

Nahyan bin Mubarak Inaugurated the SAMENA Telecommunications Council Leaders' Summit 2026

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance & Coexistence, inaugurated the SAMENA Telecommunications Council Leaders' Summit 2026, held at Atlantis The Palm in Dubai, under the theme: "Intelligent Networks for Sovereign and Sustainable Futures." The summit convened at a sensitive time in the region, bringing together a distinguished group of leaders and decision-makers from the telecommunications, technology, policy, and investment sectors, underscoring the importance of continued dialogue, coordination, and strengthened partnerships across the industry.



H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, Minister of Tolerance & Coexistence with Bocar BA, CEO and Board Member of the SAMENA Council

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The summit was held in strategic collaboration with Huawei and under the principal patronage of the Telecommunications and Digital Government Regulatory Authority (TDRA), reflecting the UAE's continued leadership in advancing a stable, forward-looking digital ecosystem. The event witnessed broad participation, both in person and virtually, from key stakeholders across the digital landscape, reaffirming the UAE's position as a trusted hub for industrial cooperation and strategic dialogue.

In this context, H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan delivered a keynote address at the opening of the summit,

where he said: “It gives me great pleasure to join you on this important occasion. I would like to begin by extending my warmest congratulations to the SAMENA Council on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary. Over the past two decades, the Council has



played a constructive role in shaping dialogue, fostering cooperation, and advancing strategic thinking across our region. During these years, I have come to know the SAMENA Council as an organization that embraces creativity, innovation, and forward-thinking, with a strong ability to adapt, while maintaining a deep commitment to regional development and global connectivity. Twenty years may not be a long time in the life of some institutions, but in the life of the digital economy, it represents multiple generations. When SAMENA was founded, broadband was a luxury, smartphones did not exist as we know them today, and the idea that artificial intelligence would one day be central to national economic strategies seemed closer to science fiction. The Council’s success and its growing relevance year after year reflect the clarity of its vision and its ability to evolve without losing its core purpose. I commend your significant contributions to shaping the digital and economic landscape of our region and express my appreciation for your steadfast commitment to our shared vision of an inclusive and sustainable digital economic future.”

He added: “It is fitting that your annual meeting is being held here in Dubai, a city that serves as a key nexus for trade and investment flows across SAMENA markets. This year’s meeting takes place at a time of heightened tensions and conflicts in the region. While this undoubtedly presents a challenge, the United Arab Emirates has never approached challenges with hesitation. We face them from a position of strength, built on firm foundations established with great care and exceptional vision over more than five decades. These foundations continue to be strengthened under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, with the strong support of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai, and through the wisdom and dedication of our people, both citizens and residents. Regardless of the pressures or challenges, the UAE will remain steady, capable, and forward-looking. We will continue to protect our nation and preserve peace. Under the guidance of His Highness the President, the UAE is committed to pursuing a path that safeguards lives and reduces violence. With his wise and visionary leadership, we will meet challenges with confidence, discipline, and determination. This is the strength of the UAE. This is its resilience. Our vision is clear, our leadership is wise, our people are committed to the values of peace and justice, and our institutions are built on strong principles and traditions. Accordingly, the UAE will continue to work for peace and prosperity, both domestically and internationally, with determination and dedication.”

He added: “The theme of this summit is both timely and highly relevant. ‘Intelligent Networks for Sovereign and Sustainable Futures’ reflects the reality that our digital future is inseparable from our economic future, our security, and our humanity. This theme addresses critical issues such

as data centers, cybersecurity, and the regulation of technology companies. Above all, it concerns the ability of nations—and indeed regions—to make free, secure, lawful, and strategic decisions regarding their digital systems. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring that countries retain control over the digital foundations of their economic and social life, with the power to decide, the capacity to act, and the strength to endure. Naturally, the discussion around digital sovereignty and sustainability is shaped by regional considerations, prevailing political and legal environments, strategic realities, and global developments. No country can, or should, aim for complete digital self-sufficiency. Our world is interconnected, and our prosperity depends on cooperation, investment, openness, and exchange.”

