



Israeli President Isaac Herzog

Remarks to the

September 18, 2021 Washington Institute for Near East Policy Scholar-Statesman Award Gala

Honoring

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi

Shalom, Salaam, from Jerusalem.

On behalf of the State of Israel, and its people, I wholeheartedly congratulate His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan for receiving The Washington Institute for Near East Policy's highest honor, the Scholar-Statesman Award. *Mabrouk* and *Mazal Tov*.

For the Israeli people, peace is the highest value for which we pray every morning, afternoon, and night. And I am therefore so proud to join in honoring this peacemaker.

The Abraham Accords and the steps taken by Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed to welcome members of all Abrahamic faiths to the UAE represent a historic turning point for our region, one which will lead to a brighter and more peaceful future, for all nations and peoples of the Middle East. It is a complete sea change, and I commend and congratulate all those who took part in bringing through the Abraham Accords.

Our children and our children's children will look back at Sheikh Mohammed's courageous decision as a key milestone in advancing our shared vision of transforming the region into a hub of innovation, a haven of stability, and a home of religious tolerance.

I look forward to working closely together, to go from normalized relations, to relations that are truly extra-ordinary. When I see the warm welcome that hundreds of thousands of Israelis have received in the United Arab Emirates, the growing Emirati Jewish community, and our flourishing bilateral ties in areas from artificial intelligence to food security, from culture to sports, even to exploring outer space. I know that we are on the right track.

Congratulations, to the leadership and friends of The Washington Institute, people who I truly honor and respect. And, of course, their ambassador, Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE ambassador, and to all of tonight's honorees. I look forward to welcoming you in Jerusalem very soon and working with you in order to advance peace and wellbeing for all the nations of the Middle East.

Thank you all, *Shukran, Toda Raba.*