

# Taware'e

wa Azamat

Together .. we preserve the country's achievements

Quarterly Magazine Published by NCEMA - 4<sup>th</sup> Issue - March 2013

Sheikh Khalifa inaugurated  
Shams-1 for renewable energy in Abu Dhabi  
**“The plant confirms the UAE’s  
commitment to maintain its stature”**

Dr. Jamal Sanad Al Suwaidi:  
**We must translate our  
feelings of loyalty and  
belonging to this country  
and its wise leadership  
into a daily behaviour**

Towards a radical solution that  
prevents health hazards and  
environmental disasters

**Landfill and a safe processing  
plant for hazardous and  
chemical waste to open soon  
in Al Dhafra**





UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

**The Supreme Council for National Security**

# **National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority**

**(Together .. we preserve the country's achievements)**

## **VISION**

**Distinction in managing crisis and emergencies.**

## **MISSION**

**To enhance the UAE's capabilities in managing crisis and emergencies by:  
setting the requirements of business continuity, enabling quick recovery  
through joint planning, and coordinating communication  
both at the national and local level.**

## **GOAL**

**Achievement of State policy with regard to procedures for managing  
emergencies, crises and disasters.**

**Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

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## Belonging to the Nation: A Continuous Process

Most human actions are a result of theory and practice. The more accurate and realistic the theory is, the more salutary and valuable the outcome will be – and vice versa.

More often than not, a sound theory results in a sound practice, unless the theory is redundant, a mere repetition of what others have previously done. The theory would fall apart if it does not emanate from a deep-rooted conviction or if it is not applied on the ground with full confidence and resolve.

There is, indeed, a gap between theory and practice – a gap that varies in size from one situation to another, and cannot be measured in metres or hours, or even in aspirations and good intentions. The only reliable criterion is the person making the theory and the level of awareness, determination, authenticity, dedication and creativity they can show to turn it into a reality. The holder of the theory is, after all, the one to act on it.

We can use this “theory-vs-practice equation” to approach the notion of “patriotism” and the true sense of “belonging” to the nation. We can also use it to measure the actual role of the individual within the community and the level of their loyalty to the motherland.

Loyalty is not about chanting slogans on particular occasions, nor is it about holding up pictures, waving flags or speechmaking. Loyalty must be expressed through concrete actions on a daily basis by all members of society, each from their own position and according to their own abilities. It is a continuous process based on awareness and positive attitude, premised on devotion and fidelity and, at its core, is love and support.

As new developments keep swirling around us in recent times, we need to see more of these daily, tangible acts of commitment and belonging to this nation, be it at school, in the work place, in boardrooms, on social occasions, while taking a stroll, or shopping and any other aspect of our lives.

We must translate all the values and notions that we have grown up to cherish, at home, at school and in college, into a conscious act in the real world. We must endeavour to strengthen the bond between members of our society, spread the spirit of solidarity and collegiality and join all our efforts to preserve the nation and its achievements and bolster its development process.

Belonging to the motherland is not just about obtaining an ID card or a passport, or observing the national dress code and working at a government institution. Belonging is more fundamentally about understanding the responsibility associated with that identity; it is more about what we do to preserve it and safeguard its human, cultural, social and moral attributes.

We must be dedicated and creative in what we do, respect laws and regulations, preserve the environment and public and private property, plant the seeds of togetherness and compassion, volunteer to help others and never infringe upon someone else’s rights.

Indeed, the measure for commitment to the nation should show in our daily behaviour as a reflection of our pride of being part of this country and our readiness to make sacrifices for it and contribute to its stability and defend its dignity and sovereignty. Loyalty ought to be a priority in the citizen’s relationship to their country, a feeling that brings one closer to the other and, by the same token, nurtures the values of brotherliness, mutual respect and honourable conduct in society. This is precisely the kind of civilised behaviour that helps consolidate the national bond in the community.

This is how loyalty stops being just a theory and becomes a reality, not just a mere verbal defence of the motherland – it becomes a method and way of life, a daily, conscientious set of behaviours, all gearing towards the accomplishment of this nation’s greater ambitions.

Quarterly specialized Magazine  
Published by  
National Emergency, Crisis and  
Disaster Management Authority

The Supreme Council for National Security  
National Emergency Crisis and Disaster  
Management Authority UAE

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4<sup>th</sup> Issue/March 2013

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The opinions expressed in the  
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**By federal decree:  
Tahnoun bin Zayed  
Deputy National  
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**14**

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**Coordination and  
Response offices  
inaugurated in the  
northern emirates**

**19**

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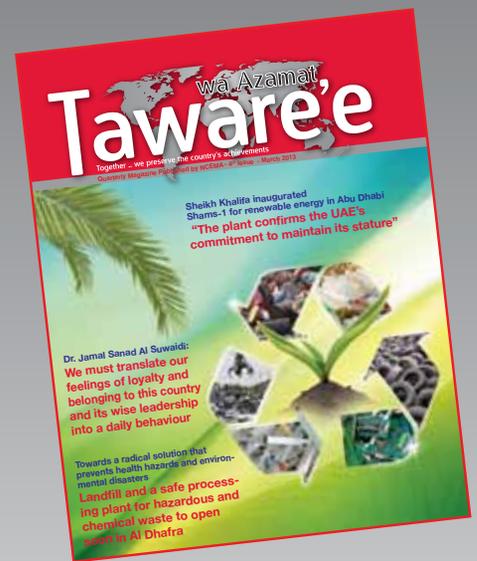
**Takatof Programme  
promotes a culture  
of volunteerism and  
best usage of available  
resources**

**34**

---

**Khalifa inaugurates  
Shams-1 for  
renewable energy  
in Abu Dhabi**

**06**



**Dr. Jamal S. Al Suwaidi:  
We must translate our  
feelings of loyalty and  
belonging to this country  
and its wise leadership  
into a daily behaviour**

**24**



**Gulf Defence Conference  
classes terrorism, extremism  
and violence as top immediate  
threats to region's security** **10**

**Abu Dhabi Customs  
launch advanced  
monitoring project for  
its border centres and  
buildings**

**41**



**landfill and safe processing plant  
for hazardous and chemical  
waste soon in Al Dhafra** **31**

**First and largest project of its kind in the Middle East to ensure long-term power security**

## **Khalifa inaugurates «Shams 1» for renewable energy in Abu Dhabi:**

### **The plant demonstrates the United Arab Emirates' commitment to maintaining its position**

Abu Dhabi took a pioneering step by completing the Shams 1 concentrated solar power plant, the first and largest of its kind in the Middle East. The project anchors the United Arab Emirates' efficient role in the process of building a diversified economy, and ensures energy security in the long term, by diversifying its sources.

Despite being a leading oil-producing country, the UAE's interest in renewable and clean energy projects reaffirms the leadership's commitment to planning for a promising future for the nation's citizens, and confirms their environmental responsibility and initiatives to shape a world that depends more heavily on clean energy sources.





### March 17th, a day like no other

Sunday, March 17th 2013 was no ordinary day in the UAE’s journey and quest for excellence. On this day, H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, officially inaugurated Shams 1, the largest concentrated solar power plant (CSP) in operation in the world. The ceremony was attended by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid AL Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, as well as a number of sheikhs and officials.

**Khalifa: A major milestone in the state’s vision for energy and economic diversification**

His Highness the president expressed his pride in the inauguration of Shams 1, calling it a major milestone in the UAE’s vision for energy and economic diversification.

His Highness said that expanding the UAE’s leadership into renewable sources of power demonstrates its commitment to maintaining its position as a major provider of energy. And he added that the inauguration of Shams 1 is a major milestone in the country’s economic diversification and a step toward long-term energy security.

His Highness expressed his pride of the young Emiratis that worked on this project as “the expertise they gained, working closely with international companies and building a project of such scale, is the type of human capital development that will enable our country to secure long-term energy leadership.”

The president noted that “Shams 1 is a strategic investment in our country’s economic, social and environmental prosperity.” And he added: “The domestic production of renewable energy extends the life of our country’s valuable hydrocarbon resources and supports the growth of a promising new industry.”





## Events

**Mohammed bin Zayed: we are no longer technology importers, but we have become partners in making and innovating the technology**

His Highness General Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces noted that the UAE is moving steadily towards establishing a new, advanced and developed concept of comprehensive development that boosts the country's status globally.

Attending the inauguration ceremony, His Highness added: "The UAE is well ahead in the field of energy uses. The country has enjoyed a leading position in the traditional energy market, but is now assuming a role in the field of renewable energy too, through launching initiatives and the adoption of quality specific projects in the uses of the clean energy. This urges us to continue planning for the future and to work to build the human resources and technological capabilities, which will make prosperous and sustainable future for future generations."

... We are proud of Emirati employees that played a significant role in the project's implementation

His Highness went on to say that foreseeing future trends is one of the pillars of sustainable development. "We are trying to read the future needs and challenges carefully, based on a scientific approach, especially regarding the development and economic side which requires the boosting of energy and looking continuously for alternatives through supporting scientific innovations and the research projects of citizens, under the supervision and with the encouragement of experts and specialists in various clean energy technology centres," he said.

He expressed his pride at the key role played by UAE citizens in the implementation of the project. "It proved that we are no longer technology importers, but we have become partners in making and innovating the technology," Sheikh Mohamed said. He urged citizens to continue developing their skills

and expertise in all technologies to be able to export technology in this vital sector, and to be pioneers in spreading the concepts of the uses of renewable energy. Sheikh Mohamed stressed the importance of utilising expertise and competency in the field of the use of clean energy in order to attain the best sustainable solutions for issues such as the scarcity of water and water desalination in this region especially with regards to the close relationship between water and energy.

### **Abu Dhabi: Hub for Renewable Energy**

Abu Dhabi has sought for years to dedicate itself as a hub for renewable energy, mainly through its energy company Masdar and by hosting the headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

On the sidelines of the inauguration ceremony, IRENA's director general Adnan Amin said: "This is a very important moment for us." And he added that the activation of Shams 1 is "a giant first step towards the oil-rich Middle East's conversion into a centre for renewable energy as well."

The UAE's decision to invest in clean energy is a promising choice for the future, especially that fossil fuel that has fueled humanity's needs for centuries, is drying out.

### **Limiting carbon emissions**

The Dh2.2 billion (USD600 million) plant is located in Madinat Zayed in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi. It covers an area of 2.5 square kilometres and features 768 tracking parabolic trough collectors.

