

UAE: PUBLIC POLICY PERSPECTIVES

ACTIONS AND INSIGHTS — MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA

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Series Editor: Melodena Stephens Balakrishnan

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ACTIONS AND INSIGHTS – MIDDLE EAST NORTH AFRICA

UAE: PUBLIC POLICY PERSPECTIVES

EDITED BY

MELODENA STEPHENS BALAKRISHNAN

*Karlshochschule International University, Karlsruhe, Germany &
Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, Dubai, UAE*

IMMANUEL AZAAD MOONESAR

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, Dubai, UAE

RAED AWAMLEH

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, Dubai, UAE

RHYS ROWLAND-JONES

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, Dubai, UAE



كلية محمد بن راشد
للإدارة الحكومية
MOHAMMED BIN RASHID
SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT



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Preface

The Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (formerly known as the Dubai School of Government) launched in 2005 under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, as the first research and teaching institution focusing on governance and public policy in the Arab world. The School aims to support good governance in the UAE and the Arab world, and build future leaders through an integrated system offering education and training programs, as well as research and publications.

MBRSG aims to promote good governance through enhancing the region's capacity for effective public policy. Toward this goal, the MBRSG collaborates with regional and global institutions in delivering its research and training programs. In addition, the School organizes policy forums and international conferences to facilitate the exchange of ideas and promote critical debate on public policy. The School is committed to the creation of knowledge, the dissemination of best practice and the training of policy makers in the Arab world. To achieve this mission, the School has strong capabilities that support research and teaching programs, including

- applied research in public policy and management;
- master's degrees in public policy and public administration;
- executive education for senior officials and executives; and
- knowledge forums for scholars and policy makers.

Hence, the latest edition (this volume — UAE: Public Policy Perspectives) of a series of books is produced by the Academy of International Business — Middle East North Africa (AIB-MENA) Chapter in collaboration with the MBRSG. The Actions and Insights series is a valuable resource for students, academics, policy makers, and researchers.

This particular volume, UAE: Public Policy Perspectives, is substantially important work given the nature and mission of MBRSG. His Excellency Dr. Ali Sebaa Al Marri, Executive President of MBRSG, inspired this volume's theme. It focuses on public policy processes and outcomes of major developmental sectors. Furthermore, this volume will inform teaching and research in our newly introduced Master of Public Policy with specializations in health, education, science and technology, social welfare, and sustainable development. The drive toward the meeting

the UAE National Agenda 2021 objectives is crucial for every government department across the UAE.

I thank AIB-MENA and Emerald for this successful partnership and thank Dubai Electricity Water Authority for their kind support.

Professor Raed Awamleh
Dean, Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government

From the Desk of the Series Editor

The year 2017 began with a very chaotic start, especially emphasizing the debate on the benefits of globalization. In the West, United Kingdom had voted to leave the European Union, Donald Trump was elected President in the United States beginning his first few weeks with great controversy and many western countries were struggling with right wing factions. Never was there a more urgent time to look at the role of the government in the overall capacity of maintaining peace, security and the well-being of its citizens and the need to translate this agenda to the wider international context.

The field of public policy is ripe for reinvention. There is a need to hear the voice of youth in emerging markets, the elderly in developed, the stateless who are seeking refuge in other countries, the marginalized who are lost in the crowd and the children — the future of tomorrow. Advocacy, civic engagement and authority are all roles that are being redefined. Governments are custodians of a nations' greatest wealth — its people, and they need to move away from pedantic bureaucracy, becoming tech savvy, nimbler, more transparent and as responsive as leading transnationals to foster dynamic relationships with the positive values and heritage of the yesteryears. Not an easy feat at all. William Gaston, the Ezra Zilkha chair in governance studies at the Brookings Institution and a former policy adviser to President Clinton writes:

“Global economic growth is no antidote for the poison of anger and humiliation, and innovation that outpaces regulation is just as dangerous as regulation that represses innovation. There is no alternative: We need to rethink our assumptions and change the way we conduct our public business. There will be false starts and failed experiments along the way, but in the end, if we are wise (and a bit lucky), we will emerge with the policies and institutions we need for the decades ahead.

Because so much is up for grabs, it is hard to imagine a more exciting time to undertake a career in public service. Whether the issue is long-term fiscal policy, financial regulation, healthcare, terrorism, climate change, nuclear proliferation, or international development, old approaches lie shattered like windows after an earthquake. We have no idea what will happen during the next generation, but today's students

of public policy will help invent a new world. And many are fueled by the determination to do just that.”¹

Yet, even in these times, there are many governments doing the unthinkable — the UAE, a young country known for its diversity (85% of its population is foreign) is not only embracing digitalization and high technology through its Smart Government but fostering the concept of tolerance. It is the first government to have set up a Ministry of Tolerance in the world. This young country is a trend-setter. UAE was the first government to introduce a seven-star rating system in 2011 for government services to raise its standard to be on par with the private sector.²

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, said in the 2013 World Government Summit:

“The government of the future needs to be hospitable like hotels and run 24/7 like airlines. All services need to be in one-stop shop.”³

Another big innovation the UAE government is embracing is the possibility of blockchain⁴ for making smart contracts, registrations, improving productivity, efficiency, and transparency. Governments of Singapore, Estonia, the city of Hong Kong, and some places in the United States are adopting or testing blockchain for finance, digital identity, or health. It can also be used for voting. The government of Estonia wishes to digitalize its citizens’ health records creating electronic patient records on blockchain. Estonia’s e-government system (established in 1997) has given its citizens a chip-embedded ID card that allows them access to over 1000 e-government services instantly via a website from where they can even file taxes or vote. By 2016, the Dubai Smart Government was offering 2000 services through its portal for citizens, residents, and visitors. Between December 2016 to January 2017, the UAE government hosted the largest virtual blockchain hackathon. The hackathon was able to attract 1000+ participants representing 41 countries. They presented 131 blockchain solutions for global government challenges in the predominant areas of global identity (20%); health (14%), reducing footprint (13%), crime & fraud (11%), and smart cities (10%).

So much is happening in this country and this book is an opportunity to unravel the “black box” of public policy. It is the 6th book of our series titled *Actions and*

¹Galston, W. A. (2009). Public policy: Reinventing the World. *US News*, dated April 22. Retrieved from <http://www.usnews.com/education/articles/2009/04/22/public-policy-reinventing-the-world>. Accessed on February 15, 2017.

²In the spirit of continuous improvement, updated program was introduced in 2014 and is called as the Global Star Rating System for Services.

³World Government Summit and EY. (2017). *Application of the Global Star Rating System for Services*. Retrieved from <https://worldgovernmentsummit.org/api/publications/document?id=4b777dc4-e97c-6578-b2f8-ff0000a7ddb6>. Accessed on February 14, 2017.

⁴World Government Summit and Consensus. (2017). *Building the hyperinterconnected future on blockchain*. Retrieved from <https://worldgovernmentsummit.org/api/publications/document?id=c5717dc4-e97c-6578-b2f8-ff0000a7ddb6>. Accessed on February 14, 2017.

