Opening Remarks

Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Ali CEO and Founder of the New TRENDS Research and Advisory United Arab Emirates

On behalf of my team at TRENDS Research and Advisory Center and myself, I would like first to express my happiness to be here with you at Tel Aviv University. Our gathering today is one of the tangible fruits of the Abraham Accords, which have drawn a new roadmap for the future of a Middle East that is more willing and prepared to achieve peace and stability through cooperation and constructive dialogue.

The Abraham Accords, which started with the signing of the peace treaty between the UAE and Israel in September 2020, before Bahrain, the Sudan and Morocco followed suit, have been one of the most important developments in the Middle East in decades. This is not only because they represent a breakthrough in the stalemated peace process between the Arabs and Israeli, but also because they usher in a new era of productive cooperation that helps achieve the aspirations of all peoples of the region.

A year after they were signed, the Accords have proved that peace can bring much more benefits for all parties, whereas continuing futile conflicts only serve the forces of extremism and terrorism. The Accords have opened new horizons of cooperation in the fields of development, technology and culture. Trade exchanges have significantly increased, while cooperation in vital areas such as health, education and technology has seen major developments that have benefited all parties. These benefits will undoubtedly serve as a catalyst for further cooperation and dialogue in the near future.
Maintaining the peace is a much more daunting task than making it, as it requires other important supporting factors to ensure that it benefits all parties, whether they participated in making it or not. Within this context, factors such as culture media and common economic interests play very important roles in ensuring sustainable peace.

The media, through the constructive and purposeful content that it offers, also plays an important role in building positive images regarding each side and enhancing public opinion’s awareness of the importance of the values of peace, dialogue and human fraternity as an alternative to the values of hatred, extremism and rejection of the other.

On the other hand, the common economic interests that are achieved through the expansion of active trade and investment links and economic partnerships in various development fields, especially the new sectors of the economy, advanced technology and knowledge wealth, will undoubtedly constitute the most important basis for the lasting peace we aspire to. Everyone must benefit from the fruits of peace so that they would have an interest in preserving it. These three issues or areas will constitute the focus of this important symposium, which we hope will (come up with) (will generate) innovative and new ideas that would contribute to strengthening cooperation and help attain our goal of sustainable and long-term peace.

**Professor Uzi Rabi Director of the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies Israel**

This is the first personal conference in Tel friends coming from Abu Dhabi in Moshe Dayan center, which is to open up the beginning of friendship,

Dr. Al Ali: I am expressing my delight for cooperation and we will enhance relations in all fields, and there will be exchange between Trends and Dyane centre in Tal Aviv university, and between states.

Trends and the M. D. Centre have important role to work together for the coming generation. What we have here is not just a peace treaty between Israel and an Arab country, a year after Abraham Accords that we can say that it goes beyond top-down affair between people of politics, but it is people to people which is instrumental to promotion peace.

For both Israel and Arab states, this is a glimpse of optimism, we have already peace treaties with Arab states like Egypt and Jordan and these are important treaties, however, this new experience with our friends in the UAE, this is a different scope because we are making the most of by respecting the other by coming up with different thinking.
In the UAE there is a plan to build up the Abrahamic centre, which is a venue for cultural dialogue, which is important and promising for future of dialogue between the two countries

Keynote Speeches

H.E. Mohamed Mahmoud Al-Khaja UAE Ambassador to the State of Israel

The Abraham Accord: Opportunities to Enhance Cooperation, Tolerance, and Development in the Region

The United Arab Emirates believes that achieving development, prosperity, and progress can only happen with sustainable peace, which builds confidence among the region’s people, especially the youth. Sustainable peace lays a foundation for constructive understanding and common interests, which would convince all parties that coexistence serves everyone’s interests.

Thus, my country and our wise leadership, may God protect them, are keen on doing everything that enhances the chances of peace, stability, development, and prosperity in our region and the world. They actively and diligently work to create favorable conditions that ensure a life of prosperity and peace for all the people, especially the region’s youth.

The Abraham Peace Accord is consistent with the vision of the UAE and its wise leadership (may God protect them) to achieve tolerance and coexistence between states and their people. His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, in an article in the Wall Street Journal last September, said that one of the UAE’s priorities is to widen the vision and scope of peaceful coexistence.

My country has a proven track record in promoting tolerance, human fraternity, and coexistence among people of all cultures. It has made this a community culture within its territories. The UAE hosted the signing of the “Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together” by The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar and His Holiness the Pope of the Catholic Church. The document is a message of peace and tolerance from the UAE to the whole world.