The project generates 100 megawatts of clean energy to power 20,000 homes in the UAE thus limiting carbon emissions that have contributed to climate change and to the environmental imbalance. The project will contribute in avoiding pumping 175,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere every year. Producing the same amount of power using sunlight is



the equivalent of planting 1.5 million trees or taking 15,000 cars off the road every year.

The plant is owned and operated by Shams Power Company, which was specifically established for this purpose as a joint venture between Masdar (60 per cent), French oil company Total (20 per cent) and the Spanish company Abengoa Solar (20 per cent).

### **Al Jaber: A clear indication of the UAE's leading role**

His Excellency Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of State and CEO of Masdar said that Masdar will be working in the coming years on increasing concentrated solar power.

During the official inauguration of Shams 1 he observed that such a paramount strategic project wouldn't have been achieved if it weren't for the support of H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the wise leadership.

Al Jaber noted that the UAE is building an economy based on science and experience. The project will help in providing specialised Emirati leaders in the field of clean energy and it creates job opportunities for UAE citizens.

He went on to say that Shams 1 embodies the UAE's efforts in the field of renewable energy and therefore, the development of its economy. He added that the project is a clear indication of the UAE's leading role in the Middle East region and in the world.

AL Jaber observed that Masdar has manages similar project outside the UAE and contributes in bringing knowledge into the UAE. He also said that the country is the first today to produce renewable energy and it is the world's first provider of clean energy.

### **Al Ali: A strategic choice**

Yousif Al Ali, general manager of the Shams Power Company observed

that power generation using sunrays is a strategic choice for the next phase, especially in light of the international trend to rely on renewable energy and reduce total dependency on traditional energy sources.

He explained that the solar plant operation will use a new global technology. By concentrating heat from direct sunlight onto oil-filled pipes, Shams 1 produces steam, which drives a turbine and generates electricity. The final power product is transferred to distribution companies via aerial transmission lines in the Western Region.

He stressed that the project is designed to operate on solar energy or gas, in case of harsh weather conditions or during the night, by generating electrical power on gas. He noted that the project's location was chosen based on extensive and careful studies and comparisons to a number of other sites. The chosen site offers many special characteristics including the availability of an appropriate infrastructure for the project, as well as the presence of gas stations and power transmission equipment among other features such as the nature of the soil and the location's geological nature. He emphasized that the project has no potential environmental effects on the health of the area's residents.

### **Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Company**

Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Company announced that it has already begun receiving electrical power produced by Shams 1. The general manager of Shams Power Company Mr Yousif Ahmed Al Ali said that the company has signed an agreement to sell electrical power to ADWEC.

Al Ali explained that Shams 1 began generating power since last January 14 and the first batch of electrical power generated by the plant was delivered to the national grid on January 17, 2013.



**A strategic investment in the country's economic, social and environmental prosperity**



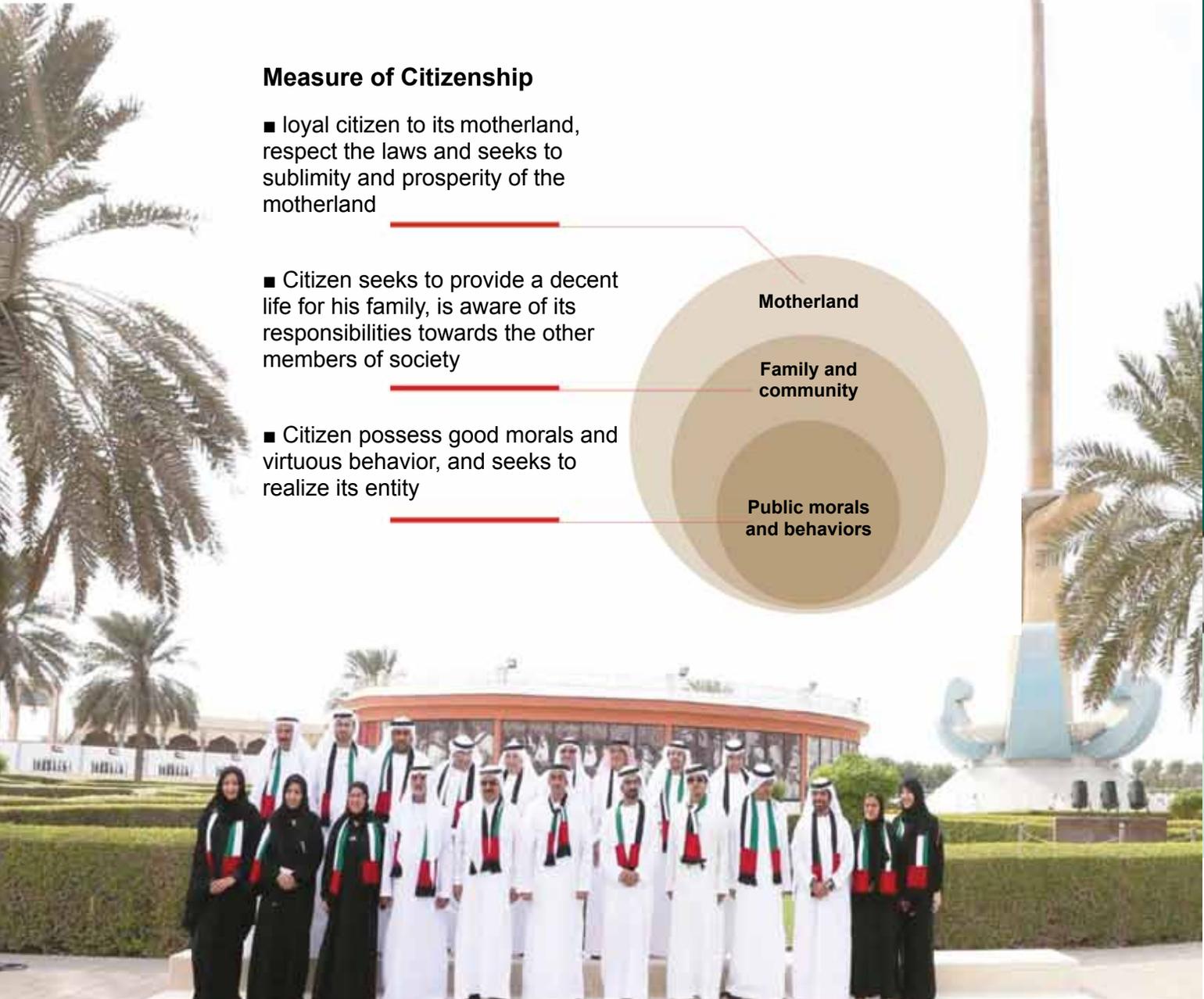
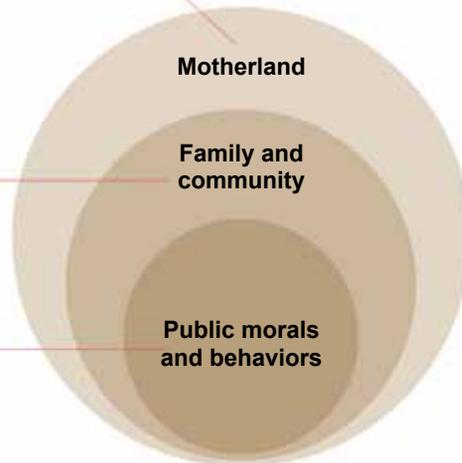
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**National Emergency Crisis and Disaster**  
**Management Authority**

## The Concept of Citizenship

It's a joint inheritance of principles, values and behaviors among individuals in one state, and which contribute to the formation of the citizen's personality and give it characteristics that distinguish it from other citizens in other countries. In another meaning, it's a full individual and responsible membership in the State, or any society, and the consequences of those membership of a group of mutual relations between the two parties.

### Measure of Citizenship

- loyal citizen to its motherland, respect the laws and seeks to sublimity and prosperity of the motherland
- Citizen seeks to provide a decent life for his family, is aware of its responsibilities towards the other members of society
- Citizen possess good morals and virtuous behavior, and seeks to realize its entity



# Disaster Floods

What is the first thing you do in case of a flood?

I go swimming...

Looking for escape Wheel



Participants stressed the need for consolidated efforts to rise up to challenges

## Gulf Defence Conference: terrorism, extremism and violence are immediate threats to region's security

UAE expresses readiness and willingness to play a more advanced role in international peacekeeping



**Participants at the Gulf Defence Conference, which took place in Abu Dhabi on the day prior to the opening ceremony of IDEX 2013 agreed that terrorism, extremism and violence are some of the worst immediate threats to the security of the Gulf region. Terrorism has become a trans-boundary phenomenon, hence the need for consolidated efforts in the region to rise up to the challenges and to protect the Gulf and the region's security against potential threats.**

For a long time, the international community has been focusing on the security of the Gulf region, especially since the discovery of oil and gas resources. The Gulf region holds approximately two-thirds of the world's oil reserves and a quarter of the

world's gas reserves. Global interest in the region was evident at the Gulf Defence Conference 2013 as the international community strongly believes that the security of the Gulf means the security of global energy.

Gulf Defence Conference 2013 was held at a time when the Gulf's security has never been more crucial due to the multiple sources of security threats. A number of Arab countries in the region are going through turmoil and radical changes that brought about a new set of powers and movements. Such transformations were an ideal occasion for the reactivation of certain countries' "dormant projects" of expansion.

Major General Obaid Al Ketbi, Chairman of the Higher Organising Committee for IDEX 2013 said that the Gulf Defence Conference, which discussed this year several issues related to maritime security and drone systems in addition to other issues of interest, was one of the world's top-notch defence conferences in terms of speakers. The conference brought together a number of experts, analysts and decision makers and was attended by six defence ministers, 12 chiefs of staff and 15 military commanders from across the globe to discuss military issues of international significance.

During the conference, France and Britain each proposed defence-related collaboration projects to GCC States. The UAE, for its part, expressed readiness and willingness to play a more advanced role in international peacekeeping.

Although the UAE along with the neighbouring Gulf countries are more secure than other Arab countries, they still face potential threats in view of their substantial role in the regional fight against terrorism and ensuring energy security. Hence, Gulf States called for the reinforcement of regional and international cooperation in these areas.

Senior military officials from Britain and France expressed their countries' willingness to be involved in the defence affairs of the GCC states. French Minister of Defence Jean-Yves Le Drian noted that "France owns cutting-edge defence equipment at

present", and he confirmed his country's preparedness to offer equipment to "any GCC State that may need them for the protection of regional security".

The UK Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Philip Dunne emphasised his country's common interests with the GCC and noted that the UK "can offer strategic situation analysis for each state and provide solutions for the protection of regional security." He also reiterated his country's willingness to train local officers in order to bridge any security gaps that may exist in the various GCC states.