He noted that: “Digital sovereignty and sustainability are of critical importance to the SAMENA region. It is a region defined by strategic geography, ambitious digital transformation, advanced infrastructure, energy systems, logistics corridors, financial flows, smart cities, and growing investments in artificial intelligence. It is also home to dynamic populations and governments committed to building a brighter future. This presents tremendous opportunities, but also significant responsibilities. These responsibilities require that digital sovereignty be understood in practical terms, supported by appropriate policies and regulations, and strengthened through regional cooperation and coordination.”

He said: “This brings me to the current tensions in our region. In times of conflict, the digital domain becomes part of the battlefield, potentially targeted to create disruption, fear, and economic instability. It is therefore essential that digital infrastructure remains resilient and capable of serving the needs of the nation and its people under all circumstances. In the UAE, we have embraced digital transformation with clarity and confidence. We have invested in digital government, AI-powered public services, strategic infrastructure, and future-ready governance. We encourage innovation, welcome global partnerships, and recognize the importance of effective regulation and long-term strategic planning.”

He concluded: “Allow me to conclude by emphasizing that the future of digital sovereignty and sustainability in our region must be built on four key principles: First, resilience — our infrastructure must be secure, redundant, and prepared for disruption. Second, trust — individuals, businesses, and governments must have confidence in the legality, reliability, and governance of their digital systems. Third, partnership — no country can succeed alone, and responsible regional and international cooperation remains essential. Fourth, wisdom — technology policy must serve people and protect dignity, stability, prosperity, and peace. I once again congratulate the SAMENA Council on twenty years of distinguished service, leadership, and regional contribution. This anniversary is not only a celebration of past achievements but also an opportunity to look ahead and shape the next chapter with purpose and courage. I wish you continued success.”

The summit witnessed strong participation from telecom operators, regulators, global technology providers, and international organizations. Partners contributed specialized sessions addressing key industry transformations, including the evolution of advanced 5G technologies,

the integration of artificial intelligence into networks and industrial systems, and the emergence of new connectivity models combining terrestrial and non-terrestrial networks.

Discussions highlighted the increasing complexity of the operating environment for telecom operators, driven by the rapid growth in demand for data and digital services, rising investment requirements, evolving regulatory frameworks, and the need for sustainable revenue models. Participants emphasized that the next phase requires moving beyond traditional connectivity models and focusing on value creation through enterprise solutions, digital platforms, and specialized applications.

Artificial intelligence featured prominently, with sessions examining its transition from experimentation to real-world deployment, alongside governance, accountability, and alignment with national priorities. The concept of “sovereign AI” was also highlighted as a practical framework to balance innovation with regulatory sovereignty.

The summit also addressed the accelerated transformation of telecom companies into broader technology-driven business models, the integration of terrestrial and satellite networks, and the emergence of direct-to-device connectivity technologies, enhancing coverage and network resilience while requiring greater coordination in spectrum management and regulatory standards.

In this context, the upper 6 GHz band emerged as a key discussion point, with participants stressing the importance of aligning spectrum policies with future requirements. The summit also highlighted issues related to space sustainability and orbital governance amid increasing space activity.

A high-level CEO session explored leadership roles in shaping the future of digital infrastructure and innovation, showcasing practical applications of artificial intelligence such as digital twins to support strategic decision-making.

For his part, Bocar BA, CEO and Board Member of the SAMENA Council, emphasized that convening the summit amid current regional conditions reflects the importance of continued dialogue and coordination among stakeholders, noting that developing digital infrastructure is a necessity that cannot be postponed.

He added that the outcomes of the summit will contribute to advancing regional and international discussions on spectrum policy, AI governance, connectivity models, and investment in digital infrastructure.

The summit concluded by reaffirming the SAMENA Council's pivotal role as a platform uniting public and private sectors, fostering partnerships, supporting innovation, and ensuring that technological advancements translate into tangible economic and societal value.

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