

Position Paper

Country: United Arab Emirates

Committee: UNESCO

Delegate: Joe Sammon, Shaker Heights High School

Introduction:

The United Arab Emirates gained their independence from the United Kingdom on December 2, 1971. The country is composed of 7 emirates, each with their own king, but the country is led by an elected prime minister. The United Arab Emirates economy is the second largest in the Arab World, and while measures have been taken to diversify the country's economy, the UAE remains heavily dependent on oil. The UAE is a relatively small nation, bordered by Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the Persian Gulf. Despite being relatively young, the UAE is one of the wealthiest per capita countries on earth, but it still has some issues, such as a lack of freshwater, desertification, and various human rights issues regarding the country's migrant workers.

GDP - \$647 billion

Population - 9,581,000

Foreign Reserve - \$79.9 billion

Government - Federal, presidential, absolute monarchy

President - Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan (since November 2004)

Prime Minister/Vice President - Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (since 2006)

1. The relationship between governance and education

The United Arab Emirates takes education very seriously. The literacy rate is roughly 90%, which is a huge improvement from 54% in 1975. The UAE ensures that all men and women receive access to education by devoting approximately 25% of total government spending to education. The UAE believes that good education systems entirely start with the government, and that an underfunded education system sets a country up for failure. There is a direct correlation with the amount of money spent on a school, and the academic performance of its students, and the United Arab Emirates is aware of this. The UAE scores a 0.79 on the Education Index, which puts it at 80th internationally, and 6th in the Middle East.

2. Preservation of World Heritage Sites

The United Arab Emirates does not consider the preservation of World Heritage Sites to be of utmost importance. The country's only WHS is the city of Al Ain, located near the Oman border. While the UAE agrees that other countries should do whatever possible to maintain these important sites, the UAE itself doesn't consider it to be a priority, as our nation lacks a substantive amount of them. Climate change poses a great threat to some of these sites, but in the UAE's case, climate change causes much greater threats, such as desertification, and the rising sea levels threatening some of our greatest cities. The UAE is willing to do what it can to help other countries achieve this goal, such as attempt to pollute less, but it is not our top priority.

3. Supporting and Accomplishing Education 2030

As stated before, the UAE highly values education. We have nearly doubled our literacy rate since 1971, and plan to have it reach 100% in the coming years. However, while the UAE may have the resources to achieve these goals, we understand that this is not the case in many countries across the globe. The UAE believes that strong education systems start with strong government involvement. If the government fails to allocate a certain amount of its budget to education, the education system will be weak. We believe there should be a global benchmark for the minimum percentage of national spending allocated towards education. While this may leave countries with smaller GDPs at a disadvantage, the UAE believes these countries should receive necessary supplies from countries willing to help them. The UAE also believes that women deserve equal access to education, which is especially a problem in the Arab World and Africa. If money is not allocated towards education, education will fail, and if money is allocated towards education, the United Nations must make sure that there is enough money in the nation, and that women are receiving these benefits as well.