

The United Arab Emirates

Positions for the League of Arab States

I. Diversifying Investments in Alternative Energy Resources

Today, as global demand for energy continues to expand and as climate change becomes a real and growing concern, the time has come to look to the future

- Masdar CEO Dr. Sultan Al Jaber

The UAE ratified the Kyoto protocol to the UN Convention on Climate Change, making the UAE the first major oil-producing country to ratify the protocol. The UAE is pursuing groundbreaking renewable energy and energy efficiency programs because it is aware of the importance of diversifying economies, especially those economies dependent on primary commodity exports. The Largest City in the UAE, Abu Dhabi, established one of the worlds most comprehensive clean energy initiatives and expanded on a total federal initiative worth \$15 billion in renewable energy programs. The Masdar Initiative focuses on the development and commercialization of technologies in renewable energy, energy efficiency, carbon management and monetization, water usage and desalination. Regarding Nuclear Energy, the UAE is pursuing a peaceful, civilian nuclear energy program which “will uphold the highest standards of safety, security, nonproliferation and operational transparency.”

UAE is committed to alternative energy, taking steps to reduce carbon emissions. Dubai is developing a master environmental plan that will ensure that growth and progress are achieved while protecting the environment. To that end, the UAE supports a global initiative for expanded and coordinated new foreign direct investment, grants and other funding. This initiative will specifically encourage the diversification of economies in developing states—particularly primary commodity export states—with an eye to renewable energy investment.

II. Addressing Human Trafficking through the Arab Region: Protecting Human Rights During Times of Crisis and Revolution

Human trafficking is not new in the Arab world. The UAE has a predominantly foreign population base with a high demand for cheap domestic servants, construction, and agricultural worker; this industry has attracted the most notice for use of trafficking victims. The UAE is committed to the global effort to combat human trafficking. The UAE works closely with international and regional law enforcement officials to apprehend and punish violators of human trafficking laws. In an attempt to combat human trafficking, the UAE is aggressively implementing a four-part anti-trafficking plan, which is designed to prevent the crime, enforce law and provide necessary support to victims. The four parts of this plan include, Legislation: in which the UAE adopted a new federal law providing strict enforcement provisions and penalties for convicted traffickers.

The UN is very active in the fight against Human Trafficking, helping draft laws and create comprehensive national anti-trafficking strategies and also assists with resources to implement them. Assistance includes the development of local capacity and expertise and tools to encourage cross-border cooperation in investigations and prosecutions. In 2000 the UN General Assembly adopted the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking In Persons, Especially Women and Children*. The UNODC, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is the custodian of the Protocol. So far more than 110 States have signed and ratified the Protocol, but the problems are that very few criminals are convicted and most victims are never identified or assisted. In March of 2007, the UN launched a new initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking or (UN.GIFT). UN.GIFT’s mission is to mobilize state and non-state actors to eradicate human trafficking by reducing both the vulnerability of potential victims and the demand for exploitation in all its forms; ensuring adequate protection and support to those who fall victim; and supporting the prosecutions of criminals involved, while respecting the fundamental human rights of all persons. To carry out its mission, the UN.GIFT is trying to increase knowledge on human trafficking and awareness as well as encourage partner ships for joint action against human trafficking and build capacity of state and non-state actors through effective rights-based responses.

The UAE is one of the 110 states to ratify the UN protocol. The UAE’s anti-trafficking plan is the first in the gulf to have a comprehensive anti-trafficking law. We have all these great new laws and protocols to help stop

human trafficking but we do not have the backing; we need more of member's states to ratify these anti-trafficking laws and protocols in order to pose a unified front against Human Trafficking.

III. Examining Arab State Progress in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium development goals adopted by all UN member states in 2000 to eradicate the most extreme variants of economic devastation: extreme poverty, hunger and disease by 2015.¹ There has been some dramatic global progress towards these goals but it looks to be that some regions have lagged behind in attaining these goals and some goals have been harder to reach than others.

The advances in Arab states have been volatile: starting with great gusto and then lagging in the last decade. The first and arguably most important of the development goals was to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty. In the Arab world, the indicators measuring this goal are generally good, though there are undeniably some states have found this goal unattainable. Poverty levels were lowered in some areas including Egypt while Tunisia saw little change in poverty levels and some states saw an *increase* in poverty levels (e.g. Djibouti increased almost 30% from mid 90's to early 2000's, Algeria increased 15%, Morocco 5%).² There was little to no reduction in overall hunger rates, which remained static at around 13% of the population, though that statistic is skewed by the most severe cases in Sudan, Iraq, Yemen and Somalia.³ The Second goal was to achieve universal primary education. The region made great gains in this area though arguably stalled at around 70-80% in the region with perpetuating gender disparities regionally at the primary levels.⁴ This statistic is skewed by problem states both in Africa and the Gulf, through regionally the Arab world is on track to meet the goal of universal adult literacy. The third development goal was the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. While there were advances in the Arab world in gender parity in secondary education, there is clearly residually low gender parity in the working sector. The fourth development goal, to reduce child mortality, is set to be met in all Arab countries other than a few, particularly Sudan, Iraq, Mauritania, Yemen and Somalia. The Fifth goal of improving maternal health is being met in some states. For example, major improvements in gulf (minus Iraq, Somalia and Yemen) and Levant and parts of North Africa are juxtaposed with declining maternal health in Somalia and Sudan, which skew the results regionally despite the fact that but most of the region has greatly reduced maternal death rates. Tuberculosis and Malaria are still thriving in some areas, leaving the region below the expected trajectory on the sixth development goal. Next, the most pressing hindrance to ensuring environmental sustainability (the seventh development goal) is access to water. Many states in the region, including UAE, have invested heavily in sustainable use of water resources though the area's achievements are once again lowered by the plight of a few states (e.g. Mauritania, Oman, Libya and Yemen). Finally, the eighth goal of developing a global partnership for development is being met through regional servicing debt and a reduction in the rates of foreign financial assistance alongside diversification of local economics and regional trade.

The greatest challenges to meeting the millennium development goals are twofold: uneven progress and development. First, while much of the Arab world is experiencing advancement along most or all of the goals, the highest rates of hunger, poverty, child mortality, lacking access to medical professionals and low maternal health exist in concert with political instability and weak states. Somalia's political vacuum as well as unrest and occupation in Palestine, Iraq, Yemen and Sudan directly link to these states' severe dearth of progress in key goals. The UAE is profoundly saddened to see the tangible toll that unrest can charge on the population and calls upon the Arab world to assist in bringing stability to our world. Second, the goal that the entire region lags in is development. While most of the region is advancing in wealth and health the Arab world still has mostly low productivity for that wealth; underachievement for where we *could* be economically. We need to advance in regional competitiveness that can come only from a concerted effort for regional stability AND diversified economic models.⁵

¹ [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/\(2011E\)_MDReport2011_ProgressChart.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/(2011E)_MDReport2011_ProgressChart.pdf)

² <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/undp/mdgr/regional/arab/mdg-arab-03e.pdf>

³ <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/undp/mdgr/regional/arab/mdg-arab-03e.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.arab-hdr.org/publications/other/undp/mdgr/regional/arab/mdg-arab-03e.pdf>

⁵ Arab NGO Network for Development

<http://www.annd.org/administrator/pubfile/s%20Book%201%20eng.pdf>