For achieving a bright future full of peace and prosperity, we envision collective efforts for our people and the region. We intend to bring a renewed focus on investing in constructive opportunities, building a society based on principles of peaceful coexistence, promoting human ties and mutual interests, and establishing the culture of peace, which would persuade the people of the region to work for peace and prosperity for all.
The UAE hopes and believes that the Abraham Accords will usher in a new era of cooperation between the people of the region. This cooperation is based on genuine and sustainable peace that keeps up with their aspirations for development, well-being, and prosperity by building fruitful partnerships in sectors that serve these aspirations and enhances hopes for a better future.

**Professor Milette Shamir Vice President for International Academic Affairs Tel Aviv University Israel**

It is an honor for Tel Aviv University to host the symposium with TRENDS Research & Advisory, which is considered to be a leading and influential think tank. In fact, both TRENDS and Tel Aviv University have much in common with each other. Both institutions are naturally keen to tackle key challenges faced by our societies and the wider world. Both organizations are also committed to building and strengthening robust international partnerships regionally as well as globally.

While Israel has cultivated strategic partnerships with many individual countries and regions over the years, what sets the Abraham Accords apart is that it has created possibilities for new partnerships in our very own region, that is in the Middle East as well as the Arabian Gulf, and specifically with the United Arab Emirates. This has been anticipated with much enthusiasm by both sides. With the signing of the Abraham Accords, there has been an overwhelming sense of excitement at Tel University whereby everyone, both students and faculty member alike, wanted contacts with their peers in the United Arab Emirates.

Clearly, the Abraham Accords have sparked curiosity and meaningful aspirations soon turned into contacts between the two sides. A few important initiatives are already flourishing into active collaboration. The first one is in the field of applied water research, driven by significant and strong mutual interest in renewable technologies for pure water. The hope is that this will lead to establishing a center for water research with educational implications. The second one concerns plans for creating an academy for aging research to manage the demographic challenges of an aging population. The idea is to develop cutting edge research on aging support and the development of technologies to deal with this global phenomenon. Both collaborative ventures have the right ingredients for success and build on partnerships. But what would truly boost and promote the possibilities of such ambitious research collaborations is expanding them into a wider framework based on meaningful exchange of ideas. The importance of the ties between TRENDS and Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies lies precisely in deepening the dialogue in the interests of greater collaboration.
Panel I: The Role of Culture in Promoting the Values of Tolerance and Dialogue

Panel Chair: Professor Uzi Rabi Director of the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies Israel

This moment is highly important because we are now a year after the Accord and many thought about what is left behind and how should we refer to the accord. This is of course a geopolitical trend. Second there is a huge interaction when it comes to cooperation in technology.

An extra dimension to the accord is culture. It very important to go through the curriculum in all levels in the UAE. We found there to be tolerance and respecting other peaceful coexistence. There are many ramifications when it comes to people; and it is clear that the Emirates have a different mission on how the middle east should be.

Mohammed Khalfan Al-Sawafi Political Researcher UAE

The role of culture in promoting the values of tolerance and dialogue

The region has witnessed several cultural developments that were led by the UAE, resulting in the introduction of a new vision for understanding the other and alleviating religious and sectarian tensions in the Middle East and North Africa. These include the Document on Human Fraternity in 2018 and the Abraham Accords in 2019.

The Abraham Accords led to a number of agreements with other Arab countries. It marked a new stage in how political decision-makers in the region follow a cultural approach to dealing with differences and crises between countries of the region.

Cultures do differ. But those differences can create a shared human civilization by changing the historical perceptions of each side about the other, as those perceptions were responsible for creating gaps and conflicts between the two sides.

The UAE foreign policy is consistent with the basic principle it has been following since its establishment fifty years ago: using diplomacy to start a dialogue between politicians, thus improving mutual understanding and coexistence between peoples. This will help solving regional crises and enhancing economic development and diversification plans.
Dr. Liora Hendelman-Baavur Director of the Alliance Center for Iranian Studies, Tel Aviv University Israel

The Role of Culture in Promoting the Values of Tolerance and Dialogue

Iran and Israel do not share common borders. They have never fought each other in a war and have no territorial claims on each other's land. However, over the last four decades, Israel and Iran have been engaged in a "low-intensity conflict." Iran has been accused of sponsoring terrorist attacks against Jewish and Israeli targets around the world. Israel is alleged to have assassinated several Iranian nuclear scientists and to have been the main force (along with the United States) behind the Stuxnet virus at Iran's nuclear facilities. The list of accusations of each of these two countries is much longer, and neither side has ever acknowledged carrying out many of these alleged attacks.

