

## UAE national day

## Celebrating 40 years of unity

Saeed Ali Al-Nowais  
AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED ARAB  
EMIRATES

On this very auspicious occasion of the 40th National Day of the United Arab Emirates, I would like to take this opportunity to convey, on behalf of the government and people of the UAE, my deepest sympathy to the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake hoping that Japan will embark on a speedy path to recovery.



I also would like to extend my heartfelt greetings and good wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the government and the great people of Japan. My sincere felicitations are extended as well to H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, president of the UAE, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, vice president and prime minister, and to T.H. the members of the Supreme Council and Rulers of the Emirates.

Forty years ago, the UAE was formed under the unprecedented leadership of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the greatly respected founding father and president of the UAE from its foundation on Dec. 2, 1971, until his death on Nov. 2, 2004. He became the ruler of Abu Dhabi in

1966. While working on infrastructural development in the emirate, his political sense and futuristic vision turned his attention to forming a unity with the neighboring emirates. He was the first to call for the federation of the UAE. Since its establishment, he worked on modernizing the country, maintaining the UAE's cultural identity.

Another honorable figure is the late Sheikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum. He became the ruler of Dubai in 1958, and vice president and prime minister of the UAE with its foundation until his death in 1990. During his rule, Dubai grew tremendously into a major cosmopolitan city and a commercial hub. He worked hand in hand with Sheikh Zayed to transform the UAE into a developed nation. He deservedly earned the sobriquet of the cofounder of the UAE.

Forecast for our economy this year is set to grow by 3 percent to 3.5 percent. Along with that, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita has reached almost \$60,000, while GDP in 2009 reached \$240 billion.

The Green Line of the Dubai Metro, the world's longest fully automated rail system, was inaugurated in September. It is truly one of the tremendous accomplishments amid the financial crisis. The UAE has evolved as a model of hope and business optimism. The completion of the Dubai Metro project is a fruit of the firm determination and vision

of the UAE leadership and diligent efforts of the Japanese consortium that undertook the construction. According to the Roads and Transport Authority, the number of commuters has marked new heights, carrying 100 million passengers since the launch up to the beginning of November.

The \$10.9 billion Etihad Rail Project is another significant landmark move in the economic development. Etihad Rail will cover a network of up to 1,200 km, stretching across the UAE and connecting the UAE to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

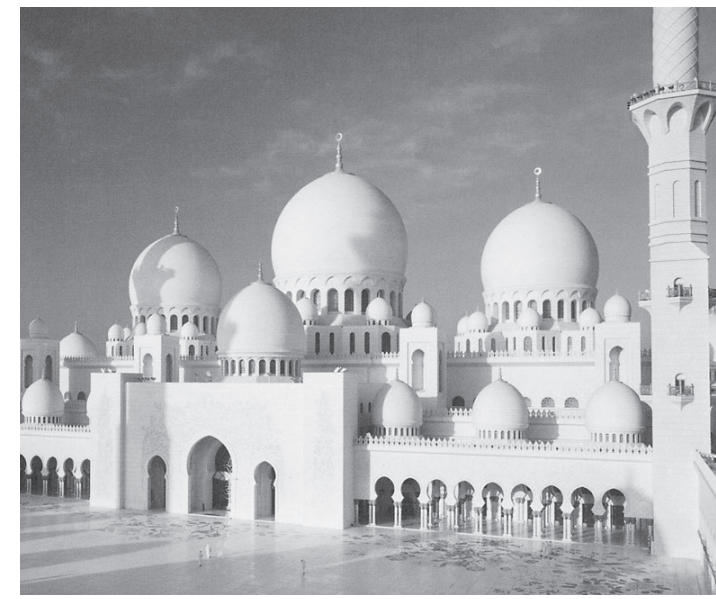
Equally impressive is the remarkable political stability that has been the world's most successful federation. The second Federal National Council (FNC) Elections following the first election conducted in 2006 took place successfully in September. Among the seven women elected, the accomplished Dr. Amal Al Qubaisi was selected as FNC deputy speaker. She became the first woman in the Gulf region to assume this position.

In terms of foreign policy, the UAE has always called for wisdom and reason in international relations. With respect to our occupied islands, the UAE, Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab League called on Iran to accept settlement of the issue through serious direct negotiations or by the International Court of Justice.

2011 opened another important chapter in the long story of successful partnership between our two countries. I am very much delighted about the



**Symbols: The official logo of the UAE's 40th National Day; the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque (right) in Abu Dhabi is the largest in the UAE and the key place for worship.** EMBASSY OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



agreement signed for launching the Abu Dhabi-Japan Economic Council in January. The council will be a step forward to the well-established economic ties and trade exchange between our two countries. It is my strong desire that the first council meeting will be held early next year.

In October, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry H.E. Yukio Edano made an official visit to Abu Dhabi. He had fruitful talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs H.H. Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE senior officials and executives of Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. on the bilateral relations, particularly in the energy field and issues of mutual interest. Of special note is that it was his first official trip overseas since taking his new post.

