

The Establishment of United Arab Emirates: A New State with a deep Roots

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UAE Map

Introduction

This paper is about the Establishment of United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 1971. The process of bringing about UAE Federation, which took four years, was a result of Britain's decision to withdraw from the area in 1968.

Background of British connection with Arab Gulf States.

Britain came to the Gulf as a result of her colonial interests in India. In 1820 the Arab Rulers of the Gulf Coast were forced to sign a treaty that had lasted until 1971. The treaty gave Britain rights to intervene in the internal affairs of the Arab Gulf States. In 1892 the Gulf Rulers had signed another treaty with Britain that was called Exclusive Treaty, which kept all foreign powers away from the area except Britain.

Britain's Policy Post World War II

Even though in 1947 Britain had withdrawn from India, but Remained in the Gulf because of oil discoveries there. Accordingly, a new British administration was established as follow:

A. 1947 the British **Political Resident** was based in Bahrain with various representatives in different Arab Gulf States ie Kuwait, Qatar, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi.

B. 1951 TOS was established. A small military that had started with around 60 recruits and a few officers.

C. 1952 The Trucial States Council was established with the aim of coordinating economic development among the rulers.

Withdrawal Decision 1968

In January 1968, a British Minister of State, Growney Roberts, had toured the Gulf states with the news that Britain is withdrawing from East of Suez by the end of 1971. He, though, did not give specific reasons. It was, however, known that Britain had devalued her currency and thus for an economic reason.

The other reason was that Britain did not want to repeat another experience in fighting a guerrilla war fare, as it did in Aden in 1964-1967.

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Steps of Federation:

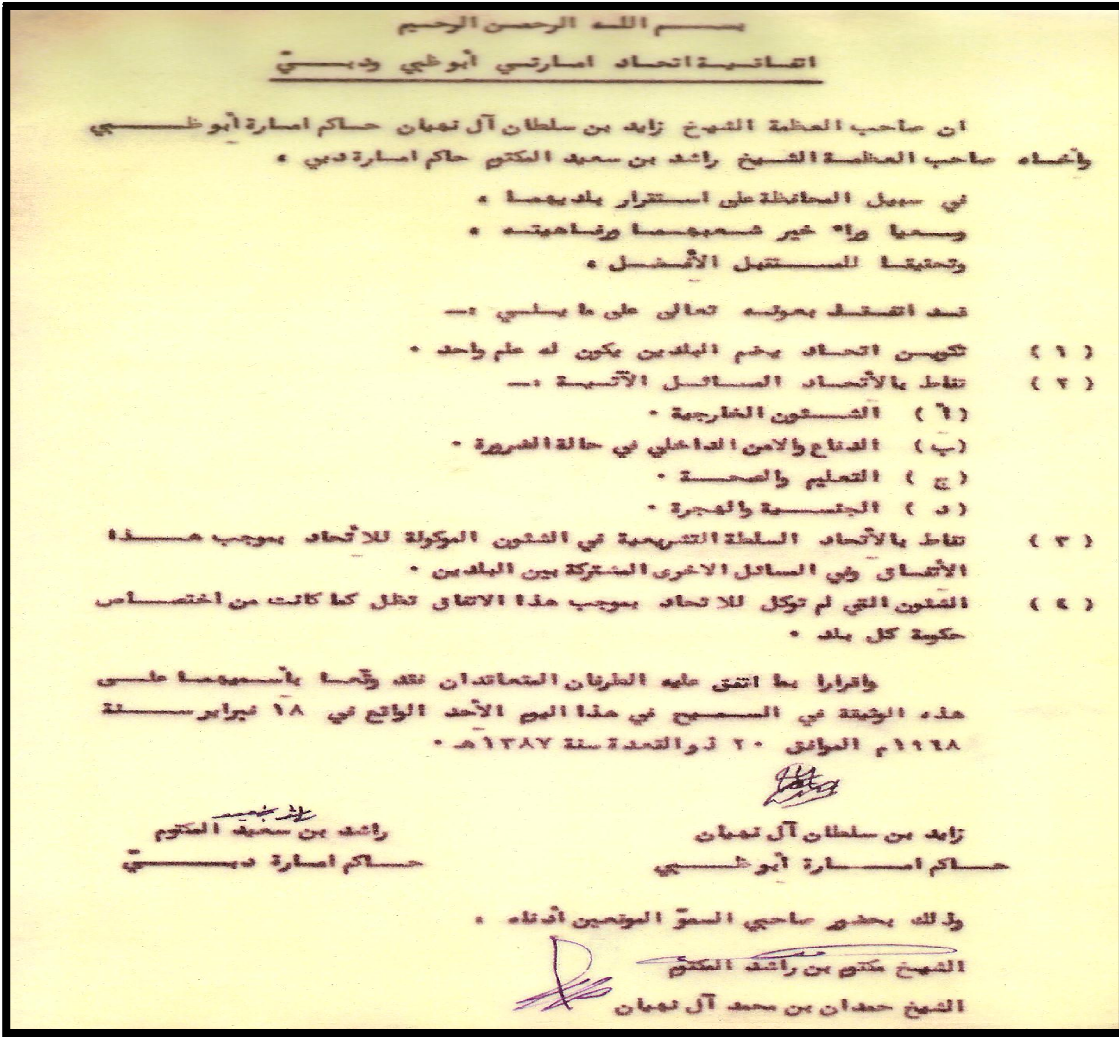
The people of the Arab gulf Emirates were left to decide their own fate, and that made them to inter in a dialogue to establish some form of federation among them.