Unlike the mutual hostility and conflict projected from the headlines that govern the international media, Iran-Israel relations are far more nuanced, and should not be viewed from the limited perspective of the Islamic Republic's nuclear program alone. Secondly, Iran-Israel relations are connected with major episodes in Iranian Jewish history, which have relevant implications to the present, and to the Jewish community that resides in Iran to this very day. These historic and cultural ties can serve important building blocks in overcoming contemporary divisions between the people of these two ancient nations on the backdrop of unofficial cultural initiatives.

Panel II: The Role of Media in Enhancing Peace and Human Fraternity
Panel Chair: Dr. Liora Hendelman-Baavur Director of the Alliance Center for Iranian Studies, Tel Aviv University Israel

Hamad Al-Kaabi Editor-in-Chief of Al-Ittihad newspaper UAE
The Role of the Media in Promoting Peace and Human Brotherhood

More than a year ago, we covered in our press the Abraham Accord, and how it was a qualitative shift in the nature of relations among countries of the Middle East, and we monitored it dimensions as a historical step taken by the UAE with great awareness and vision looking forward to a better future dominated by dialogue, coexistence and cooperation.

The media always interacts with its surroundings and environment. We are aware of the
importance of promoting a culture of peace, based on our belief in the central role of the media in facing hate speech, and focusing on building an atmosphere of trust, dialogue and communication with the other.

The media was and continues to support the major steps taken by the UAE towards the world, particularly in the Year of Tolerance 2019, specifically in the document “The Document on Human Fraternity” and in “the Abrahamic Family House” within continuous steps to maintain peace and spread the spirit of tolerance.

On the level of the “Al-Ittihad” experience, it took practical steps towards promoting tolerance, as the newspaper accompanied in February 2019 the journey of His Holiness Pope Francis, upon his return from the Emirates to the Vatican, after signing the Human Fraternity Document.

Al-Ittihad was present during the signing of the Abraham Peace Accord in Washington, DC. The newspaper provided educational content to its readers about the development gains achieved as a result of the Accord, and published reports on areas of cooperation between the UAE and Israel.

The media can spread a culture of tolerance and peace, by extending bridges of dialogue and communication with the other in all its religious and cultural diversity, by spreading awareness, clarifying facts, immunizing young people against the danger of isolation and extremism, and moving positively towards raising generations that understand the meaning and importance of peace, and are aware of the benefits of tolerance, through a discourse that looks to the future. It respects human diversity as a source of wealth for humanity.

Practical steps
- Media is able to promote the experiences of communication, coexistence and human dialogue among followers of religions.
- Media can educate the masses on a culture of openness and human communication.
- Media can prevent the confusion between what is political and what is religious.
- Media has the ability to create spaces for convergence through the exchange of publications and joint seminars, the exchange of visits between media institutions, the transfer of experiences.

Since the Abraham Accords were and still are a profound step towards construction and development in the region, the role of the media is important at this moment to keep pace with this momentum and invest it in the interest of the people for a better reality for a
region that has long been tired of conflicts and its peoples now hope to look to the future through stability, security and prosperity.

**Neta Livne (TBC) Editor-in-Chief of Yedioth Ahronoth newspaper Israel**

**The role of the media in the peace process**

Media played a central role in facilitating this peace accord between the United Arab Emirates and Israel. It is journalism that connects our two nations. It is journalism that enabled me, as the editor of a leading Israel newspaper to write an article addressed to the public in the UAE and engage with them directly. It is journalism that enabled Mr. Al Kaabi to write an article published simultaneously in Yediot Achronot and engage with the Israeli public.

The legendary publisher of The Washington Post, Philip Graham, once described journalism and news as “the first draft of history”. Here is an example of how a news story has served as a driving force behind this historic process: In June 2020, the UAE Ambassador in the US, Youssef Al Ottaiba, wrote a groundbreaking article in Yediot Achronot. Many in Israel believe that the article had a significant influence on Israel's decision not to proceed with planned annexation of around 30% of the West Bank. That was a catalyst and an accelerator of the decision to normalize relations two months later and the eventual signing of the Accords in Washington.

The peace agreement Israel and the UAE signed, and the normalization agreement signed with Bahrain provided us with a welcome and blessed respite and opportunity to publish good, encouraging and optimistic news.

A year ago, we were still hoping that the people of UAE would come and visit the Holy city of Jerusalem, the bustling metropolis of Tel Aviv, the wonders of the Dead Sea and many other sites and places of natural beauty and historical significance.