Insights and its launch coincides with the 59th annual Academy of International Business Conference being held in Dubai, UAE. By promoting a deep understanding of different viewpoints and embracing diversity through tolerance, we hope that these cases will shed some light on the profound changes this country is catalyzing for its national citizens, its residents and for the global community. As Founder and President of the Academy of International Business — MENA, a ‘nonprofit’ volunteer initiative founded in 2009 and housed under the University of Wollongong in Dubai, UAE (UoWD), my team and I have been trying to push the subject areas of international business studies and now the public policy arena, to throw a positive light on the region. As a group of volunteers, we work passionately to bring this agenda to life and hope it reflects in the research and teaching output. We believe we can make a difference and this world can be a better place.

This book is divided into six sections and the cases will give you a glimpse of the ideas behind some of the most iconic companies and projects in this region. The areas of public policy covered are: government leadership, national competitive advantage, social and sustainable development, national human capital development, entrepreneurship, and government systems. Insights from thought leaders provoke dialogue on pertinent topics that are evolving — tolerance, country reputation, space industry, health and social welfare policy, education and technology, entrepreneurship, and taxation. These perspectives, contributed by various authors from government, academia, and industry offer suggestions for further development in the public policy arena. We begin with a perspective of tolerance and the need to cultivate it as a nation resource by Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi, UAE Cabinet Member, and UAE Minister of State for Tolerance.

The first case is on His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai. You will get an insight into his vision and the policies he has implemented that has helped build the global city of Dubai and the UAE. His Highness Sheikh Mohammed says,

*“I see before me leaders and innovators. My advice to you is to cast aside all doubt in your minds, for doubt destroys innovation. You should wake up every morning full of confidence and rise to new challenges as pioneering leaders.”*⁵

Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) plays an important role embracing the diversification strategy of the country and has recently built one of the world’s largest solar power grids. The plan is that by 2050, clean energy will be 75% of the total power output. Few people know that DEWA surpasses Europe and the United States in reducing power transmission losses and its reduction of water losses is greater than North America. The Dubai Smart City case documents the digital transformation of the government and its future aspirations to be the smartest city

⁵Sheikh Mohammed. (2017). *Quotes*. Retrieved from <https://sheikhmohammed.ae/en-us/quotes>. Accessed on February 26, 2017.

in the world by 2017, focusing on improving quality of life for its citizens. Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA) is one of the world's five largest primary aluminium producers. It was a merger of DUBAL and EMAL. EGA is owned equally by Mubadala Development Company of Abu Dhabi and Investment Corporation of Dubai. This case looks at the future opportunities and challenges the company is facing as the industry faces a slowdown.

The case on the Emirates Group showcases the impact of the company and the airline industry that has developed Dubai into a leading global aviation hub, by quantifying the spillover benefits for the city and other places in the world. The perspective about the advantages of space exploration also highlights UAE's future space ambitions. For example, by 2021, UAE will send a space probe to Mars. In 2017, the UAE government presented an ambitious 100-year national program to build a city on Mars by 2117.

The case on the Mohammed Bin Rashid Foundation (MBRF) and the United Nations Development Program explores partnerships and knowledge sharing between governmental and international institutions. MBRF is a US\$ 10 billion foundation launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai in May 2007 and focuses on education, entrepreneurship, and research and development.

The perspective by Christopher M. Schroeder and Sherif Kamel addresses opportunities to enhance education through technology. This report is an excerpt from one of the five working papers for the Middle East Strategy Task Force, a bi-partisan effort of the Atlantic Council of the United States, co-chaired by former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley. The original paper was released on February 3, 2016. The cases on Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) and Masdar look at the education policy in the UAE, especially with respect to equipping and motivating students to embrace science and technology careers.

Fadi Ghandour, Founder of Aramex, Executive Chairman of Wamda Group is a mentor for entrepreneurs in the region and he highlights the importance for private sector corporate entrepreneurship responsibility and the role that they can play in the entrepreneurship ecosystem and for societal development through supporting SDGs. Entrepreneurship plays an important role for the diversification of the economy. Around 95% of companies in the Middle East region are classified as family businesses. The case on Family Businesses looks at some challenges they face and the possible policy implications. Dubai as a smart government has embraced process and quality management as key pillars. The Dubai Quality Awards are used to encourage benchmarking and continuous progress and this is highlighted in the case about Business Excellence.

This book would not be possible without our champion supporters. First of all, I would have to thank institutions like the Prime Minister's Office, UAE Ministry of Tolerance, Mohamed Bin Rashid School of Government and DEWA for their support in this project. Projects like this are volunteer projects and require many hours of hard work — but we were lucky not only to have great contributing authors but also mentors. A big thank you to Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna

bint Khalid Al Qasimi, The Minister of State for Tolerance who has been a big supporter of ours since we first began. The leadership at the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, has been our greatest champion — thank you Your Excellency Dr. Ali Sebaa Al Marri. Fadi Ghandour and Christopher M. Schroeder, both gurus of the startup scene, have always brought their entrepreneurial thinking into our way of running the organization and inspired us to find innovative ways to work despite the challenges and more importantly have been there to provide support despite their very hectic schedules. At AIB-MENA, we love the creativity of public–private partnerships and outcome has always been very productive.

Teaching cases are a collaborative volunteer effort between the case writers and organizational representatives. We have to thank the authors, who have worked with revisions and tight deadlines and the organizational representatives, who have also worked with us to understand the academic style, supported our deadlines, our limitations and been generous in letting us see behind the scenes. You helped us to record the history of a region not many people understand, document impact and yet also let us know the challenges that you face, which are always part of any organization growth and so important for learning.

I thank my co-editors Prof. Raed Awamleh who has always been supportive of the big ideas and Prof. Rhys Rowland-Jones who has always been there, we could not have done it without you both! But, I especially have to thank Immanuel Azaad Moonesar who has burnt the midnight oil with me working on many AIB-MENA projects. This one was a big responsibility — but you managed brilliantly to fill the gap, especially as we operated between two countries. This was one project with a lot of hope — thinking always positively of the future. To my AIB-MENA team, my very supportive advisory board, and my kids — thank you — your support all these years shows us that dreams become reality with lots of perspiration, determination, and inspiration. We all hope this book becomes a first of many other policy case books and gives you a glimpse of how countries can embrace best practices of business corporations without losing focus on their citizens and yet balancing heritage with the progress of nations.

