

UAE's FM urges world to step up Mideast peace efforts

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United Arab Emirates (UAE) Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan here Sunday urged the international community to step up efforts to revive the Middle East peace process.

He made the urge during a joint news conference at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi with visiting French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy.

He stressed the importance of resuming the Middle East peace process and observing international legitimacy resolutions regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The UAE foreign minister hailed the level of UAE-French relations, which have recently developed in a tangible manner.

He also commended the outcomes of the UAE-French Joint Committee meeting, which wrapped up here Sunday.

Concerning a Palestinian national unity government, he spoke highly of the Makkah Agreement, which was facilitated by Saudi King Abdullah bin Abdul-Aziz, but, he said, it needed to be further observed by all Palestinian factions, chiefly Hamas and Fatah.

For his part, the French foreign minister voiced his country's full support for the UAE in all fields, particularly the security and military deal as per a bilateral defence deal that was signed by both countries in 1995. France also hopes to see the Arab Gulf region more stable and secure, he said.

On the meeting, he said he had discussed with the UAE foreign minister the latest regional developments, Iran's nuclear dossier, regional stability, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon.

Asked about France's position on the Iranian nuclear program, he said his country pursued the dialogue and strictness policy, saying European countries had asked Iran to show its goodwill through concrete procedures, but it failed and isolated itself politically and economically instead.

However, he called for continuing dialogue with Iran and keeping the military option as the final resort, which could disrupt regional security and stability.

Regarding the Palestinian issue, the French foreign minister said his country would announce its position on the new Palestinian national unity government once it makes public its political plank.