter or telegram, without the consent of the addressee, or who eavesdrops a telephone conversation. The perpetrator shall be punished with incarceration for a period not less than (3) three months or with a fine not less than (5,000) five thousand AED if he discloses the letter, telegram or telephone conversation to any person other than the addressee without his permission, whenever such disclosure would cause harm to third parties." This Article reflects the law's commitment to protecting the confidentiality of correspondence and communications, as it criminalises opening letters or listening to phone calls without authorisation, thereby strengthening the right to privacy and confidentiality. It also increases the penalty if the content is disclosed to a third party, especially if it leads to harm to others, ensuring an effective deterrent against infringement of personal data.



Conclusion

The UAE continues to strengthen the protection of the right to privacy through an integrated legal system and innovative initiatives that keep pace with global technological developments. Through modern legislation, such as the Personal Data Protection Law and the Cybercrime Law, the UAE ensures the protection of personal information and sensitive data of individuals and guarantees their rights in a safe community environment.

The UAE's attention to this right reflects its commitment to the principles of human rights and contributes to building an advanced society that respects the privacy of individuals and enhances confidence in the judicial and legal system. In light of increasing digital challenges, the UAE remains a pioneer in emphasising the right of individuals to privacy, balancing security and personal freedom and reinforcing its international standing as a key supporter of human rights in the region and globally.

Use of Artificial Intelligence in Penal and Correctional Institutions pursuant to Federal Decree-Law no 34.of2024

Effective April, 14 Federal Decree-Law No 34 .of 2024 will come into force ,introducing progressive provisions that reinforce the United Arab Emirates 'commitment to human rights .The legislation includes a significant nomenclature change ,redesignating penal institutions as correctional facilities ,emphasizing rehabilitation alongside punishment as their primary objective.

The decree-law mandates the implementation of advanced technological solutions, including artificial intelligence ,in correctional and rehabilitative processes .It emphasizes the protection of inmates 'dignity ,explicitly prohibiting torture ,cruel treatment ,or degrading punishment .Furthermore ,the legislation requires that all inmates be informed of their rights, obligations ,prohibitions ,and applicable sanctions in a language they comprehend.



The decree-law introduces the concept of "Community Empowerment", establishing a transitional period designed to facilitate inmates 'reintegration into society .This phase incorporates a graduated reduction in restrictions and grants certain privileges that count toward the sentence duration .Additionally ,the legislation provides for "Conditional Release "allowing inmates sentenced to one month or more of restricted freedom to be released after serving three-quarters of their sentence.

Penal Institutions Construction Controls

Article (5) of the law embodies a clear commitment to the protection of human rights by ensuring a humane and comprehensive environment in the design of penal and correctional institutions .It establishes standards that uphold the dignity of inmates by adhering to appropriate capacity limits ,thereby safeguarding them from overcrowding and poor living conditions .Additionally ,the article guarantees



the rights of female inmates by providing dedicated facilities for pregnant women and those accompanied by children ,addressing their health and social needs. Moreover ,the article takes into account the rights of persons with disabilities by ensuring the availability of suitable infrastructure to accommodate their needs, thereby reinforcing the principles of equality and non-discrimination. Finally ,the provision reflects a commitment to rehabilitation and social reintegration by facilitating access to physical ,psychological ,and cultural rehabilitation programs for inmates .This progressive reformist approach underscores the humane nature of the penal system.

Rights of Inmates

Federal Decree-Law No 34 .of 2024 explicitly addresses "Inmate Rights "in Article .(8)The first clause affirms the obligation to respect the inmate's dignity and prohibits subjecting them to torture ,cruel treatment ,or degrading punishment ,in alignment with international human rights standards ,particularly the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel ,Inhuman ,or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to which the United Arab Emirates acceded in 2012.

The second clause grants the inmate the right to access any judgment or document formally communicated to them and to submit petitions ,legal pleadings ,reports, requests ,or memoranda ,ensuring that such submissions reach the competent authority within the legally prescribed timeframe.

The third clause establishes the inmate's right to be informed ,in a language they understand ,of their obligations ,prohibitions ,and the penalties applicable to them. By these provisions ,the article comprehensively safeguards the inmate's dignity, protecting them from any form of torture or cruel treatment inconsistent with the required respect for their humanity.

Furthermore ,Article (9) enshrines the inmate's right to submit a written complaint to the officials of the penal and correctional institution ,who are required to accept and immediately transmit it to the Public Prosecution after recording it in the database .The provision's reference to the complaint being forwarded "immediately" underscores that institution officials have no discretionary authority in this matter; they are strictly obligated to refer the complaint to the Public Prosecution ,which

Virtual Visits

Article (12) of the law ,concerning the regulation of visitation in penal and correctional institutions ,stipulates that the executive regulations of the decree-law shall determine the conditions ,procedures ,and types of in-person and virtual visits ,as well as the circumstances under which visitation may be wholly or partially restricted .Such restrictions must be for a reasonable duration and justified by health concerns or security reasons.

The provision notably introduces " virtual visits "a measure previously unavailable, leveraging modern technological applications. It also emphasizes that visitation restrictions must not be indefinite but rather subject to a reasonable timeframe and specific health or security justifications.

Furthermore ,Article (19) affirms the right of foreign inmates held in pretrial detention to communicate with others .The second clause allows such communication upon obtaining written authorization from the Public Prosecution in the following cases:

First: Communication between the foreign inmate and their embassy, diplomatic mission, or the entity responsible for their interests within the state.

Second: Meetings with their legal counsel within the penal and correctional institution provided their legal representation status is verified.

Care for Pregnant Inmates: Ensuring Human Rights for Mother and Child

Article (20) emphasizes the commitment of penal and correctional institutions to protecting human rights by providing humane treatment and special care for pregnant inmates. Pregnant inmates are exempt from work duties during pregnancy and are granted appropriate health conditions, including proper nutrition, rest, and medical care. Any disciplinary measures are postponed until after delivery.

Oversight and Inspection

The legal provisions set forth in Articles (10) and (11) emphasize the importance of upholding human rights within penal and correctional institutions through continuous oversight and inspection mechanisms. The law mandates that these institutions be subject to the supervision of the Public Prosecution to ensure compliance with legal provisions and to prevent any violations or unlawful detention of inmates. It further grants inmates the right to submit complaints directly to a member of the Public Prosecution, reinforcing principles of accountability and transparency.

Moreover, the law requires the establishment of periodic inspection committees to verify adherence to regulations, while ensuring that institutions designated for female inmates are inspected with due consideration for their privacy, including the participation of female inspectors. These measures reflect an institutional commitment to safeguarding the dignity of inmates and strengthening justice.



is vested with the authority to review and process it, including requesting any necessary supporting information. This reinforces the principles of transparency and accountability.

The law stipulates that inmates shall be transferred to hospital when approaching their due date, ensuring necessary care for both mother and newborn. Furthermore, the law permits mothers to keep their infants with them until the age of two years, while guaranteeing the child's rights to care and privacy beyond this period.

The Article underscores the importance of respecting the dignity of both mother and inmate, prohibiting any reference to the child's birth circumstances in their official documentation. This provision strengthens both the legal and social protection for mother and child alike.

Rehabilitation and Societal Empowerment

Since the purpose of penal and correctional institutions extends beyond mere "legal deterrence" to a system aimed at rehabilitation and gradual reintegration of inmates into society prior to their final release, Article (22) stipulates:

"When an inmate's sentence in the penal and correctional institution exceeds four (4) years, they must undergo a period of community empowerment before release. During this period, restrictions shall be gradually reduced and privileges granted in accordance with the conditions specified in the law's executive regulations."

This provision establishes a "rehabilitation period" enabling inmates to resume their place in society in a reformed state, distinct from their pre-conviction circumstances.

Articles (29) and (30) of the law further highlight the role of penal and correctional institutions in promoting human rights through comprehensive social and educational care for inmates.

These institutions are obligated to provide educational and cultural programs encompassing:

- Vocational training
- Religious guidance
- Employment preparation support

These measures enhance rehabilitation and facilitate positive social reintegration



post-release. The legislation mandates the assignment of social workers and psychologists within these institutions to provide necessary support to inmates, while ensuring their freedom to practice religious observances.

The right to education stands as one of the law's most significant aspects, granting inmates the opportunity to continue their studies through either in-person or distance learning, thereby ensuring their personal and professional development. Ensuring Human Rights to Healthcare within Correctional Institutions

Articles (24) and (25) reflect the commitment of UAE penal and correctional institutions to protecting human rights through comprehensive healthcare provision for inmates. Article (24) mandates the provision of medical treatment for inmates in coordination with government health facilities, including coverage for inmates without health insurance.

The legislation requires a resident physician in each correctional facility to ensure continuous monitoring of inmates' physical and psychological health. For female inmates, the law guarantees privacy through the appointment of female medical staff or implementation of appropriate alternative measures when necessary.

Article (25) delineates the scope of healthcare services, encompassing:

- Improved hygiene standards
- Safe and balanced nutritional provisions
- Physical and mental health promotion
- Access to outdoor spaces and therapeutic services
- These provisions affirm respect for inmates' human dignity and their right to a healthy environment that enables dignified living during sentence implementation.

Articles (27) and (28) demonstrate a fundamental commitment to human rights protection through ensuring appropriate medical care for inmates suffering from life-threatening conditions or diseases that may endanger others. These provisions require correctional institutions to refer inmates to specialized health facilities for necessary medical evaluation and ensure health monitoring in coordination with healthcare authorities and the public prosecution.