Melodena Stephens Balakrishnan

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List of Contributors

<i>Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi</i>	UAE Cabinet Member, and UAE Minister of State for Tolerance
<i>His Excellency Ali Sebaa Al Marri</i>	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, UAE
<i>Sara Akvan</i>	University of Wollongong in Dubai, UAE
<i>Mohamad Alattar</i>	Communication Strategist, UAE
<i>Faisal Alkhatib</i>	London School of Economics and Political Science, UK
<i>Raed Awamleh</i>	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, UAE
<i>Melodena Stephens Balakrishnan</i>	Karlshochschule International University, Germany; Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (Non-Resident Research Fellow), UAE
<i>Guy Burton</i>	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, UAE
<i>Scott Fargher</i>	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, UAE
<i>Fadi Ghandour</i>	Executive Chairman of Wamda Group, Founder of Aramex
<i>Louay Jasser</i>	Business Development Manager, UAE
<i>Sherif Kamel</i>	American University in Cairo
<i>Flevy Lasrado</i>	University of Wollongong in Dubai, UAE
<i>Immanuel Azaad Moonesar</i>	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, UAE
<i>Rhys Rowland-Jones</i>	Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, UAE

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Fadi Salem

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of
Government, UAE

Christopher M. Schroeder

Author, CEO and Investor

Balan Sundarakani

University of Wollongong in Dubai, UAE

Megan Mathias

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government,
UAE

Racquel Warner

Mohammed Bin Rashid School of
Government, UAE

PART I

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

Chapter 1

Perspective: Tolerance — A Precious National Resource

Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi

UAE Cabinet Member and UAE Minister of State for Tolerance

1995 was proclaimed the United Nations Year for Tolerance (by Resolution No. 51/95)¹ as per the 1993 initiative of UNESCO, as outlined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance and Follow-Up Plan of Action for the year.^{2,3} Subsequent to this, in 1996, the United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 51/201 on the “Issues of Human Rights Including the Various Approaches to Improve the Actual Enjoyment of Human Rights and Basic Freedoms” defined the principle of tolerance (see [Exhibit 1.1](#)). At the United Nations level, the concept of tolerance has been promoted in various ways but UAE was the first country in the world to recognize the importance of the resource of tolerance in a cohesive national and international society, and appointed a Minister of State for Tolerance in February 2016.⁴

Tolerance has a pluralistic definition. It is an attitude of the mind and involves at the highest level, the ability to be non-judgmental and the acceptance of differences rather than merely putting up with them. Tolerance respects diversity and believes in the values of individuality and originality.

¹UN General Assembly. (1995). A/RES/51/95, dated February 28, 1997. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/51/95. Accessed on November 25, 2016.

²UNESCO Executive Board. (1995). *Declaration of the Principles and Follow-Up Plan of Action for the United Nations Year of Tolerance, 147EX/15*, dated September 19. Retrieved from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001013/101344Eb.pdf>. Accessed on November 25, 2016.

³UN. (2016, November 16). *International Day of Tolerance*. Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/en/events/toleranceday/>. Accessed on November 25, 2016.

⁴Al Makhtoum, M. b. R. (2016). Mohammad Bin Rashid: Why UAE ministers for happiness, tolerance, youth and the future? *Gulf News*, dated February 17. Retrieved from: <http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/mohammad-bin-rashid-why-uae-ministers-for-happiness-tolerance-youth-and-the-future-1.1680133>. Accessed on November 21, 2016.

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Exhibit 1.1: Meaning of Tolerance.

- 1.1. Tolerance is respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression, and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience, and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, but also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of Peace.
- 1.2. Tolerance is not concession, condescension, or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. In no circumstance can it be used to justify infringements of these fundamental values. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups, and States.
- 1.3. Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy, and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments.
- 1.4. Consistent with respect for human rights, the practice of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or the abandonment or weakening of one's convictions. It means that one is free to adhere to one's own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs. It means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech, behavior and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. It also means that one's views are not to be imposed on others.

Source: Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, Article 1, United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 51/201.⁵

Tolerance and peace are closely correlated as studies have shown.⁶ The world today is in precious need of tolerance and it is a resource not only of the individual but at the collective level of the people of countries. The UAE would like to look at tolerance as a value that is an integral part of all of us — the “acceptance, and the rejoicing of differences.”⁷

The preceding years have not been easy for our world. According to UNHCR, 1 in every 122 humans are internally displaced, or a refugee or seeking asylum, with

⁵UN General Assembly Resolution No. 51/201. (1995). *Declaration of Principles on Tolerance*. Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/a51-201.htm>. Accessed on November 25, 2016.

⁶Yablon, Y. B., & Katz, Y. J. (2001). Internet-based group relations: A high school peace education project in Israel. *Educational Media International*, 38(2–3), 175–182.

⁷Khamis, J. (2016). Shaikha Lubna: Tolerance is a value, not a service. *Gulf News*, dated February 24. Retrieved from <http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/government/shaikha-lubna-tolerance-is-a-value-not-a-service-1.1678601>. Accessed on November 15, 2016.

half being children.⁸ We are now facing one of the largest migrations in our times and the issue of integration of immigrants is a priority for many national leaders. In 2016, the UN global campaign “Together” was launched to:

“change negative perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants, and to strengthen the social contract between host countries and communities, and refugees and migrants.”⁹

A study in the Netherland showed that a tolerant representation of its national history would be able to elevate acceptance of immigrants and their expressive rights, even with natives who feel a relatively strong sense of belonging to their nation.¹⁰ Hence, tolerance is a national asset and has strong roots in history. In addition to the human displacement, the World Bank highlights the challenges of fragility, conflict, and violence:

“2 billion people live in countries where development outcomes are affected by fragility, conflict, and violence. By 2030, the share of global poor living in fragile and conflict-affected situations is projected to reach 46 percent. Terrorism incidents have increased by 120 percent since 2012. Forced displacement is a development world crisis: 95% of refugees and internally displaced live in developing countries, originating from the same 10 conflicts since 1991.”¹¹

Aid is a large contributor to mitigate the after-effects of conflicts and natural disasters. The UAE has been at the forefront of this endeavor. The UAE has been recognized since 2013, for the third time in a row, as 1 of the 10 largest donor states in Official Development Aid (ODA).¹² Over the last 44 years, the UAE has provided over US\$ 47 billions of global aid, working through 43 charity organizations, the private sector, and individuals.¹³ But we know it alone is not enough. We need to address the reasons prior to the situation that leads to conflict.

We salute our leadership for their foresight in promoting the concept of tolerance and embedding it at multiple levels — individual and society, business, national,

⁸UNHCR. (2015). *Worldwide displacement hits all-time high as war and persecution increase*, dated June 18. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2015/6/558193896/worldwide-displacement-hits-all-time-high-war-persecution-increase.html>. Accessed on November 15, 2016.

⁹UN. (2016). *Together*. Retrieved from <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/together>. Accessed on November 25, 2016.

¹⁰Smeekes, A., Verkuyten, M., & Poppe, E. (2012). How a tolerant past affects the present historical tolerance and the acceptance of Muslim expressive rights. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(11), 1410–1422.

¹¹World Bank. (2016, September 21). *Helping countries navigate a volatile environment*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/overview>. Accessed on November 15, 2016.

