

United Arab Emirates – Alberta Relations

Government of Alberta ■
International and Intergovernmental Relations



This map is a generalized illustration only and is not intended to be used for reference purposes. The representation of political boundaries does not necessarily reflect the position of the Government of Alberta on international issues of recognition, sovereignty or jurisdiction.

PROFILE

Capital: Abu Dhabi

Population: 5.4 million (2009 est.)

Language: Arabic (official), Persian, Farsi, English, Hindi and Urdu.

Government: Federation of 7 emirates: Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Fujairah, Sharjah, Dubai, Umm al-Qaiwain, Ras al-Khaimah

Head of State: President, His Highness Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahyan (also ruler of Abu Dhabi) (since November 2004)

Head of Government: Prime Minister Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum (also ruler of Dubai) (since January 2006)

Currency: UAE Dirham (AED), \$1 CDN = 3.54 AED; 1 AED: \$0.028 CDN (July 2010)

GDP: US\$248 billion (2009 est.)

GDP (PPP): US\$178.3 billion (2009 est.)

GDP Per Capita (PPP): US\$ 32,817 (2009 est.)

GDP growth rate: -3.5% (2009 est.)

Inflation: 1.5% (2009 est.)

Key Industry Sectors: petroleum, petrochemicals, large-scale hydrocarbon-based activities, aluminum and other metals, tourism, construction materials, fertilizers, commercial ship repair, fishing, handicrafts, textiles, cement, boat building and pearling

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES OVERVIEW

■ Political power is concentrated in Abu Dhabi, which controls the vast majority of the UAE's economic and resource wealth.

■ Despite an economy that is more diversified than other oil exporters in the region, the UAE is taking steps to reduce its dependence on oil and gas revenues.

DID YOU KNOW?

■ Situated along the southern approaches of the Strait of Hormuz—a vital transit point for world crude oil, the UAE is considered to be strategically located.

■ In March 2009, the Honourable Stockwell Day, Canadian Minister of International Trade signed an agreement on economic cooperation, trade and investment with Sultan Saeed Nasser Al Mansoori, UAE Minister of Economy.

■ Canadians have made many contributions to the UAE since the country's formation including significant contributions to the UAE educational system and the design and construction of landmarks.

RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

■ The UAE and Canada are currently involved in a dispute centred on Open Skies. This has affected certain diplomatic relations and makes it more difficult for Canadian and UAE political levels to meet.

■ The Government of Alberta has sent several trade missions to the UAE in recent years.

■ Alberta is an active participant in the biannual Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC).

■ In 2006, the UAE signed a one-year contract for flight training at the NATO Training Base in Cold Lake.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

■ Alberta Education has granted Accreditation Status to an Out-of-Province school in Abu Dhabi.

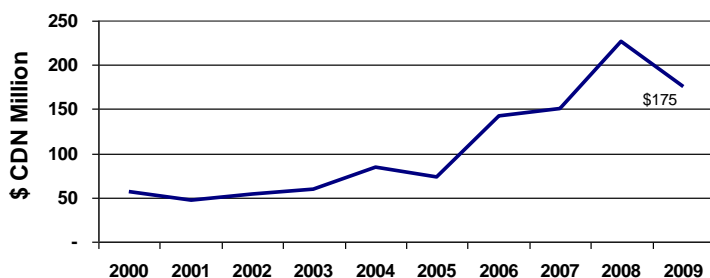
■ In 2009-2010, some 2900 students were enrolled in locally developed Arabic language programs in Alberta schools. In addition to the 910 students in Arabic bilingual programs (grades 1-7) in Edmonton and Fort McMurray, just over 2000 students in two public jurisdictions, one charter school and two private schools in Alberta were enrolled in the Arabic Language and Culture program, receiving second language instruction.

■ The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology has recently completed a contract with the Abu Dhabi Gas Company (GASCO) to provide technical training, at a refinery outside of Abu Dhabi.

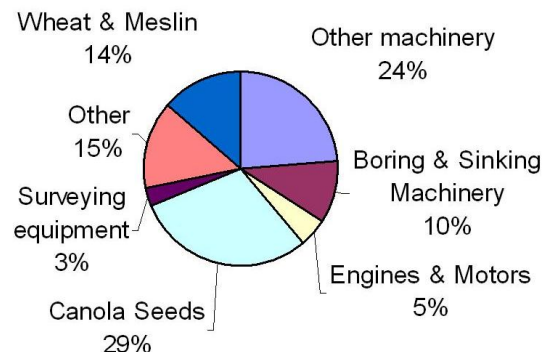
COMMUNITY

■ Between 2005 and 2009, approximately 1280 Economic Immigrants arrived in Alberta from the UAE. However, the UAE was not necessarily the country of citizenship for all of these immigrants.