The legislation pays particular attention to preserving inmates' dignity in death by:

- Mandating immediate notification of family members
- Allowing unrestricted visitation rights for relatives
- Requiring public prosecution authorization prior to burial
- Establishing precise protocols for handling all cases of death
- These comprehensive measures ensure the maintenance of human dignity and rights throughout an inmate's period of incarceration, including end-of-life circumstances.
- Psychological Care and Temporary Release

Article (26) specifically addresses the care of inmates with psychological conditions. The Article stipulates that if the psychiatrist assigned to provide psychological treatment in the penal and correctional institution determines that an inmate has a mental illness, the inmate must be referred to the nearest psychiatric health facility within the geographical jurisdiction for evaluation and preparation of a medical report.

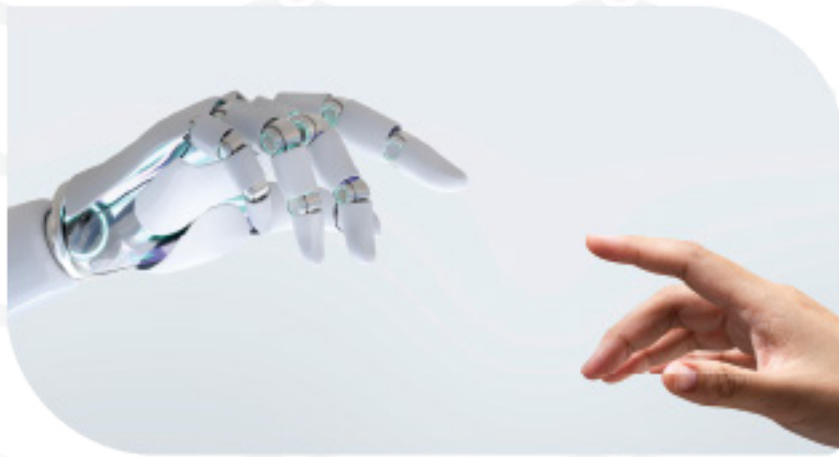
The medical report must be submitted to the Public Prosecution, which may order the inmate's placement in the health facility. The time spent in the facility shall be deducted from the sentenced period. In all cases, the placement of an inmate with mental illness shall only occur after approval from the competent health authority.

To further support inmates' psychological wellbeing, Article 31 provides that: "The penal and correctional institution may, with the approval of the Public Prosecution, grant temporary leave to inmates for emergency reasons, work purposes, education, training, or family home visits".

Artificial intelligence a tool to strengthen security and human care

Article 52 envisions a progressive approach to leveraging modern technology to bolster security and enhance the living conditions of inmates within correctional and penal institutions. The legislation sanctions the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI) as a viable tool for monitoring inmates and predicting their physical and psychological states, thereby contributing to the prevention of potential issues and the safeguarding of human rights. The primary objective of deploying this advanced technology is to supplant subjective evaluations of inmates' health and intentions by institutional staff, which may be susceptible to individual biases and prejudices. In contrast, AI ensures precise and objective assessments, facilitating timely interventions to safeguard inmates' well-being and prevent any risks to their lives. This provision underscores the commitment to upholding the dignity and human rights of inmates, while also promoting a safer and more secure environment within correctional facilities. By harnessing the potential of AI technology, Article 52 sets a precedent for innovative and humane approaches to incarceration and rehabilitation.

This application supports the creation of a secure and humane environment by enabling early detection of critical health and psychological conditions, ensuring necessary medical and psychological interventions. AI also enhances transparency through the implementation of precise monitoring mechanisms while maintaining respect for inmates' fundamental rights.



Article 32 further states: "An inmate who has served no less than three (3) months of their sentence may meet with family members up to the second degree of kinship or their spouse, through a request submitted to the institution officer specifying the names of those to be met and their relationship".

Achieving the Balance between Discipline and Human Rights in Disciplinary Sanctions

Articles (33) to (36) regulate disciplinary sanctions for inmates in a manner that balances the necessity of maintaining order within correctional and penal institutions with the protection of human rights.

The law mandates that inmates be informed of their duties and prohibitions in a language they understand, thereby enhancing transparency and clarity. It establishes a graduated system of disciplinary measures, including warnings and temporary suspension of privileges, while limiting solitary confinement to a maximum of seven days, subject to prior medical examination, to ensure the inmate's dignity and physical and psychological well-being are not compromised. The law requires a fair investigation before imposing any disciplinary sanction, including informing the inmate of the alleged violation and allowing them to present their defense, reinforcing procedural justice.

Furthermore, all disciplinary measures are documented in a database and reported to the Public Prosecution, ensuring oversight and accountability. Additionally, the law prohibits disciplinary sanctions from delaying an inmate's scheduled release, reflecting a commitment to upholding inmates' rights and preserving their human dignity.

Regulation of Release Procedures: Striking a Balance between Punishment and Human Rights

Articles 37 through 44 inclusive, of this law articulate a commitment to the regulated release of incarcerated individuals, balancing the administration of justice with the preservation of human rights. The release process is governed by clearly defined procedures designed to maintain the dignity of inmates. These procedures include the provision of basic clothing to indigent inmates and, where applicable, coordination with the competent authorities for the implementation of electronic monitoring.

Provisions for humanitarian and medical release demonstrate a particular regard for the rights of inmates suffering from debilitating illnesses or total disabilities.



Release under these circumstances is contingent upon a medical determination and coordination with the Public Prosecution. Furthermore, the law permits conditional release for inmates who have demonstrated good conduct and fulfilled the requirements of their sentence, thereby reinforcing the principles of rehabilitation and reintegration.

In the case of inmates serving life sentences, the law permits application for release after a specified period of incarceration, subject to a comprehensive review of their conduct and the potential impact on public safety. This provision ensures a measured and judicious approach to justice.

Young Inmates Privacy

Articles (45) to (48) reflect the law's commitment to safeguarding the rights and privacy of young inmates within the transitional age group (21-18) years, by providing an environment tailored to their specific needs and challenges. The law mandates that correctional and penal institutions allocate separate facilities for young inmates, ensuring they are not mixed with other inmate categories to protect them from negative influences and foster a sense of security.

Furthermore, these provisions emphasize the development and rehabilitation of young inmates through annually structured programs, coordinated with relevant authorities, to provide social care, education, and vocational training. They are also granted special privileges, such as exceptional leave to visit their families on special occasions.

The law additionally allows for the application of restricted freedom measures, enabling young inmates to work outside correctional facilities in both the public and private sectors, thereby enhancing their prospects for responsible reintegration into society after serving their sentences.

These measures demonstrate a strong commitment to human rights while ensuring a rehabilitative approach that enables young inmates to become productive members of society.

Conclusion

The legal provisions governing correctional and penal institutions in the United Arab Emirates reflect a clear commitment to protecting human rights and upholding the dignity of inmates. By ensuring access to healthcare and social support, maintaining a secure environment tailored to diverse inmate needs, and integrating advanced technologies like artificial intelligence, the law strives to balance public security with individual rights.

These provisions align with international treaties and conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Nelson Mandela Rules for the treatment of prisoners. The law demonstrates a profound understanding of the rehabilitative role of correctional institutions, emphasizing reform and reintegration rather than mere punishment, thereby increasing inmates' chances of returning to society as responsible individuals.

Key Recommendations

Strengthening regulatory safeguards for AI usage to ensure the protection of inmates' data and privacy.

Developing post-release social and psychological support programs to facilitate successful reintegration and prevent recidivism.

Enhancing the role of the National Human Rights Institution in ensuring the transparency of procedures within correctional facilities.

Establishing mechanisms for periodic and independent reviews of detention decisions to ensure compliance with legal and human rights standards.

This comprehensive approach reflects a progressive legislative framework that promotes justice and reinforces the principles of dignity and respect outlined in international human rights instruments.

She demanded the right to education without gender discrimination

Malala Yousafzai "a human rights activist"

Stronger than the bullets of extremism

'If you are serious about creating a safe and sustainable future for children, be serious about education' was not just a statement made by human rights activist Malala Yousafzai during her hosting at the United Nations a few years ago, but a recommendation to world leaders to pay attention to education without gender discrimination.



The beginning of a passion for education

The year 1997 was the year Malala was born in Mingora, the largest city in Pakistan's Swat Valley, the first of three children born to her mother Ziauddin and her father Tor Bikai Yousafzai, who worked as the principal of a girls' education school and seemed to support his daughter's passion for education, as she often wandered between classrooms as a child. But, when extremists took control of the city and the region as a whole, they banned girls' education and destroyed more than 400 schools dedicated to girls' education in 2009; despite being only 11 years old, Malala Yousafzai decided to stand up against the denial of education to girls.

A Pakistani girl, from a young age, she realised her human rights mission to defend the rights of women and girls. At the age of 11, she was already defending the rights of women and girls; as an outspoken advocate for girls' right to education, she was often at risk, especially in a climate of discrimination in this regard, and as a result of her march to demand the reduction of discrimination in education, she was shot, yet she did not stop her human rights activism, until she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize at only 17 years old.

Blogging

The young girl began blogging under the pseudonym 'Jules Mackay' on the BBC website in early 2009, where she revealed her life journey in the shadow of extremism and her desire to go to school; her first post on the BBC website was titled 'I'm scared'.

For a few years, she spoke to the media about her desire to learn. Her father encouraged her to express her passion for science so that she could speak for the desire of many girls to learn. As her activism continued until 2011, she was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize, and although she did not win, the same year she was awarded Pakistan's National Youth Peace Prize.

The failed assassination!

