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Statement by

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Minister of State

of the United Arab Emirates

before

The General Debate of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Abdulla Shahid on his presidency of this session. We are confident that we will collectively make further progress in addressing urgent international issues and building a safer and sustainable world. A world in which our peoples can look to the future with hope and confidence.

The UAE believes that this year is a **historic juncture** at the national level as we celebrate the golden jubilee of the UAE and announce the "Principles of the 50," which set out the socio-economic development road map in preparation for the upcoming years. This year is also a critical juncture at the international level, where we are all striving to address the COVID-19 pandemic, **secure supply chains for all the people**, and help them recover from the medical, economic, and security impacts of the pandemic. This year, my country will also host Expo 2020, which will be inaugurated in a few days with the participation of more than 190 countries. We aspire for this international event to help in the next phase of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and support international efforts aimed at **instilling hope and optimism** among peoples, as it will provide a platform to connect minds, develop innovative solutions for the most pressing international challenges, and lay the groundwork to create a brighter and more prosperous future.



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Mr. President,

Today, we need **wise leadership** to advance **multilateralism and to develop a united international position** to address our common global challenges. It is also imperative to have a **genuine political will** to overcome this difficult historic juncture, which requires putting differences aside and strengthening relations between states in order to focus on the future and security of our peoples while **upholding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter**. In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's vision to strengthen multilateralism in a manner that serves our shared interests, as set out in his report "Our Common Agenda"

As a priority, we must **generate international momentum to develop peaceful solutions to conflicts** and avert political crises before they escalate. In this context, the UAE will continue its long-standing **support for the efforts of the United Nations and the international community** to achieve real progress in **political processes**. We believe that creating an environment conducive to peace and stability, especially in our region, requires implementing a comprehensive and durable ceasefire in Yemen, and sustaining it in Libya and Syria with the departure of all foreign forces.

Nevertheless, and in order to succeed in our efforts to end the cycle of conflict in the Arab region, **crude regional interference** in Arab affairs, especially in Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Iraq, must be halted. The illegal interference has obstructed political processes, exacerbated humanitarian crises, and undermined regional and international stability. The UAE relies on a clear international position that rejects regional interference in Arab affairs and supports Arab countries in overcoming all obstacles to peace and stability in the region. We stress here that ensuring **full respect for the sovereignty of Arab countries and reaching comprehensive political solutions** under the auspices of the United Nations remain the only way to end the crises in the Arab region.

In this context, we believe that there is an opportunity to achieve **sustainable peace in Yemen**. It will only be possible by reaching a comprehensive political solution that includes a ceasefire to ensure stability for the people of Yemen and neighboring countries. We have seen genuine initiatives in this direction, the latest of which was presented by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to end the war in Yemen. For these efforts to be successful, all parties must demonstrate commitment and determination. However, the Houthi militias continue their provocative and aggressive actions, obstructing the political process and efforts of the United Nations. We reiterate here the importance of implementing the Riyadh Agreement and committing to it to unify the people of Yemen.

Additionally, supporting stability in the region requires ending the occupation of all Palestinian and Arab territories, establishing **an independent Palestinian state** based on the 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital, and achieving the two-state solution in accordance with the



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relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. We also reiterate the call to stop the construction of settlements, displacement of Palestinians, and all other illegal practices.

One year after signing the **Abraham Accords**, we are encouraged by the establishment of new relations in the region, which unlocked prospects for peace and reconciliation. Through these relations, we seek to stimulate economic growth and advance prosperity and stability for the people in the region, especially for the younger generations who deserve to look to the future with optimism and hope.

Mr. President,

The ongoing conflicts in the region exacerbated by the pandemic threaten to contribute to a future in which **extremist and terrorist groups**, such as the Houthis, Da'esh, Al-Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Hezbollah, continue their recruitment of new generations of young people to fuel violence and hatred. As such, we will not relent in our efforts to counter these scourges wherever they exist. We must continue to build on the progress achieved in our fight against Da'esh in Syria and Iraq by strengthening regional and international cooperation and constantly refining our methods while respecting international law.

In this context, we stress the need to protect the **security of energy supplies, freedom of navigation, and trade routes** while working at the same time on de-escalation. Targeting vital infrastructure and facilities has direct repercussions on the international economy, peace, and security.