¹²WAM. (2016). *UAE ranked world's 2nd largest ODA donor*, dated April 13. Retrieved from <http://www.wam.ae/en/news/emirates/1395294106778.html>. Accessed on November 11, 2016.

¹³UAEInteract. (2016). *Sheikha Lubna: Tolerance is a value, not a service*, dated February 25. Retrieved from <http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Sheikha-Lubna-Tolerance-is-a-value-not-a-service/74207.htm>. Accessed on November 15, 2016.

regional, and international. It lies at the heart of everything the UAE stands for. His Highness, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi said,

“The United Arab Emirates is based on well established, time-honored values that seek to promote the country’s relations on the basis of mutual respect, dialogue, cooperation and renouncing all forms of terrorism, violence and fanaticism.”

The UAE is a young and a multicultural society. It is home to over 200 nationalities, exceeding, in comparison, even the United Nations, which currently has 193 countries as its members. The pluralism prevalent in a country where foreigners are over 85%¹⁴ of the population requires strong cohesion in its society and is dependent on tolerance. This means taking the time and effort to understand each other and their cultures, engaging proactively in cooperation between different communities and most importantly respecting one another for their differences not their similarities. Hazel Markus, a Professor of Psychology from Stanford believes that minds are created and maintained, through the individuals’ participation in various social worlds and the influence of these social worlds. These can be for example, country of origin, region, global influence, ethnicity, gender, religion and professions. The exposure to these “worlds” according to her,

*“Don’t just tell us what to think and feel and do ... they structure how we think, feel and behave. Our social worlds are organized by some culture-specific meanings and practices, and very often these are so much a part of everyday life that they are invisible to us.”*¹⁵ It relates to the ‘conception of individuality’, the “relatedness of individuals to each other through distinct conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other. The emphasis is on attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence with them.”¹⁶

The UAE government promotes harmony and peace, and a cosmopolitan diverse society. This is our strength. It allows us to show the world the best mixture of ethnicities, religions, and cultures, at a time where many divisive issues threaten global peace and plague the modern world. The UAE reaches beyond her national borders to support the region and the world. Through this value of tolerance, we are able to

¹⁴Gulf Research Center. (2017). *GCC: Total Population and Percentage of national and non-nationals in GCC countries (latest national statistics — 2010–2015)*. Retrieved from <http://gulfmigration.eu/total-population-and-percentage-of-nationals-and-non-nationals-in-gcc-countries-latest-national-statistics-2010-2015/>. Accessed on January 30, 2017.

¹⁵Stanford. (1996). Why psychologists need to study cultural diversity. *Stanford News*, dated May 2. Retrieved from <http://news.stanford.edu/pr/96/960212aasmkus.html>. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

¹⁶Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98(2), 224–253.

promote social cohesion, inclusion, and moderation. This quality is not new to the region. The greatest dynasties of the Arab Culture, whether you look at Baghdad, Damascus or Cordoba, Andalusia, were all open to other civilizations, cultures, and regions and this, one assumes was among a key reason for their great leaps in science, philosophy, inventions and culture. His Highness, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai stated that,

“There is no future for this region without intellectual restructuring that consolidates the values of tolerance, pluralism and acceptance of others intellectually, culturally and in terms of sect and religion.”¹⁷

1.1. National Program for Tolerance

A National Program for Tolerance was developed to help create a stronger UAE society that will continue to build up tolerance, multiculturalism, the culture of acceptance of others, and which will reject attitudes of discrimination and hatred. The focus is to institutionalize tolerance through initiatives and programs at local, regional, and global levels, along with value-driven objectives. This is key in countering extremism and racism that plague most nations in the world today.

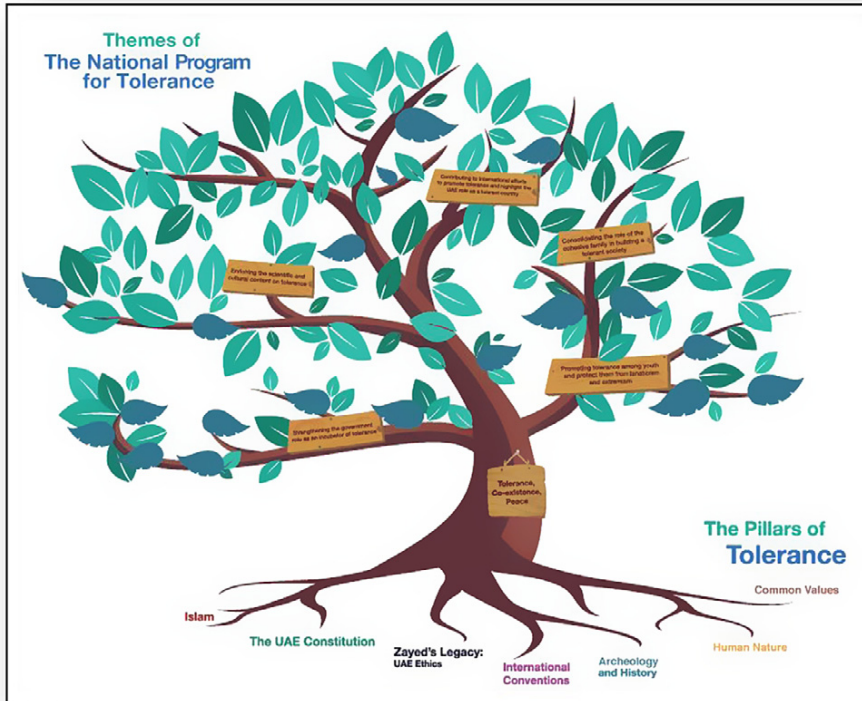
The UAE National Tolerance program rests on seven main pillars: Islam, UAE Constitution, Zayed’s Legacy and Ethics of the UAE, International Conventions, Archeology and History, Human Nature, and Common Values (see Exhibit 1.2). These pillars will focus on future hopes as the aim is to encourage tolerance in a time when mortality confronts us all.¹⁸ These pillars are founded on the principles outlined by UNESCO on countering intolerance (see Exhibit 1.3). From a policy point of view, the National Tolerance Program will be in collaboration with federal and local entities under five main themes:

1. Strengthening the government’s role as an incubator of tolerance.
2. Consolidating the role of the cohesive family in building a tolerant society.
3. Promoting tolerance among youth and protect them from fanaticism and extremism.
4. Enriching the scientific and cultural content on tolerance.
5. Contributing to international efforts to promote tolerance and highlight the UAE as a tolerant country.

¹⁷UAE Ministry of Tolerance (2016). Quote, Available: <http://www.moh.gov.ae/en/Documents/National%20Tolerance%20Program%20Updated%20on%2014-11-2016.pdf>. Accessed 30 January, 2017.

¹⁸Greenberg, J., Simon, L., Pyszczynski, T., Solomon, S., & Chatel, D. (1992). Terror management and tolerance: Does mortality salience always intensify negative reactions to others who threaten one’s world-view? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(2), 212.