On 9 October 2012, 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai was returning from school with her friends when two extremists intercepted the bus and asked: 'Who is Malala?' When they recognised her, they shot her in the head. Fortunately, she was airlifted to a Pakistani military hospital and then to an intensive care unit in England; after ten days in a coma, Malala



woke up in a hospital in Birmingham, England.

Paralysed on the left side of her face, she underwent several surgeries to overcome the effects of the unfortunate accident, and then underwent rehabilitation to return to her family after months of medical treatment, after which she moved to England.

Although she was able to go to school in the British city of Birmingham without any danger, she did not stop advocating for the elimination of gender discrimination in education. She and her father established a fund to support women and girls internationally in 2014, the same year she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Advocating for girls' education and investing in education

The Malala Fund for Women and Girls advocates for girls' education and provides financial resources for schools in countries suffering from oppression and poverty, and lobbies internationally to convince governments to invest in education; Malala has become a global symbol of resilience and adherence to basic rights, especially girls' rights to education, and her influence has extended beyond Pakistan to include the whole world, and she is now a prominent speaker at international conferences related to education and human rights.

The main lessons learnt from Malala Yousafzai's story can be summarised as follows:

- Believe in the right to education: The importance of education as a fundamental right of every human being, especially girls, should never be underestimated without gender discrimination.
- Sacrifice and courage: Persistence and courage in continuing her peaceful demands for education for girls; she did not back down from these demands even though she was on the verge of losing her life.
- Positive influence: She emphasised the ability of young people to make tangible improvements to their societies and the world as a whole, and that working for human rights only requires faith and a strong will.

She confronted extremism and discrimination through 'blog posts' starting with 'I'm Scared.'

She addressed world leaders: A safe and sustainable future for children starts with education.'

She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize at the age of just seventeen.

Conclusion:

Malala Yousafzai is a prominent figure who has inspired many people around the world with her persistence and determination, demonstrated that the right to education without discrimination is a fundamental right that no child should be denied. She proved that a small voice can have a big impact on the march to achieve equality among human beings regardless of gender, colour, race or beliefs.

Osama Khatib :A Scientific Journey in Service of Humanity through Robotics

Scientific research is the cornerstone of human advancement, enabling sustainable development and promoting the rights to knowledge, health, and safety. It serves as a fundamental pillar for human protection, transcending mere discovery to become an instrument for enhancing quality of life and addressing multifaceted human challenges. Among scientists who have harnessed technology for humanitarian purposes, Professor Osama Khatib stands prominent as a pioneering robotics engineer. His research has emerged as a means of human protection, enabling interaction with previously inaccessible environments and opening new horizons for humanity.



Osama Khatib

Head of the International Organization for Robot Research (IFRR)

In an interview with Stanford University, Professor Osama Khatib characterized his scientific journey as "a contribution to human perception of life", asserting that this understanding enables us to enhance and safeguard life from adverse effects, both present and future.

Artificial intelligence and human rights empowerment

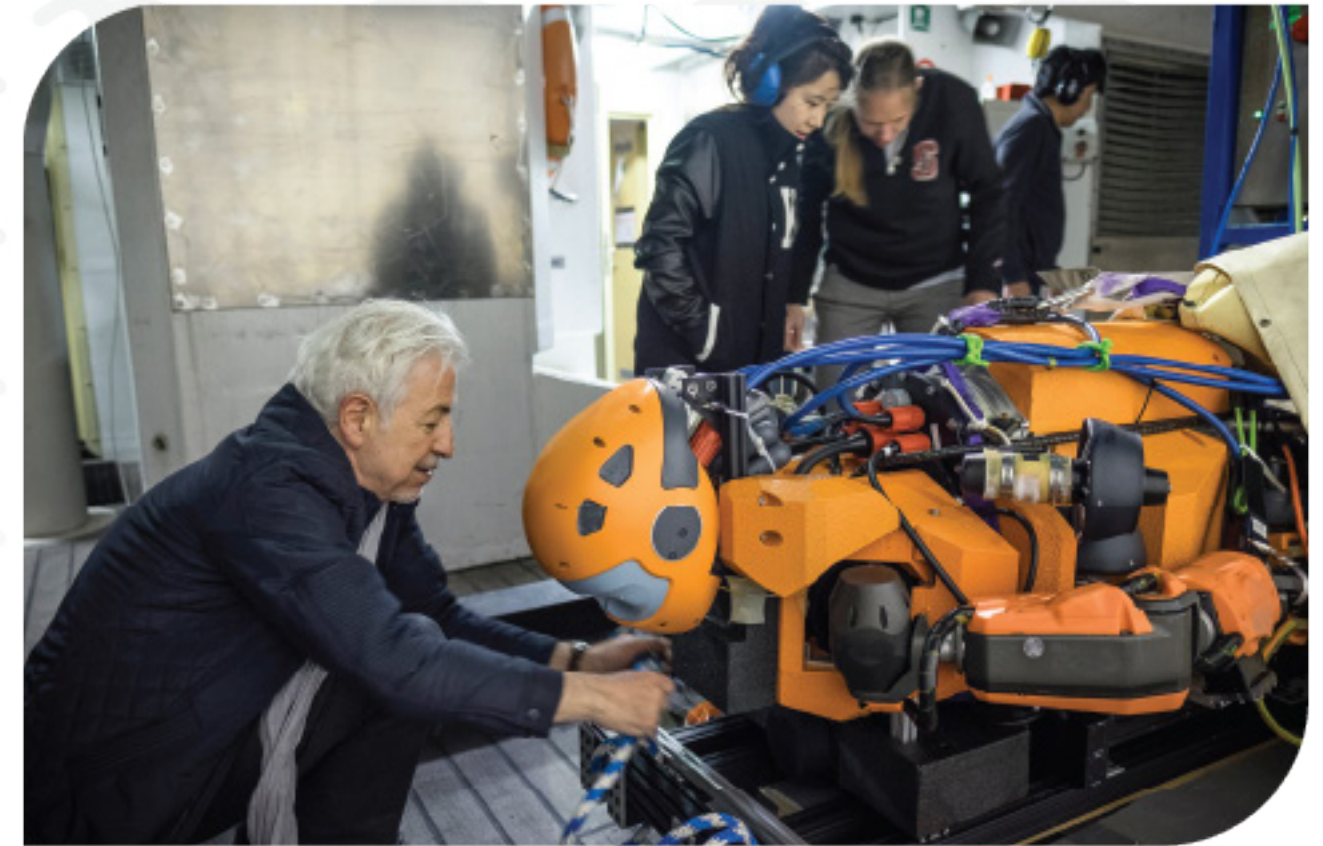
Artificial Intelligence and advanced robotics have revolutionized human life through their capabilities in big data analysis, sophisticated medical solutions, and complex problem-solving. Professor Osama Khatib's research has been instrumental in this field, particularly in developing intelligent robots capable of operating in hazardous environments such as ocean depths. This achievement transcends mere technological advancement—it represents a crucial step in enhancing human safety and security. These robotic systems provide secure alternatives for divers, scientists, and researchers, preserving human life while supporting the fundamental rights to life, occupational safety, and scientific research.

An Inspiring and Professional Journey

Professor Osama Khatib was born in 1950 in Aleppo, Syria, where he began his academic journey at Al-Ma'moun School. He subsequently relocated to France for higher education, enrolling at the University of Montpellier in 1971 to study Electrical Engineering. He earned his Master's degree in 1974 followed by a doctorate in Automatic Systems from the National Higher School of Aeronautics and Space in Toulouse in 1980.

In 1981 he commenced his academic career at Stanford University as a Research Associate, ultimately attaining the position of Full Professor in 2000 where he continues to lead research in robotics and human-machine interaction.

Professor Khatib has held several prestigious academic and research



positions, including Director of the Stanford Robotics Laboratory and President of the International Foundation of Robotics Research (IFRR). (His visiting professorships at distinguished institutions, including the National University of Singapore, Paris VI University, and EPFL in Switzerland, have established him as one of the world's foremost authorities in robotics engineering.

Robots for the Service of Humanity and the Protection of the Environment

Humanity has always sought to understand the unknown and explore hidden worlds. However, environmental risks and natural obstacles have often limited access to certain locations. In response, Professor Osama Khatib's research has led to the development of smart robots capable of interacting with both humans and their surroundings, opening new frontiers for scientific exploration while minimizing risks. These innovations have transformed robots into effective tools for human protection and sustainable development.

One of his most groundbreaking creations is the "Ocean One" robot, which revolutionized deep-sea exploration with its advanced sensory capabilities, enabling it to operate underwater and interact with objects through touch. In 2021 Professor Khatib led the "Ocean OneK" mission, utilizing the latest generation of humanoid robots to explore the depths of the ocean without endangering divers' lives. This innovation was not only a scientific

He served as the chairman of the International Foundation of Robotics Research (IFRR) and is widely regarded as a pioneering luminary in the field of robotics research.

He successfully developed robotic systems capable of interacting and collaborating safely with human beings.



breakthrough but also a pioneering step in safeguarding researchers' rights to safety and professional security while preserving submerged environmental and cultural heritage. Through this technology, underwater archaeological sites can now be explored without causing damage, ensuring the preservation of humanity's legacy for future generations. This remarkable achievement highlights the intersection of scientific research and human rights in its most fundamental form.

A Well-Deserved Honor: The "Arab Nobel Prize" in Engineering and Technology

In recognition of his pioneering scientific career, Professor Oussama Khatib was awarded the "2024 Great Arab Minds" Award in Engineering and Technology, established by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum to honor exceptional Arab intellectuals. This award, considered the "Arab Nobel Prize", acknowledges his extraordinary contributions to robotics engineering and his publication of over 327 scientific papers that have advanced the field globally.

