The UAE and Israel: Three Years of Progress

The years on, the Abraham Accords are delivering on their promise of expanded trade and commerce, deeper people-to-people ties, and a more integrated region. Collaboration is taking place across numerous fields, including trade, investment, health, technology, agriculture, tourism and more. Below is an overview of joint achievements following the Accords.

Diplomatic

- **HE Mohamed Al Khaja** presented his credentials to Israel’s former President Reuvin Rivlin, becoming the first UAE Ambassador to Israel (March 2021).
- Israel’s Foreign Minister and Alternate Prime Minister **Yair Lapid** made his first official visit to the UAE. The **Israeli Embassy in Abu Dhabi** and **Consulate General in Dubai** formally opened (June 2021).
- **UAE Embassy in Tel Aviv** formally opened (July 2021).
- **HE Mariam Almheiri**, Minister of State for Food and Water Security, visited Israel (July 2021).
- **HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, participated in a virtual call with his counterparts from **Israel** as well as the **US** and **India** to form the I2U2 group. (October 2021).
- **HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan** met with Israeli President **Isaac Herzog** during his first visit to the UAE (January 2022).
- **Israel** hosted the first **Negev Forum**, welcoming the top diplomats from the **UAE** and US along with other Arab countries (March 2022).
- **HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan** received **Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett** during his second visit to the UAE (June 2022).
- The **UAE**, **Israel** and **US** launched the inaugural I2U2 Summit, convening leaders from the three countries and **India** to collaborate on economic and trade matters (July 2022).
- **HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan** became the first UAE foreign minister to visit **Israel**. Sheikh Abdullah met with **Israeli President Isaac Herzog** and attended a
reception marking the two-year anniversary of the signing of the Abraham Accords (September 2022).

- HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan met with President of Israel Isaac Herzog (December 2022).
- HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu spoke about “their commitment to advancing their historic peace deal” (April 2023).
- HH President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan sent a letter to President Isaac Herzog to officially invite Israel to attend the COP28 climate conference (May 2023).

Economy & Trade

- DP World signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel’s Bank Leumi to explore potential financing to develop Israel’s port sector (September 2020).
- Emirates NBD signed an MOU with Israel’s Bank Hapoalim to allow bank services between the two countries (September 2020).
- DP World signed MOUs with Israel’s DoverTower to explore opportunities to develop infrastructure for trade between Israel and the UAE and the region (September 2020).
- Jebel Ali Free Zone entered into a strategic agreement with the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce to support businesses and encourage economic cooperation (September 2020).
- The Dubai Airport Free Zone Authority signed an MOU with the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce to support Israeli companies in establishing business in Dubai (September 2020).
- Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Tel Aviv Chamber of Commerce signed a strategic partnership agreement that aims to establish a framework for bilateral economic cooperation and mutually beneficial partnerships (September 2020).
- Through its Dubai Diamond Exchange, DMCC signed an agreement with the Israel Diamond Exchange to foster collaboration by sharing knowledge, partnering on exhibitions and promoting bilateral trade opportunities (September 2020).
- Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) signed a cooperation agreement with the Israel Export Institute to collaborate on trade and investments (October 2020).
- The UAE and Israel reached a bilateral agreement to protect investors from arbitrary changes in regulations and political situations (October 2020).
• **KIKLABB** and **NY Koen Group** announced a partnership agreement which aims to facilitate cultural understanding, foreign investment and business development between the business communities of the UAE and Israel (November 2020).

• **Abu Dhabi Ports** and the **Manufacturers Association of Israel** signed an agreement to enhance trade, investment and technology cooperation between the UAE and Israel (December 2020).

• **Etihad Credit Insurance** and the **Israel Foreign Trade Risks Insurance Corporation** signed an agreement to develop economic relations between the two countries (December 2020).

• **Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange** and the **Tel Aviv Stock Exchange** signed a MOU to facilitate channels of communication and develop capital markets in the UAE and Israel (December 2020).

• **DP World's Smart Solution Logistics FZE** signed an agreement with Israel-based **Allalouf Logistics** to explore growth opportunities for the logistics and general freight forwarding business in the UAE and Israel (January 2021).