The nation's capital city hosted the proceedings of the official conference of the International Defence Exhibition IDEX 2013 under the patronage of HH the president Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan. HH Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the National Security Advisor and Deputy Chairman of the Executive Council of Abu Dhabi inaugurated the event which was attended by HE Lieutenant General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al Rumaihi, Chief of Staff of the UAE Armed Forces as well as an elite group of political and military decision makers representing 33 countries. A considerable number of ambassadors, diplomats, analysts and executives from participating defence companies were also in attendance.

Staff Major General Khaled Abdullah Al Bu Ainnain, President of the Institute for Near East and Gulf Military Analysis, INEGMA, which organised the conference, confirmed that the GDC is an opportunity for the various attending military delegations to exchange ideas pertaining to defence issues. He focused on the regional dynamic transformations and the defence and security relations in the region. He noted that the recent military conflicts in various places around the world prove the significance and importance of knowledge and defence technologies exchange among regional

**INSTABILITY  
IN SOME  
COUNTRIES IN  
THE ARAB REGION  
ENCOURAGED TO  
MOVE PROJECTS  
AND AWAKENED  
DORMANT**

and international players.

Major General Rashad Mohamed Salem Obaid Al Saadi, Commander of the UAE's National Defence College delivered the UAE's armed forces speech and said: "The Arabian Gulf's security is of regional and international significance. Therefore, the responsibility to safeguard it and to secure its maritime passageways becomes a matter of global relevance." And he added that the UAE leadership "is working towards increasing its military and security readiness and on strengthening cooperation with neighbouring countries and the international community to promote peace in the region and in the world." He went on to say: "Our strategic leadership ensures a balanced building of our land, sea, air and special forces capabilities in order to increase our armed forces' defence and combat capabilities... The armed forces have always contributed to support peacekeeping forces in various parts of the world. They are prepared at all times to help in relief efforts in natural disaster-stricken areas around the globe."

For his part, Staff Major General Ali Mohammed Sabih Al Kaabi, Military Advisor to HH the Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, confirmed the UAE armed forces' humanitarian and ethical commitment to their role as relief efforts providers in times of crises and disasters. He emphasised their readiness at all times to participate in rescue and relief efforts in line with the UAE's international aid programmes.

In his address during the conference, Major General Al Kaabi shed light on the UAE's external humanitarian aid programmes and the armed forces' supporting role in them. He said: "The first part of the presentation shall focus on the UAE aid programme. The second part shall focus on the role the armed forces play in offering said aid in times of crises and disasters." He added that the UAE has had substantial experience in offering humanitarian assistance in countries such as Yemen, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria.

Major General Al Kaabi went on to say: "The work that we do here in the United Arab Emirates is

based on a clear approach that the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan had entrenched and that deems external aid and relief efforts as an integral part of the UAE's foreign policy since it aims at safeguarding human dignity." He also noted that "our efforts centre on offering humanitarian aid, saving lives and providing vital humanitarian needs through official authorities and with the support of the armed forces."

Al Kaabi observed that the objectives of external aid programmes concentrate mainly on eradicating poverty and hunger, providing basic education around the world, reducing child mortality rates, improving mothers' health, combatting HIV, ensuring sustainability and establishing security, stability and peace.

Speaking of the various state agencies that participate in relief efforts, Major General Al Kaabi said: "There are a number of bodies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, the Armed Forces, Khalifa bin Zayed Humanitarian Foundation, Zayed bin Sultan Charitable Foundation and the Red Crescent." And he explained that the Armed Forces, in collaboration with various state agencies, have had their part to play in instances of crises and disasters, namely following the Pakistan earthquake. Its services included search and rescue, providing accommodation, building tents, logistical services, providing food and medical supplies, building roads, infrastructure, power companies and bridges, removing landmines and explosives and supporting alliances.

Al Kaabi also described the numerous roles of the armed forces which include establishing stability and peacekeeping, providing air transport and strategic and tactical support, local transportation of aid, escorting aid to ensure its arrival to affected areas, providing capacity to address chemical and biological weapons and protection of VIPs. The armed forces have a significant role to play in providing grants and loans to countries affected by crises and disasters, in addition to offering charitable and humanitarian aid, building mosques and schools,

supplying professional training, computer systems, medical support networks, field hospitals and surgery and radiology wards.

He explained that the UAE armed forces mission in Pakistan, for instance, was the outcome of military coordination between the two countries following a political decision. The mission involved air transport of aid, military hospitals and protection of relief convoys. In Afghanistan, the Emirati armed forces assisted in constructing roads and bridges, removing landmines and explosives and exchanging intelligence with the Afghani and the coalition forces in order to make informed decisions and provide relief supplies, he explained.

As for their role in the Syrian crisis, he said: “We coordinate with the Jordanian side to offer aid to refugees. We supply tents, medical care centres and a field hospital in addition to food and medical supplies. We are also responsible for ensuring the safety of relief staff, opening emergency assistance locations and providing military medical staff.”

In his address at the conference, the French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said: “Three major crises are a good illustration of the threats we are confronted to in a global world, and where we have to adapt our defence and national security strategies: nuclear proliferation, international terrorism, chemical threats and potential destabilisation of whole areas...”

He added: “There are major stakes in the Middle-East: to put an end to Iran’s violations of their own international commitments and to give guarantees to the world that their programme is exclusively pacific; to prevent them from acquiring the tools for blackmailing their close or remote neighbours in the future; to prevent a series of proliferation that would threaten the Middle-East and consequently the world’s safety.”

And he went on to say: “Our responsibility is to foil this effort and to guarantee the viability of the international non-proliferation regime, for the safety of all. This responsibility justifies France’s strong commitment to foster an approach that combines both necessary firmness and opening to serious dialogue. The increasingly strong sanctions that we have imposed are only a way to bring Iran back to serious negotiations. The Iranians know that they will only regain the international community’s trust if they tread the path to negotiating, in good faith and without preconditions.”

The UK Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Philip Dunne focused on the significance of UAE-UK strategic dialogue in the field of security and its impact on the prosperity of the GCC States. He emphasised the importance of trust in matters of common interest. He also stressed the need to counter Iran’s nuclear ambitions.

Lieutenant General Vincent Brooks, Commanding General of the US Third Army spoke of the cooperation between his country and GCC States in the area of defence. He said: “We maintain military and security cooperation with the majority of the GCC and the region states. We realise that Iran does indeed constitute a real threat to all GCC countries.” He went on to call for “more cooperation among many nations in order to avoid conflicts.”

A total of 1112 companies showcased their products at IDEX 2013, attracting more than 80 thousand visitors, which makes this year’s edition of the annual exhibition the largest in its history.

Major General Obaid Al Ketbi, Chairman of the Higher Organising Committee for IDEX 2013 noted that the Armed Forces signed a total of 55 deals with an overall value of Dh 14 billion during the exhibition.

**THE SECURITY OF THE REGION GAINED A NEW DIMENSION BECAUSE OF THE MULTIPLICITY OF SOURCES OF SECURITY THREAT**

## The President issues federal decree appointing H.H. Tahnoun bin Zayed as Deputy National Security Advisor

H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, issued a federal decree appointing H.H. Sheikh Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan as Deputy National Security Advisor with a rank of minister.



### First of its in the Arab world



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Fax: +971 2 4177088

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P.O Box: 113811 Abu Dhabi

**Price:** to be agreed upon with management

#### Conditions:

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In view of coordinating common efforts to respond to emergencies

## NCEMA signs three MoUs with «Arabia» «Al Etihad», and «Emirates» Airlines

As part of its efforts to develop a standardised emergency response, the National Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management Authority, NCEMA, in its capacity as the main national authority responsible for setting standards and coordinating all efforts related to emergency management, signed three memoranda of understanding with Air Arabia, Al Etihad, and Emirates airlines.



The MOUs stipulate that all three carriers shall provide the required support to NCEMA in order to put the agreed strategies and plans into effect in case of unexpected emergencies or crises. As per the MOUs, the parties shall form joint work team to develop the required mechanisms that support NCEMA's efforts.

### MoU with with Air Arabia

The first MoU with Air Arabia was signed by Sheikh Abdullah Bin Mohammed Al Thani, Chairman of the Board of Air Arabia, and H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Matar Al Rumaithi, Director General of NCEMA in the presence of a number of senior executives from both parties.

Sheikh Al Thani and H.E. Al Rumaithi, both stressed the importance of this partnership which contributes to enhancing capabilities and supporting the NCEMA's endeavours to perform its role to the best of its ability.

### MoU with Etihad Airways

His Excellency Mohammed Khalfan Matar Al Rumaithi, General Director of NCEMA and Khalid Ghaith Al Mehairbi, Senior Vice-President for Government and Aeropolitical Affairs at Etihad Airlines, signed a memorandum of understanding under which the national airline will provide support for the Authority in implementing approved plans and strategies in situations of emergency or crisis. According to strategies and plans, both parties will also form a joint working group to develop mechanisms to support NCEMA's efforts, contributing therefore to the security, prosperity and stability of the UAE.

Al Rumaithi emphasized the importance of concerted efforts which ultimately serve the interests of all the country's sectors. "The signing of this MoU with an airline of the caliber of Etihad Airways enhances the private sector's contribution to NCEMA's efforts, as it enjoys extensive expertise in this area. As the main national stakeholder responsible

for setting standards, coordinating emergency management efforts and drafting a unified national response plan, NCEMA shall develop and sustain legislations, policies and procedures related to emergency, crisis and disaster management, while improving preparedness and readiness, through agreements strengthening its roles and responsibilities," he added.

For his part, Al Mehairbi observed that safety has always been a top priority for Etihad Airways. "In our capacity as the national airline of the UAE and a world leading airline, we are proud to sign this MoU with NCEMA", he said. And he added: "We look forward to working closely with NCEMA in the field of emergency, crisis and disaster management, while we continue to enhance our company's public safety systems to support the Authority's efforts and programmes."

The signing ceremony was attended by H.E. Shahwan Srouf Al Dhaheri, Deputy General Director of NCEMA, NCEMA department directors , Captain Richard Hale, Minister of Labour Affairs, Hassan Ali Al Hammadi, Senior Deputy Chief of Executive Affairs, Hareb Mubarak Al Muhairy, Etihad's Vice-President for Commercial Affairs, Captain Salah Al Farajalla, Etihad Vice-President for Aviation Security and National Pilot Development, Abdulkader Hussein Ahmed, Vice-President for Governmental and International Affairs and Jawad Al Hashemi, Director of Governmental Sales in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain.

