

# UN envoy: Sudan's new deal saved the country from civil war

Author:

AP

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Sat, 2021-11-27 00:18

CAIRO: The deal struck in Sudan to reinstate the prime minister following a military coup is imperfect but has saved the country from sliding into civil strife, the UN envoy to Sudan said on Friday.

Volker Perthes was speaking of the agreement between Sudan's military leaders and Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok, who was deposed and put under house arrest following the coup last month that stirred an international outcry.

The military takeover threatened to thwart the process of democratic transition that the country had embarked on since the ouster of longtime autocrat Omar Bashir.

The deal, signed on Sunday, was seen as the biggest concession made by the country's top military leader, Gen. Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, since the coup. However, the country's pro-democracy groups have dismissed it as illegitimate and accused Hamdok of allowing himself to serve as a fig leaf for continued military rule.

"The agreement of course is not perfect," Perthes said.

"But it is better than not having an agreement and continuing on a path where the military in the end will be the sole ruler."

Both signatories felt compelled to make "bitter concessions" in order to spare the country the risk of more violence, chaos and international isolation, he added.

"It would not have been possible to exclude a scenario which would have brought Sudan to something close to what we have seen in Yemen, Libya or Syria," Perthes said. He spoke to the AP via videoconference from Khartoum. Sudan has been struggling with its transition to a democratic government since the military overthrow of Bashir in 2019, following a mass uprising against three decades of his rule.

The deal that Hamdok signed with the military envisions an independent Cabinet of technocrats led by the prime minister until new elections are held.

The government will still remain under military oversight, although Hamdok claims he will have the power to appoint ministers.

The deal also stipulates that all political detainees arrested following the Oct. 25 coup be released. So far, several ministers and politicians have been freed. The number of those still in detention remains unknown.

"We have a situation now where we at least have an important step toward the restoration of the constitutional order," said Perthes.

Since the takeover, protesters have repeatedly taken to the streets in some of the largest demonstrations in recent years.

Sudanese security forces have cracked down on the rallies and have killed more than 40 protesters so far, according to activist groups.

Further measures need to be taken to prove the viability of the deal, said Perthes, including the release of all detainees, the cessation of the use of violence against protesters and Hamdok's full freedom to choose his Cabinet members.

On Thursday, thousands rallied in Khartoum and in several Sudanese provinces to demand a fully civilian government and protest the deal.

Activists had circulated videos on social media showing tear gas canisters being fired at protesters.

However, the Sudanese police said that protesters had thrown Molotov cocktails and hurled stones at two police stations in the capital of Khartoum, and its twin city of Omdurman, wounding more than 30 policemen. In a statement released late Thursday, authorities said they arrested 15 people.



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Tags:

[Sudan](#)

Thousands of Sudanese protest against deal between PM Hamdok and military35 killed in clashes in Sudan's restive Darfur – officials

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# Iraq sends extra planes to Belarus to repatriate migrants

Author:

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Sat, 2021-11-27 00:12

BAGHDAD: Iraq is sending more planes to Belarus to repatriate more than 800 migrants stuck on the border with Poland, adding to around 1,000 already collected since operations started, authorities said on Friday.

Hundreds of Iraqis, most of them Kurds, have been flown back since repatriation flights began on Nov. 18 from the ex-Soviet state.

Thousands of migrants have been camped on the border there for weeks hoping to enter the EU, often in bitter conditions – with those returning to Iraq showing injuries from the freezing cold.

Another flight on Friday will bring 431 people, followed by a flight on Saturday to collect 430 more, Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed Al-Sahaf said. Most of the thousands of Iraqis stranded on the border say they have spent their savings, sold valuables and even taken loans to escape economic hardship in Iraq and start a new life in the EU.

The West accuses Belarus of bringing in would-be migrants – mostly from the Middle East – under the false pretense they would be to cross into EU members Poland and Lithuania.

Belarus has denied the claim and criticized the EU for not taking in the migrants.

Aid groups say at least 11 migrants have died on the two sides of the border since the crisis began in the summer, and have criticized the Polish government over its policy of pushing migrants back.

Belarus leader Alexander Lukashenko told migrants on the border with Poland on Friday that he would not try to stop them from reaching the EU, urging Germany to take them in.