Exhibit 1.2: The UAE National Program for Tolerance.



Source: The UAE National Program for Tolerance.

Exhibit 1.3: How Can Intolerance Be Countered?

1. *Fighting intolerance requires law:*

Each Government is responsible for enforcing human rights laws, for banning and punishing hate crimes and discrimination against minorities, whether these are committed by State officials, private organizations, or individuals. The State must also ensure equal access to courts, human rights commissioners, or ombudsmen, so that people do not take justice into their own hands and resort to violence to settle their disputes.

2. *Fighting intolerance requires education:*

Laws are necessary but not sufficient for countering intolerance in individual attitudes. Intolerance is very often rooted in ignorance and fear: fear of the unknown, of the other, other cultures, nations, religions. Intolerance is also closely linked to an exaggerated sense of self-worth and pride, whether personal, national, or religious. These notions are taught and learned at an early age. Therefore, greater emphasis needs to be placed on educating more and better. Greater efforts need to be made to

Exhibit 1.3: (Continued)

teach children about tolerance and human rights, about other ways of life. Children should be encouraged at home and in school to be open-minded and curious.

Education is a life-long experience and does not begin or end in school. Endeavors to build tolerance through education will not succeed unless they reach all age groups, and take place everywhere: at home, in schools, in the workplace, in law-enforcement and legal training, and not least in entertainment and on the information highways.

3. *Fighting intolerance requires access to information:*

Intolerance is most dangerous when it is exploited to fulfill the political and territorial ambitions of an individual or groups of individuals. Hatemongers often begin by identifying the public's tolerance threshold. They then develop fallacious arguments, lie with statistics and manipulate public opinion with misinformation and prejudice. The most efficient way to limit the influence of hatemongers is to develop policies that generate and promote press freedom and press pluralism, in order to allow the public to differentiate between facts and opinions.

4. *Fighting intolerance requires individual awareness:*

Intolerance in a society is the sum total of the intolerance of its individual members. Bigotry, stereotyping, stigmatizing, insults, and racial jokes are examples of individual expressions of intolerance to which some people are subjected daily. Intolerance breeds intolerance. It leaves its victims in pursuit of revenge. In order to fight intolerance, individuals should become aware of the link between their behavior and the vicious cycle of mistrust and violence in society. Each one of us should begin by asking: am I a tolerant person? Do I stereotype people? Do I reject those who are different from me? Do I blame my problems on "them"?

5. *Fighting intolerance requires local solutions:*

Many people know that tomorrow's problems will be increasingly global but few realize that solutions to global problems are mainly local, even individual. When confronted with an escalation of intolerance around us, we must not wait for governments and institutions to act alone. We are all part of the solution. We should not feel powerless for we actually possess an enormous capacity to wield power. Nonviolent action is a way of using that power — the power of people. The tools of nonviolent action — putting a group together to confront a problem, to organize a grassroots network, to demonstrate solidarity with victims of intolerance, to discredit hateful propaganda — are available to all those who want to put an end to intolerance, violence, and hatred.

Source: UNESCO.¹⁹

1.1.1. Islam

The UAE National Program for Tolerance's first pillar is Islam. Religion is identified as one of the most salient components of "identity."²⁰ Islam, like many other

¹⁹UNESCO. (2016). *Learning to live together: Promoting tolerance*, Retrieved from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/fight-against-discrimination/promoting-tolerance/>. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

²⁰Al Sadi, F. H., & Basit, T. N. (2013). Religious tolerance in Oman: Addressing religious prejudice through educational intervention. *British Educational Research Journal*, 39(3), 447–472.

religions in the world is a religion rooted in peace and love. The greeting commonly used by Muslims “Salaamu aleikum,” literally means “Peace be upon you.”²¹ Since ancient times, across the world, there has always been a need to differentiate terrorists and religion, especially when battles were fought in the name of religion to further personal or political agendas.²² Late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, former President and Founder of the UAE, said in an interview in 2002,

*“Muslims stand against any person of Muslim faith who will try to commit any terror act against a fellow human being. A terrorist is an enemy of Islam and of humanity, while the true Muslim is friendly to all human beings and a brother to other Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This is because Islam is a religion of mercy and tolerance.”*²³

The UAE’s Constitution declares that Islam is the official religion. Through this pillar, we intend to collect examples of tolerance, many of which are evidenced in the Holy Quran, the Prophet’s Sunna, and even in our Islamic history. We will encourage and commend stories of tolerance.

Religious tolerance is a fundamental pillar of a strong state, and a catalyst of prosperity in today’s world. The UAE constitution firmly ensures the freedom of all to practice their religious beliefs and enjoy their freedom and rights, in conformity with international conventions and treaties. In UAE, there are a number of Christian churches, as well as a Hindu temple.

On my recent visit to Rome, I personally, on behalf of the delegation delivered an official invitation from our President, His Highness, Sheikh Khalifa to His Holiness, Pope Francis to visit the country (see Exhibit 1.4). Our government through its initiatives wishes to make UAE an incubator for peace and the cradle of dialogue, understanding, coexistence and harmony. In 2016, Abu Dhabi, UAE hosted the Muslim Council of Elders and the Anglican Church Forum, under the theme, “Towards an understanding, integrated world.” His Highness, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said:

“Tolerance is no catchphrase, but a quality we must cherish and practice. It must be woven into the fabric of our society to safeguard our future and maintain the progress we have made. There can be no bright

²¹Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Washington, DC. (2016). *Travelling in a Muslim Country*. Retrieved from <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/travel-culture/traveling-muslim-country>. Accessed on November 25, 2016.

²²Bush. (2001). Islam is Peace. *White House*, September 17. Retrieved from <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010917-11.html>. Accessed on November 11, 2016.

²³Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Washington, DC. (2016). *Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Founder of the UAE*. Retrieved from <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/history/sheikh-zayed-bin-sultan-al-nahyan-founder-uae>. Accessed on November 23, 2016.

future for the Middle East without an intellectual reconstruction that re-establishes the values of ideological openness, diversity, and acceptance of others' viewpoints, whether intellectual, cultural, or religious.”²⁴

Exhibit 1.4: Her Excellency Sheikhha Lubna with His Holiness Pope Francis.



Source: UAE National Program for Tolerance.

1.1.2. UAE Constitution

UAE's Constitution, created in 1971 is founded on encouraging equality, freedom, respect, and indiscrimination. This is especially reflected in Articles 25, 32, and 40 (see Exhibit 1.5). UAE is a Federation. The President of the Federation and the Vice President are elected by the Supreme Council of Rulers, the top policy-making body in the UAE, for renewable five-year terms. The Prime Minister appoints the Cabinet of Ministers, and the Supreme Council with the Cabinet of Ministers and the 40-member parliament known as the Federal National Council (FNC) also examines proposed new legislation and provides advice to the UAE Cabinet, as required.²⁵

²⁴WAM. (2016). *Why ministers for happiness, tolerance, youth and the future?* By Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Retrieved from <http://www.wam.ae/en/news/emirates/1395292124434.html>. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

²⁵Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, New Delhi. (2016). *Government*. Retrieved from http://www.uaeembassy-newdelhi.com/theuae_government.asp. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

Exhibit 1.5: UAE Constitution.