First: Sumaih Union Agreement:

After the British announcement in January 1968, the Rulers of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed and the Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Rashid, had met in a small village called Sumaih. They agreed to :

A: Form a union between their Emirates.

B: Invite other Emirates to join the Federation



Sumaih Agreement of federation in 1968

Federation of Nine

In response to the call of Sheikh Zayed and Rashid, all Arab Gulf States of: Bahrain, Qatar, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Amu Al Quwain, Ras al Khaimah, and Fujairah had met in Dubai on 25-27, February 1968. They agreed to form a Federation of Nine Emirates.



Meeting of the 9 Emirates in Dubai

Failure of the Federation of Nine

The announcement of the Federation of Nine was received with enthusiasm from the people of all emirates. The process of establishing such Federation took four years. However, the federation did not materialize. There were several obstacles such as:

First, Iranian claim over Bahrain and several Arab Islands in the mouth of the strait of Hurmoz.

Second, the site of the capital, nonetheless they agreed to make Abu Dhabi the temporary capital of the federation.

Third, the British opposition party stand on the withdrawal of the troops. Indeed, the Tory Opposition Party leader, Edward Heath, had announced several times that in case their party won election of 1970, they would not withdraw the troops from the Gulf. That made several states to hesitate in taking deep negotiations for the Federation.

Fourth, there were other various reasons such as the right to establish a separate military forces by each state, and etc...

Union of Arab Emirates

By May 1971, the Federation process of the Nine, came to an end. Where by Bahrain and Qatar looked for independent, and thus formed their own separate states by August and September accordingly.

Sheikh Zayed, the ruler of Abu Dhabi, on the other hand had called other smaller states to join Abu Dhabi to form smaller federation of seven Emirates. Indeed, Sheikh Zayed deeply regretted the option of Bahrain and Qatar but he did not give up his hope of a smaller federation.



The founders of the Federation of Arab Emirates



The last meeting between the British colonial representative Sir Geoffrey Arthur and the first president of UAE Sheikh Zayed

Federation of the Seven Emirates:

On December the second 1971 the United Arab Emirates was born as a new state. It has joined Arab League and United Nation, and was recognized by all Arab and non Arab states.

UAE constitution spelled out the Federation authorities as follow:

First, the Rulers Supreme Council

It's the most powerful institution in the country, in it each state has one representative. The supreme Council has a legislative powers.

Second, The President and the Vice President

The President of the Federation is the symbolic head of the state, and has an Executive powers as issuing degrees of higher ranks in the Armed forces as well as meeting the foreign diplomats, and appointment of ministers on the advice of the Prime Minister.

Third, The National Council:

There are 40 representatives in the Federal National Council. They are elected by the people and thus represent them. The National Council has many powers such calling upon ministers, advising the President, and in case of agreement with the Government they have the right to bring the issue to the Supreme Council. Furthermore, they can call for constitutional amendments.

Fourth, The Ministerial Council: It's an executive authority headed by Prime Minister.

Fifth, The Judicial Courts: The legal authorities are independent and thus form another power of check and balance.

UAE Foreign Relations

There are five factors that make UAE play an important role in the World arena, namely:

First, Oil

UAE oil reserve is 98 billion barrels, and the daily production is 2.9 million barrel per day. It could last for 93 years. UAE shares 7.2% of World proven oil reserve. Comparing to Mexico which has 13 b.b with 3.5 m.b.p.d production, and which could last for 9 years.

Second, Strategic Location: UAE is located in an important area that connect the Far East with the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.

Third, the presence of huge foreign expat : There are expat in the UAE from each part of the World, which meant that UAE became a save heaven for many people seeking a good paid job. That reflects on good relation with the original countries.

Fourth, Hegemonic society: UAE people goes back to the same Arab tribes that resided in this part of the Globe since the pre-history.

Fifth, Wise Leadership: the Rulers of the Emirates are so close from the their people as say their Diwan (royal court) are opened and any one can easily reach them. Furthermore, Sheikh Zayed (the late President of the UAE) was a World figure who had played several peaceful missions and truce among Arab States.

The present President of UAE, Sheikh Khalifah bin Zayed, is following his steps too.

In the End a short film will be presented: Now and then.