In footage released by state media, Lukashenko was shown visiting a center near the Polish border hosting hundreds of migrants who traveled to Belarus in the hopes of reaching Europe.

Lukashenko was shown walking among and talking to the migrants in the center, then addressing them outside from a podium in a campaign-style speech.

Dressed in winter coats as they stood in the cold, the migrants appeared confused, though there were scatterings of applause.

“If anybody wants to go West – that is your right. We will not try to catch you, beat you, and hold you behind barbed wire,” Lukashenko said.

“We will work with you to achieve your dream.”

With many of the migrants hoping to reach Germany, Lukashenko said he was asking the German people to welcome them.

“Please take these people in. This number is not very big. They want to live in Germany – 2,000 people is not a big problem for Germany,” he said.

In recent months thousands of migrants from the Middle East have traveled to Belarus in the hopes of getting across the border into EU member Poland.



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[belarus](#)

[Poland](#)

[migrants](#)

Tunisia rescues 487 migrants in crowded boat off its coast  
UK PM asks France to take back Channel-crossing migrants

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## [Abu Dhabi crown prince holds separate talks with Egypt, Iraq leaders](#)

Author:

Fri, 2021-11-26 02:12

DUBAI: Abu Dhabi Crown Prince on Thursday held separate talks with leaders from Egypt and Iraq to discuss regional security. During his calls with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, the crown prince discussed bilateral relations and various aspects of cooperation and joint work, and ways of developing and expanding them.

They also reviewed a number of regional and international development and “affirmed their mutual keenness to continue consultation and coordination on many issues” and enhance security, stability and development in the Arab

region, state news agency WAM reported.

The crown prince recently concluded a trip to Turkey, the first in 10 years. During his visit, he met with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and the UAE announced it was setting up a \$10 billion fund to support investments in Turkey.



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[Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed](#)

[Abdel Fattah El-Sisi](#)

[Mustafa Al-Kadhimi](#)

Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed to meet with Turkish President  
Wednesday Abu Dhabi crown prince and US defense secretary discuss strategic  
bilateral relations

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# Arab coalition hits military targets in Yemen's Sanaa

Fri, 2021-11-26 00:57

RIYADH: The Arab coalition said it conducted airstrikes on camps and military targets in Sanaa, state TV reported on Thursday.

The coalition said it used preventive measures to spare civilians and civilian objects from collateral damage, adding the "operation in Sanaa was in compliance with international humanitarian law and its customary rules."

The coalition said it had struck the presidential palace camp in the capital in response threats and after precise intelligence.

Earlier on Thursday, the coalition said it carried out eight operations targeting Houthi elements in Marib.

It said more than 60 Houthi fighters were killed and five military vehicles were destroyed.

The Houthis renewed their offensive on energy-rich Marib in September in an effort to take control of the last remaining internationally-recognized government's strongholds.

It has sparked widespread condemnation as the province has been serving as a safe haven for around one million displaced Yemenis that have been fleeing the fighting since the conflict began in 2014.

Coalition forces have been conducting daily strikes on Houthi targets in and around Marib in recent weeks and began striking locations in the capital, Sanaa, following reports that the Iran-backed militia have been using the airport as a military base and air systems launch site.



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[Yemen](#)

[Arab Coalition](#)

[Houthi](#)

[Sanaa](#)

[Marib](#)

HRW urges Houthis to end 'repeated indiscriminate attacks' on civilians  
Japan denounces Houthis, demands end to occupation of US compound in Yemen

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## [Oman's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai pays a fitting tribute to frankincense](#)

Thu, 2021-11-25 23:34

DUBAI: Frankincense, the aromatic resin harvested from trees that grow in a narrow climate belt from the Horn of Africa to India and parts of southern China, has been used for 6,000 years as both a perfume and panacea for a host of ailments.

Most of the world's supply comes from Somalia, Eritrea and Yemen. But it is Oman that famously produces the world's finest – and most expensive – frankincense, a rich and spicy aroma that ancient Egyptians called the “Sweat of the Gods.”

Trade in frankincense has flourished in this region for centuries, and was one of the most valued commodities of the ancient and medieval world.