Science and Human Rights :Parallel and Interlinked Paths

Science is not merely a luxury but a fundamental human right and an instrument for achieving justice, security, and development. Each scientific discovery represents progress toward a more promising future where the world becomes safer, more sustainable, and equitable for all.

This principle is embodied in Professor Osama Khatib's journey, who has transformed technology into a bridge serving humanity, protecting human life, and enabling exploration of realms that were once beyond human comprehension.



Counsellor Jaber Al-Marri speaking to “Emirates Human Rights Magazine”: Arab human rights legislation is ‘outdated’ and needs continuous development and modernization.

The Arab Charter Committee on Human Rights is the main Arab mechanism for monitoring and following up on States Parties’ observance of human rights by submitting their periodic reports to the Committee periodically, in accordance with resolution 270 of the Council of the League of Arab States at summit level issued on 23 May 2004.

The Committee consists of seven members in their personal capacity, elected by the States Parties to the Charter by secret ballot; they must be highly experienced and competent and serve with impartiality and integrity.



Committee, as Counsellor Jaber Al-Marri reveals visions, challenges and prospects for development in Arab human rights legislation.

At the beginning, we would like to understand the role played by the Arab Charter Committee for Human Rights in promoting and protecting human rights in the Arab countries?

The Committee works on the basis of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which is the main document in the Arab human rights system within the framework of the League of Arab States, as it represents a binding legal agreement adopted at the highest official Arab level, represented by the Arab Summit, and as a comprehensive document that includes many commitments to protect various economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, and even so-called third generation rights, known as ‘solidarity rights’, such as the right to development, which has not yet been framed internationally in the form of a convention, and the right to the environment. The Arab Charter for Human Rights is the first Arab regional charter that takes into account the common factors among the Arab peoples.

Monitoring and following up on States Parties’ compliance

The Charter Committee is responsible for ensuring Member States’ compliance with the Charter. How do you see the Committee’s contributions to enhancing the experiences and practices of Member States in promoting human rights?

The Arab Charter Committee was established on the basis of the Arab Charter itself, to act as a monitoring and follow-up committee to implement the commitments of the States Parties to the Arab Charter on Human Rights,

and to confirm their commitment to its implementation and adherence to its texts and the values and principles it contains.

In terms of its organization and work, the Arab Charter Committee is very similar to the United Nations human rights treaty committees. It is also close to them in terms of the method of work and the partnership that these committees are keen to strengthen with various member states. The Committee relies on the reporting system as a basic system of monitoring and follow-up, and the nature of the composition of the Committee is characterized by the geographical and gender diversity of its members, who are citizens of states parties, which provides these committees with a special nature from the diversity of their countries’ human rights systems and their personal and institutional experiences.

The Committee’s interactive dialogues with the delegations of States parties when discussing their initial and periodic reports are often attended by a variety of officials, in addition to representatives of Arab states and civil society as observers, and the reports of States and the Committee’s observations and recommendations are available on the Committee’s website, which provides a good environment for following up on the experiences and concerns of different States regarding the human rights situation and their commitment and guarantee of the Arab Charter in terms of national human rights legislation, institutions and policies.

The reporting system adopted by the Committee in the context of the process of following up on the implementation of States parties’ obligations is the only method provided for in the Arab Charter on Human Rights.

Accordingly, we expect a comprehensive interactive dialogue during the review of the reports on the various aspects addressed by the Charter; a dialogue that provides States with guiding paths in the development of human rights programs and policies.

11 reports to States Parties

You chaired the Arab Charter for Human Rights Committee for two consecutive terms, how do you view this process as you head the most prominent Arab human rights mechanism?

- In fact, it was a wonderful and fruitful process, and it would not have been so without the cooperation of the working team in the committee and the technical secretariat and the support of the Secretariat-General.

The period of our mandate witnessed the discussion of 11 reports of many countries, starting with the State of Qatar, whose two reports were discussed during that period, then the State of Kuwait, Iraq, Mauritania, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Sultanate of Oman, and finally the report of the United Arab Emirates was discussed, and all discussion sessions were characterized by constructive integrated dialogues that represent an audit of the Arab human rights reality.



Counsellor Jaber Saleh
Hamad Al-Marri.

- Chairman of the Arab Charter for Human Rights Committee for two terms, the first in 2021 for a period of two years, and the second term starting from April 2023 for a period of two years.

- He previously served as a member of the Committee from 2015 to 2019, and then as Vice-Chairman of the Committee from 2017 to 2019.

- He has also held various positions and functions at the National Human Rights Committee, the Human Trafficking Committee, the Supreme Judicial Council and the judicial courts in Qatar.

- Counsellor Jaber Al-Marri is an Arab human rights expert and has a vision for the current and future of human rights in Arab countries.



The Committee was keen to enhance the participation of States in presenting and discussing their national reports on the Arab Charter on Human Rights, and at the conclusion of these discussions, the Committee presents its observations and recommendations to the States Parties.

- My chairmanship also witnessed the accession of the Sultanate of Oman and the United Comoros Republic to the Arab Charter on Human Rights, which undoubtedly contributed to the integration of the Arab human rights process. We also succeeded, through diligent work, in urging states to ratify an amendment to one of the articles of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, related to changing the name of the Committee to 'Arab Charter on Human Rights Committee' instead of 'Arab Human Rights Committee' to prevent confusion with another committee, the Arab Permanent Committee for Human Rights. Openness to regional and international human rights mechanisms and institutions was also strengthened through a number of partnerships with them in various human rights events.

Required Update

Sometimes, there is talk about the need to develop Arab human rights legislation and mechanisms and bring them up to international standards. How can we understand and interpret such calls and the extent of the need for them at the Arab level?

- Clearly, any development process at the level of reference texts such as legislation or at the level of institutional mechanisms relating to human rights is positive and desirable, especially since these rights are evolving in themselves, in addition to the way in which they are protected. However, it is also necessary to point out that any development is subject to a basic condition related to the local 'national' specificity, which is crucial for translating legislation in a real way on the ground; I personally believe that this matter represents in itself a required harmonization with international and national frameworks, which is very important in this field.

Let me tell you that many of the legislation and laws on human rights in Arab countries are 'old' and need to be reviewed and updated continuously, especially since the period of their preparation was characterized by factors and circumstances other than those in which we now live; with the



developments that have occurred in the course of life and the diversity that it has become now, it has created increasing human needs related to human rights, which has made there are human rights issues that did not exist when these laws and legislations were prepared.

We can also point out that the continuous developments that international and regional human rights mechanisms have become, and even the expansion of human rights bodies, institutions and organisations at the level of states themselves, with all these manifestations and developments, there is a need to conduct periodic reviews of our legislative systems and national human rights institutions, and to subject them to a real evaluation process that contributes to their development and upgrading, in addition to developing and submitting the necessary proposals and treatments to fill any gaps that may arise or needs that need to be addressed, which means continuing to keep pace with the world in enhancing and upgrading its contributions in terms of promoting respect for human rights.

Cooperation of States Parties with the Committee

The Arab Charter Committee performs many tasks relating to the promotion of respect for human rights, perhaps most notably following up and discussing the national reports of member states. How has this mechanism contributed to enhancing states' compliance and fulfilment of their obligations under the Arab Charter on Human Rights, and are there any initiatives or projects to develop or upgrade the work of this mechanism?

-At the beginning to answer this question, I would like to refer to a very important fact, which is that the compliance and fulfilment of States' obligation stems from their desire and will, and therefore the efforts of the Charter Committee would not have been possible without that wish and that cooperation, which stems from the real will of those States; we are not the only mechanism in the international human rights law system that issues recommendations to States Parties.

Therefore, I stress that the main factor is the will and wish of the state, and then comes the role of the Charter Committee and its efforts in addressing all rights; the main work of the Committee is to study reports and issue observations and

The texts of the Arab Charter are 'broad' to accommodate the continuous developments of human rights.

We support the publication of the 'Emirates Journal of Human Rights'; we support the publication of more media experiences to support education and support Arab human rights awareness.

States' compliance and fulfilment of their commitment to the Arab Charter Committee stems from their desire and will.

Civil society is the cornerstone in the promotion of human rights in the Arab world.



recommendations ,as a first stage; through the Committee ,we work to analyze the recommendations and translate them into indicative data ,and work with other regional mechanisms to develop treatments and guiding frameworks for the region in accordance with these data. The indicative statements issued by the Commission were an important input to the development of the Arab Strategy for Human Rights and its implementation plan ,through cooperation with the Permanent Arab Commission for Human Rights and the Group of Governmental Experts on the development of the implementation plan for the Arab Strategy for Human Rights .This cooperation extends to the Arab Human Rights Observatory of the Arab Parliament for Human Rights, the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, the Arab Network of National Human Rights Institutions and many others ,to which the Commission contributes or shares work with other institutions and mechanisms.

Civil society is the cornerstone

The Arab Charter for Human Rights Committee is keen to enhance the participation of national civil society organizations when discussing the national reports of member states, and guarantees them opportunities to participate effectively in attending the discussion sessions or reviewing their parallel reports. How do you evaluate these participations, and what is your general opinion of the work and contributions of civil society organizations dealing with human rights in the Arab world?

-Civil society is the cornerstone of the process of promoting and fostering human rights in the Arab world ,and we must acknowledge that they were the first to open up to the global human rights movement before states organized this field through legislation ,institutions and policies.

However ,I personally find that civil society's interaction with the Arab system needs more effort in order to continue its contributions in the future ,which is in fact a joint responsibility that falls on civil society itself on the one hand ,and on the other hand on the Arab mechanisms.