Article 25

All persons shall be equal before the law. No discrimination shall be practiced between citizens of the Union by reason of race, nationality, religious belief or social position.

Article 32

The freedom to hold religious ceremonies in accordance with established custom shall be safeguarded, provided such ceremonies are consistent with public order and with public morals.

Article 40

Foreigners shall enjoy, within the Union, the rights and freedoms stipulated in international charters which are in force, or in treaties and agreements to which the Union is party. They shall be subject to the equivalent obligations.

Source: https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/United_Arab_Emirates_2004.pdf

Tolerance begins in society and starts with respecting women and the role they play. The UN Global Assembly document A/51/201 states that,

*“Intolerance may take the form of marginalization of vulnerable groups and their exclusion from social and political participation, as well as violence and discrimination against them.”*²⁶

Women play a strong role in the UAE government.²⁷ In the 2015 FNC election, close to 25 percent of those elected were women including the body’s president, Dr. Amal Al Qubaisi, the first woman in the region to lead a national assembly.²⁸ There are eight women who serve on the UAE Cabinet and women make up 20 percent of the diplomatic corps.²⁹ Women have also been appointed to positions in the judiciary since 2008.³⁰ The UAE has four women fighter pilots and over 30 women who were trained to work with the country’s special security forces.³¹ In September 2014, the first region’s first military college for women, Khawla bint Al Azwar Military School, was opened.³²

²⁶UNESCO. (1995). *Declaration of the Principles of Tolerance*. Available: http://www.unesco.org/webworld/peace_library/UNESCO/HRIGHTS/124-129.HTM. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

²⁷Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, Washington, DC. (2016). *Women in government and business*. Available: <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/women-uae>. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹*Ibid.*

³²*Ibid.*

The constitution extends protection to vulnerable groups like children, the elderly, and the disabled. UAE supports education and learning services for students with special needs. Dubai aims to be one of the world's most disabled-friendly cities by 2020.³³ UAE is committed to human rights. Keeping in mind it is a young country, over the last 45 years, the UAE has transformed itself from a traditional, largely rural nation with little access to education and health services, to a globally connected, modern infrastructured country with a cosmopolitan and urbanized society. It has been faced with large-scale immigration — for example, in 1980, the total UAE population was 1 million, and by 2014, it was 9.4 million and expected to reach 15.5 million in 2050.³⁴

We are constantly working to promote a transparent and inclusive approach to human rights:³⁵ ensuring the rights of workers, women and children; implementing domestic legal frameworks; and ratifying international human rights conventions. In 2015, we passed an Anti-Discrimination Law to apply to everyone, which criminalizes all forms of discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste, creed, doctrine, race, color, or ethnic origin and it covers speech and the written word, books, pamphlets, or even via online media. His Highness, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Nahyan, The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, said,

*“The civilized, advanced nation we seek to build and the sustainable development we are keen to achieve both require concerted efforts from all sectors of the community and from all public and private entities and organizations. They require consistent and harmonious work in order to achieve our goals and promote and underpin our nations status with its distinct role regionally and internationally.”*³⁶

³³Government of Dubai. (2016). The announcement of “A Friendly Environment for Persons with Disabilities According to Universal Design Principles and Standards”. Retrieved from <http://tec.gov.ae/en/media-centre/press-releases/2016/the-announcement-of-the-enabling-environment-for-people-with-disabilities-universal-design-standards>. Accessed on December 26, 2016; Clarke, K. (2016). Dubai aims to be the most disabled-friendly city. *Gulf News*, dated April 14. Retrieved from <http://www.khaleejtimes.com/nation/dubai/dubai-aims-to-be-the-most-disabled-friendly-city>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

³⁴Consul General of the United Arab Emirates — Los Angeles. (2016). *Human Rights*. Retrieved from <http://losangeles.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/combating-human-trafficking>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

³⁵For more read the speech given by Dr. Anwar Gargash, *Minister of State for Foreign Affairs before the Human Rights Council's Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva*. Retrieved from http://www.uaeinteract.com/docs/Text_of_UAE_speech_at_HRCs_Universal_Periodic_Review/53163.htm. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

³⁶Crown Prince Court. (2016). *His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan*. Retrieved from <https://www.cpc.gov.ae/en-us/thecrownprince/Pages/default.aspx>. Accessed on November 26, 2016.

1.1.3. Zayed's Legacy: Ethics of the UAE

The UAE society has been known for its genuine tradition in terms of tolerance, peace, cultural pluralism, openness, and coexistence. Late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan is the Founding Father of the UAE. UAE was born as a coalition of seven emirates which are governed by seven rulers. Sheikh Zayed's love for the country and his deep understanding of his people came through his extensive travels across the country, and living with the Bedouin to understand their way of life. He along with Founding Fathers like Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the late ruler of Dubai, were visionaries in investing in the progress of the nation and its people. They were known for their adoption of the "majlis," an open house discussion that allowed members of society to offer views for discussion and consideration. People from all stations of society, cultures, and religions were welcome. This platform served as an informal council.

Sheikh Zayed always ruled with fairness and was known for using principals of consensus and agreement to secure the future. Sheikh Zayed's tolerance ideals were applied more broadly at the regional or international level where the UAE has a tradition of trying to resolve disagreements and enhance cooperation through dialogue and agreement. For example, from 1999 to 2001, the largest contingent for the UN's peacekeeping Kosovo Force (KFOR) from any non-NATO states, and the only one from an Arab or Muslim country was UAE.³⁷

Sheikh Zayed believed that the resources of the country should be used for the benefit of the people and women were given equal opportunities in education and employment. In 1975, the rate of adult literacy for women was 31 percent versus men at 54 percent.³⁸ Today, Emirati men and women have a literacy rate of 95 percent.³⁹

Sheikh Zayed believed that UAE should share her fortune as a country with other less fortunate countries and today UAE plays a leading role in relief and developmental assistance worldwide. As mentioned before, UAE is 1 of the 10 largest donor states in ODA. Sheikh Zayed also embraced conservation and sustainability. It is being embraced in the UAE Vision 2021 as it is stated "The UAE Government wants to ensure sustainable development while preserving the environment, and to achieve a perfect balance between economic and social development."⁴⁰ Sheikh Zayed died in 2004 but his legacy continues to be incorporated by the rulers of UAE.

