

# SHEIKH SHAKHBUT BIN NAHYAN AL NAHYAN

Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, United Arab Emirates

**Robert Dossou, President of the African Association of International Law, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Benin, former President of the Constitutional Court of Benin**

If His Excellency and His Highness Sheikh Shakhbut bin Nahyan Al Nahyan would like to take the floor, we shall be glad to hear him.

## **Sheikh Shakhbut bin Nahyan Al Nahyan**

First of all, welcome to the United Arab Emirates. We are very honored and glad to have you here and I very much hope that you have enjoyed your stay so far. I also hope that you have had and continue to have fruitful and constructive discussions to help not only colleagues but also policymakers in hopefully taking the right decisions and the right approach to facing the common challenges and threats that may be seen in the near future. Nevertheless, I am very much delighted and honored to be here with you today to participate in this roundtable discussion.

Extending from my senior leadership belief of wise leadership and strengthening international cooperation and solidarity, it is a genuine honor to represent the UAE in this capacity in order for us to develop bridges of understanding throughout the African continent and the rest of the world. I would also like to extend my appreciation to the organizers of this event and all the invitees who have joined us here in Abu Dhabi. It is evident that so much effort has been dedicated to this planning and execution and we expect great outcomes. Thanks to you all for your interventions.

There is no doubt that the UAE is wholeheartedly invested in the future of Africa and its people and of course we continue to hopefully play a proactive and valuable role in Africa, coming from our ethics and our standards and our values in providing and reflecting peace, security, prosperity, fraternity and coexistence. I think it is very relevant to say that the UAE was founded in 1971 without one drop of blood spilled, nor one bullet fired. We have been built with coexistence, peace, warmth and love to one another and this is what we want to export and showcase to our partners and our trusted allies internationally.

We are excited to enter a new era of post-Covid-19 when we will be able to build stronger partnerships across Africa and across the world with the hopes of creating a better future for our countries and regions, a future built on stability, security and sustainability. We understand that the only way to achieve this is through dialogue, open channels of communication,

exchange of knowledge and, above all, the development of strategic partnerships that are mutually beneficial. The UAE is proud of its longstanding relations with the African continent and the rest of the world. We share a vision of boosting prosperity for our peoples and creating opportunities for coming generations.

We are certain that we will continue to enjoy fruitful partnerships by strengthening ties of cooperation in pursuit of a more prosperous future. We will explore all available opportunities to incorporate and advance our relations, proactively engaging across different fields and sectors. We will join efforts to address global issues that influence our stability to grow as partners. We will continue to work together on pressing global challenges, including counterterrorism and extremism, combating climate change, improving food security and more. To enable this, we need platforms, such as the World Policy Conference, that allow us to discuss the most problematic issues and collectively determine solutions. These events also bring about the opportunity to advance our relations to new heights. I would like to thank you for having me here, joining this panel and roundtable, and I very much look forward to witnessing its productive outcomes. I wish you all a happy and a fruitful time in the UAE and the very best wishes. Thank you.

### **Robert Dossou**

Your Excellency, Your Highness, on behalf of all of the participants in this workshop, thank you for coming. We are honored not only by your presence, but also by your words.

You have emphasized tolerance. Yours is the only country in the world, or one of the few – I say one of the few out of caution, but I think you are the only one – to have a Ministry for Tolerance. It would be wonderful if you managed to transmit this neighborly love to us. We hope you do.

I came to your country in 1995, when I was my country's Foreign Affairs Minister. It was an official visit and I had already had talks at the time. This has stayed with me, and I am personally happy that you have come because it recalls good memories.

Thank you for being here. We would be happy if you could participate in the discussion until the end, if your schedule allows. Thank you, Your Highness.