



Economic and Trade Affairs Department

The Speech of Minister of State His Excellency Ahmed Al Sayegh

The Brazil-Arab Economic Forum

19 October 2020

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, allow me to thank President Jair Bolsonaro and Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita for their remarks [**optional:** *may wish to highlight or concur with salient points made in these aforementioned remarks*].

At this time, platforms such as the Brazil-Arab Economic Forum have become more important than ever, and I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to the Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce for hosting this event despite the significant challenges brought about by COVID-19.

I would also like to extend my warm regards and best wishes to all attending this Forum today. I know many of you have been impacted by the pandemic, and I hope you and your families remain safe and well as we navigate this global challenge.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no question that the Arab region shares a deep and unique bond with Brazil. This is reflected not only in our close economic and political partnerships, but also in the significant cultural and social ties that have long existed between our peoples.

For the UAE, we continue to seek new avenues to enhance what is already a highly constructive relationship with Brazil.

As most participants in this Forum are no doubt aware, Brazil is the UAE's foremost economic and political partner in South America.

In 2019, total non-oil trade reached close to three billion US dollars, with great potential to expand our already substantial economic interactions.

Beyond this, the presence of a large community of Brazilian citizens living and working in the UAE, and the mutually beneficial interactions that take place on a daily basis between Brazilian and UAE businesses emphasize the depth and breadth of this bilateral partnership.

From the UAE's perspective, the state visit by President Bolsonaro to the UAE in October 2019, highlighted the upward trajectory of our bilateral ties, and underlined just how far we have come in developing a robust and all-encompassing relationship built upon mutual respect and trust.

This visit, which saw the formalization of our strategic partnership, the hosting of a high-level business forum, and the signing of numerous commercial agreements was indeed a ground-breaking event in the history of UAE-Brazil relations.

I wish to commend President Bolsonaro and the Brazilian Government on the foresight and leadership displayed in recognizing the great potential that exists not only in the UAE, but also the broader Arab World.

I am confident that the friendly ties we have developed will ensure a significant expansion in cooperation between the UAE and Brazilian economies across a range of critical sectors, including food security, infrastructure, energy, innovation, and defense in the years to come.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As has previously been rightly noted by President Bolsonaro, the UAE is Brazil's gateway to the region.

This is a privileged position, which the UAE recognizes.

It is one we wish to only further develop and strengthen.

In doing so, however, the UAE does not only wish to serve as the Brazilian business community's entry point to the Arab region, we also seek to be your second home.

We want to be a place where Brazilian businesses and citizens can seize new openings for success and prosperity.

A place where you can have confidence that your products, ideas, aspirations, and talents will be welcomed and fostered.

In my view, the UAE is that place. From our position as a regional leader in technology, renewable energy, finance, and logistics, to our accelerated efforts in grasping new and exciting developments in the realm of food security; there is much that the UAE can offer Brazil.

In the same vein, there is also much that Brazil can offer the UAE in supporting our vision for a much more prosperous, stable, and vibrant future.

I, therefore, encourage the Brazilian business community to embrace with two hands the economic and trade prospects present in the UAE and the Arab region more generally.

I also wish to implore UAE and other regional companies to continue to seek out new areas for engagement with Brazil, a global economic powerhouse that continues to grow in its importance and stature.

As aptly pointed out in the theme of this Forum, the future is now. We must all recognize this reality and not close our eyes to the very real opportunities that are rapidly emerging around us.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding my remarks, I would like to emphasize how important it is that we continue our open engagement and dialogue throughout this challenging time.

Despite the uncertainties the world is facing, it is clear that the relationship between Brazil and the Arab World stands upon firm foundations and provides us with an unparalleled ability to help and support each other.

I wish you all the best in what I am confident will be a fruitful and engaging Forum.

Thank you.