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸Embassy of the United Arab Emirates. (2016). *Education in the UAE*. Retrieved from <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/education-uae>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰UAE Vision 2021. (2016). *Sustainable environment and infrastructure*. Retrieved from <https://www.vision2021.ae/en/national-priority-areas/sustainable-environment-and-infrastructure>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

1.1.4. International Conventions

UAE believes that tolerance is at the heart of how we engage internationally. We have adopted the United Nations' Principles of Tolerance. His Highness, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum stated that,

“The UAE, under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan will continue to promote the principles of tolerance established by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. As tolerance is a key value of our ancestors and our founding fathers. The UAE has succeeded in spreading it throughout the Arab region and the world... Tolerance is the basis for building societies, and promoting values of peaceful coexistence. Today, we need to be more tolerant and united to face the changes happening around us.”⁴¹

UAE celebrates November 16, as declared in 1996 by the UN, as the Day of Tolerance. As part of the program, members of the various segments of society are selected as the “Voice of Tolerance.” They promote tolerance at the local, regional, and international level using a variety of media platforms for which we will work in collaboration with media outlets.

The UAE will create a World Charter of Tolerance, Coexistence, and Peace. This will be a platform that will coordinate and energize efforts to achieve the vision behind the objectives of tolerance, coexistence and peace that was initiated by the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan. It will be implemented at various levels — teachers, students, citizens, expats, and employees and at a local and international level. We believe our society is built on embracing the notion of multiculturalism and the need to harmoniously move toward the acceptance of the plurality of viewpoints and an ability to embrace diversity without having to compromise on your own beliefs.

In addition to all of this, UAE seeks to reinforce the rule of international law, using the guiding principles expressed by HH Sheikh Zayed, which includes

“an underlying belief in justice in international dealings between states, a principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of other states and the pursuit, wherever possible, of peaceful resolutions of disputes, with strong support for international institutions, such as the United Nations (UN).”⁴²

⁴¹See more at: <http://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/news/uae-cabinet-approves-national-tolerance-program#sthash.obnELw1K.dpuf>

⁴²For more on UAE Foreign Policy, read <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/foreign-policy>

1.1.5. Archeology and History

UAE is a young nation, but historically it has long since thrived on cultural diversity, always being a key trade route. UAE's history is rich in these facts and we will preserve them. By linking the past with the future, tempering, promoting, and endorsing the narratives with the value of tolerance, which are further highlighted in the four principles of the UAE 2021 Vision, "United in Responsibility," "United in Destiny," "United in Knowledge," and "United in Prosperity."

In fact, the symbol for Expo 2020 is taken from the 5000-year-old archeological site, Saroug Al Hadeed (also called Saruq al Hadid), an ancient center for metal-working.⁴³ The artifact, a set of gold rings, now represents the logo of Expo 2020 and its theme "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future." The archeological site shows that it was a place of confluence, with ties to Mesopotamia, Syria, India, and Egypt. Expo 2020 is the first World Expo to take place in the MEASA (Middle East, Africa, and South Asia), a region of 72 countries, with a combined population of 2.8 billion people. It will bring together more than 180 nations and an international audience of 25 million visitors.

1.1.6. Humanity

As humans, we are part of a global population of over 7 billion people with limited resources and unequal access to them. Facing this challenge, we must be reminded that we are bestowed with the unique quality of humanity, the ability to love, to have compassion or mercy, and to be creative in solving these difficult challenges. Decisions tempered with tolerance will find more peaceful solutions.

Tolerance is a quality that is influenced by pre-adult and early adult years.⁴⁴ Education is the key to bestow on our young people, the attitudes and interpersonal skills needed to live at peace with one another for the coming years. It must begin at home to be embedded in society as a way of life. In my role as Minister, I think of myself as a nurturer of this asset and the policies we implement should allow us to scale it beyond the individual and across borders. We need to ask the tough questions — how can we institutionalize tolerance, champion it, and get our youth to embrace the concept?

In 2016, taking an educational policy perspective, UAE began to roll out a moral education program focusing on five key elements: ethics, personal and community development, culture and heritage, civic education, and rights and responsibilities.⁴⁵

⁴³For more on the archeological site of Saruq al Hadid, read: <http://www.saruqalhadid.ae>

⁴⁴Miller, S. D., & Sears, D. O. (1986). Stability and change in social tolerance: A test of the persistence hypothesis. *American Journal of Political Science*, 214–236.

⁴⁵The Cabinet UAE Government. (2016). *Crown Prince Of Abu Dhabi launches "Moral Education" To promote tolerance*. Retrieved from <https://uacabinet.ae/en/details/news/crown-prince-of-abu-dhabi-launches-moral-education-to-promote-tolerance>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

Research finds that students exposed to studies of other regions often had higher levels of intercultural sensitivity.⁴⁶ A study on high school students finds that open discussion on societal issues promotes engagement with political issues and elections, while service learning opportunities increase community-based and expressive actions with both opportunities leading to participatory citizenship.⁴⁷ We will work with sports clubs and student clubs in universities, colleges, and schools to promote the values of tolerance in theory and practice in cooperation with the concerned bodies.

UAE has one of the youngest national populations in the world at 42 percent (ages 15–34).⁴⁸ The role youth plays is tremendous in entrenching and driving a culture of tolerance. In the UAE, through organizations like Emirates Foundation, youth are encouraged to volunteer, and Emirates Foundation has over 33,000 registered volunteers who work on social causes.⁴⁹ Volunteerism has positive effects on youth performance in school and self-esteem, it strengthens intrinsic work values and the anticipated importance of community involvement.⁵⁰ The National Program for Tolerance has announced the creation of a Tolerance Volunteer Association in cooperation with the Emirates Foundation to focus on promoting communication among the various communities in the UAE on the basis of tolerance. At the 2016 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize for the Promotion of Tolerance and Non-Violence Ceremony, Assistant Director-General of UNESCO for Social and Human Sciences, Nada Al-Nashif emphasized that,

*“Education is a powerful vehicle to counter fear and exclusion as it develops capacities for independent judgment, critical thinking and ethical reasoning, raising awareness of people’s shared rights and freedoms. (...) We must build societies based on respect for human rights, where fear, mistrust and marginalization give way to pluralism, participation and respect for diversity. Tolerance also teaches us the values of empathy, responsiveness and social justice — tenets that bring to bear positive social transformations.”*⁵¹

We must also protect our youth from fanaticism and extremism. In 2014, UAE introduced a nine-month compulsory military service for male high school

⁴⁶Brooks, D. C. (2005). Learning tolerance: The impact of comparative politics courses on levels of cultural sensitivity. *Journal of Political Science Education*, 1(2), 221–232.

⁴⁷Kahne, J., Crow, D., & Lee, N.-J. (2013). Different pedagogy, different politics: High school learning opportunities and youth political engagement. *Political Psychology*, 34(3), 419–441.

⁴⁸Emirates Foundation. (2013). *Youth and Entrepreneurship in UAE*. Retrieved from <https://www.emiratesfoundation.ae/Content/en/files/Youthentrepreneurship.pdf>. Accessed on January 30, 2017.

⁴⁹Emirates Foundation. (2013). *Emirates Foundation for Youth Development Recognition Ceremony*. Retrieved from <http://recognition.emiratesfoundation.ae/awards/en/>. Accessed on January 30, 2017.