### ... with Emirates Airlines

Following the signing of the MoU at his office in Dubai His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and CEO of Emirates Airline & Group, His Highness stressed the importance of this partnership and said: "Emirates



will commit to support the vital initiatives of NCEMA and assist in achieving its objectives."

The signing ceremony was attended by Mohammed Khalfan Matar Al Romaithi, Director General of NCEMA. The signing ceremony was attended by Ali Salem bin Kneid Al Fallasi, Director of the Support Services Department at NCEMA, Khalifa Al Alaili, Director of NCEMA's National Coordination and Response Bureau in Dubai, Hameed Abdullah bin Darwish, Head of Public Services Division at NCEMA, Adel Al Rida, Executive Vice-President of Engineering and Operations at Emirates Airlines

For his part, HE Mohammed Khalfan Matar Al Rumaithi, Director General of NCEMA emphasised the significance of concerted efforts among various sectors since they ultimately serve the interests of the country. He pointed out that the agreement with a heavy-weight such as Emirates Airlines enhances the participation of the private sector in emergency management efforts.



Scientific forum recommends efforts to propagate the culture of volunteerism and its applications in the community

## NCEMA participates in World Civil Defence Day events

The National Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management Authority [NCEMA] participated in the World Civil Defence Day celebrations that were held in Abu Dhabi under the title “Civil Defence and Preparing Civil Societies for Disaster Prevention”.



Lieutenant General Saif Abdullah Al Shafar, the Interior Ministry’s undersecretary opened the event in the presence of HE Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, NCEMA’s director general, Major General Nasser Lakhraibani Al Nuaimi, secretary general of the office of HH Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Major General Staff Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili, assistant undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for support resources and services, Major General Khamis Saif bin Suwaif, Director General of Criminal Security at the Ministry of Interior, Major General Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi, director general of Central Operations at Abu Dhabi Police, Major General Rashid Thani Al Matroushi, acting commander general of Civil Defence, Brigadier General Saleh Al Aayed, director of public relations and media at the Civil Defence general directorate,

Colonel Saad Al Dosari, manager of the office of the director general of civil defence in Saudi Arabia, general directors of civil defence in the UAE, Colonel Dr Jassem Mohammed Al Mithrab, chairman of the higher organising committee and a large number of officers from the Ministry of Interior.

NCEMA also took part in the exhibition that was held on the sidelines of the scientific forum. Dr Abdullah Mohammed Al Shiba, head of the specialised training unit at NCEMA presented a paper on the authority’s role in preventing emergencies and disasters.

Lieutenant General Saif Al Shafar stressed that the Ministry of Interior is making great efforts to raise the level and the performance of civil defence organisations and their members in order to keep up with the UAE’s achievements in areas of urban and

industrial development. He added that the general command of Civil Defence in the country has undergone major development in recent years through the rehabilitation of its staff and the acquisition of state-of-the-art systems and equipment. He observed that Civil Defence officers are making great and distinct efforts to ensure public safety and to protect lives, property and national wealth.

He noted that the Civil Defence seeks to activate partnerships with civil societies and the various social institutions via a variety of mechanisms, including forming volunteer teams trained in rescue operations. This would raise the level of awareness among the public and introduce them to a higher level of knowledge that allows them to act adequately in cases of emergencies or disasters.

Lieutenant General Al Shafar emphasised that for the Civil Defence to be efficient it requires constant collaboration and coordination with agencies and individuals. This is a strategy that the General Command of Civil Defence has been implementing in the UAE and that has been well received by all the relevant players in the community. Civil Defence departments in the country are constantly organising awareness campaigns addressed to the public. Such programmes and plans are an embodiment of this year's slogan. Al Shafar called on the public to take an active part in supporting the civil defence efforts in protecting the people's safety by benefiting from its multiple awareness programmes.

For his part, Major General Rashid Al Matroushi stressed that "...thanks to our joint efforts we shall contribute to establishing a preventive culture in the community and create new horizons for coordination between Civil Defence and disaster management agencies on one hand and civil societies on the other hand." He added: "The accomplishments that have been achieved so far and the noble goals we seek to attain along with you constitute a vital part of Civil Defence's vision to make the UAE one of the world's top countries in terms of safety and security."

The Scientific Forum discussed seven papers during its sessions. Major General Al Matroushi

talked about "Civil Defence Procedures to Manage Crises and Disasters". Mrs Fawziya Tareh, director of the family development department at the Ministry of Social Affairs presented a paper on "The role of the Ministry of Social Affairs in disaster management". Mr Humaid Rashid Al Shamsi, acting director of relief and emergency department at the Emirati Red Crescent Authority talked about "Civil Societies supporting role to authorities". Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed Abduljalil Al Ansari, head of the Emirates search and rescue team at the Abu Dhabi Police General Headquarters addressed the "Role of the Emirates search and rescue team in confronting crises and disasters." Dr Saleh Saif Salem Al Ali, the medical emergency and disaster medicine consultant at the general command of the armed forces spoke about "The role of professional medical associations in times of crises and disasters... towards a distinguished community partnership." And Masood Yussuf Al Hosani from the Emirates Foundation for Youth Development focused on the Emirates Foundation vision for youth as well as on its mission and achievements.

Before it wrapped up, the forum issued recommendations to strengthen collaboration and coordination between Civil Defence and civil societies and to work with relevant partners to propagate the culture of volunteerism in the community. This involves developing the volunteers' skills and promoting communication between domestic volunteering civil societies and equivalent associations abroad. It also calls on the relevant government agencies to offer additional material and moral assistance to active civil societies to enable them to better prepare their volunteers and advance their theoretical and scientific skills through advanced programmes and drills that are in line with international best practices. The forum recommended the organisation of exchange awareness visits between Civil Defence departments and civil societies, which would serve in strengthening their policies and mechanisms for cooperation and coordination.

As per the plan to form specialised local teams

## The National Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management Authority Inaugurates coordination and response offices in the Northern Emirates

As part of its efforts to implement top-notch systems for the management of emergencies and crises and in line with its endeavours to establish a regular mechanism for timely and efficient response throughout the emirates, NCEMA inaugurated a series of coordination and response offices across the country in the emirates of Sharjah, Fujairah, Umm Al Quwain, Ajman and Ras Al Khaimah.



Coordination and response offices are tasked with following up on daily emergency incidents with the relevant authorities in each of the emirates. They participate in developing and updating the local risk register, updating local capabilities and resources and setting up local response plans. Their role includes supplying local and national trainings and drills in line with the strategic vision for training programmes supplied by various agencies under the supervision of NCEMA, in cooperation and collaboration with the relevant ministries and authorities.

National coordination and response offices shall coordinate, locally and nationally, with regards to the programmes of the integrated emergency management matrix. They shall also be responsible for ensuring the consistency between local and

national programmes in order to guarantee adequate management of any emergency.

The newly inaugurated offices use the latest emergency management systems and a mechanism to measure response time. They are equipped with central operations systems that allow them to coordinate with the relevant authorities in cases of emergency.

### Inauguration of Coordination and Response Office in Ras Al Khaimah

Major General Sheikh Talib bin Saqr Al Qasimi, General Commander of RAK Police and Head of the local emergency team in RAK and H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, NCEMA's Director General have



inaugurated the new headquarter of the coordination and response office in the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah.

Al Qasimi and Al Rumaithi were shown around the office accompanied by Brigadier General Mohammed Al Noubi Mohammed, Deputy General Commander of RAK Police and Mr. Ali Rashed Al Niyadi, Director of NCEMA's Operations Department as well as a number of officials from the RAK Police General Command and directors of local departments in RAK's local emergency team. The delegation was briefed on the technical equipment and administrative procedures applied at the office to enhance the capacity of the local emergency team to perform their duties and responsibilities.

Major General Sheikh Talib bin Saqr Al Qasimi stressed that the formation of a local emergency team shall contribute to a better and more efficient implementation of the general strategy highlighted in the emergency and crisis plans adopted by the higher leadership. The new step shall help in improving national response to emergencies and crises.

For his part, Al Rumaithi praised the use of modern techniques and communication systems to ensure coordination among stakeholders and with the national operations center in order to share the CRIP (common

recognized information picture) and other relevant information, according to the latest security standards. He also praised the office's qualified national staff.

Al Rumaithi commended the implementation of the recommendations of H.H. Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, National Security Advisor and Chairman of the Board of NCEMA, which anchor the principles of successful response and management, innovation and implementation of best solutions, and working at the highest levels of

professionalism using the available capabilities and skills that ensure timely response to emergencies.

On behalf of NCEMA's chairman and board of directors, Al Rumaithi thanked Sheikh Talib bin Saqr Al Qasimi, General Commander of RAK Police for the guidance he provides for the local emergency team to perform their duties.

Major General Sheikh Talib bin Saqr Al Qasimi received in the RAK Police General Command office H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, accompanied by Mr. Ali Rashed Al Niyadi, Director of NCEMA's Operations Department and Mr. Khalfan Nayeh Saeed bin Hafesh, Director of the national coordination and response office in RAK. The meeting emphasised aspects of joint cooperation and ways of developing the work of the local emergency team.

### ... in Umm Al Quwain

H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, NCEMA's Director General, accompanied by Colonel Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Mualla, Commander General of Umm Al Quwain Police and Head of the local emergency team, a number of managers and officials from the local emergency team and senior officers from the General Command of Umm Al Quwain Police inaugurated the new coordination and response office



emergency response, submitting recommendations to the team of senior leaders and conducting field visits to examine the best practices in preparedness and response systems. The team also identifies potential hazards at the local level and classifies them according to their type, probability and impact, while preparing response plans and programmes and assessing the readiness of responding agencies.

in the emirate and took note of the technical equipment and administrative procedures implemented in it.

Colonel Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Mualla received in his office H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, NCEMA's Director General. The meeting was attended by a number of directors of local and federal departments. It focused on the various aspects of joint coordination and ways to develop the work of the local emergency team.

Al Rumaithi thanked UAQ Police General Commander and his team for their efforts in following up on the local emergency team's work and providing it with the required resources to achieve its mission.

NCEMA's General Director praised the role of the local Emiratis enrolled in the local emergency team trained to ensure an efficient and successful management of crises, emergencies and disasters. Al Rumaithi encouraged them to deploy further efforts and work as one team guided by a patriotic spirit to protect the country's achievements.

