



وزارة الخارجية  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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**MOFA Brief on**  
**Emirati women empowerment**  
**on occasion of International Women's Day**

**March 2014**

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The United Arab Emirates has occupied a pioneer role in the empowerment of women in the region. They occupy the leading posts in the public and private sectors in the UAE. The two thirds of students in the government universities are women.

Emirati women also play a greater and effective role in the development process in the UAE in all fields through the empowerment programme launched by President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said in a statement on the International Women's Day, which corresponds with today, Saturday, that the MoFA has taken a step to appoint three woman ambassadors abroad in Sweden, Spain and Montenegro, as well as UAE Permanent Representative to UN and UAE's Consul General in Milano.

It added that the woman diplomats at the MoFA are 148, while the woman diplomats at the UAE missions abroad are 30. "This reflects the shrewd vision of the UAE leadership to back women, being essential component of Emirati community, whose efforts are on equal footing with men in the comprehensive development being experienced by the UAE. The women are also in the leading and decision making posts.

The UAE President is keen on empowering the women in all fields and levels so that they become effective partners in the nation-building. "The state since its inception on 2nd December, 1971, focused on the women development by empowering them to play their natural role as effective partners in the sustainable development process", Sheikh Khalifa said.

He said on 9th December, 2009, that "We look at women as main component of the UAE community. They are partners of men in all work places. What has been attained by Emirati women was not accidental development, but a culmination of long efforts outlined by the late leader and UAE founding father Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who had encouraged and empowered women to exercise her rights in the equal footing with men." Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, said, "We have exceeded the phase of the women empowerment, as we enable the community through women and our economy to strengthen the women to play

greater role in the development of our government services as they occupy the leading posts." Sheikh Mohammed said in his book, "Flashes of Thought" that "We launch the development projects run by women. We develop our infrastructure, health and education services even our military forces, depending on the women in all these fields." The existence of women in all these fields is logical as about 70 per cent of the graduates from the universities today are women.

Sheikh Mohammed said, "Women constitute over 65 per cent of the total staff in the Cabinet. 30 per cent of them occupy the leading posts. Even my daily work depends mostly on women, as 85 per cent of team work in my office are Emirati women." For his part, His Highness General Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, said the UAE is well ahead in the empowerment of women to play their social role, a legacy chalked out by the late Sheikh Zayed by Sultan Al Nahyan. He noted that Sheikh Zayed had persevered to provide all the facilities and remove the impediments to encourage Emirati women to play their role in the development of the community- a move that reflected on the UAE's humanitarian and social role at the world level.

Sheikh Mohamed underlined that the equality, solidarity and cohesion themes do not distinguish between man and woman.

H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, the Mother of the Nation, Chairwoman of the General Women's Union (GWU), Supreme Chairperson of the Family Development Foundation (FDF) and President of the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood, has become a symbol of giving, determination and is seen as one of the most important woman leaders in the world, due to her outstanding and leading role in the field of empowering women and defending their cause not only in the UAE, but also regionally and internationally.

The effort that has been exerted by Sheikha Fatima in the field of supporting Emirati women since the establishment of the General Women's Union in August 1975, has become obvious in the light of the prestigious stature of the UAE women.

Emirati women become ministers, FNC members, judges and diplomats, in addition to their effective and prominent role in contributing to the overall development in the country through full participation alongside men in various work places.

Sheikha Fatima has also added other humanitarian dimensions to the general women's work through her important initiatives, which aim at protecting women and providing all kinds of comprehensive care, in addition to safeguarding the women's dignity in various regions in the world.

In his speech while addressing the UN General Assembly in 2013, H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Foreign Minister, pointed out the successes that have been achieved by the UAE women in building the society.

Sheikh Abdullah said that the UAE has achieved a host of outstanding successes in the field of women empowerment. He recognised their vital role in the societies, noting that protection of women from the discrimination in various areas, "is a necessity and should be given care by the international community." He added that the UAE is proud of its serious steps in this regard, citing that the country has acquired an outstanding rank among the countries in the region in this field.

Sheikh Abdullah also said in a previous speech that the UAE's constitution guarantees equal rights for men and women, where women enjoy the same legal status, as they have the right to get education and work on equal footing as men.

He added that the constitution prohibits any discrimination in salaries between women and men, pointing out that the UAE has joined a number of international agreements on human rights, including the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against". He also emphasised support to the international efforts in women's empowerment issues.

It is noteworthy that the UAE cooperates with international mechanisms for human rights, adding that the UAE is ranked 38th according to the Woman's Empowerment Index.