

World leaders pay respects in UAE after death of pro-West president

Світові лідери віддають шану після смерті прозахідного президента ОАЕ

Світові лідери висловили співчуття новому лідеру ОАЕ шейху Мухаммаду бін Заїду Аль Нагаяну у зв'язку зі смертю його зведеного брата президента шейха Халіфи бін Заїда Аль Нахаяна на знак підтримки ключового регіонального гравця.

Президент Франції Емманюель Макрон, чия країна має прибуткові ділові та військові зв'язки з ОАЕ, сказав Шейху Мухаммаду в Абу-Дабі, що ОАЕ можуть "розраховувати на дружбу Франції", і обговорив з ним конфлікт в Україні.

Президент Ізраїлю Іцхак Герцог сказав, що встановлення зв'язків між ОАЕ та Ізраїлем два роки тому було надбанням для всього регіону, побудованого «сміливими та новаторськими лідерами», включаючи Шейха Халіфу. Президента США Джо Байдена, чия адміністрація мала важкі зв'язки з ОАЕ та Саудівською Аравією, на похоронах буде представляти віцепрезидентка Камала Харріс, яка відвідає ОАЕ.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/world-leaders-pay-respects-uae-after-death-pro-west-president-2022-05-15/>

World leaders descended on the United Arab Emirates on Sunday to offer condolences to new leader Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan on the death of his half-brother President Khalifa bin Zayed in a show of support to a key regional player.

Sheikh Mohammed, now ruler of wealthy Abu Dhabi emirate, steered the Western-allied Gulf state, an OPEC oil producer and regional business hub, for years before being named the UAE's third president by a federal supreme council on Saturday.

French President Emmanuel Macron, whose country holds lucrative business and military ties with the UAE, told Sheikh Mohammed in Abu Dhabi that the UAE could "count on France's friendship" and discussed the Ukraine conflict, the Elysee said.

Israeli President Isaac Herzog said before heading to the Emirati capital that the establishment of ties between the UAE and Israel two years ago was an asset for the whole region built by "bold and groundbreaking leaders", including Khalifa.

The UAE, along with Bahrain, upended decades of Arab consensus by forging relations with Israel, creating a new anti-Iran axis in the region and drawing Palestinian ire.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas traveled to the UAE to offer his condolences while Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson was due later on Sunday in Abu Dhabi.

Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani also visited and met with Sheikh Mohammed, the Qatari Amiri Diwan said, in a first such a visit since 2017 when the UAE and Saudi Arabia imposed a boycott on Doha.

Doha and Abu Dhabi had been for years locked in a bitter rivalry over the role of political Islam in the Muslim world. The rift was partially resolved last year.

U.S. President Joe Biden, whose administration has had fraught ties with the UAE and Saudi Arabia, will be represented by Vice President Kamala Harris, due to visit on Monday.

Several Arab leaders paid respects on Saturday. Saudi Arabia's crown prince, whose father King Salman entered hospital a week ago, sent a delegation.

Sheikh Mohammed, known as MbZ, has been a driving force in Middle East politics, championing Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the West as he rose to power and combating political Islam, seen as a threat to Gulf dynastic rule, around the region.

MbZ deepened ties with Russia and China as Gulf states increasingly questioned the regional commitment of traditional security guarantor the United States. Strains in U.S.-Emirati ties were highlighted by the Ukraine conflict as Gulf states refused to side with Western allies in isolating Russia.

After years of enmity Abu Dhabi has also moved to engage with Iran and Turkey as the UAE doubles down on economic growth amid rising regional competition and a global push away from hydrocarbons, the lifeblood of Gulf economies.