For his part, Colonel Sheikh Rashid bin Ahmed Al Mualla, Commander General of Umm Al Quwain Police and Head of the local emergency team said that the local emergency team ensures an effective implementation of the emergency and crisis management plans adopted by senior leaders and improves the efficiency of national response efforts. He added that the local emergency team is also responsible for preparing reports on the

### ... in Ajman

The National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA) inaugurated a coordination and response office in the emirate of Ajman.

H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, NCEMA's Director General, accompanied by General Ali Abdullah Alwan, General Commander of Ajman Police and Head of the local emergency team in the emirate, Mr. Ali Rashed Al Niyadi, Director of NCEMA's Operations Department and a number of directors and officials from the local emergency team and senior officers from the General Command of Ajman Police visited the new office and took note of the technical equipment and administrative procedures implemented by the local emergency team in situations of emergency and crises.

NCEMA's Director General thanked the Ajman local emergency team presided over by General Alwan for providing the team members with all necessary resources to carry out their roles efficiently and dynamically, which creates a good work environment for ministries, institutions and relevant authorities.

Al Rumaithi stressed that staff members should acquire the technical and administrative skills required to perform their duties more effectively. He emphasised the importance of NCEMA's training and development



programmes which improve the performance of the members of the local emergency team in situations of emergency, crisis and disaster. He encouraged them to demonstrate perseverance and dedication and work as one team guided by a patriotic spirit in order to protect the country's achievements.

For his part, General Ali Abdallah Alwan, General Commander of Ajman Police and Head of the Ajman local emergency team said that the presence of a local emergency team would contribute to a better implementation of the general strategy highlighted in the emergency and crisis plans adopted by the senior leadership. It improves the national response time according to best practices and in coordination with ministries, federal and local authorities, as well as emergency and disaster committees at the emirate level.

### ... in Fujairah

A new coordination and response office was inaugurated in the emirate of Fujairah in the presence of NCEMA's director general and H.E. Colonel Mohammed Ahmed bin Ghanem Al Kaabi, General Commander of Fujairah Police.

A meeting was held to emphasise aspects of joint cooperation, the daily event register, the

update of the local risk register, the local resources and capabilities available for the local emergency team, the local response plans, as well as the local and national trainings and exercises organised in Fujairah, in light of the strategic vision presented by exercises prepared by different stakeholders and overseen by NCEMA, in coordination and cooperation with concerned ministries and authorities.

Following the meeting, the delegation visited the office and took note of its technical and administrative equipment.

Mr. Saeed Hilal Al Zahmi, the office's Acting Director, conducted a briefing on the latest electronic systems and communication tools used by the office for emergency management. Al Zahmi highlighted ways of enhancing communication channels and coordination among national coordination and response offices on one hand and the Operations Centre, on the other hand. The visiting delegation was made aware of the roles and responsibilities of the office, including the main operations room equipped with the latest communication and event tracking systems.

NCEMA's Director General thanked the local emergency team for their relentless and tangible efforts and praised their efficiency.

Al Rumaithi said that the local coordination offices are responsible for coordinating at the local and national levels to safeguard an integrated system for crisis and emergency management. He added that the responsibility of these offices is immense since they are required to ensure consistency between local plans and national plans in order to guarantee an efficient and successful management of crises, emergencies and disasters. He also commended the capabilities of the highly trained Emiratis



working at the office.

He urged the specialised teams working at the coordination offices to deploy further efforts and work as one team guided by a patriotic spirit in order to protect the country's achievements.

### and... an Office in Sharjah

H.E. Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, NCEMA's General Director, accompanied by General Abdullah Mubarak Al Dukhan, Deputy General Commander of Sharjah Police, inaugurated the new headquarters of the coordination and response office in the emirate of Sharjah. The inauguration was attended by Mr Ali Rashid Al Niyadi, the Director of Operations at NCEMA and Mr Abdullah Hassan Gharib, the director of the local coordination and response office, as well as a number of officials.

The visiting delegation was briefed on the technical equipment and the administrative procedures used to strengthen the capacity of responders to perform their duties and responsibilities.

Al Rumaithi thanked the local emergency team led by Major

General Humaid Mohammed Al Hadidi for their effective role in the development of work to prepare and respond to emergencies and crises. He said that the local coordination offices are responsible for coordinating at the local and national levels to safeguard the integrated system for crisis and emergency management. He added that the responsibility of these offices is immense since they are required to ensure consistency between local plans and national

plans in order to ensure an efficient and successful management of crises, emergency and disasters. He also commended the capabilities of Emiratis working at the office and urged them to exert more effort guided by a spirit of patriotism.

For his part, General Abdullah Mubarak Al Dukhan, Deputy General Commander of Sharjah Police, said that the presence of a local emergency team would contribute to a better implementation of the general strategy highlighted in the emergency and crisis plans adopted by the higher leadership.

He said that the team is required to draft the necessary reports on response situations, recommendations and proposals to be

submitted to the senior leadership team. He added that the local emergency team coordinates and participates in the follow-up process of the implementation of all the requirements of business continuity in the ministries and vital institutions. Furthermore, the team members assess the situation and readiness of infrastructure to face crises and disasters, while ensuring that the organisational units implement the decisions taken by the team and take the necessary measures to improve performance.

**Leap advanced process in order to achieve the objectives set out in the management of emergencies, crises and disasters**



The Arab Spring has yet to yield harvest

**His Excellency Dr.  
Jamal Sanad Al Suwaidi  
Director General of the  
Emirates Center  
for Strategic Studies  
and Research  
to “Tawaree” :**

**We must translate our  
feelings of loyalty and  
belonging to the country  
and its wise leadership into  
daily working behaviour**

To the young Emirati generation I say: You  
are entrusted with the UAE's well being which  
requires the mind and efforts of one and all



**His Excellency Dr Jamal Sanad Al Suwaidi, Director General of the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research sees that the present international atmosphere is highly unstable... “which compels us as citizens to translate our feelings of loyalty and belonging to this country and to its wise leadership into daily working behaviour in order for us to preserve our accomplishments and strengthen our capabilities to build our nation.”**

**In an exclusive interview with “Tawaree wa Azamat”, he said... “The Arab Spring has yet to yield springtime, or even fall time harvest...”**

**He noted that, since its establishment, the ECSSR’s research journey has been distinguished. The centre has gained in importance through its clear planning vision that aimed in the first place to support the national development, construction and modernisation plans. He said: “We are far from being content with what we have achieved so far. We still have many hopes and ambitions.”**

**“The centre’s significance stems from its strong conviction of its pivotal role at the service of the country,” he observed.**

**The current  
global  
atmosphere  
is significantly  
unstable**



## Interview

He stressed that the support offered by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed AL Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and President of the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research has contributed to propel the centre to its present position as a distinguished national institution.

Speaking of the “Strategic Visions” magazine, he said “it is a culmination of our rich research journey and a valuable knowledge portal for the UAE.”

Dr Al Suwaidi sees that the value and the role of scientific research and think tanks is underestimated in many cases. He emphasised the national roles of these centres and stressed that they give the utmost priority to the interests of their respective countries and peoples.

H.E. Dr. Jamal Sanad Al Suwaidi wrapped up the interview by urging the young Emirati generation to ensure the well being and the future of the country.

**• The ECSSR was established in March 1994 as a unique institution of its kind in the Middle East. How successful was it in fulfilling this ambition?**

•• Since its establishment on March 14, 1994, the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research has been an advanced and distinguished research institution that focuses mainly on the strategic dimension of its studies, research and scientific activities. It was this precisely dimension that added to the value of knowledge produced at the centre and that has been missing in the Arab World.

It is a known fact that the strategic dimension is the basis for any planning and decision making in any country that seeks to keep up with the modern pace of development in a rapidly changing world.

Hence the centre acquired its paramount position by adopting a clear planning vision targeted primarily to support development, construction and modernisation plans for our country and the rest of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States, through the provision of support and the required information infrastructure and guidelines necessary for the decision-making process.

Certainly, the ECSSR's elevated position in the world of research and scientific studies is sufficient proof of its success and its ability to achieve many of its objectives. In fact, our position reflects the importance and significance of the role we have been playing. However, we are far from being content with what we have achieved so far; we still have many hopes and ambitions. We believe that the role of the center will increase during the current period and in the future, especially in light of the complexities and the growing turmoil in the Middle East. In the present

circumstances, the centre becomes an important hub for brainstorming and a vital base for monitoring the situation regionally and internationally. The centre will be expected to perform its national role within the institutional systems operating in the country, which all seek to implement the ambitious development vision of our wise leadership, led by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE.

**• Research and Study centres are proliferating in many countries. What do you think of this**

**Research centres ought to have the interests of their respective countries and peoples at the top of their priorities**

**phenomenon and what distinguishes the ECSSR from other centres?**

•• Based on my academic background and my experience in the field of research, I see no objection to the spread of research and think tanks in any country. However, the main problematic lies in how firmly convinced are the managers of these centres of their value and of the vital role they play on one hand, and on the other hand, in the level of professionalism and seriousness demonstrated in their operation.

I can safely say that in many cases, the value of scientific study and the role of think tanks are underestimated. We hear about many research and study centres that are mere facades that exploit the title for prestige. Such practices undermine the valuable role that research centres are supposed to perform, especially in our Arab World that need to find its way into the future. I am not exaggerating when I say that the Arab region is in dire need for a clear and objective view of reality.

What is important in my opinion is that all parties concerned are persuaded that studies and research centres have a national duty and role.

These centres must have must have the interests of their respective countries and peoples at the top of their priorities, for once these institutions lose their compass, the consequences would be tragic and the damage irreparable.

Therefore, I consider that the ECSSR's distinction stems from its conviction of its pivotal role aimed to serve the country and of its awareness that its harmony and cooperation with the various development institutions in the country are the true indication of its success.

This is the main driver of all of our research

activities. You may have noticed this through our choice of issues and topics for our annual conferences, forums, lectures original and translated publications, magazines or any other media of knowledge production that aim to support the country's development in all fields.

**• Since its creation, the centre established new standards of excellence and competence in strategic research and studies. What are they?**

I already explained the general framework of our work which necessitates specific regulations to monitor performance, control mechanisms and direct us towards our objectives,

There are many criteria and regulations in this sense, mainly creativity. We, at the ECSSR were careful not to fall into the trap of imitation. We seek to be unique and distinguished at the level of knowledge production and research and at the level of planning and performance. This requires a well-designed structure that lays down the standards for competence and quality that, in turn, require close follow-up to ensure the respect and the sustainability of the standards in a way that entrenches

creativity and distinction as a deep-rooted culture.

We were successful in embedding this culture among our staff that strive for qualitative excellence. We also adopt a policy of accountability and honesty that require a high degree of self-criticism in order to detect any flaws and address them at the earliest.