A year ago, we were still hoping Israelis would visit the United Arab Emirates, admire the beauty of Abu Dhabi and the developments of Dubai, take a closer look at the 163 floors of the wonder called "Burj Khalifa".

A year ago, the thought of an Israeli sipping a cup of coffee in Dubai and reading Etihad, or Amirati sitting in Tel Aviv and reading Yedioth Ahronoth, seemed like a distant dream.
Dr. Nir Boms Research Fellow at The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies Israel

The media, that was dubbed as the fourth pillar of government has long been seen as an important policy tool as well as one of mobilization, change and dissent. “Whoever controls the media, control the mind” – and this idea guided many to develop a variety of tools aimed at influencing media and messaging. Granted, the media market today became much more complicated with the rapid appearance of new media and social media platforms. When it comes to the promotion of peace and normalization in the Middle East, many of these platforms – both traditional, state funded, as well as social media platforms - are still advocating against the ideas of Peace and Human Fraternity. A number of studies has shown the negative impact of certain kind of media on social unrest. It also appears that the modern phenomena of radical terrorist groups such as AQ or “the Islamic State”, could not have demonstrated success without the influence of social media that significantly contributed to their ability to gain resources, volunteers and visibility. These extreme examples should guide us as we approach the challenge ahead – how to build a positive cross platform media momentum to promote the agenda of peace building in the Middle East.

Panel III: Prospects for Cooperation in Development and Technology

Panel Chair: Dr. Stephen Blackwell Scientific Advisor - Director of Strategic Studies TRENDS Research & Advisory UAE

Elyazia Al-Hosani Head of Media Department TRENDS Research & Advisory UAE

The UAE is known to be one of the most peaceful, developed and diverse countries in the region. The signing of the peace agreement and the normalization of relations with Israel, to any serious observer of the UAE policies, will not be a surprise. The agreement is a natural outcome of the UAE’s approach to tolerance, moderation, and acceptance of the other irrespective of religion, race, or ideology.

It has been a year since the signing of the Abraham Accords, during which I have visited Israel twice. I am here today to share my thoughts on the progress made since the announcement of the Accords in 2020, as well as future opportunities for advancing relations between UAE and Israel in the fields of development and technology.

Relations between the UAE and Israel have already steadily improved since the signing of the Abraham Accords.
To institutionalize their developmental partnership, the Emirati and Israeli governments have concluded several groundbreaking trade agreements and economic cooperation deals. For example, they signed a comprehensive agreement on economic and trade cooperation, in June 2021, that includes free flow of goods and services, as well as cooperation regarding trade fairs, exchanges of experts and knowledge, exchanges of delegations, cooperation in standardization and regulation, encouraging cooperation of the private sector, encouraging research and development, agro-technologies and more.

Israel’s involvement at Expo 2020 Dubai is extremely important. It’s a unique opportunity to deepen and develop business, diplomatic, tourism and cultural cooperation between Israel and the UAE.

Both Israel and UAE are leaders in emerging clean tech. Israel is ranked second in the latest Global Cleantech Innovation Index, and the UAE is a world leader in renewable energy.

The prospects of linking power grids and developing natural gas markets, the UAE-Israel partnership has the potential to build a greener Middle East. This partnership is based upon Israel’s technological capabilities and the UAE’s world-leading advances in sustainable urban living.

The Abraham Accords would help foster technological cooperation between the UAE and Israel and economic development in the two countries. More importantly, the UAE-Israeli partnership can play a major role in advancing the technological and sustainable development of the entire Middle East.

Ksenia Svetlova Director of the program on Israel-Middle East relations The Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies (Mitvim) Israel

I would like to focus on the technological, scientific and academic cooperation between our countries. Although we don’t share a geographic border among us, however after visiting the UAE I’m confident that the similarities and the common ground that we share with each other is vast and profound. Our societies aim to excel and make a difference, whether by developing lifesaving medical procedures or sending a mission to Mars.

The joint issues which are behind the scientific and academic cooperation between Israel and the UAE make it a strategic collaboration of paramount importance to the two countries, not only academically but also at the security and geopolitical levels. When the agreements were signed and everyone was talking about such tourism or trade, I was thinking that this is just the tip of the iceberg. We are facing a grave change in climate, unexpected “surprises”, such as previously unknown viruses and pandemics, our region
is rocked and shaken by violent and radical forces, and we are stronger when we share knowledge and aspire to excellence together!