Today, the resin, harvested from the Boswellia tree, is still highly prized, as Oman's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai shows. With sustainability experts warning that the tree variety globally is under threat, the pavilion provides a fitting tribute to frankincense and its rich history.



Lab50, an initiative involved in the pavilion's design, engaged more than young 300 Omanis from sectors including government and SMEs to develop the narrative and content of the pavilion. (Supplied)

The word frankincense comes from the Old French “franc encens” (“noble” or “pure incense”), and is the English version of the Arabic Al-luban.

Today, the value of frankincense resin is still determined by its color, clump size and oil content. The most valuable grade, known as hojari, comes from a narrow, dry belt of the Dhofar Mountains in Oman. Boswellia trees studding this region are a feature of Oman's UNESCO-appointed Land of Frankincense World Heritage site.

The Omani pavilion, located in the Mobility District, pays homage to the precious substance. Even the mandatory hand sanitizer is enhanced with the resin's aroma and natural antiviral properties.



Given frankincense's long history, stretching over millennia, one might expect Oman's pavilion to be built on tradition or to be rooted in the past. In fact, the pavilion is a testament to Oman's future generations, and has been created by Omani youth, the future of the country's economy.

## EXPECTED EXPO 2020 DIVIDEND

A long-term investment 'in the future of the UAE'



Expo 2020 and its legacy will boost economic activity by  
**33.378 billion**  
2013-2031



Restaurants & hotels:  
**\$3.1 billion**



And support  
**905,200**  
full-time equivalent (FTE)  
job-years  
2013-2031



Construction:  
**\$7.35 billion**



Events organization &  
business services:  
**\$18.757 billion**



Economic activity will equal  
**1.5%** of UAE GDP during expo  
October 2020 – April 2021



Spending in SME sector  
**\$1.279 billion**  
supporting **12,600** job-years  
November 2013 – October 2020

Source: EY Report: The economic impact of Expo 2020 Dubai

ARAB NEWS

Lab50, an initiative involved in the pavilion's design, engaged more than young 300 Omanis from sectors including government and SMEs to develop the narrative and content of the pavilion.

The result is a modern story-telling experience, with frankincense at its center. The pavilion's design was led by recent graduates, and its technology designed and built by young Omanis. Multi-sensory and mixed-reality audiovisual content was written, shot and produced by local talent.

The exterior of the pavilion shows how a young eye can interpret tradition. The sweeping, intricately detailed exterior echoes and exploits the features of a frankincense tree.

Visitors entering the pavilion on the ground floor are greeted by a replica of the "Mother Tree," and introduced to the resin extraction process and the uses of frankincense throughout history.

### FASTFACTS

\* For the past 6,000 years, frankincense has been used to raise spirits and

encourage well-being.

\* Pavilion's five zones show how frankincense contributed to Omani progress in different fields.

\* Exhibits offer interactive experiences using AR and mixed reality technology.

Displays highlight the role frankincense played in worship and medicine, from the mummification of ancient Egyptian rulers to its role in traditional Chinese medicine. On the first floor, visitors discover the Forest of Sustainability, a modern exhibit in which tree-shaped displays tell the story of Oman's plans for sustainable innovation.

Through digital displays and QR codes, these stories come to life: There is a feature on Oman's collaboration with the UAE to harvest wind power, and another on Oman's "million date palm" project.

Many case studies are linked to Oman's efforts in wildlife conservation, including birds of prey, the Arabian snow leopard and rare plants.



The Omani pavilion highlights the country's commitment to sustainability, not only of its precious natural flora, but also its youth. (Supplied)

Despite its pervasive presence at the Omani pavilion, the Boswellia tree is under threat and may die out within 20 years, according to sustainability experts. Scientists who have studied the issue say many older trees have not produced a new sapling in half a century.