This is a substantial administrative tool that includes various implementation details such as the principle of reward and punishment, adoption of motivational policies to support quality and improve performance, detecting

**“Strategic Visions” magazine is a culmination of our rich research journey and an valuable knowledge portal.**



## Interview

inactive staff members that lack the required level of ambition and addressing these issues through rehabilitation and training programmes or through modified career placement in a way that fits individual capabilities and guarantees maximum utilisation of the available human resources.

**• To what do you attribute the ECSSR's prestigious international stature?**

•• No doubt that the centre's advanced position in the field of research and studies, which make it a mecca for researchers, academics and politicians from all over the world, can be mainly attributed to the strong support it receives from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, the president of the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research.

His Highness is keen to support the centre, which has helped tremendously in propelling it to its present position as a distinguished national institution. Such support is part of a more comprehensive conviction at the leadership level of the value of scientific research and the role that think tanks play in supporting the decision-making process. It is a conviction that is echoed in many of our beloved nation's policies. It is reflected in our leaders' endeavours to partake in the various activities and events organised by the centre to discuss myriad issues and topics.

**• 19 years into its foundation, the centre has achieved a great deal. What else remains to be achieved?**

After a long journey of diligent work and excellent performance, I can assure you that we

have yet to achieve all of our objectives. There is a lot that the centre can offer in the coming years.

We recently issued the "Strategic Visions" magazine, which comes as a culmination of our rich research journey and represents a valuable knowledge portal for the UAE. We aim to elevate this new periodical to the top of the list of globally recognised scientific periodicals in the coming phase. To this end, we adopt specific publication criteria and regulations and we focus on serious studies that contribute to the human knowledge bank.

We also aim, in the coming phase, to concentrate on development and social issues that are becoming increasingly important on the world's research agenda. These issues include renewable energy, information warfare, effects of social media, the regional rise of political Islam, the ambitious military nuclear projects of certain regional powers in addition to a number of other topics that the centre may help in understanding.

**• The centre's UAE Federation Library is one of the country's, and maybe the region's, most significant libraries. What can you tell us about the Million Volume plan for the library?**

•• The UAE Federation Library receives special interest from the centre. We are keen to provide it with all the requirements needed for its development and growth. The library is constantly acquiring new publications from all over the world. It is equipped with the latest systems for cataloguing an archiving as well as advanced e-library systems. We have plans to make it a Million Volume library; a target we trust we shall attain soon, God willing.

We are keen to acquire quality publications in varied subjects as this reflects the UAE's appreciation of cultural and human openness and the significance it gives to communication and

**We are far from content with what we have achieved so far, and we still have many hopes and ambitions**

benefiting from scientific achievements everywhere.

- The centre's tasks include developing reports and offering support to decision-makers regarding the best political alternatives. In light of this role, what, in your opinion, are the threats to the UAE in the foreseeable future?

- The UAE indeed faces a number of internal and external challenges, notably the plans of certain religious organisations to undermine its security and stability by cloning the experiences in other countries in the region.

It is true that the country's tight security has succeeded in unveiling secret conspiracies that have been brewing under the surface, but this doesn't mean that the conspiring organisations have relinquished their quest to harm our nation.

Maintaining the pace of progress and development in the UAE is in itself an immense challenge. It requires that we sustain the same level of planning, management and financing.

The regional environment we live in is going through security, political and sectarian imbalance. The region today is different from what it was like two years ago although its new aspects have yet to take shape. These challenges, in addition to traditional challenges, such as the growing nuclear and expansionist ambitions of neighbouring Iran that still persists in its occupation to the Emirati islands (Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Moussa) and its constant interference in the internal affairs of the GCC countries, as well as the instability of the global financial system among other economic, political and strategic challenges, only prove how unstable the current global situation is. This compels us as citizens to translate our feelings of loyalty and belonging to this country and its wise

leadership into daily working behaviour if we are to preserve the country's accomplishments and strengthen our capabilities to build our nation.

- **What are your thoughts of the so-called Arab Spring?**

- I don't want to get into a discussion of terminology, especially in the case of the so-called Arab Spring, which, so far, has yet to yield any springtime harvest or even a fall time harvest of dead leaves that may be of some use. It only brought high winds that swept away the security and stability of some Arab peoples and endangered the future of millions of Arab youth.

What I'm concerned with in this context is the absence of any clear strategic vision at the level of the new political leaders in the Arab countries that have undergone change. They are too busy with internal conflict that, coupled with their poor political expertise, selfishness and a mad desire to monopolise power, show how complex these countries' dilemma is. The new leadership's tendencies to hold on to power and their policies of marginalisation and elimination are wreaking havoc in society and throwing their respective countries back into the dark ages.

- The world has become a small village and it is normal that a country is affected by events around it. Do you think that the region would be immune to the winds of change? Do you see any repercussions of the Arab Spring in the Gulf, and more specifically in the UAE?

- Talk of the theory of the political domino effect that suggests that the movement of protest and change would soon catch up with the region's countries is an analytical risk that isn't supported by facts. Many researchers and analysts link the

**Regional environment in which we live undergoing unbalance security and political, but also sectarian**



## Interview

spread of social media to the winds of change that took over the Arab World. They presume that social media were the driver that sparked the revolutions, and this is true to a certain extent. Social media did have an undeniable role to play in sparking protests.

But to admit this doesn't mean that change would inevitably spread horizontally across all countries of the Arab World. A close inspection of these revolutions show that the main reason behind them was social turmoil and latent internal congestion that provided an opportunity for religious organisations and foreign interference.

But, when we talk about a coherent community that abides by a set of values such as the Emirati community, which enjoys an extraordinary relationship between leadership and the public, then the situation that we witnessed in other Arab countries wouldn't be an option. In the Emirates, everyone enjoys the fruits of development. Justice in the Emirates is for all and our strong relationship with our wise leadership is one of the main aspects of rule as interaction is constant between the people and the leaders and development requirements are met without delay.

It is my personal opinion that, from a theoretical point of view, no one is immune to change. However, when you have all the elements for internal immunity, your body would be capable of thwarting any external infection. In other words, even if you live in a viral environment, your body will be able to resist any infection if you have already given it the effective serum to withstand threats.

Infections only affect weak points, regardless of geographical considerations. Hence the responsibility of GCC countries to immunise their communities and address any gaps that some may exploit to plant sectarian or political sedition.

We, in the United Arab Emirates, enjoy wise leadership and popular loyalty, which gives our beloved nation a strong sense of solidarity that allows us to be optimistic about the future. We trust in our leaders, mainly our president His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Sultan Al Nahyan and we believe in the loyalty of our people to the country and to the leadership that strives to fulfill its needs and ambitions.

**We have succeeded to a large extent in instilling a culture of innovation and excellence among workers who are always looking to the exceptional performance and excellence**

### • What do you have to say to the young Emirati generation?

I personally believe that the new generation is the generation of empowerment. It holds a great moral responsibility, greater than the one our generation had to hold. We reaped the fruits of the labour of our forefathers, mainly His Highness the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. Our forefathers went through a lot of difficulties to lay the foundations of the federation. Just as we enjoyed the results of their labour, the future generation shall enjoy the results of our efforts, but they also have the responsibility of preserving our accomplishments and adding to them, just as our current leaders have developed the UAE in a short period of time.

To the young Emirati generation I say: You are entrusted with the UAE's well being and stability which requires the mind and efforts of one and all. Be generous with it and arm yourselves with education and knowledge to lift our precious nation to higher grounds. You only have to realise the value of this most generous country and the value of our precious security, stability, prosperity and respect to know how imperative it is for us all to show more loyalty and belonging to our nation and to hold on tighter than ever to our genuine values as a community.

Safe processing of this type of waste prevents health hazards and environmental disasters

## Landfill and Processing Plant for Hazardous and Chemical Waste to Open Soon in Al Dhafra

The Abu Dhabi Centre of Waste Management Aims to Reduce Waste Production



Scientific development introduced new types of waste, other than the biodegradable type. These are hazardous and chemical waste, which, to be processed, require a state to set up special emergency plans and to take adequate measures and procedures to face any adverse effects they may impose on human health and the environment.

Successful waste management in various parts of the world is a fundamental task that preserves human beings and the environment. States and governments everywhere strive to develop their systems to control, collect, transport and process waste either through recycling or safe and proper disposal.

The United Arab Emirates has adopted some of the most advanced scientific methods to avoid any negative effects from hazardous waste. The Centre for Waste Management in Abu Dhabi applies an integrated system for the management of waste in the emirate, in line with the best international standards. The system includes the establishment of a sanitary landfill for waste, a processing plant for hazardous waste and an incinerator for medical waste as well as a plant to recycle used tires and a factory for recycling demolition and construction waste.

Al Dhafra area in Abu Dhabi will host the new landfill and chemical and hazardous waste processing plant to be established in the near future. The landfill is part of the centre's plan to create a waste management village in the city of Abu Dhabi, at a close distance from the current dump. The new landfill will have a safe and healthy design and will be constructed in an uninhabited area in the desert, surrounded by sand dunes and little plants, and on a low, flat and salty plot of land, adjacent to the Dhafra highway, 72 km southwest of Abu Dhabi.

The site was chosen according to international standards required to ward off any negative effects that may result from hazardous and chemical waste. A detailed study was conducted to assess the project's environmental impact. Special attention was given to avoiding the risk of contaminating groundwater and surface water sources. The landfill would be located at a safe distance from residential areas and other areas of economic activity and services. It is removed from areas at risk of flooding and earthquakes. And in general, the following issues were taken into consideration for its construction:

- Distance from residential and human gathering areas.
  - Distance from surface water.
  - Distance from groundwater.
- Safe landfills are among the

- most common methods used worldwide for proper
- disposal of hazardous waste. Waste is safely
- deposited in a pit in the ground at a carefully
- chosen location following detailed studies to assess its impact on the environment.

#### **Hazardous waste landfills classifications:**

- Landfills are classified according to the type and volume of waste deposited in them:

#### **Single-type landfill:**

- It holds in the same pit or cell same or similar hazardous waste.

#### **Combined landfill:**

- It holds in the same pit or cell two or more types of hazardous waste.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in 1992 addressed the subject of toxic chemicals in Chapter 19 of Agenda 21, and also in Chapter 20 which pertains to hazardous waste. Chemical toxic and/or hazardous waste is defined as "waste that, if improperly processed, stored, transported or disposed of, represents an intrinsic or potential threat to human health or to the environment," or "waste that causes or contributes significantly to increased incidence of incurable diseases, increased



incidence of disability resulting from curable diseases, or increased mortality cases.”

