

Hormuz Disruptions Raise Hunger Risks

● UAE takes a strategic role in global food security

● UN warns millions could face acute hunger due to ongoing crisis

● Dubai's logistics hub strengthens humanitarian response worldwide



The United Arab Emirates has been elected to the Executive Board of the World Food Programme for the 2026–2028 term, at a time of escalating global food security challenges and ongoing disruptions in key maritime routes.

The election highlights the UAE's growing role in global humanitarian efforts. Dubai hosts

the largest United Nations humanitarian logistics hub near Jebel Ali Port, enabling rapid redirection of aid during supply chain disruptions. The country also activated land corridors and established international air bridges, delivering vital supplies to over 100 countries during the

COVID-19 pandemic.

The UN Humanitarian Response Depot in Dubai continues to deploy alternative land, sea, and air routes to ensure life-saving aid reaches affected populations across Asia and Africa, despite delays impacting tens of thousands of tonnes of

assistance.

The UAE's new role marks a shift from being a major donor to a strategic partner, aligning humanitarian response with sustainable development and resilient food systems.

UAE Ambassador to the UN, Mohamed Abushahab, said the

membership would strengthen the country's role in shaping WFP strategies, focusing on innovation, logistics efficiency, and resilient food systems.

The appointment comes at a critical time as traffic through the Strait of Hormuz has dropped by more than 90% since February 28, 2026, amid rising regional tensions and threats to maritime security. The strait is a vital global route, handling a significant share of oil, gas, and fertilizer trade.

Disruptions in the waterway pose direct risks to global food security, especially as Gulf countries account for a large portion of global fertilizer exports. The United Nations has warned that the ongoing situation could push an additional 45 million people into acute hunger, with millions more at risk of falling into poverty in the Arab region.

The UAE has reaffirmed its commitment to working through international platforms to address threats to maritime

navigation and support efforts to reopen and secure the Strait of Hormuz. It stressed that protecting freedom of navigation is a shared global responsibility to maintain economic stability and ensure food supplies reach those in need.

The country also emphasized that using maritime routes as a tool of economic pressure threatens global supply chains and violates international law.

As part of its expanded role, the UAE aims to lead efforts to ensure food reaches vulnerable populations despite supply chain challenges.

In a related development, the UAE was also re-elected on April 8, 2026, to the Executive Board of UN Women for the 2026–2028 term, reinforcing its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. Additionally, the UAE was elected, alongside Saudi Arabia, India, and China, to the UN Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for the 2027–2030 term.

Jeddah Talks Focus on Security, Economy



His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia, met with António Costa, President of the European Council, in Jeddah.

During the meeting, both sides reviewed the strategic partnership between Saudi Arabia and the European Union, highlighting ongoing cooperation across multiple sectors. They also discussed recent regional developments and their broader security and economic implications on the international stage.

The two leaders emphasized the importance of coordinated efforts to strengthen regional security and stability, amid evolving geopolitical challenges.

The meeting was attended

by Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs; Musaed bin Mohammed Al-Aiban, Minister of State and National Security Advisor; and Haifa Al-Jedea. From the European side, attendees included Christophe Farnaud, Anna-Maria Boura, Chief Foreign Policy Advisor to the European Council President, and Luigi Di Maio, along with several other officials.



“The two leaders stressed the need for joint efforts to regional security and stability in light of shifting geopolitical dynamics.”

Iran Ceasefire, Gaza Plan Top Rubio Talks



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio held talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty focusing on regional security and ongoing diplomatic efforts in the Middle East.

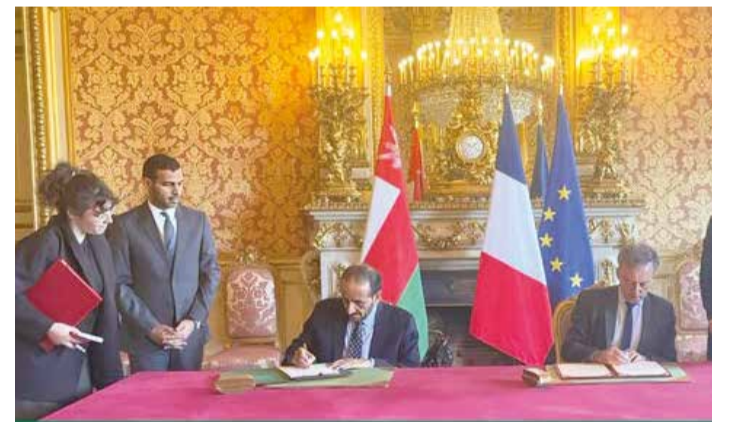
According to a statement from Rubio's office, the two officials discussed the ceasefire with Iran and emphasized the importance of securing long-term peace and stability across the region. The discussions also covered joint US-Egypt efforts to disarm Hamas, in line with the US President's 20-point plan for Gaza. Both sides explored ways to strengthen economic and commercial ties between the United States and Egypt.

Additionally, Rubio highlighted the importance of continued cooperation between Washington and Cairo to achieve a humanitarian truce in Sudan, where ongoing conflict has raised international concern.

Oman, France sign spouse work permit deal

The government of the Sultanate of Oman and the government of the French Republic have signed an agreement allowing spouses of official employees to obtain work permits. The agreement was concluded during the first

round of the Omani-French Strategic Dialogue, held in Paris. On the Omani side, the agreement was signed by Khalifa bin Ali Al-Harhi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Political Affairs. Representing France, Martin Briens, Sec-



retary General of the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, signed the deal.

The agreement aims to enhance cooperation between

the two countries and support official employees' families by enabling spouses to work legally during their overseas assignments.

Pakistan PM Begins High-Stakes Three-Nation Visit



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif arrived in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday, the first stop of his three-nation tour from April 15 to 18, where discussions are expected to focus on regional stability and cooperation.

Makkah Region Deputy Governor Prince Saud bin Mashaal bin Abdulaziz, along with Saudi and Pakistani diplomats, received him at King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, PM Shehbaz is scheduled to hold a bilateral meeting with Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed

bin Salman. The talks will cover strengthening Pakistan-Saudi relations and broader regional developments.

The premier is accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, Special Assistant Syed Tariq Fatemi, and Foreign Media Spokesperson Mosharrarf Zaidi.

Following his Saudi visit, PM Shehbaz will travel to Qatar and Türkiye as part of the same diplomatic tour. The Foreign Office said the visits will focus on bilateral cooperation and coordination on regional peace and security issues.