• The **Dubai Investment Development Agency** (Dubai FDI), an agency of Dubai Economy, signed an agreement with the **Manufacturers’ Association of Israel** to explore collaboration in promoting cross-border business and investment opportunities (March 2021).

• Israel’s **Money Laundering and Terror Financing Prohibition Authority** at the Ministry of Justice and the UAE’s **Financial Intelligence Unit** signed an MOU aimed at strengthening cooperation to address money laundering (March 2021).

• The **UAE** and **Israel** signed a tax treaty to avoid double taxation that will help promote bilateral trade and investment in years to come (May 2021).

• **HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed** and Israeli Foreign Minister **Yair Lapid** signed an agreement on economic and trade cooperation to foster economic ties and related opportunities (June 2021).

• The **UAE** and **Israel** signed an agreement to facilitate cooperation in energy sector priorities, such as clean energy and energy storage (November 2021).

• The **UAE** and **Israel** signed an MOU on cooperation in maritime transport (April 2022).

• The **UAE** and **Israel** signed a free trade agreement, the first of its kind for the region, seeking to expand bilateral trade to $10 billion by 2027 (May 2022).

• 35 business agreements were signed in 2022 between the **UAE** and **Israel** in areas as diverse as cooperation in the fields of health and the environment to collaboration in agriculture, security, and water (January 2023).

• The **UAE** and **Israel** signed a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), reducing or removing tariffs on about 96% of goods traded between the nations (March 2023).
• UAE and Israeli firms signed an MOU to tackle global agriculture challenges including food security and desertification (August 2023).

Technology

• The Mohamed Bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence and Israel’s Weizmann Institute of Science are working together to advance the development and use of AI through academic exchanges, conferences and the establishment of a virtual institute for AI (September 2020).
• Abu Dhabi Global Market announced it would sign an MOU with Israel Securities Authority and Bank Hapoalim to support the fintech sector through projects to facilitate international trade, business and financial services activities between the UAE and Israel (November 2020).
• DIFC FinTech Hive signed an agreement with Israel’s FinTech-Aviv to strengthen the role of Dubai International Financial Centre as a global fintech hub (November 2020).
• The UAE-Israel Tech Zone launched to connect over investors, technology leaders, government officials and developers and promote business cooperation in the tech sector (December 2020).
• EDGE and Israel Aerospace Industries signed an MOU to develop an advanced C-UAS (Counter- Unmanned Aircraft System) tailored to the UAE market (March 2021).
• G42 and Rafael Advanced Defense Systems formed a joint venture to commercialize AI and big data technologies (April 2021).
• The UAE approved a multi-million dollar joint fund with Israel to support private sector technology research and development (January 2022).
• HH Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan met with the Minister of Finance of Israel, Avigdor Lieberman to discuss opportunities in trade and finance. (September 2022).
• A joint UAE-Israel R&D fund to support tech projects involving Emirati and Israeli companies was announced (December 2022).
• The UAE and Israel established the Crystal Ball Initiative, a global platform to fight ransomware cyberattacks (June 2023).
• The UAE’s G42 teamed up with Viola in Israel to address the worldwide tech employee shortage (June 2023).

Energy & Environment

• Masdar and Israel’s EDF Renewables announced an agreement to explore renewable energy opportunities in Israel and support the country’s clean energy objectives (January 2021).

Updated September 14, 2023
• Israel’s Delek Drilling announced the signing of a non-binding MOU with Mubadala Petroleum for the sale of Delek Drilling’s 22% non-operated stake in the Tamar gas field (April 2021).

• An agreement was signed to launch a joint Israeli-Emirati water research program as part of a collaboration between the Israeli Watergen company and Baynunah, a sister company of Al Dahra Group, an Emirati agriculture group that specializes in food security (June 2021).

• HE Mariam Almheiri signed an MOU with Israeli Agriculture Minister Oded Forer that aims to enhance cooperation in the areas of food production, food supply chains, and research and innovation (July 2021).

• HE Mariam Almheiri signed a second MOU with Israeli Minister of Environmental Protection Tamar Zandberg aimed at joint research efforts for the mitigation of climate change and ensuring biodiversity and ecosystem conservation (July 2021).

• UAE, Jordan, and Israel sign MoU to advance Project Prosperity, at COP27. Previously at Expo 2020 Dubai, the UAE, Jordan, and Israel first signed an initial Declaration of Intent to explore the feasibility of the project.