During the last year quite a few MOU agreements were signed between Israeli and Emirati hospitals, universities and technological companies. However, this is just the beginning. I would like to stress the importance of academic cooperation and development of relations between think-tanks, exchange program and knowledge transfer – they often engage younger generation, and these programs are long-term projects that bring experts and scientists closer together and help them exchange opinions and reach better results.

I have to doubts that in one year the amount of MOU’s will grow significantly, but I suggest the respective governments to closely watch and further encourage this process. Rome wasn’t built in one day, and so also the scientific dialogue and cooperation between our countries is an ongoing, long-term process. By encouraging and developing this process our governments will ensure a better communication and outstanding achievements that can be reached together.

Dr. Paul Rivlin Senior fellow at the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies Israel

I will give an Israeli economist’s perspective on the prospects for cooperation and development following the signing of the Abraham accords.

The first task is to identify trends in where is technology going, at the international and national levels. This is very dynamic and in Israel changes were observed between 2020 and the first half of 2021, although conclusions should be drawn with caution.

The role of the eco-system will then be examined: the environment for firms in Israel and the UAE. This involves evaluating the quality of national systems including education, technological education, research and development, the infrastructure, institutions (governance), market and business sophistication, government assistance and the legal framework.

The Global Innovation Index shows that the UAE is consistently ranked higher than Israel in its institutions, political and regulatory environment and infrastructure. Israel does well on innovation, research and development, entrepreneurship and high-tech production. The UAE scores low on knowledge and technological outputs. This suggest complementarities between the two economies that can be the basis for trade and investment.
How has cooperation between Israel and UAE developed? Are there other models than

Concluding Remarks

Elyazia Al-Hosani, Head of Media Department TRENDS Research & Advisory UAE

In concluding this important symposium, it gives us great pleasure at TRENDS Research & Advisory to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, our partner in convening this symposium, and to Tel Aviv University for hosting and organizing it in the best possible way.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the strategic partner of TRENDS, the renowned Al-Ittihad newspaper, for its valuable input to the symposium. My thanks are also due to all of the speakers, whose contributions and ideas have enriched our gathering.

Throughout the proceedings of this symposium, we have heard many inspiring views and insights that will help build the foundations of a lasting peace to which we all aspire. We have also heard ideas which would surely enhance the gains of this peace agreement. To lay solid foundations for peace and making it a lasting one, we have to work together and make use of the ideas you have come up with today.

It is certain that building solid foundations for a lasting peace requires enhanced mutual cooperation and strong partnerships that are based on the values of tolerance, dialogue and coexistence while preserving the rights of every party. Hence, we have focused in this symposium on presenting ideas and insights that aim at promoting the role of cultural dialogue as a window to understand each other’s culture.

Today, we have all agreed on the centrality of media in countering hate speech, and the need to focus on building an atmosphere of trust, dialogue and civilized communication. We have learned here how to harness the media through various platforms that would serve peace in the Middle East and help create new generations that look to the future with a spirit of humanitarian cooperation.

Regarding cooperation in the areas of development and technology, we have learned about the various aspects of economic integration and how this could be a reliable base for joint efforts. We have also learned about the common ground for bilateral technological, scientific, and academic cooperation between our two countries, which have always been striving to excel and working toward peace and prosperity across the
world. We have added a significant strategic step to this cooperation at the academic, security and geopolitical levels.

As we now end this symposium and underline the importance of its results, we once more thank you all for the amazing organization and the hospitality that we have received. We all hope that this gathering today will mark the beginning of a fruitful cooperation and a continuous communication along the path of more tolerance, development and peace.

Dr. Brandon Friedman, Director of Research the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies Israel

There are four main points:
Asides from the similar nature of establishment, the role of the leaderships of both countries was crucial as they manged to seize the right moment to establish their states. A comparison between Shimon Peres and Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nayhanis is here important. The two leaders considered the active role of people as the steppingstone in the process of building prosperity in the Middle East.

There were positive energy following the Israeli peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan. Commitment to peace is an everyday duty, and an enduring peace can only be achieved through constant dedication.

According to the most recent data, the Arab youth looks at the UAE as a story of success. The main geopolitical achievements in terms of multilateral regional initiatives, such as the East Mediterranean Gas Forum, the Baghdad Conference, and the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Abraham Accords have been the catalyst that triggered this new call for multilateralism, and they remain a source of inspiration for the future.

The next generations are the future. Since the youth is entrusted with the important goal of preserving the peace, it is crucial to involve the young minds of the region in Track II initiatives aimed at fostering inclusive dialogues, especially on the issues that appear to be uncomfortable and difficult to talk about.