These events demonstrate that our two countries are surely enjoying excellent economic ties. Japan is our top trading partner,

while the UAE maintains its position as a stable and reliable energy supplier to Japan. The value of the bilateral trade has increased to \$23.82 billion during the first six months of 2011. In 2010, Japan's oil dependence on the UAE represented 20.9 percent of its total oil imports, making the UAE the second-largest oil exporter to Japan.

There are 45 UAE students studying in Japanese universities. The number of Japanese residents in the UAE has reached about 3,500, the largest Japanese community in the Middle East and Africa combined. In parallel, the number of Japanese companies operating in the UAE has jumped from 270 in 2009 to 357 in 2010.

Following the long-awaited launching of Etihad Airways last year, Emirates Airline last month introduced two extra flights a week to Japan for daily, nonstop service. These initiatives of the UAE's national carriers prove that robust

demand on the routes has been continuing stronger in Japan since their inaugurations. I offer my thanks to the concerned authorities of both countries for their relentless efforts that enabled these services to become reality.

For the past 40 years, the UAE and Japan have created an incredible relationship built on notable achievements in all aspects. I have the utmost pleasure to express my gratitude and thanks to the respectable Japanese organizations that have been working tirelessly to elevate our valuable relations. With a look to the next 40 years, I promise to do my best to open up a new avenue for the future progress of our relations.

Finally, I again hope that Japan will achieve an earliest recovery, and likewise, seize this opportunity to convey my sincere wishes to the people of Japan and the readers of The Japan Times for everlasting peace, prosperity and happiness.

## Strong exchanges highlight relations

Yasuo Fukuda  
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-UAE PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE



On behalf of The Japan-UAE Parliamentary Friendship League, may I offer some words on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the United Arab Emirates. I offer my heartfelt congratulations on the increasing progress and prosperity of the UAE under the outstanding leadership of President H.H. Shiek Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, inheriting the wishes of the late President H.H. Shiek Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, the UAE's founding father. I would also like to thank the president and people of UAE for their sympathy and aid toward Japan in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The relationship between our countries has been continuing for over 40 years. Originating with a cooperative relationship in oil, many people have been going back and forth between our countries, and such strong interpersonal networks have laid the cornerstone for successful cooperation in a wide range of fields.

In the tourism sector, a Japanese horse won the Dubai World Cup in March, and attractions such as the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix and the Burj Khalifa — the world's tallest skyscraper — continue to stoke strong interest toward the UAE among Japanese.

In June, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon was awarded to Hamad Abdullah Al Mutawah, the former undersecretary of the UAE Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. In addition, last year marked Etihad Airways' maiden voyage to Japan as a new flight route was implemented, and we members of The Japan-UAE Parliamentary Friendship League are greatly pleased to learn that interpersonal exchanges between the two countries are becoming ever stronger.

By February next year, the first Japan-Abu Dhabi Economic Conference will be held. I hope this will be an opportunity for Japan and the UAE to further invest in each other's countries, for promoting Japanese companies to extend their operations to the UAE, and through such activities I hope Japan can help promote the diversification of UAE's industries and strengthen its human resources.

I believe the relationship between Japan and the UAE will continue to become increasingly intimate. On this auspicious occasion of the UAE's 40th anniversary, may I also take this opportunity to express my sincere hope that Japan and the UAE will continue to develop, in particular with the earnest efforts of the people of both countries. In this regard, The Japan-UAE Parliamentary Friendship League is prepared to continue to offer its support in whatever ways it can.

Keiichiro Okabe  
PRESIDENT, UAE-JAPAN SOCIETY

First, I would like to express my gratitude to all the people of the United Arab Emirates who have given their condolences, sympathy and aid to Japan following the Great East Japan Earthquake that devastated the nation in March.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the UAE, I offer my cordial congratulations to President H.H. Shiek Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, members of the Federal Supreme Council and the people of the UAE.

In the 40 years since the founding of the nation in 1971, the UAE has improved its social stability and has enjoyed robust economic growth under the noble ideals and wise leadership of the late President H.H. Shiek

Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, the UAE's founding father, and of President H.H. Shiek Khalifa. Our country almost completely depends on imports for oil and natural gases, and in this regard the UAE is one of the main suppliers of such resources to our country. The relationship between Japan and the UAE have established strong economic interdependence as longtime, important economic partners. Also, Japan and the UAE have been deepening mutual understanding year after year through the promotion, exchanges and relations in various areas, including culture, education, tourism and sports.

I also visit the UAE several times a year and have the great opportunity to meet President H.H. Shiek Khalifa and other members of the government. The grand initiatives that the leaders of the UAE advance — the enhancement of energy technology, diversification of domestic industries, and fostering the growth of human capital — have all moved

me deeply as greatly visionary initiatives that stem from long-term country planning. In regards to these above-mentioned initiatives, I believe that there are plenty of possibilities where both Japan's public and private sector can provide the technology and knowhow to cooperate and con-

tribute toward helping the UAE achieve those goals.

Our society also believes that we will become a bridge between the UAE and Japan. I once again express my earnest hope for the further prosperity of the UAE and even more intimate bilateral relations.

**Congratulations to the Government and People of the United Arab Emirates on Their 40th National Day**

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