

## Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash



### Gargash's Bio

His Excellency Dr. Anwar Mohammed Gargash is recognized as one of the main public voices of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) government. Although he first attracted such international attention in 2006 when as chairman of the National Elections Committee he oversaw the UAE's first elections, he has long enjoyed a multifaceted prominence in his own nation.

Dr. Gargash was educated at George Washington University in the United States, and earned his PhD from Kings College, Cambridge. He subsequently became a professor of political science at UAE National University, achieving a public reputation as a respected intellectual and proponent of greater political participation for the UAE. In 2006, he was appointed Minister of State for Federal National Council Affairs (FNC). Two years later, he was named Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

As chair of the National Elections Committee, Dr. Gargash created an information technology team that established what was claimed to be the first e-voting system in the Middle East, to carry out the initial election for seats in the FNC. The election, which signaled that the UAE had joined other Gulf Arab countries in introducing the electoral process to its political system, garnered global respect for Dr. Gargash.

Among the roles by which Dr. Gargash is expanding his role in shaping the UAE's political and economic future are chairman of several government entities: the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, and the Boards of Trustees of the Dubai School of Government and the Al Owais Cultural Foundation.

As spokesman for the UAE's course of gradual change, Dr. Gargash has been vocal about issues affecting both the Arabian Gulf and the global community. On the energy debate, he said, "States producing hydrocarbon energy should play a role in the development of renewable energy." The Masdar Initiative — Abu Dhabi's multifaceted program to develop and commercialize renewable energy technologies — has been prominent in his public statements. Commenting on the events of the Arab Spring and the sweeping changes in the Arab World, Dr. Gargash has said, "Most important of all is a respect for people's freedom to live life as they wish: in short, tolerance. Cultures that defend tolerance have a strong sense of what should not be tolerated: namely, those who preach that people should be persecuted because of their beliefs."

With advances in improved governance, increased political participation for women, higher standards of social welfare and health services, and the crafting of a global-focused education system, the UAE is intent on a role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; there is little doubt that Anwar Gargash will continue to help direct that effort.