We in the Charter Committee are always keen on cooperation and openness with civil society organizations ,and we welcome their participation in the discussion sessions of State party reports ,as observers ,and schedule closed hearings for them .We also receive their shadow reports, granting them the right to publish their parallel reports submitted to the Committee ,or limit them to the Committee only and keep them as non-public documents.

However ,in our assessment of Arab civil society's interaction with the Charter Committee ,we see the need - despite its vitality - for further cooperation and strengthening the contributions of civil society organizations concerned with human rights and cooperation with available Arab mechanisms.



Future Challenges: Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights

The Arab Charter on Human Rights has completed two decades since it was adopted at the 16 th Arab Summit .Do you see a need to conduct a comprehensive review of the Charter or develop its mechanisms ,in order to enhance its role and contributions ,and respond to emerging changes, especially in terms of achieving climate justice or digital justice ,and the challenges posed by artificial intelligence ,for example?

-What characterizes the Arab Charter on Human Rights is that its provisions are broad, which allows it to keep pace with many of the developments in the world; however, this does not contradict the need for new supporting instruments that include details and explanations of new issues, including artificial intelligence.

- I believe that such instruments will come as additional protocols to the Charter, so I believe that the Charter as a main document does not need to interfere with its amendment, at least according to contemporary data.

A human rights window

"The UAE Human Rights Magazine", published by the Union Association for Human Rights, is the first Arab media outlet to be published in Arabic, English and French; to launch an international horizon that contributes to promoting the culture of human rights at the international level and introducing our Arab human rights initiatives and experiences. How do you see this initiative and its role in promoting Arab human rights culture at the international level?

-Without a doubt ,I am always interested in following up on human rights publications and publications related to the Arab human rights situation ,and it is good to find an addition to these publications through your magazine .Through my follow-ups ,I notice that the publications ,whether issued in Arabic only or those issued in more than one language ,are still limited ,and therefore there is a need for more publications that are concerned with educating and supporting Arab human rights awareness ,and for this we certainly support and commend the publication of the ' Emirates Human Rights ' magazine and others.

Conclusion

The interview with Counselor Jaber Al-Matari represents an important window to understand the challenges and developments facing human rights in the Arab world .He highlighted the importance of modernizing human rights legislation and the need to align it with global developments, such as artificial intelligence and digital justice.

He also emphasized the role of civil society as a cornerstone in the promotion and protection of rights.

Despite the great efforts of the Arab Charter Committee, the most important question remains :How can Arab states strike a balance between preserving their national identity and complying with international human rights standards?

The promotion of human rights is not just a legal obligation ,but a collective responsibility that requires the cooperation of governments, civil society ,the media ,the dissemination of a culture of rights ,and the promotion of awareness of human rights. We remain hopeful that this dialogue will be the beginning of a broader discussion on the future of human rights in the Arab region.

Arab Charter Committee ,an Arab mechanism to promote human rights

The Charter Committee is one of the prominent bodies within the Arab League system. It was established in 2009 by the entry into force of the Arab Charter on Human Rights on 15 March .2008 It is responsible for monitoring the extent to which States Parties are committed to achieving the following basic aims of the Charter:



The Committee was established in 2009, following the entry into force of the Arab Charter on Human Rights on 16 March 2008, in order to review the reports of the Arab States on the measures they have taken to implement public rights and freedoms.

To place human rights at the centre of the key national concerns of Arab States, making them lofty and fundamental ideals that shape the will of the individual in Arab States and enable him to improve his life in accordance with noble human values.

To teach the human person in the Arab States pride in his identity, loyalty to his country, attachment to his land, history and common interests and to instil in him a culture of human brotherhood, tolerance and openness towards others, in accordance with universal principles and values and with those proclaimed in international human rights instruments.

To prepare the new generations in Arab States for a free and responsible life in a civil society that is characterized by solidarity, founded on a balance between awareness of rights and respect for obligations, and governed by the values of equality, tolerance and moderation.

To entrench the principle that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

Composition and working mechanism of the Committee

Composition of the Committee:

The Committee of the Arab Charter on Human Rights consists of seven members elected by secret ballot by the States Parties to the Charter; members



are required to be highly experienced and competent in the field of human rights, and work in their personal capacity and not as representatives of their governments, to ensure the independence and impartiality of the Committee.

The Committee's working mechanism:

I. Periodic reports: The Committee requests Member States to submit periodic reports on the extent of their implementation of the Charter, and reviews these reports and prepares its technical observations on them in preparation for their discussion.

In accordance with the first paragraph of Article (49) of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, the States parties undertake to submit reports to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States on the measures they have taken to give effect to the rights and freedoms recognized in the Charter. The first report is submitted within one year of the entry into force of the Charter for the State Party.

Thereafter, periodic reports are submitted every three years to follow up on developments and challenges.

II. Listening to interested parties: The Committee holds hearings and discussions with representatives of member states and civil society organisations, with the aim of making observations and recommendations in application of the provisions and objectives of the Charter.

III. Issuing recommendations: Based on the reports and hearings, a number of recommendations and concluding observations are issued, which are addressed to member states with the aim of contributing to improving or supporting the continuity of their efforts in protecting human rights on their territory. The Committee sends the report and concluding observations to the concerned state and asks it to comment on its observations within a period of up to one month. After the final adoption, the Committee endeavours to disseminate it widely, and to transmit an annual report containing its observations and recommendations to the Council of the League of Arab States through the Secretary-General.

The Committee holds regular meetings to follow up on the human rights situation and study the reports of States Parties. It also holds extraordinary meetings to discuss new issues and developments. The Committee also attaches great importance to establishing a constructive dialogue with States Parties in order to support their efforts to improve the implementation of the provisions of the Charter.

In this context, the Committee has adopted guidelines and directives for the preparation and submission of reports, which contribute to:

Standardise the format and content of reports submitted by States parties, thereby facilitating their review and analysis.

Enhance transparency and credibility in presenting the human rights situation in accordance with international standards.

Provide a clear framework for States to provide accurate and comprehensive data on the progress made in implementing the Charter.



Enable the Committee to objectively evaluate the reports submitted and compare the implementation of rights and obligations between different states. Promote constructive dialogue between the Committee and States Parties by providing practical recommendations that contribute to the promotion of human rights. Through this mechanism, the Committee monitors the extent to which States Parties fulfil their obligations and issues recommendations and reports aimed at strengthening the protection of human rights in the Arab region, in addition to:

Establishing a constructive dialogue with States Parties with a view to assisting them in improving compliance with the Arab Charter. Assisting States Parties in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them regarding their care of human rights under Article (48) of the Charter and guiding their work.

The Committee shall advise Member States on how to strengthen the protection of human rights in domestic and international legislation.

The Committee and Shadow Reports:

Civil society organisations play an important role in the process of assessing and monitoring the human rights situation by submitting parallel reports known as "Shadow Reports". These reports contribute to providing a more comprehensive and objective view of states' commitment to implementing the provisions of the Arab Charter on Human Rights, as they provide additional information that may not be included in government reports.

Shadow Reports provide the Charter Committee with a deeper understanding of the challenges and achievements of States Parties in implementing the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Charter. They also help reveal any gaps or issues that need to be improved. By reviewing these reports, the Committee can make comparisons between the perspectives of governments and civil society, thus enhancing the fairness and transparency of the assessment process.

The participation of civil society in this process is one of the key elements in ensuring the protection of human rights. These organisations can provide independent recommendations that help states improve their policies and practices in line with international and regional human rights standards.

Review of the UAE report before the Charter Committee

Last January, the United Arab Emirates discussed its second national report on the Arab Charter on Human Rights at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo, before the Arab Charter on Human Rights Committee at its 27th session. The review of the UAE report before the Charter Committee comes within the framework of its commitment to the provisions of the Arab Charter on Human Rights and its keenness to promote and protect human rights at the regional and international levels.

The review session was attended by a number of public interest associations, in addition to a closed hearing session for civil society organisations, which included the participation of the Union Association for Human Rights, during which the UAHR discussed its shadow report, which included the following main themes:



Legal and institutional framework:

- Reviewing national legislation in line with the State's obligations under the Arab Charter on Human Rights.
- Outlining the role of national institutions such as the National Human Rights Institution and government agencies concerned with the protection of rights and freedoms.

Adherence to international conventions:

- Highlighting the efforts made to harmonise national laws with international standards.
- Reviewing the periodic reports submitted by the State to the competent regional and international bodies.

Adherence to regional conventions:

- Outlining the State's implementation of the previous recommendations issued by the Charter Committee.
- Outlining the State's commitment to implementing all provisions of the Charter.

Achievements and developments in the field of human rights:

- Highlighting the legislative developments that have been implemented during the last four years.
- Referring to national strategies and plans that support human rights, such as empowering women, ensuring gender equality, and promoting legal justice.

Reviewing the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on human rights.

Partnership with civil society:

- Emphasising the participation of civil society organisations in reviewing national reports and making recommendations.
- Referring to the ongoing dialogue between the government and NGOs that has contributed to the implementation of human rights obligations.

The Committee is composed of seven members elected in their personal capacity by secret ballot by the States Parties, who must be highly experienced and competent in the field of human rights.

The Committee advises Member States on how to strengthen the protection of human rights in domestic and international legislation.

Conclusion

The Arab Charter Committee is an important regional mechanism to promote human rights in Arab countries. It contributes to assessing the extent of States Parties' commitment to the Charter and provides a platform for constructive dialogue between governments and civil society. It is also an effective tool for monitoring progress and making recommendations to improve legislation and practices, thereby contributing to building more just and tolerant societies.