The World Health Organization recommends to countries that are trying to establish a legal definition for chemical waste to consider whether the waste in question cause "short-term hazards" of a severe nature or "long-term hazards" of a sustainable nature in relation to the environment.

**The toxins resulting from hazardous waste, if inadequately processed, cause serious health damages such as:**

- Significant damage to the nervous system and the liver.
- Hormonal imbalance.
- Retarded growth and an impaired ability to learn, as a result of exposing embryos to toxins.
- Infection of the immune system.
- Impaired fertility.

**The sources of hazardous and chemical waste are multiple, most notably:**

- Residues from chemical manufacturing processes such as chromium used in aluminum plants and leather tanning factories, which constitutes a major threat to the environment if disposed of in a random manner.
- Medical waste: chemical toxic hazards from expired drugs and plastic bottles that are used in abundance in the medical field.
- Waste from chemical materials used in agriculture, especially fertilizers and pesticide residues.
- Household hazardous waste such as batteries containing heavy components, especially car batteries, used oils, concentrated chemical detergents and their packaging.

There are multiple advantages for the safe disposal of hazardous and chemical waste by using landfills, most notably: long-term storage of hazardous waste and disposal of many types of waste. In addition

to that, disposal through landfills doesn't require highly advanced operational technical skill.

However, what is most important in this context is the need to work towards reducing the generation of such waste, especially if we consider that many of the chemical goods and their waste contain hazardous substances that accumulate day after day in homes, such as cleaning detergents, medicine waste, residues of paint and solvents, batteries and electric lamps and so on.

All of these types of waste contain a variety of hazardous substances such as chemical acids. For instance, remote controls and energy-saving light bulbs contain toxic mercury. Computer batteries contain cadmium, and electric circuit boards in electronic goods contain lead, bromine, antimony trioxide and cadmium, and these substances that are found in every home, once they expire or are no longer used, amount to thousands of tons of household and electronic waste, batteries, drug waste and toxic mercury lighting materials.

Hence, the efforts of the Centre for Waste Management in Abu Dhabi don't only aim to develop and build landfills, but also to reduce waste generation by 70 per cent by 2015, and 80 per cent by 2018. The centre's objective is to benefit from waste through recycling, processing or safe disposal, especially since the level of waste production in the emirate of Abu Dhabi is among the highest in the world. Abu Dhabi produces around 12 million tonnes per year, at a rate of 33,247 tonnes per day.

More than one hundred thousand chemical substances are in circulation nowadays in the world's markets. Although most of them have become basic daily life needs, they can still cause health risks and environmental disasters. Therefore, they must be handled and disposed of as safely as possible.



Submit to the youth the opportunity to volunteer in the humanitarian and social programs and allows them to use their time in a meaningful way

**«Takatof» program works to promote a culture of volunteerism and take advantage of the resources available and to find creative solutions that meet the needs of the UAE society**



**The Takatof Programme for Social Volunteering is one of the leading initiatives aimed at raising the level of public awareness to the needs of a community. It encourages participation in the available volunteering opportunities and it seeks to enable individuals, develop their skills and motivate them to commit to volunteer work and strengthen their ties with the UAE community.**

The programme's significance stems from the values it seeks to promote and uphold, namely ethical commitment, social responsibility, public service, national unity, patriotism and consolidation of national identity.

The programme was inspired by HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander

of the UAE Armed Forces. It was designed to create a culture of volunteering throughout the UAE. It mobilises resources across the nation to find creative solution to respond to the needs of the community. Takatof particularly offers young people the opportunity to volunteer in a number of humanitarian and social programmes and to use their time meaningfully.

The programme's officials observe that Takatof Programme has established extensive and positive relationships inside the UAE as well as abroad. They confirm that their ultimate goal is "to further extend our relationship network to include a wider base of public and private bodies in the country, which would be significantly beneficial for Emirati youth and would have a positive impact on their lives."

### **Establishment**

Takatof Programme was launched in Abu Dhabi in April 2007 upon the initiative of the Emirates Foundation, a charitable organisation established in 2005 in the UAE under the patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the chairmanship of HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed AL Nahyan, the Foreign Minister.

### **Vision, Mission and Objectives**

Takatof's vision is to embed the concept of volunteerism in UAE culture and to develop it into a way of life in the Emirati community. Its main purpose is to motivate individuals to volunteer and to invest the available resources in activities that reflect social responsibility and best respond to the needs of the community. The programme aims to support and encourage volunteering, focus on mobilising young people to take part in its activities and projects and promote its values at all levels of the Emirati community. Takatof also seeks to build the volunteers' capabilities and develop their leadership and communication skills. Volunteers are given opportunities that best fit their abilities and fulfil their ambitions. The programme endeavours to develop strategic volunteering initiatives including opportunities for collaboration and coordination with public and private sector partners.

### **Projects and volunteering programmes**

Takatof works via a number of projects, programmes and clubs in the UAE and abroad. These are:

The National Emergency Response Volunteer Programme, «Sanid»

The Sanid programme is a successful joint initiative between Takatof and the National Crisis, Disasters

and Emergency Management Authority. The two organisations signed a partnership agreement in August 2009 and launched the National Emergency Response Volunteer Programme, Sanid, in January 2010 during the second session of the Emergency Management Conference.

The programme has proved efficient since its inception. It prepares UAE citizens and residents alike and equips them with the required skills and knowledge to take part efficiently in emergency response efforts. It enables them to protect themselves and the community and to mitigate the effects of emergencies.

### **2800 volunteers**

An official source at Takatof confirmed that the Sanid database includes more than 2800 volunteers. They are all trained in emergency response and they have offered their services and support in a number of emergency cases recently in Al Ain and Sharjah.

Sanid programme was officially adopted by a number of local agencies as the lead body to train in emergency response.

The programme enjoys the continuous support of HH Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the National Security Advisor and the National Crisis, Disasters and Emergency Management Authority, the partner of the Emirates Foundation since the launching of the programme in 2010. NCEMA's efforts in developing and implementing the programme's plans contributed substantially to its success and continuity.

### **Volunteering in the Health Sector**

Volunteers perform a number of health and administrative activities in hospitals, healthcare centres and special needs institutions. Their activities include offering services and guidance to patients, welcoming visitors and helping the nursing and rehabilitation staff.

The project aims to develop the volunteers' skills and broaden their experiences in humanitarian action and medical care. It seeks to achieve social interaction

and communication and to direct the volunteers' energy towards responding to the needs of the community.

### **Takatof for Special Needs Programme**

The Takatof for Special Needs Programme provides opportunities for volunteers to make beneficial use of their free time helping people with special needs. The programme helps volunteers hone their skills and broaden their experiences through humanitarian work in collaboration with specialised centres throughout the UAE. The programme aims to establish and propagate a volunteering culture and contributes to integrating special needs people into the Emirati community. At the same time, it gives volunteers a sense of gratification.



### **Al Khoi Project**

Al Khoi project is a joint initiative between Takatof and Zayed House for Family Care «Dar Zayed», run by the Zayed Higher Organisation for Humanitarian Care and Special Needs. The memorandum of understanding related to the project's inauguration was signed in 2009. Al Khoi project offers Emirati youth volunteering opportunities to help integrate children from Dar Zayed into cultural, social, recreational and sporting activities, ultimately creating a friendly environment suitable for learning, exchanging experiences and benefiting from leisure time.

### **School Volunteering Grants**

The first edition of this programme was launched in September 2008 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. During the programme's first round, a total of 22 grants were awarded for the academic year 2008/2009. Following initial success, the programme was expanded, and 50 grants were offered to elementary, preparatory and secondary schools across the UAE for the academic year 2009/2010.

### **Ramadan Project**

The Takatof Ramadan Project was first launched in 2007 with the objectives of spreading the concept of social responsibility through volunteering and providing volunteers with opportunities to help needy low-income Emirati families in the country.

The project assists with food, school, health and living expenses. It relies entirely on volunteers whose efforts include conducting field surveys to get a better understanding of the needs of low-income families, distribution of food vouchers and other forms of assistance. The project also includes visits to sick patients, holding Iftar programmes for the elderly, special needs people and labourers as a way to share the joy of the Holy Month.

### **Takatof International Volunteering Programme**

The programme provides volunteers with various opportunities to develop their skills and to take part in many positive and responsible activities abroad. Volunteers gain new experiences while they get the chance to represent the UAE and highlight its honourable humanitarian profile.

Takatof volunteers participate in diverse projects

and missions such as maintenance, construction and refurbishing of homes and schools. They visit senior citizens care centres, orphanages and special needs centres. They also take part in organising a number of environmental, cultural, artistic and recreational events as well as offer their services at UAE pavilions in international exhibitions.

The programme was launched in 2008, its first mission was in the Kingdom of Morocco. Since then, the project has been taking volunteers to numerous countries in Asia, Africa, America and Europe where they were able to leave their distinctive marks. Their missions included Egypt, Thailand, Jordan, USA, Korea, China, Italy, Germany and Tanzania.

### **Volunteering Training Programmes**

Takatof training programmes aim to create and develop the knowledge base and the volunteering skills of applicants. They help them to better understand the benefits of volunteer work and the various methods of volunteering. This programme offers volunteers opportunities to learn through interactive activities and entertaining training exercises. Training attendees are given a certificate in the basics of volunteering as well as volunteer leadership courses in universities and academic establishments. Courses also cover training trainers in schools.

### **University Volunteer Clubs**

Takatof university volunteering clubs promote social volunteering and develop student initiatives where students participate in volunteering community service activities. With the support of Takatof, university clubs plan and manage community service opportunities in university campuses and in the surrounding community. Takatof provides a number of tools and instruments to volunteering clubs to help students in their volunteering planning endeavours.

In February 2009, Takatof signed a memorandum of agreement with the UAE University, one of the most prestigious learning establishments in the country, to establish a volunteering club. The club became operational in 2010-2011.

### **Environment Service Project**

The Takatof Programme supports environmental initiatives by participating in the organisation of many events and public campaigns that address environmental issues throughout the UAE. Volunteers took part in organising beach and land cleaning campaigns and in the national blood donation drive against thalassemia.

### **Makeover Stars Project**

The project provides volunteers with the opportunity to exercise manual labour such as painting, cleaning, gardening, refurbishing and decorating libraries and laboratories. Their missions also include renovating the homes of disadvantaged Emirati families and service buildings such as schools, hospitals, special needs centres and others.