Alberta's Exports to United Arab Emirates (2000 - 2009)



Alberta Merchandise Exports to the United Arab Emirates 2005-2009 Average (Total = \$153.44 Million CDN)



TRADE AND INVESTMENT

- A leading member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the UAE is experiencing dramatic economic growth and is Canada's primary export market in the region. More than 40% of goods exported to the UAE are re-exported as the country is a major regional distribution centre.
- Between 2005 and 2009 Alberta's exports to UAE averaged \$153.4 million CDN. Primary exports included canola seeds; machinery and wheat.
- During the same period, Alberta's direct imports from UAE averaged \$2.61 million CDN per year, including surveying equipment, machinery, precious stones and iron and steel products. This figure does not include goods sold in Alberta that arrived via distribution hubs in other provinces.
- In 2008, Alberta's agri-food exports to the UAE totaled \$120.9 million CDN. Notable agri-food exports during this time included wheat, canola seeds, peas and potatoes.
- In 2009, International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC), a company wholly owned by the Government of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi entered into an agreement acquiring all shares of Calgary-based, chemical and plastic value-added producer, NOVA Chemicals Corporation for \$2.3 billion USD.
- In 2010, TAQA NORTH (a subsidiary of the Abu Dhabi National Energy Company) acquired assets from Suncor in West Central Alberta (near Sundre) in the amount of \$285 million CDN.

ENERGY

- The UAE has the 7th largest proven oil reserves in the world at 97.8 billion barrels (bbl) (January 2009) compared to Alberta with reserves of 171.4 billion bbl (2009).
- The UAE has the world's 6th largest natural gas reserves of 214 trillion cubic feet (TcF) (January 2009) compared to Alberta with reserves of 37.5 TcF (2009).

- In January 2010, Alberta Energy signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Masdar (the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company) focusing on cooperation in the field of carbon capture and storage.
- Abu Dhabi has committed \$22 billion US to the so called Masdar Initiative whose objective is to transform the emirate into a world class developer and producer of clean energy technologies.
- Since 2007, Calgary's Sonic Energy Services has provided specialized oilfield services in a joint venture with UAE-based Sheikh Mana bin Khalifa Al-Maktoum Commercial Holdings.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- **Construction and Engineering Services:** Opportunities exist for Alberta firms due to the expansion of a number of plants and onshore gas development.
- **Building Materials:** Rapid economic and population growth has fuelled the construction and renovation boom. Opportunities exist for suppliers of materials and machinery, including cement, concrete, steel, high-level communications infrastructure, etc. The UAE relies completely on imported equipment.
- **Computers:** Annual market growth for computers is estimated at 20-25% over the next three years. Calgary-based EFA Software Services has already signed several contracts in the Gulf region, including the UAE.
- **Agri-Food:** Abu Dhabi has food security requirements, which Alberta is well positioned to support. Discussions are underway to enable a close link between the two regions. Halal beef, canola, pulses, and wheat have been discussed as strong trade items.
- **Energy:** Expansion in the energy sector generates opportunities in petrochemicals and electricity generation. Government plans indicate increased oil production capacity within the next seven years. Innovative oil and gas equipment and service providers will be required as the modernization and expansion of the oil and gas industry continues.

The Minister of Energy, Dhaen Al Hamli, predicts the country will increase production of natural gas by 33% to meet increased domestic consumption of electricity and the rising demand from the petrochemical industry. Industry in the UAE has also shown interest in Alberta's renowned Sour Gas technology.

- The UAE is an important market for firms looking to expand their Middle East revenue, and remains an important hub for accessing larger regional markets, given its broadly favourable business climate and strong logistics.

RECENT VISITS

- July 2010: The Honourable Ron Liepert, Alberta Minister of Energy, led a mission to the Middle East and met with the UAE's top energy leaders in an effort to strengthen relations between both jurisdictions.
- January 2010: The Honourable Ed Stelmach, Premier of Alberta, attended the 2010 World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi and took part in signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Abu Dhabi Department of Economic Development and signing a Carbon Capture and Storage MoU between Alberta Energy and Masdar.
- November 2008: The Honourable Ron Stevens, Minister of International and Intergovernmental Relations met with business and government leaders in Abu Dhabi and attended the 13th edition of ADIPEC.
- June 2008: His Excellency Mohammed Bin Dhaen Al-Hamli, UAE Minister of Energy, and His Excellency Hassan Mohammed Obaid Al-Suwaidi, UAE Ambassador to Canada, visited Alberta to attend the 2008 Global Petroleum Show.

DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION

- His Excellency Mohamed Abdullah Al Ghafli is the Ambassador for the UAE to Canada.
- Mr. Ken Lewis is the Canadian Ambassador to the UAE.

