

HER EXCELLENCY NOURA AL KAABI

Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, and esteemed speakers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to address you today.

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the United Arab Emirates for the 17th Edition of the World Policy Conference. We are excited to host this distinguished gathering for the fourth time. WPC as a forum has consistently fostered the kind of open dialogue and innovative collaboration that we value so much here. Over the years, this conference has become an essential space for addressing the pressing challenges of our times, driven by the insights and contributions of global leaders, policymakers, and thinkers.

Your presence here today—representing diverse perspectives and areas of expertise—underscores the shared commitment to seeking solutions to the world's most urgent and complex issues. Collaborative spirit is the bedrock of the World Policy Conference.

As we convene, we do so in a year of profound global uncertainty and transformation. From geopolitical tensions to environmental crises, the challenges the world is facing are vast. Multiple concurrent conflicts threaten peace and stability in Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. At the same time, 2024 was packed with an unprecedented number of key elections that will shape global policy in the coming years. Yet, amid these changes, there is also the promise of progress, grounded in our collective determination to chart a positive path forward.

As we begin, it is imperative to acknowledge the ongoing tragedies that weigh heavily on the global conscience. The war in Gaza is now over a year old, and the loss of civilian lives continues. The humanitarian crisis in Gaza remains a deep source of concern, with untold suffering and loss of life. The UAE reaffirms its call for an immediate cessation of hostilities. We believe firmly in the need for de-escalation and the delivery of life-saving aid to those in desperate need.

This situation highlights the critical need for robust diplomacy and cooperation. It serves as a stark reminder of the interconnected nature of global peace and security. We have seen the spillover effects of the war in Gaza firsthand in Lebanon. At the same time, we have seen the promise of diplomacy in brokering a ceasefire in Lebanon. We are hopeful that this could lead to further improvements in the situation, and that there will be similar diplomatic achievements in the future. These conflicts do not remain confined; their consequences ripple outward,

disrupting economies, straining communities, and testing the resilience of societies far beyond their immediate borders.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The war in Ukraine continues to strain the international order, fueling divisions and creating ripple effects that impact global energy markets, food systems, and multilateral fora. The conflict in Sudan continues unabated, as we witness the unfolding of a humanitarian catastrophe in real time. Throughout all this, we believe it essential that we continue to uphold the principles of dialogue and mutual respect, even in the face of stark disagreements. We must work tirelessly to find diplomatic solutions. We must keep talking to each other. Without dialogue progress is impossible.

At the same time, we must be mindful that the world is undergoing profound shifts in its economic and geopolitical landscape. The rise of new economic groupings and the evolution of multilateral organizations reflect a growing recognition that the traditional systems of global governance must adapt. There is a pressing need for more inclusive and equitable frameworks that give voice to emerging countries, while preserving the core values of cooperation and shared responsibility.

Still, it is vital to recognize the enduring importance of international institutions. Organizations like the UN despite their challenges and need for reform, remain indispensable platforms for addressing global crises. At the same time, regional organizations like the African Union and the League of Arab States have a critical role to play in complementing these efforts, bringing localized insights and tailored solutions to the table.

The challenges and changes we face are compounded by accelerating technological advancements. Artificial intelligence in particular, is reshaping industries, societies, and even the way we perceive human potential. While these innovations offer extraordinary opportunities, they also bring ethical dilemmas and risks that must be managed carefully. We are eager to unleash the power of human creativity, but we also cannot ignore the real and potential harms of mismanaging AI. In the UAE, we are committed to fostering a balanced approach, leveraging technology for good while safeguarding against its misuse.

Environmental challenges, meanwhile, remain a defining crisis of our time. Climate change is not a distant threat, it is a present reality that demands immediate and sustained action. We are seeing the cumulative effects of it already. The UAE has long prioritized climate action, including as the host of COP28, emphasizing the need for inclusive and results-oriented collaboration. We stand ready to support future COP efforts as well.

Our efforts to address the climate crisis must also encompass the intertwined challenges of food and water security and economic inequality. Climate-induced disruptions to these essential resources threaten not only the livelihoods of millions but also the stability of entire regions. These challenges threaten developmental goals and could undermine hard won progress.

Tackling these issues requires integrated strategies that harness innovation, promote resilience, and ensure that no one is left behind.

Equally important is the role of education and human capital development in building a sustainable future. An educated, empowered populace is the key to building this future. As technology transforms our economies, the need for a skilled and adaptable workforce becomes ever more critical.

The UAE has long prioritized investments in education, with a focus on empowering youth and women as drivers of change. We firmly believe that diversity and inclusion are not just moral imperatives—they are practical necessities for innovation and progress.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we reflect on these global challenges, we are reminded here in the region that the Middle East stands at a crossroads. The region's history of conflict and division is well known, but so too is its potential as a hub for innovation, trade, and cultural exchange. We have seen this potential become reality in some places, and we are eager to further foster this progress. Building a future rooted in cooperation and mutual respect is not only desirable, it is essential for global stability for a region that stands at the axis of change.

This requires addressing the underlying drivers of conflict, from political grievances to economic disparities. It also demands a concerted effort to promote tolerance and counter the forces of extremism that seek to divide societies. Terrorism and extremism continue to threaten societies, demanding our unwavering attention and decisive action. The UAE remains steadfast in its commitment to its principles of tolerance and coexistence.

The challenges of the Middle East are not isolated from broader global trends. The shifting dynamics of international alliances underscore the need for multilateral approaches that are inclusive and forward-looking. These developments present opportunities to rethink how nations collaborate, emphasizing connectivity, shared prosperity, and mutual accountability.

This global interconnectedness, and the requirement for collaboration, is here to stay.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

If all of this sounds like a lot, that's because it is.

But let us recognize that the challenges we face are not insurmountable. Humans are capable of crafting solutions to even the toughest problems, as history has shown us. These challenges require bold thinking, collective effort, and a firm conviction in the necessity of cooperation.



The UAE stands ready to play its part, as a partner, a bridge-builder, and a champion of peace and prosperity. We remain committed to fostering an environment where collaboration and innovation can thrive, guided by the values that unite us all.

As we begin this conference, let us engage with open minds, knowing even small steps can lead to meaningful progress.

I wish you a productive and inspiring conference.

Thank you, and may God bless you all.