



A lesson in leadership: turning vision into reality

Abu Dhabi’s remarkable transformation in just a matter of decades can be attributed to the emirate’s astute leaders who have been able to translate their vision into action.

One of these visions is manifested in the leaders’ ability to innovate in today’s context, according to Dr **Ahmed Mubarak Ali Al Mazrouei**, Deputy Secretary General of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council, and Chairman of the Health Authority in Abu Dhabi.



“Today the role of government has evolved. Leaders can no longer be focused only on their achievement for economic growth. We are obligated to master the challenge of combining economic growth with environmental stewardship, he said in the opening keynote, *‘Dreams for Leaders -- A Viewpoint from Abu Dhabi’* at the first INSEAD Leadership Summit Middle East held in Abu Dhabi.

“Abu Dhabi has a bold vision to transform itself and to (become) a global leader in sustainable future, energy and technology. Throughout our visionary leadership, we have become the first major

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hydrocarbon-producing economy to invest in long-term strategic development in this area.”

Dr Mazrouei was referring to the Masdar Initiative, which seeks solutions to address energy security and climate change. “It’s innovation and, at the same time, Abu Dhabi wants to be part of the problem-solving areas in the world for areas (in terms of) what could be next -- after energy, after the best use of safe nuclear plants.”

With regard to its consumption of nuclear energy, of which Mazrouei says Abu Dhabi is “a notable example” because of its legally-binding decision to ban uranium enrichment, opting to import its nuclear fuel instead. The UAE is the first country to put civilian nuclear energy law into practice.

“As a chairman of the nuclear authority, we, as the government of the United Arab Emirates, fully appreciate the supreme importance of safety when it comes to the peaceful users of nuclear energy. The benefits of peaceful nuclear energy are great, including areas of electricity generation, medicine, industry and agriculture. But we are committed to ensuring that these are only made available in a manner that does not compromise public safety or the environment,” he told INSEAD Knowledge on the sidelines of the Summit.

Adapting to the changing role of capitalism was also something that the leaders of Abu Dhabi undertook. “The economic model of global capital and commerce is being rewritten with the role of capitalism and its nature being questioned. The challenge for us as leaders is to rewire the way which government and business interact, and how together they can best relate to society.”

Dr. Mazrouei adds that Abu Dhabi, as a result of recognising the need to develop partnerships between government and private sector, as well as the provision of service and infrastructure through private-public partnerships, built the 327-kilometre Mafraq-Ghweifat highway linking the UAE to neighbouring Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The private-public partnerships also extend to healthcare. An example of this is the partnership delivery with world-renowned healthcare providers as such the Cleveland Clinic and Johns Hopkins University. “Medicine has not only branded healthcare but has provided a new avenue for reform through the management contract, linking rewards to outcomes, on a par with the main facilities in the United States,” he adds.

Dr Mazrouei believes that the city’s leaders have paved the way for a better tomorrow. “I remember how Abu Dhabi was 40 years ago. Look at Abu Dhabi today, and then glimpse the future by learning about plans already laid out. Yesterday is history with good memories, tomorrow a revolutionary vision. Today it’s time for action. Our reality today was the dream of yesterday as envisioned by our founder and current leader.”

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