When the UNESCO site at Wadi Dawkah in the Dhofar governorate was established

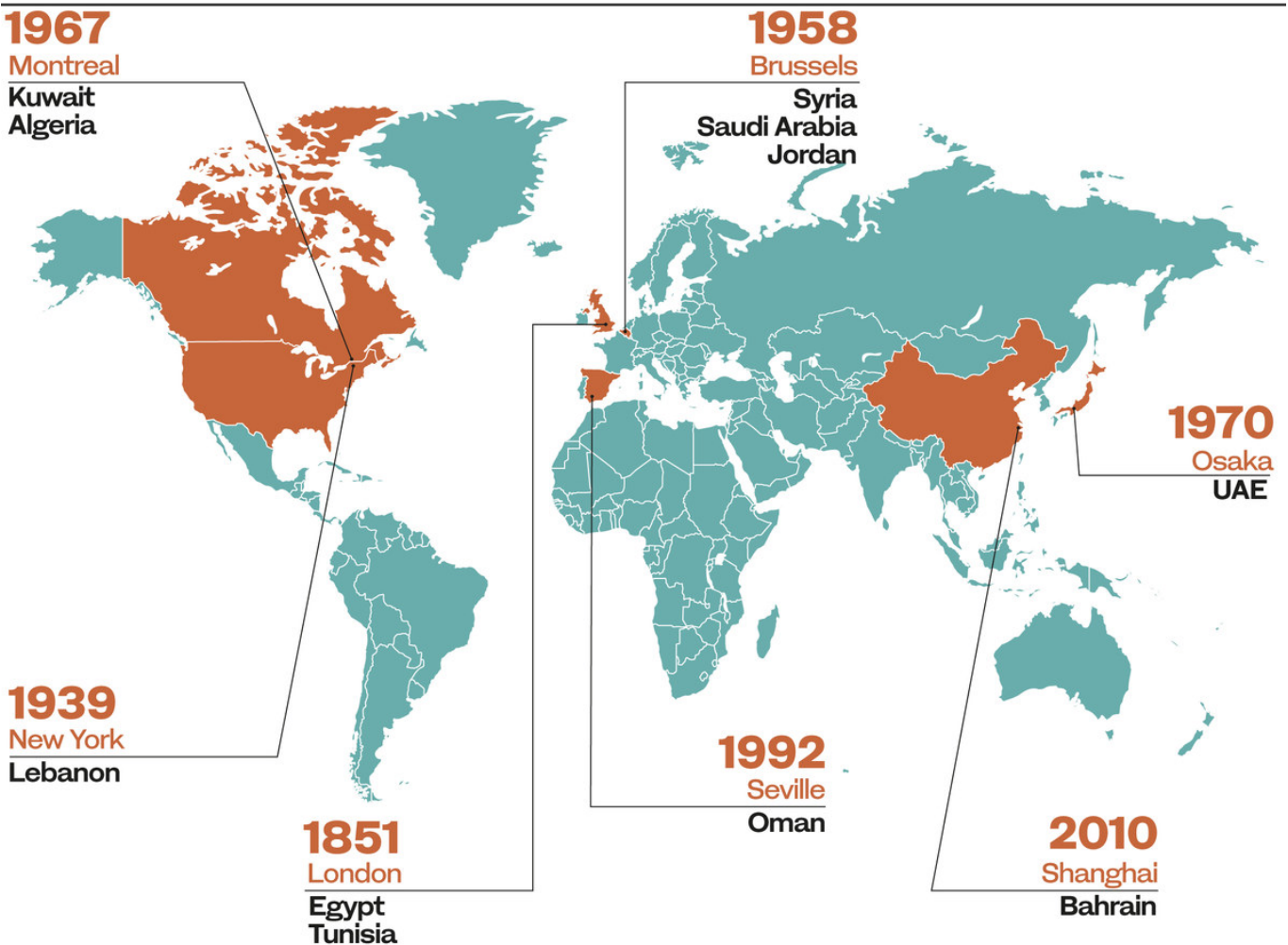
in 2000, only about 1,200 frankincense trees were growing there. Since then, thousands more have been planted, with the goal to reach 10,000 on the site.

An irrigation system has been installed to help nurture saplings, and there are also wild trees flourishing beyond the perimeter fence. Oman's investment in sustainability and the future generations of frankincense trees appears to be paying off.

From the Forest of Sustainability, visitors enter the Frankincense Crystal Hall, where precious frankincense crystals in hanging lights add a modern touch to the journey. Exiting the hall, visitors enter the "trade tunnel and trade shore," which tells the story of Oman's history as a trading hub, with more than 200 sea lanes and 86 global ports within two weeks' journey by sea.