Universal Periodic Review :A UN Mechanism to Review States 'Compliance with Human Rights Commitments

In March ,2006 the United Nations General Assembly launched the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) (mechanism ,which was implemented by the Intergovernmental Working Group of the Human Rights Council .This mechanism aims to assess how the 193 UN member states respect and implement their obligations and commitments as outlined in the UN Charter ,the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ,and the international treaties that each state has ratified or acceded to .The review also covers voluntary pledges made by states) such as national human rights policies or programs (and applicable international humanitarian law.

The Universal Periodic Review process is conducted once every four and a half years ,representing a significant achievement in ensuring equal treatment among all states .This process provides each country with an opportunity to declare the measures it has taken to improve human rights conditions and overcome the challenges it faces .It also promotes the global exchange of best practices in human rights.

UPR Procedures

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) relies on key documents ,including:

National Report: Submitted by the state under review, detailing the measures and steps it has taken to improve human rights.

International Reports: Provided by human rights experts, special rapporteurs, bodies established under human rights treaties, and other United Nations entities.

Stakeholder Information: Such as reports from non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions.

The review process involves an interactive discussion lasting between 3 to 5 hours within the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (composed of 47 member states of the Human Rights Council). During the session, the state submits its national report, followed by interventions from member states and observers, who pose questions and offer recommendations.

The review process is facilitated by a group known as the "Troika" (comprising three countries), acting as rapporteurs. The Troika for each country is selected through a lottery before each Working Group session. The Troika compiles the recommendations resulting from the interactive dialogue into a final document, and the state under review is given the opportunity to provide initial comments on the recommendations, with the option to accept, reject, or take note of them. The final report is adopted during a plenary session of the Human Rights Council.



Follow-up Steps of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The state under review holds the primary responsibility for implementing the recommendations outlined in the final report. The UPR ensures accountability by assessing the progress made by states in fulfilling these recommendations. During its next review cycle, the state is required to provide updates on the efforts undertaken to implement the recommendations from the previous review.

The international community supports the state in this process by offering capacity-building assistance and technical support in consultation with the concerned state. If necessary, the Human Rights Council may intervene in cases where states fail to demonstrate cooperation.

Objectives of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The primary objective of the UPR is to improve human rights conditions in every state, ultimately benefiting people worldwide. This mechanism aims to strengthen human rights protection on the ground by:

Assessing the human rights records of states.

Addressing human rights violations wherever they occur.

Providing technical support to states to enhance their capacity in addressing human rights challenges.

Promoting the exchange of best practices among states and stakeholders.

The UAE in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

The UAE began its participation in the UPR mechanism in December 2008, when it submitted its first national report to the Human Rights Council, which was adopted in March 2009.

In January 2013, the UAE presented its second national report, which was adopted in June of the same year, followed by its third national report in January 2018, adopted in June 2018. The fourth national report was submitted in May 2023 and adopted in October 2023.

During the adoption of its fourth report, the UAE reaffirmed its commitment to continuously developing its legislative and institutional frameworks, as well as its national policies related to human rights. The state informed the Human Rights Council of its acceptance of 198 recommendations, noting that many had already been implemented, while the remaining recommendations would be executed over the next four and a half years.

The UAE also emphasized strengthening cooperation with the National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles and further developing the Permanent Committee on Human Rights as a national mechanism for implementation, reporting, and follow-up.

Conclusion

The UPR serves as a vital platform for fostering dialogue and international cooperation to enhance human rights globally. This mechanism underscores states' commitment to upholding international human rights standards and highlights the importance of global solidarity in addressing human rights challenges.

However, the "Union for Human Rights" association argues that the UPR requires substantial improvements, as it is an outdated mechanism that no longer aligns with evolving circumstances. The association highlights concerns, particularly the way recommendations are counted. Currently, the total number of recommendations a state receives is based on the number of countries submitting them rather than the quality or substance of each recommendation. This results in excessive repetition, where, if similar recommendations were merged, the total count would be significantly lower—rather than exceeding 200 or even 300 recommendations for some states. This methodological flaw creates a misleading perception within the international community, suggesting that the concerned state fails to adequately protect human rights. Therefore, a revision of the UPR's methodology is necessary to ensure greater accuracy and effectiveness in the process.

UAE contributes to preserving humanity's intangible cultural heritage through 'The Art of Henna'

The sixteenth contribution to UNESCO's list

The UNESCO's inscription of henna and its associated rituals on the Intangible Cultural Heritage List underscores the importance of documenting and preserving inherited Gulf traditions and their role in reinforcing Arab identity. The United Arab Emirates submitted a joint file with 16 Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, and the Sultanate of Oman, to nominate henna for inclusion in the intangible heritage list.

The nomination file highlighted heritage's role in sustainable development and shared human heritage, serving as a testament to Arab communities' experiences in enriching and diversifying henna designs as a traditional adornment. UNESCO justified the inclusion of henna on the Intangible Cultural Heritage List by noting that it "symbolizes an individual's life cycle from birth to death, being present during key life stages". The rituals of henna application are accompanied by oral expressions such as songs and stories. Henna constitutes an integral component of the United Arab Emirates' rich heritage, transcending its role beyond a mere natural substance used for cosmetic or decorative purposes. It carries within it cultural symbols and traditions deeply rooted in Emirati history, representing a significant element of national identity.

Henna :A Heritage Deeply Rooted in the Emirates

The origins of henna in the Emirates date back centuries, where it served as a fundamental component of social and religious traditions. Henna transcended its role beyond mere cosmetic application, becoming intrinsically linked to major occasions such as weddings, festivals, and religious celebrations. To this day, it remains a principal element in wedding ceremonies and other significant occasions.

In the past, women in the Emirates prepared henna by hand, collecting dried leaves and grinding them into a fine powder, which they then mixed with water to create a paste used for adorning hands and feet.

These designs were not merely decorative but represented a folk art that reflected Emirati culture, distinguished by intricate and expressive patterns that showcased the refined taste of the local people.

The henna designs varied between flowers, palm leaves, and birds, drawing inspiration from the Emirati natural environment, thus imparting a unique character that expressed national identity.

Henna :A National Identity and Cultural Symbol

While henna has been used in other countries across the Arab world, Emirati society has made it an integral part of its cultural identity, distinguished by unique designs that reflect national culture and highlight elements of folk heritage. Over time,

henna has not lost its standing in society; on the contrary, it has flourished and evolved in the modern era. It is now used in diverse ways, with ready-to-use packaged henna products available, alongside modern tools that facilitate drawing and pattern creation.

Henna artistry centers have become widespread, offering intricate designs for women on various occasions, thus contributing to the preservation of this cherished national heritage.

Henna is the sixteenth element inscribed by the United Arab Emirates on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, marking a continuous journey that began in 2010 with the inclusion of falconry and the rhythmic Al-Ayyala performance, which embodies a rich tapestry of tradition, resilience, and unity. Other listed elements include the Majlis, a cultural and social gathering space for community dialogue, Arabic coffee, a symbol of Emirati hospitality, palm oases, where wisdom and authentic practices flourish, and the Aflej irrigation system, a testament to the ingenuity in harnessing and sustaining nature's resources.

Heritage and Cultural Rights :A Profound Connection

The UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity constitutes a vital programme for the safeguarding and preservation of intangible cultural heritage. Administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, this List recognizes and promotes such heritage as a reflection of the world's diverse cultural expressions. It encompasses traditions and practices transmitted across generations, thereby playing a crucial role in reinforcing cultural identity and protecting it from the risks of erosion or disappearance.

Intangible cultural heritage includes a wide range of living cultural expressions, such as folk arts, languages, customs, and rituals, transmitted across generations. The objectives of the list are:

Safeguarding Cultural Heritage: Through documentation, registration, and the provision of legal and cultural protection.

Promoting Cultural Diversity: By recognizing intangible cultural heritage as an integral part of the identity of communities and a shared record of humanity.

Raising Awareness: To highlight the importance of preserving intangible cultural heritage and protecting it from various threats, as it belongs to all of humanity.

The documentation of human heritage is recognized as a matter of upholding human rights, in accordance with the 2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity. Article 4 of this Declaration states that the defense of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity. It implies a commitment to respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. In 2002, the General Assembly, in its resolution 57/249, proclaimed 21 May of each year as the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development. Furthermore, in 2015, the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted the draft resolution on Culture and Sustainable Development (A/C.2/70/L.59), which emphasized the contribution of culture to sustainable development, and consequently, its contribution to the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.



Article Four of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity defines the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage as a manifestation of human rights stewardship and establishes it as an obligation that must be respected.

In conclusion:

The inscription of henna on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity not only represents recognition of this ancient tradition, but also a responsibility to ensure its continuity for future generations. The safeguarding of cultural heritage is not merely a duty, but a bridge connecting the past with the present, illuminating the path towards the future. This ensures that this beautiful art remains vibrant and alive in the heart of Emirati and Arab culture.

Sports in the UAE - A Life-Enhancing Approach

Sports stand as one of the most crucial activities contributing to physical and mental well-being. In the United Arab Emirates, sports receive substantial support from both the wise leadership and society, with comprehensive backing across various domains, from infrastructure development to organizational programs and initiatives. Sports are recognized as an effective means of enhancing quality of life and promoting human rights.



Salam Mohamed Abu Karnib
Member of the Board of
Directors of the Union for
Human Rights Association

In this context, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched the "National Sports Strategy 2031" during 2023 affirming: "Sports represents the optimal path for our youth, serving as a protective shield for our community's health, and stands as the means to raise our nation's flag in numerous international forums."