The project was launched simultaneously with the Takatof Programme in 2007. Its first project involved maintenance work on Zayed bin Al Khattab Elementary School in Qidfa in Fujairah. In 2008, Takatof volunteers conducted community renovation drives at six schools in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah.

In 2009, three schools were renovated in different regions in the country. In 2010, Takatof volunteers renovated one school and seven homes in Al Houa, Al Ain and the Northern Emirates. The mission involved wall painting, home repairs, cleaning and furniture installing.

The project reflects Takatof's vision in terms of integrating individuals and human resources in committed social activities. In June 2008, Emirates Foundation signed a three-year memorandum of agreement with the Ministry of Education to support cooperation and partnership between both parties and to launch and activate initiatives aimed at building a solid sense of citizenship and belonging.

### **Volunteering in Public Events Project**

This project allows Takatof volunteers to support or organise a number of public events and activities

inside the UAE. They participate in many national events that help develop their leadership skills and strengthen their self-awareness. Their areas of participation include social, national, educational and sporting events as well as environmental activities.

### **Results Reaped**

Six years into the introduction of the Takatof programme, how can the initiative be assessed and how successful did the programme prove to be in terms of establishing a culture of volunteerism in the UAE community? How many volunteers have so far joined the various programmes and projects offered by Takatof?

Takatof officials deem that the programme has indeed been successful, mainly due to the continued support of the leadership, the primary volunteer His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, as well the members of the Emirate Foundation's board, especially His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Foreign Minister. This success motivates us to exert more efforts in order to preserve the volunteers' achievements on one hand and, on the other hand, to develop additional programmes and projects that uphold the programme's pioneering status in the Emirati community.

### **One Success After Another**

Takatof officials observed that the programme has indeed "enjoyed many successes as evidenced by the numbers." They said: "A total of 28,000 young volunteers are registered in our database. Collectively, they completed approximately one million hours of volunteer work. This is the effect we are looking to achieve in Emirati youth's lives to motivate them to always be positive. In addition to that, we were able



to establish a culture of volunteerism among Emirati youth. We are seeing a number of volunteering programmes in various parts of the country and we see Takatof volunteers in numerous national and international events in the country, not to mention the volunteering events they create to serve the country."

### **A Yearning to Give Back to Society**

In an exclusive interview with Taware'e wa Azamat Takatof officials mentioned that "the primary motivation Takatof offers to its volunteers is the chance to give something back to their country. We doubt that such success could have been achieved if it wasn't for the young people's yearning to give back to a country that has been most generous towards them. As far as the programme is concerned, we offer volunteers the required training before any volunteering mission. This helps in developing their skills and furthering their experiences in tackling all sorts of situations. The trainings we offer them include courses in leadership, communication, dealing with the media, customer service, reception services and professional development. The foundation organises an annual celebratory event, attended by our wise leadership, in honour of active volunteers in Takatof and Sanid programmes."

## Finnish Minister of Housing and Communications Visits NCEMA and Meets with its General Director



**His Excellency Mohammed Khalfan Al Rumaithi, Director General of the National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management (NCEMA) received in his office Her Excellency Krista Kiurum, Finnish Minister of Housing and Communications. The addressed tackled issues of common interest to both the United Arab Emirates and Finland and ways to enhance cooperation in areas of emergency and crisis management.**

The Finnish minister was accompanied by Her Excellency Elka Semela, Finnish Ambassador to the UAE, , Essa Suminin, Special Advisor to the Ministry of Housing and Communications and Johnny Barcan, Special Advisor to the Ministry of Environment.

Al Rumaithi praised the brotherly relations between the UAE and the Republic of Finland in various fields. He also expressed NCEMA's readiness to exchange expertise with the Finnish State in the field of emergency planning, coordination mechanisms and bilateral cooperation.

For her part, the Finnish minister commended the UAE's global reputation and achievements in economic, political, social and developmental areas, and she emphasized the solid ties between the two countries.

Al Rumaithi briefed the visiting delegation on NCEMA's role, tasks and functions which include coordinating efforts, drafting emergency, crisis and disaster plans and developing national policies and procedures, in order to ensure preparedness and oversee the process of emergency management at the national level.

The visiting delegation toured the National Operations Center, where they were informed about the role of the center, the national emergency and crisis management team, the strategic coordination and planning group, the main operations room, the information building and the support cells, as well as the immediate response mechanism, in situations of emergency and crisis.

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## Delegation from the Jordanian Armed Forces visits NCEMA Headquarters in Abu Dhabi



A delegation from the Jordanian Armed Forces led by Brigadier General Munther Mohammed Al Zyoud, Director of the Royal Corps of Engineers visited the National Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA) at its headquarters in Abu Dhabi.

Dr. Jamal Al Hosani, Director of the Technology and Communications Department at NCEMA, along with Mr Ali Rashid Al Niyadi, Director of Operations Department and Mr Nasser Mohammed Al Yamahi, Director of the Media and Communications Department, received the visiting delegation. Dr. Al Hosani delivered a presentation on NCEMA's establishment, role, specialization, management and plans. He spoke about NCEMA's role in setting up plans and programmes to counter emergencies.

The Jordanian delegation was briefed on NCEMA's preparedness and abilities to manage emergencies, crises and disasters and they took note of the authority's emergency-related studies, plans and scenarios.

Dr. Al Hosani stressed the significance of such visits since they allow for discussions in areas of cooperation and exchange of expertise among various agencies and he highlighted NCEMA's pioneering role in this field in the region.



These include high-definition surveillance cameras and state-of-the-art operation rooms.

## Abu Dhabi Customs launches an advanced border surveillance project



**In line with its strategic plan that seeks to adopt the latest technology in protecting the country's security and improve customs services, Abu Dhabi Customs Administration has launched a project to monitor customs centres and affiliated administrative units. The system includes advanced surveillance cameras for better security and customs services.**

### **A joint team - Tracking any security breach**

In 2011, a joint technical team was set up with personnel from Abu Dhabi Customs Administration and Abu Dhabi Police General Headquarters, to exchange expertise. The team came up with a plan to build state-of-the-art security systems with high-definition cameras. The new system, which helps to monitor and prevent any security breach, documents all cases and provides recordings that

can be presented in courts as unequivocal evidence.

Surveillance devices will be used also in documenting incidents and seizures, to be submitted as evidence to the relevant authorities, and to protect customs officials from malicious allegations in some cases.

Moreover, the project seeks to improve customs services and methods to deal with the public through continuous follow-up and analysis to identify and improve any areas that need improvement.

### **Announcement of the Project**

At a press conference held in Abu Dhabi to announce the project, Saeed Ahmed Al Muhairi, head of Abu Dhabi Customs, said that the launch of the surveillance cameras and operations project came to translate the aspirations of senior officials at the Department of Finance, in line with its strategic plan and the recommendations of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council, that aim to help local departments, including Abu Dhabi Customs, achieve performance excellence.

Department of Finance and Customs Administration have made great strides towards the goal of excellent performance thanks to a raft of development projects, said Mr Al Muhairi. The process of modernisation at Abu Dhabi Customs is continuing, Mr Al Muhairi noted, adding that search and surveillance equipments are being modernised and advanced screening systems are provided in line with Abu Dhabi Customs' keenness to provide maximum security and surveillance at all ports.

### **The system covers all customs centres in Abu Dhabi**

For his part, Ali Al Kuwaiti, head of Khatam Al Shukla border post in Al Ain said that the system covers all customs centres in Al Ain, Western Region, Abu Dhabi and the administrative buildings affiliated with them.

All customs ports and departments are linked to the main operating room at the office of Customs Administration in Abu Dhabi; the project includes the instalment of high-definition cameras that can detect any abnormal activities, read body language and detect smuggling attempts.

During the initial phases of the project, some cases were 100 per cent solved, with surveillance cameras being able to read the body language of some passengers who were transferred to

the inspection area where some smuggling attempts were uncovered, he noted.

Al Kuwait said that the project uses the same data infrastructure used by the Department of Finance, noting that such experiences are rare in the UAE.

The goal of the project is to document operations and monitor any security breach, with cameras being "another eye" for customs inspectors. He added that the project also focuses on security services, and personnel performance measurement.

He pointed out that the second phase of the project would be conducted later on, through the establishment of three main operation rooms in the Western Region, Al Ain and in the main operation room at Abu Dhabi Airport.

Each of these operation rooms will be equipped with wireless devices, linking all departments and centres to ensure confidentiality and quick access to information. The second phase, Al Kuwait said, will be ready in the fourth quarter of the year, noting that the first phase proved to be a success, and that the experiment can benefit not only Customs, but all relevant authorities also.

### **Accomplished phases of the project**

The project started in 2011, with the primary challenge being to select the best surveillance systems. To this end, the customs administration in coordination with Abu Dhabi Police formed a joint technical team to examine the best systems used worldwide, and how suitable they are to Abu Dhabi customs. The team eventually came up with the technical specifications required for the system. The second challenge was how to make the best out of the hardware and software used, and avoid errors during installation. The team and the project manager agreed to choose one of the customs posts to try and test every aspect of the system. The aim was to identify any potential

**The second phase of the project: Create 3 major operations Rooms in the Western Region and Al Ain**



technical problems that might arise in other centres and find solutions to them. The Khatam Al Shukla was the selected customs centre.

After this stage came the installation of the system in seven customs centres at the same time, which necessitated the division of the team into three groups, one for Abu Dhabi, a second group for the Western Region and a third for Al Ain.

The installation of the system in the selected customs centres and the affiliated administrative units was completed in the second quarter of 2012.

After that, the main control room at Abu Dhabi Customs Administration was launched, and the system's efficiency and stability was assessed, to ensure it is workable before going to service. This stage ran until the last quarter of 2012.

Abu Dhabi Police, represented by the Central Operations Department and Ports and Airports Security Department, as well as the IT section at the Abu Dhabi Department of Finance and Abu

Dhabi Airports Company, played a vital part in implementing the surveillance cameras project.

These departments will also benefit from the system, at the customs posts through linking. Abu Dhabi Police GHQ has already been linked to the system in some customs centres.

### **The used technology**

The Customs Administration has used a number of hardware and software to achieve the project's goals, which include long-range indoor, outdoor and mobile surveillance cameras, as well as high definition cameras that meet the customs' requirements.

With regard to software, the latest of versions, that feature many properties, was adopted. It can be programmed to sound an alarm for a particular activity; it can be encrypted to prevent any manipulation or alteration to ensure it is valid before courts; it stops when there is no movement at the site, and the slightest movement automatically triggers recording.