• The UAE, Israel and Jordan signed a declaration of intent to build renewable electricity and water desalination capacity to address the threat posed by climate change on energy and water security in the MENA region (November 2021).

• The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment signed an MOU with Israel’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to promote partnership in agricultural R&D (March 2022).

• The UAE, Jordan, and Israel signed a MOU to speed progress on a deal to exchange solar energy for desalinated water (November 2022).

Health

• The UAE and Israeli health ministries agreed on immediate cooperation in the healthcare sector. The ministers pledged to appoint a representative responsible in part for coordinating relations between both countries, particularly in the response to COVID-19 (August 2020).

• Abu Dhabi’s G42 Healthcare signed an agreement with Israel’s NanoScent to develop, distribute and manufacture a test that detects COVID-19 from exhaled air (August 2020).

• Pluristem Therapeutics Inc. and the Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Center signed an MOU to collaborate on activities related to advancing the treatment and research of cell therapies (August 2020).
• Emirati company APEX National Investment signed a strategic commercial agreement with Israel’s Tera Group to cooperate on COVID-19 research and development, with a focus on advancing testing and vaccine technology (August 2020).

• Israel’s Sheba Medical Center and APEX National Investment signed a preliminary agreement to jointly promote healthcare technologies in the UAE and the Gulf region (September 2020).

• SURE Universal Ltd, a developer of IoT (Internet of Things) software for home healthcare, partnered with HBK Department of Projects in the UAE to launch a white-label smart IoT healthcare solution for both the UAE and Middle East regional markets (September 2020).

• The Galilee Medical Center and Azrieli Faculty of Medicine at Bar-Ilan University in the Galilee signed an agreement with the dental clinic at the Gulf Medical University to collaborate in the fields of dentistry and oral and maxillofacial surgery (December 2020).

• Israeli MediWound, a maker of a pineapple-based gel to treat burn victims, signed a marketing and distribution agreement UAE conglomerate Ghassan Aboud Group for the commercialization of its NexoBrid drug in the UAE for the treatment of severe burns (December 2020).

• Bar-Ilan University signed an agreement with the UAE’s Gulf Medical University to promote medical research and improve public health throughout the Middle East (January 2021).

• Zulekha Hospital in the UAE and Israel-based Health Plus signed a mutual agreement to cooperate in the field of medical tourism (February 2021).

• The Emirates Health Services Establishment (EHSE) signed an agreement with the Israeli Ministry of Health aimed at enhancing quality of healthcare in the two countries (April 2021).

• Dubai-based SJM Group and INMED, an Israeli medtech startup, will partner on creating a digital health platform for remote patient management in Dubai (July 2021).

• The Department of Health-Abu Dhabi signed an MOU with Clalit Health Services, the largest HMO in Israel and second largest globally, on healthcare cooperation (July 2021).

• The Department of Health-Abu Dhabi signed an MOU with Sheba Medical Center, creating a framework for cooperation in developing and improving healthcare services (July 2021).

• Israel’s Illumigyn signed an MOU with UAE-based Digital Health Innovation (DHI) 2048 to deploy 2,500 gynescope systems to the region by the year 2025 (August 2021).

• The UAE and Israel signed an MOU to collaborate on COVID-19 vaccine monitoring and verification (October 2021).
- Israel’s Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center signed an MOU with the Government of Abu Dhabi to establish an emergency medicine center in the Emirate (February 2022).
- Abu Dhabi’s Department of Health, the United Arab Emirates’ healthcare regulator and Israel’s Kahn Sagol Maccabi Research and Innovation Center signed a MOU to increase cooperation in technological innovation and healthcare research in Abu Dhabi (February 2023).
- The UAE and Israel signed a health agreement between the UAE's largest health player, PureHealth, and Israel's largest hospital, Sheba Medical Center, to closely collaborate on joint clinical research projects, promote the use of advanced technology in healthcare, expand genetic research initiatives and boost health tourism in both countries (June 2023).