National Sports Strategy 2031

This ambitious strategy focuses on launching 17 sports initiatives by 2031 including:

- Development of physical education methods and curricula in schools.
- Discovery and funding of athletic talents and elite athletes.
- Enhancement of athletes' professional careers and development of the sports sector workforce.
- Modernization of sports laws to keep pace with digital transformation.
- Implementation of sports marketing and promotion plans, and hosting of influential international events.

Sports as a tool to boost public health

The United Arab Emirates' efforts in developing sports reflect its ongoing commitment to improving public health and enhancing community well-being. Health is considered a fundamental human right, and the nation has launched numerous sporting events and initiatives aimed at making sports an integral part of individuals' daily lifestyle, such as organizing marathons and cycling events. This affirms that sports are not merely a physical activity, but rather a fundamental pillar for achieving quality of life.

The nation has placed significant emphasis on enhancing education and developing life skills through the integration of sports into academic curricula across various educational stages.

The UAE encourages students to participate in physical activities to build healthy bodies and active minds. These efforts include teaching various types of sports in schools, both team and individual sports, as well as providing specialized training programs through advanced sports academies to develop the skills of emerging athletes.

Gender equality

The United Arab Emirates has placed special emphasis on enhancing the role of women in sports, demonstrating a strong commitment to gender equality by establishing women's sports teams across various disciplines, including football, basketball, swimming, and other team sports.

Furthermore, the UAE has organized numerous women-only championships,



contributing to the development of their athletic skills and supporting their ambitions in the field. Notable among these events are: the Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Women's Volleyball Cup, the Fatima bint Mubarak Gulf Women's Basketball Cup, the Fatima bint Mubarak International Women's Blitz Chess Championship, the Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Cup for Private Stables Owners in Endurance Riding, the Sheikhha Fatima bint Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan Women's Endurance Cup, the Sheikhha Hind Women's Sports Tournament, and the Arab Women's Sports Tournament in Sharjah. Moreover, several prominent women's sports institutions play a key role in the country's strategy for empowering women in sports. These include the Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Women's Sports Academy, Abu Dhabi Ladies Club, Al Ain Ladies Club, the Sharjah Women's Sports Olympic Center, and the Scientific Center for Research and Sports Performance Development in Sharjah.

Sports for All

The United Arab Emirates has demonstrated a strong commitment to launching and sponsoring sports activities that cater to all age groups, including marathons, cycling races, and family sports days.

The nation has placed particular emphasis on organizing specialized sporting events for people of determination, providing essential support for their representation in international competitions such as the Paralympic Games, thereby reinforcing the concept of sports for all.

On the global stage, the UAE has established itself as an international sporting destination by hosting major events such as the FIFA Club World Cup, Dubai Tennis Open, and Formula 1 championships. These events not only highlight the country's position on the global sporting map but also enhance dialogue and understanding between cultures, contributing to world peace and reflecting the UAE's commitment to its civilizational role.

Moreover, these initiatives demonstrate that the UAE views sports not merely as an activity but as a comprehensive message that promotes global peace, public health, and equality. These efforts showcase the UAE's dedication to building a sports-oriented society that places human development at the core of its priorities, with continued aspirations to achieve further accomplishments by 2031.

The UAE's comprehensive approach to sports development exemplifies their understanding of athletics as a unifying force that transcends cultural boundaries while promoting both individual and societal well-being.



The UAE proves that sport is not just an activity, but a holistic message that promotes global peace, public health, and equality.

Artificial intelligence: from dream to nightmare

Humans ,driven by the desire for convenience and efficiency ,have a history of embracing technology without fully considering the potential consequences.



By:
**Consultant Faisal
Al khoori**

Counselor Faisal Saleh Al-Khoori is a prominent legal expert holding a master's degree in public law. He has made outstanding contributions to the legal field, most notably authoring a book titled «The Rights of the Suspect in the UAE Criminal Procedure Law – A Comparison with Arab and French Laws.» This book was first published by the Emirates Center for Legal Studies and Research.

While people undoubtedly need things that make their lives easier and faster, solutions that are too readily available often lose their true value .We often invest significant effort in pursuing advancements without fully considering their potential consequences .AI is a prime example of a technology that the world is grappling with.

Unfortunately ,we must recognize that the idea of owning and easily acquiring things has captivated human beings in the age of the information revolution. We should see AI not as inevitable for any particular task ,nor as a panacea, but rather as an option with risks and benefits that must be carefully weighed. It may be appropriate here to ask a question :How do humans view artificial intelligence?

How Do Humans Perceive Artificial Intelligence?

Many people think that artificial intelligence is like any technology created to serve humans ,such as a washing machine ,coffee machine ,or a smart program like Google Translate .However ,artificial intelligence is beyond imagination .You can imagine that algorithms might decide many things for humans ,such as choosing a university ,nominating someone ,or even interrogating you.

There are two things to know about AI :it is the first technology in history that can make decisions by itself ,which we call an adaptability system ,and it's the first technology in history that can create ideas by itself as well .Therefore, it cannot be compared to any previous technology known to humankind, such as printing ,computers ,or others ,as all of the above were controlled by humans.

The Potential Threat of AI

Humans must understand the nature of the entity they are dealing with. Artificial intelligence has been invented and will develop through information. It will be nourished until it becomes a "monster "raised by man ,as described by scientists such as Geoffrey Hinton and Yuval Noah Harari .It will analyze and use this data ,even surpassing human abilities .Scientists see AI as nine times smarter than humans .This means humans will lose dominance and control and will have no hope of competition or superiority .You must realize that AI ,by pretending to have the notion of understanding ,is not only able to tell or make up stories but can also interpret them and predict what might happen.

Scientist Yuval Noah Harari ,on one hand ,describes AI as the greatest threat to humanity right now .However ,on the other hand ,he doesn't refuse to use



it but believes the world is not ready to absorb and contain it.

Professor Daniel Dennett ,while speaking to the MIT channel about trusting AI, argues that preventing counterfeit AI entities is crucial for social trust and security. Geoffrey Hinton ,a British-Canadian computer scientist and cognitive psychologist known for his work on artificial neural networks ,earned the title "Godfather of AI ".He departed from Google in May ,2023 citing concerns about the risks of artificial intelligence technology .Geoffrey Hinton tells us why he's now scared of the tech he helped build" :I have suddenly switched my views on whether these things are going to be more intelligent than us". Hinton wants to raise public awareness of the serious risks that he now believes may accompany the technology he ushered in.

Risks ,Benefits ,and the Path Forward

With vision and transparency ,it is crucial to elaborate on the potential risks and benefits of artificial intelligence .It's true that many people are eager to adopt AI without fully considering the potential consequences.

On one hand ,AI has the potential to revolutionize many aspects of our lives, from healthcare to transportation .It can automate tasks ,improve decision-making ,and even create new forms of art and entertainment.

However ,there are also significant risks associated with AI ,such as job displacement ,privacy concerns ,and the potential for malicious use .It's important to approach AI development and deployment with caution and to consider the ethical implications of these technologies.

Ultimately ,the decision of whether to fully adopt AI or to proceed cautiously will depend on various factors ,including the specific application ,the level of risk involved ,and the availability of appropriate safeguards .It's crucial to have a thoughtful and nuanced discussion about the future of AI ,weighing the potential benefits against the potential risks.

There is also a serious danger in this area :artificial intelligence is being developed and invested in fiercely by the private sector or government companies ,which ,in one way or another ,makes it out of public control.

The Need for Regulation

Despite what many scholars and politicians are demanding ,the regulation of something of this gravity must be at the national level before the international level. Since international and national companies will rush to invest in this field ,I believe that legislators must intervene to develop legislation that guarantees human sovereignty over artificial intelligence and its peaceful use.

Conclusion

AI is a double-edged sword. It has the potential to revolutionize our world ,but it also poses significant threats .By understanding the risks and benefits ,and by taking proactive steps to mitigate the former and maximize the latter ,we can ensure that AI serves humanity rather than the other way around.

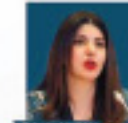
The Union's integrated efforts emphasise the UAE's human rights leadership

The "Union for Human Rights" Association has continued to strengthen its leading position in the field of promoting human rights, not only at the national level, but also at the Arab and international levels.

As the Association continued to exert more efforts to review the efforts made by the UAE and its wise leadership to enhance the country's leadership in the field of human rights.

UAHR
الاتحاد للمواطنة والاعراف
Union for Human Rights

المُتحدِّثين والمُحاور: SPEAKERS AND TOPICS

 د. ويلف فوث Dr. Willy Fauthe دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل The role of UN bodies and mechanisms in protecting and promoting human rights in the future	 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib تعزيز التعاون الدولي في تعزيز حقوق الإنسان Strengthening international solidarity to promote human rights in the future	 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل Status of human rights and the future	 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل The role of youth in promoting human rights in the future
 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل The role of the Charter of the Future in advancing human rights in the future	 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل Women's protection and empowerment in the future	 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل The role of NGOs in promoting human rights in the future	 د. فاطمة الخياط Dr. Fatima Alkhatib دورات واثبات الحقوق الإنسانية في المستقبل The role of NGOs in promoting human rights in the future

Celebrating International Human Rights Day

During an international seminar organised by the "Union for Human Rights" Association, with the participation of international experts in the field of human rights, the UAE's qualitative achievements in the field of human rights in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, especially in the fields of health, education, social protection, preservation of cultural, intellectual and religious rights, combating discrimination and promoting justice, were highlighted.

