

Address by UAE Consul General, H.E. Dr. Nariman Al Mulla

To of Mercy College

3/12/2020

Principal Mrs. McInerney,
Deputy Principal Mrs. Hickey,
Father Takchi, Father Joe, and Sister Howard,
distinguished students of Mercy College,

My name is Nariman Al Mulla, consul general of the UAE to Victoria.

A pleasant part of my role is to symbolize the United Arab Emirates in a variety of settings. As I move around the Country, I have the opportunity to meet and to understand people, and to learn more about Australia and its rich nature.

On my journeys, I also take the opportunity to talk about my own country. I'm not sure whether many of you know much about the UAE, however I would like to share an aspect of my homeland that is important to all of us as a human being.

Inclusion and acceptance for all people, regardless of their faith, beliefs or nationality Is not a new concept for Emiratis. Its deep-rooted in the DNA of our culture that we share with Australia. It is the value that our founder, Sheikh Zayed bin sultan Al Nahyan practiced, promoted, and genuinely **believed** in.

It has allowed us and our country to show the world who we truly are. It has allowed us to send messages of hope and positivity.

Let me share with you through this record some fundamental characteristics of the UAE.

Film # 1

As witnessed; The UAE has taken various actions to establish itself as the global capital for **moderation** and acceptance; For instance:

- 2019 was declared The Year of Tolerance, emphasising tolerance as a universal concept aimed at establishing the values of dialogue, coexistence and empathy to different cultures.
- In alliance with this, UAE has appointed a Minister of Tolerance – the only country to have such a ministerial position,
- We proudly recognise young Arab leaders with awards that acknowledge outstanding projects that revel diversity and inclusivity. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Award for Tolerance aims to develop young Arab leaders in the field of tolerance, and to support the intellectual, cultural and media promotions of values of tolerance and openness.
- His Holiness Pope Francis made a historical visit to the UAE. In response to an invitation from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces. His Holiness visits was to participate in the International Interfaith Meeting on ‘Human **F**eternity’. He became the first Pope to set foot on the Arabian Peninsula,
- The Document of Human Fraternity inaugurates a new phase of coexistence and tolerance between followers of religions, in which the two universal symbols call upon all believers and non-believers to live together, respect for freedom of belief, expression and practice, and respect for pluralism and differences in religion, color, sex and language. The document emphasizes in one of its principles that dialogue and understanding and the dissemination of a culture of tolerance and acceptance of the other and coexistence among people, will contribute to contain many of the social and political problems.

- In co-mmemoration of the historic visit of His Holiness Pope Francis, the Pope of the Catholic Church, the Grand Imam, Dr. Ahmed Al Tayeb, Sheikh of Al Azhar Al Sharif, to the UAE, and their launch from Abu Dhabi "The Human Brotherhood Document". His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has allocated a plot of land and the construction of a new cultural landmark called the Ibrahimi Family House.

- Anti - discrimination laws and legislations has been set by the government because UAE strongly believe in interfaith. we offer each other warm words over Eid, Christmas, Rosha shanah and Diwali.

Global crises can often bring out the best in nations, bridging political divides and acting as a catalyst to selfless giving, with countries stepping up to provide aid to those in need.

Year 2020; was a very challenging year for all of us as COVID-19- pandemic affected us badly. It has exhausted all of us mentally, physically and financially.

The virus, which was originated in December last year, has spread to more than 200 countries and territories. More than 2.8 million people have been infected, and more than 200,000 have died.

In response, the UAE persists to do everything it can to support the international community. it had donated tons of aids. Shipments to 47 nations included everything from testing kits to food and medical supplies.

Here, what people says about the philan-thropical respond of the UAE in combating the virus:

Film # 2

Dear Students

I am confident that your educators always encourage you all to be self-aware, open-minded, kindhearted towards others and independent in thought and action, by contributing to the world in which you live.

Mercy College theme for this year was to “listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying”. each one of us in this room has unique gifts from God. This year in particular we should listen to what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do, so that we do not waste our gifts, but become the best version of ourselves.

May the true spirit of Christmas shine in your heart and light your path. Wishing you and your loved ones; a blessed Christmas.

Thank you