⁵⁰Johnson, M. K., Beebe, T., Mortimer, J. T., & Snyder, M. (1998). Volunteerism in adolescence: A process perspective. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 8(3), 309–332.

⁵¹UNESCO. (2016). *Tolerance Center (Russian Federation), winner of the 2016 UNESCO-Madanjeet Singh Prize*, dated November 22. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/fight-against-discrimination/sv4/news/tolerance_center_russian_federation_winner_of_the_2016_un/. Accessed on November 23, 2016.

graduates between the age of 18 and 30. While this aims to instill values of loyalty and sacrifice in the hearts of the citizens, it is built on the notions that UAE holds dear, the values of the nation. Military service offers not just leadership training, teamwork, but it is most of all a crash course in getting along with all types of people to accomplish difficult goals under difficult deadlines and circumstances. We believe our youth will be stronger, having a common understanding of our culture, values, and our heritage and be more willing to secure our country and protect the security of future generations, over the individual.

1.1.7. Common Values

Nations share many values, principles, and interests that ensures understanding, cooperation, solidarity, respect, and tolerance for all. We believe that these common values are not just to be embraced at the individual level but at the family level. We are working toward consolidating the role of the cohesive family in building a tolerant society. According to Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO,

“Accelerating globalization processes place a premium on intercultural competencies, both individual and collective, which enable us to manage cultural diversity more effectively and monitor cultural change. Without such competencies, misunderstandings rooted in identity issues are liable to proliferate.....(this) implies a need to move beyond a focus on differences that can only be a source of conflict, ignorance and misunderstanding. Cultural diversity is related to the dynamic process whereby cultures change while remaining themselves, in a state of permanent openness to one another. At the individual level, this is reflected in multiple and changing cultural identities, which are not easily reducible to definite categories and which represent opportunities for dialogue based on sharing what we have in common beyond those differences.”⁵²

To embed common values, the government will be the incubator of tolerance. The announced International Institute for Tolerance will develop studies, research, policies and device strategies and activities to promote tolerance locally, regionally, and internationally. It will work on recommendations for the revision of UAE laws and regulations to promote tolerance and renounce violence, extremism, and fanaticism. Their work will inform the setting of national indexes and consolidating the UAE's position in global competitiveness.

⁵²UNESCO World Report. (2009). *Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue*. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/pdf/Investing_in_cultural_diversity.pdf. Accessed on November 24, 2016.

At the international level, for example, UAE is working with United Kingdom to contribute at multiple levels to expand common human values.⁵³ Since July 2015, the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the United States launched the Sawab Centre, which aims to harness social media to correct misconceptions and provide a bigger platform for moderate voices.⁵⁴ UAE also works with the Al Azhar Al Sharif and the Vatican, to promote religious tolerance and highlight the benevolence of the monotheistic religions. The Ministry has a strategic partnership with Hedayah, the Global Centre for Excellence in Countering Violent Extremism which was set up in UAE, and the United States and approved by the other member countries of the Global Counterterrorism Forum in 2012.⁵⁵ Hedayah Institute is at the frontlines of combating extreme religious violence; promoting interfaith dialogue; and invests in key academic institutions and scholars committed to promoting an Islam that is moderate and responsible.

The National Program for Tolerance will publish “The UAE Guide to Tolerance,” a publication that includes relevant key terms and local and international laws, so it can be a local and international reference for researchers in this field. The government announced the creation of an International Award for Tolerance under the name of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Award for Tolerance, which is a global initiative to encourage tolerance, and to honor champions of tolerance around the world. In addition, we will hold an annual international conference that addresses various countries’ policies on tolerance and comes up with recommendations to address the challenges of each phase, actively participating in the international dialogue to further this agenda.

Individual organizations, both public and private, are also encouraged to support tolerance through a Corporate Tolerance Responsibility (CTR) Programme for Organizations, which the UAE Cabinet described as one of the first of its kind worldwide. The National Program for Tolerance works on joint initiatives with bodies such as the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Community Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development, Family Development Foundation, the General Authority of Islamic Affairs and Endowments, and the National Media Council, to target individuals, mothers, students, teachers, married people, and families in the UAE. These initiatives also extend to various segments of society like convicted people. Through such initiatives, it is hoped to consolidate the role of the individual and the family in building

⁵³WAM. (2016). *UAE, UK promote values of tolerance, peace, says Sheikha Lubna*. Retrieved from <http://www.wam.ae/en/news/emirates-international/1395302706975.html>. Accessed on November 15, 2016.

⁵⁴Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates – Los Angeles. (2016). *A positive agenda for the Middle East – Remarks by Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba*. Retrieved from <http://losangeles.uae-embassy.org/news-media/positive-agenda-middle-east-remarks-ambassador-yousef-al-otaiba>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

⁵⁵Hedayah. (2015). *About us*. Retrieved from <http://www.hedayahcenter.org>. Accessed on December 26, 2016; Embassy of the United Arab Emirates – Washington, DC (2016). *Counterterrorism*. Retrieved from <http://www.uae-embassy.org/about-uae/foreign-policy/uae-counterterrorism>. Accessed on December 26, 2016.

society, to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the Emirati community as a tolerant and open society to all cultures, nationalities, and religions.

1.2. UAE Leading the Way to the Future

UAE is paving the way for a secure future and highlights the universal truth that the world must embrace the concept of tolerance, diversity, and plurality. These are assets that society should cultivate, and embrace at all levels and we must internationally work together on how to embed this concept in the fabric of our culture, nationally and globally to safeguard a future built through peaceful collaboration and mutual respect and understanding.

Being the first country to appoint a cabinet member as a Minister of State for Tolerance shows how important we think this value is, even though it was endorsed by the UN in 1995. UAE remains a unique place for tolerance initiatives especially with our diverse population mix that allows us to showcase, embed, and strengthen tolerance policies that the world could benefit from cultivating.

Globalization and digitalization have opened the door of possibilities to our youth about their future through the diversity of ideas, people, viewpoints, and interactions. We can help them resist division and fragmentation by embracing the opportunities available to facilitate inclusive thinking and reject divisive forces or intolerance. Our youth will be our asset. We will use social media and digital technologies to engage in a dialogue with our youth. Reaching out to the youth in cooperation with the leaders of the social media sector and distinguished youth, column writers and other influencers, we will help spread the values of tolerance

We will encourage the publication of books, TV programs, research papers, radio programs, and short films to spread and promote the value of tolerance. Over the next few months, we will work on promoting an existing cartoon character that can represent tolerance in a TV cartoon series and printed books. We will use digital platforms to understand them better, identify sources of conflict and drivers of tolerance. This monitoring will help us increase civic online participation.

We hope through our endeavors, to build bridges of tolerance and compassion and show the world that we, the people of UAE, respect and welcome diversity, and that this national resource strengthens our world to create a more secure future for the next generation.