## ARAB COUNTRIES IN WORLD EXPOS

Year of first participation in a World Expo



ARAB NEWS

On the third floor, visitors are invited to "step into the future." Ancient traditions are reframed through a modern, scientific lens, with a focus on technology and the future of frankincense.

Modern uses of frankincense extend from personal to religious, spiritual and medical. According to Oman pavilion information, "frankincense is

scientifically proven to fight cancer, depression and asthma” and “is still used as a disinfectant when burnt.”

Visitors to the pavilion also have an opportunity to take the sweet aroma of frankincense home. Gifts on offer range from traditional weaving to Omani silver and products based on frankincense.

The Omani pavilion highlights the country’s commitment to sustainability, not only of its precious natural flora, but also its youth.

Innovation created by and for young Omani talent will provide inspiration and opportunity for future generations of Omanis.





## EXPO 2020 DUBAI UAE: KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

Delayed by a year because of the pandemic, the showpiece event finally begins on Oct. 1 and continues until the end of March

<b>4.38</b> Total area in square kilometers covered by the exposit.	<b>44,000</b> Passengers Dubai Metro can carry each hour to and from the site.	<b>30,000</b> Volunteers will help welcome the world to the expo.	<b>4,000</b> Age in years of a ring, found in the UAE, that inspired the expologo.	<b>200+</b> Number of entities, including 192 countries and organizations, taking part.	<b>60</b> Live events will be hosted by expo each day.	<b>200</b> Food and beverage outlets will serve visitors.	<b>25 M</b> Visits expected over 182 days of the expo.
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### EXPO ENTRY PORTALS

Design: Asif Khan  
Structural Engineer: Calin Gologan  
Manufacturer: Ha-Co Carbon GmbH

**5,000+**

Number of times the carbon-fiber filaments, laid end to end, could circle the world.

**21**

Height in meters of doors, which despite their size can be opened by one person.

### AL-WASL DOME

The 150-meter diameter Al-Wasl Plaza is being designed as a central hub for the exposition.

**675**

Height in meters, taller than Leaning Tower of Pisa.

**2,544**

Weight in tons, equivalent to 25 blue whales.

**724,000**

Volume in cubic meters of steel crown, equivalent to about 300 Olympic-size swimming pools.

**136**

Kilometers of steel used, equal to the height of 16 Burj Khalifas.

**1,162**

Individual sections were joined together to make the dome.

### ALIF - THE MOBILITY PAVILION

Architect: Foster + Partners  
Timings: 10:00 - 22:00  
Location: Mobility District

**160**

Passengers that can be carried in the world's largest lift.

**330**

Length in meters of the partly underground track for viewing mobility devices.

**9**

Height in meters of historical giants of mobility created by Weta Workshop.

### TERRA - THE SUSTAINABILITY PAVILION

Architect: Grimshaw Architects  
Timings: 10:00 - 22:00  
Location: Sustainability District

**4**

Gigawatt hours of energy generated by its solar panels in a year, enough for a Nissan Leaf to travel halfway to Mars.

**25,000**

Area of pavilion and surrounding grounds in square meters.

**75**

Percentage reduction in water use through new irrigation techniques and local plants.

### ENTERTAINMENT FAST FACTS

Each country's pavilion will stage its own National Day celebration.	Daily events will include live shows, parades, musicals and roving entertainment.	There will be a dedicated pavilion for women.	Event mascots Rashid and Latifa will entertain children with daily stage shows.	Three robots — Opti, Alif and Terra — will meet and greet visitors.	Children and adults will be treated to an amazing outdoor movie experience every Monday.	The expo has its own orchestra, an all-female ensemble called Firdaus, mentored by composer A.R. Rahman.	Visitors can take in a daily schedule of sports and other activities.
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[Editor's Choice](#)

INTERVIEW: Saudi pavilion at Expo 2020 is a glimpse into KSA's future, says French politician  
France's pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai showcases the French art of living in new exhibition  
Egypt's Expo 2020 Dubai pavilion heralds a future well-grounded in the past  
From traditional to abstract, Arab pavilions at Expo 2020 Dubai seize the imagination