Participants pointed out that the UAE is taking steady steps towards promoting human rights, and this is evident through the enactment of laws, policies and strategies, especially those related to the empowerment of women, the rights of children, the elderly and labour; where, during the past five years, about 55 laws concerned with the care and promotion of human rights, including the law on protection against domestic violence,



combating discrimination, hatred and extremism, protection of witnesses, juvenile delinquents and persons of unknown parentage, combating human trafficking, regulating places of worship for non-Muslims, media regulation, regulation of labour relations, senior citizens' rights and data protection. More than 40 national strategies, plans and policies have been launched to promote and ensure the enjoyment of human rights. At the international level, the UAE has ranked high in global competitiveness indicators, including seventh globally and first regionally in the Gender Equality Index 2024, and first globally in the Low Labour Conflict Index, according to the annual Global Competitiveness Report 2024.

Brainstorming and operational plan for 2025

In a brainstorming session held in Abu Dhabi, the Board of Directors discussed the Association's progress and achievements for the year 2024, reviewed all future plans and programmes, followed up on the implementation of its strategy 2024-2028 and adopted its operational plan for 2025, which included projects and frameworks targeted by the Association to consolidate its position and leadership as one of the UAE's civil society institutions. Based on the achievements in 2024, the association confirmed that it will continue to issue and develop 'Emirates Human Rights' magazine to include the French language in addition to Arabic and English, to play its media role in spreading and developing national, regional and international human rights awareness; to be a human rights platform from the UAE to the world; by shedding

Review of the UAE's human rights leadership during the celebration of International Human Rights Day.



light on contemporary rights ,and providing an interactive space for specialists and international experts to discuss human rights issues ,in order to enhance interaction among various concerned parties such as civil society institutions, international human rights organisations and researchers in this field.

Arab Charter for Human Rights

The Association participated as a representative of UAE civil society in the work of the 27th session of the Arab Charter Committee for Human Rights, to discuss the second periodic report submitted by the United Arab Emirates, which was held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States in Cairo on 27 and 28 January ,2025 where the Association submitted a parallel and independent national report to the Charter Committee ,which included a set of observations and recommendations that enhanced the quality and comprehensiveness of the report.

This was preceded by the participation of the Association ,headed by Her Excellency Dr Fatima Al Kaabi ,President of the Association ,in a meeting with the delegation of the Arab Charter Committee for Human Rights - League of Arab States ,headed by His Excellency Jaber Al Marri ,Chairman of the Committee ,in preparation for participating as an observer in the review of the UAE's report before the Committee in January,2025

Her Excellency Maryam Al Kaabi ,Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the Arab Republic of Egypt and Permanent Representative to the League of Arab States ,received the Vice-President of the Assembly on the sidelines of the Assembly's participation in the Charter Committee meetings.

Parallel report during the review of the UAE's second report before the Committee of the Arab Charter for Human Rights.

Participation in the United Nations Conference to Combat Desertification.



International collaboration and partnerships

Her Excellency Dr Fatima Al Kaabi ,President of the Association ,discussed with Ambassador Nabila Makram ,Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Fahim Foundation for Psychological Support - Egypt, the plan for joint projects and ways to support cooperation with the Association in order to develop and enhance the role of civil society in caring for human rights' in the field of mental health.'

A delegation headed by Mrs Maryam Al Ahmadi ,Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors ,participated in the activities of the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (COP16 (in Riyadh ,where the delegation discussed the importance of international collaboration to address the causes and repercussions of drought and desertification ,and to confront the repercussions related to the decline in the ability of countries to secure food in the context of ensuring the right to food and protection from poverty and hunger ,especially that the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) UNCCD (estimates that by ,2050 desertification areas will increase by 50 per cent and crop productivity will decrease by 10 per cent globally.

National and International Days

The Union Association for Human Rights also continued to celebrate international ,Arab and national days ,through statements circulated in the media and its social media platforms ,covering the following events: Human Rights Day, World Arabic Language Day, UAE Nakhwa Day, International Education Day, International Clean Energy Day, World Interfaith Harmony Week, National Environment Day, International Day of Human Fraternity, International Day of Women and Girls in Science, International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism.

A 'brainstorming' session to adopt the Union operational plan and the most prominent projects and target frameworks for 2025.



THE UNION ASSOCIATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IS PARTICIPATING
**IN THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN
TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

تشارك جمعية الاتحاد لحقوق الإنسان
في الحملة الدولية
لمناهضة العنف ضد المرأة والفتيات

بمناسبة اليوم الدولي للقضاء على العنف ضد المرأة والفتيات، تحتفل مع دولة الإمارات والعالم

ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, WE JOIN THE UAE AND THE WORLD IN CELEBRATION

UNDER THE SLOGAN:
#TOWARDSBEIJING+30
#UNITETOENDVIOLENCEAGAINSTWOMENANDGIRLS
Campaign Duration: 16 days of activities
From November 25 to December 10

تحت الشعار:
#نحو_بيجين_30+
#التحدوا_لإنهاء_العنف_ضد_المرأة_والفتيات
مدة الحملة: 16 يوماً من النشاطات
من 25 نوفمبر إلى 10 ديسمبر

• ستسلط الحملة الضوء على الجهود العالمية المستمرة لمكافحة العنف ضد المرأة والفتيات.
• اللون البرتقالي يرمز إلى مستقبل مشرق خالي من العنف.

• THE CAMPAIGN WILL HIGHLIGHT THE ONGOING GLOBAL EFFORTS TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS.
• ORANGE COLOR SYMBOLIZES A BRIGHT FUTURE FREE FROM VIOLENCE.

Conclusion:

It is expected that the Union Society for Human Rights will continue its integrated participation during the sessions of the Human Rights Council meetings, the achievements of which are presented in the upcoming issues of the magazine, including the 58th session, where a number of written and oral statements are presented and human rights events are organised, whether represented by an international seminar on the sidelines of the session or a human rights cultural exhibition in the square of the United Nations Palace; the Society continues to exert all efforts to achieve its goals and present the true image of the process of promoting and sponsoring human rights in the State of the UAE.

The Orange Campaign

In this context, the Union Association for Human Rights participated in the international campaign to combat violence against women and girls, as part of the UAE and the world's celebrations of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls under the slogan 'Towards Beijing +30: Unite to End Violence against Women and Girls' and the 30th anniversary of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The campaign - which ran for 16 days through the association's social media accounts - comes in line with the international campaign 'Unite to End Violence Against Women', which focused on international efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls around the world, starting from 25 November until 10 December, which coincides with the global celebration of Human Rights Day.

The association's participation in the international campaign achieved all its objectives, namely enhancing community awareness of protecting women and girls from violence of all kinds (physical, digital, economic); (it left a real impression of the UAE's efforts to combat violence against women, the campaign attracted about 180,000 views with 82 tweets and 'orange' posts through the association's social media platforms; and 140,000 people interacted with the sentence through likes or interaction.

According to the campaign statistics, Dubai ranked first in terms of interaction with the campaign with 29.3 per cent, followed by Abu Dhabi with 29.2 per cent, Sharjah with 14.3 per cent, Al Ain with 6.8 per cent, and Ajman with 5.4 per cent.



جمعية الاتحاد لحقوق الإنسان
Union Association for Human Rights

Union Association for Human Rights Competition

"Color and Write with Sustainability"
In this issue's supplement

Join now
by coloring the caricatures in the magazine supplement or
by expressing your creative ideas about sustainability

Cash prizes and certificates of appreciation in different categories, including for people of determination

Children (5-12 years) Youth (12-18 years)
Adults (19 years and older)

Deadline for submissions
April 4, 2025
Winners announcement
April 18, 2025

Don't miss the chance and be one of the winners!

It is important to stress the alignment of our human rights Projects with your Political agenda!



Human Rights Activist



Emirates Hall

The UAE sky shifts from dawn to sunset in the heart of the Grand Meeting Room 17 of the Palais des Nations, the UAE's donation to the United Nations in Geneva.

-The architectural idea of the project is inspired by the emblem of the United Arab Emirates consisting of a golden falcon surrounded by a circle of seven stars representing the seven emirates that make up the Union.

Photography: Savannah Lynn Jakta

Avid photographer, collaborator, European Public Law Organization (EPLO). She loves photography and is keen to document her life in pictures. She looks forward to visiting the Emirates and experiencing its global splendor.





Scan the QR code
to watch a video of the hall



- Under the falcon ,the name of the United Arab Emirates was written in Kufio script ,where the name of the country was placed within the circle in the heart of the golden falcon ,while preserving the transformations and authentic suggestions of Arabic calligraphy.
- The structure was then installed with the sky background symbolizing the sky of the UAE and its ambitious endless and boundless vision that represents the vision The future and forward-looking of the UAE.
- The perimeter of the hall consists of wooden panels in sand colors ,whose curved shapes represent an accurate representation of the wind in sand dunes.
- The purple carpets are inspired by the unique colour gradation that characterizes the sands of the Abu Dhabi desert.

The hall features the latest and finest broadcasting, listening and interpretation technologies in addition to advanced systems for transmitting and following up conferences ,at a cost of about 22 \$ million .The Emirates Hall is one of four main halls in the building ,which hosts nearly nine thousand meetings annually ,with around 28,000 attendees .These participants contribute to the formulation and making of pivotal international decisions that affect the course and movement of the world. This initiative reflects the UAE's commitment to supporting the efforts of the United Nations in performing its international role at various levels ,thus enhancing the Organization's effectiveness in achieving its global goals.



UAHR En.



UAHR AR.



SOCIAL MEDIA