Similarly, we must ensure that the Middle East is a region free of weapons of mass destruction. This should be the goal of all countries that are committed to protecting the international order. Reaching **a common understanding with Iran**, which addresses all regional and international concerns, remains a fundamental requirement and should start with de-escalation to achieve regional and international peace and stability. We cannot ignore Iran's development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, as well as its interference in the region. Therefore, any future agreement with Iran must address the shortcomings of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and must involve the countries of the region. This is a legitimate and fair request by countries that seek to protect their security and peoples.

We will continue to call on Iran to respect international law, the principles of good neighborliness, and to resolve disputes through peaceful means. We reiterate our **demand that Iran ends its occupation of the three UAE islands: Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa**. The UAE will never cease its demand for its legitimate sovereignty over the islands occupied by Iran since 1971, in flagrant violation of international law and the United Nations Charter. The UAE will continue to call on Iran to agree to resolve this dispute peacefully through direct negotiations or referral to the International Court of Justice.



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Mr. President,

The UAE stresses the importance of de-escalation and overcoming the challenges facing many countries worldwide. In this regard, we stress the urgent need to strengthen security and stability in **Afghanistan** to fulfill the aspirations of its people, particularly women and youth, and to end the prolonged suffering in return for peace and prosperity. As we follow the rapidly changing developments in Afghanistan and assess their political, security, and humanitarian repercussions, the UAE stresses the importance of ensuring secure access of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people to preserve their dignity and protect their rights. In light of our efforts to promote tolerance and provide humanitarian assistance to all peoples in need without discrimination, my country continues to support international humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan and to send urgent medical and food assistance while facilitating efforts to safely evacuate Afghans and people from other countries through the UAE.

Moreover, we emphasize the importance of maintaining **security and stability in the African continent**. We stress the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses all security, humanitarian, and development issues throughout the continent. The African Union has made vigorous and exemplary efforts, which need further international support, especially in the areas of countering extremism and terrorism, and of mediation and consultation in order to resolve existing disagreements.

We need to strengthen our cooperation in promoting tolerance and building **peaceful coexisting communities**, including through countering hate speech. As we commemorated this year, for the first time, the **International Day of Human Fraternity**, the UAE is encouraged by international calls to promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue. We also reiterate that achieving sustainable peace requires **active participation from women and youth** in light of their vital role in preventing and resolving conflicts and building prosperous societies.

In the same approach, the UAE is keen to strengthen the humanitarian response in its foreign policy and contributed with the international community in alleviating **the dire humanitarian situation in areas affected by conflict and disasters**. As a priority, we must **strengthen multilateralism to help people respond to the pandemic**, starting with the equitable distribution of vaccines, sustained humanitarian assistance, and cooperation in rebuilding a sustainable economy. This will require building institutions capable of coping with the challenges and **strengthening the work of regional and international organizations**, foremost the United Nations, which plays a pivotal role in building resilient societies.

Particular emphasis should also be placed **on future preparedness** and investment in areas that achieve security, peace, and prosperity for peoples. Therefore, the UAE continues its approach towards promoting development and prosperity through an ambitious vision that combines



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economic development with technology and innovation. The **link between politics and economic growth** is clear and crucial for our region as we look towards its future. We stress here the importance of enabling people to have access to **advanced technology**. Though it is exploited by some to cause unrest, advanced technology is a vital tool to achieve peace and address urgent challenges, including climate change. **My country will continue to work with its partners** in the next phase to transform challenges into opportunities and harness potentials to achieve peace.

In this context, **climate change** remains one of the most pressing challenges. In spite of its increasingly serious repercussions, we believe that if we intensify our international efforts, we will not only be able to reduce its effects and adapt to them, but we will also be able to achieve many economic benefits for countries by investing in solutions mitigating the effects of climate change. Therefore, we stress the need for developing a suitable global response during the twenty-sixth session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) and in all relevant international meetings. At the same time, we view the Paris Agreement as an exceptional opportunity to support economic growth and create job opportunities. For our part, the UAE seeks to work with its partners to find solutions and explore opportunities that reduce the effects of climate change, including through seeking to host the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28).

We also commend the tireless efforts of the **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)** in Abu Dhabi in helping countries adopt renewable energy and providing solutions to address the challenges of climate change.

Finally, Mr. President,

I would like to express the UAE's sincere gratitude to member states **for our election to the membership of the Security Council for the term 2022-2023**. During our membership in the Security Council, my country will use its experience, expertise, and proven approach to build bridges for cooperation to address the most pressing challenges, including extremism, terrorism, regional crises, combating epidemics, climate change, as well as addressing women and youth issues and strengthening their role in achieving security and peace.

Thank you, Mr. President.