Tourism & Aviation

- Israel was invited to participate in Expo 2020 Dubai in April 2019. The Israel Pavilion was featured at Expo from October 2021 to March 2022.
- The UAE’s General Civil Aviation Authority signed an air transport services agreement with the Civil Aviation Authority of Israel to strengthen bilateral air transport relations and expand air links between the two countries (October 2020).
- Etihad Airways and El Al Israel Airlines signed an MOU to introduce codeshare services and frequent flyer programs with the aim of encouraging tourism to Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv (November 2020).
- The UAE and Israel ratified a bilateral agreement that will exempt tourists from both countries from visa requirements when visiting the other country (November 2020).
- Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC) and Expo Tel Aviv signed an MOU to collaborate in the regional business tourism sector (February 2021).
- Israel Aerospace Industries signed an agreement with Etihad Engineering to establish a facility in Abu Dhabi that will convert Boeing passenger planes into cargo aircraft (August 2021).
- The UAE Space Agency signed an MOU with the Israel Space Agency to enhance cooperation in scientific research and space exploration (October 2021).
- The UAE and Israel signed an MOU to strengthen their tourism and economic cooperation and reinforce their bilateral ties (February 2022).
- Emirates Airline announced plans for a second daily flight between Dubai and Tel Aviv starting in October 2022 (July 2022).
- UAE and Israel agree to increase passenger flights for the summer, bringing the weekly number of flights to Dubai to 49, second only to flights to Istanbul (March 2023).
• **Israel** is Dubai’s fastest growing source of tourism year-over-year, with seven weekly flights and over 74,000 Israelis flying to the UAE last month alone (April 2023).

**People-to-People**

• **UAE** and **Israeli** health ministry officials announced that both countries would create a student exchange program once conditions allowed amid the COVID-19 pandemic (August 2020).

• The **Abu Dhabi Film Commission, Israel Film Fund** and **Jerusalem Sam Spiegel Film & Television School** reached an agreement to cooperate in the fields of film and television (September 2020).

• The **UAE Pro League** signed an MOU with the **Israeli Professional Football League** to jointly advance football-related activities (October 2020).

• The **Ahmed bin Zayed Foundation** and **Yitzhak Rabin Center** signed an MOU which aims to provide humanitarian aid to all segments of society, regardless of their religion (October 2020).

• **TRENDS Research & Advisory** in Abu Dhabi signed an MOU with **Mitvim**, the Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies, to enhance research cooperation on Israel, the GCC and the Middle East (October 2020).

• **TRENDS Research & Advisory** also signed an MOU with the **Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies** at Tel Aviv University to enhance academic and analytical research, as well as cooperation in mutual interest areas (October 2020).

• The **International Fund for Houbara Conservation** in Abu Dhabi and the **Israel Nature and Heritage Foundation** will work together over the next five years on the conservation of the houbara bustard and other vulnerable bird species in Israel (November 2020).

• **ZAKA International Rescue Unit** signed an MOU with the organizing committee of the **Dubai International Humanitarian Aid & Development Conference & Exhibition** (DIHAD) to support collaboration in mutual humanitarian assistance and training (November 2020).

• The **Crossroads of Civilizations Museum** in Dubai and the Jerusalem-based **Heritage Center for Middle East and North Africa Jewry** signed an MOU to strengthen and highlight people-to- people understanding (December 2020).

• The **UAE** and **Israel’s Football Associations** signed an MOU to organize friendly matches and hold workshops, among other activities to support football in both countries (December 2020).

• The UAE’s **Al Ain Football Club** and Israel’s **Maccabi Haifa** signed an agreement of cooperation and agreed to play friendly matches (February 2021).
• The National Archives of the UAE and National Library of Israel signed an MOU committing "the two organizations to work together in support of mutual and separate goals and for the benefit of the international cultural and documentary heritage sector” (April 2021).

• The Emirates News Agency and Israel’s Tazpit Press Service signed an agreement to strengthen professional cooperation and news exchange experiences (April 2021).

• i24NEWS signed a series of cooperation agreements with leading companies in the UAE, including Dubai Media Incorporated, Abu Dhabi Media Group and Motivate Media Group, as well as with the Dubai Ministry of Tourism (June 2021).

• The UAE and Israel signed an MOU in educational affairs, which also aims to promote exchanges between academics and students in both countries (November 2021).

• The UAE becomes the first Arab nation to teach the Holocaust in schools (January 2023).