

UAE poised to lead clean energy drive

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The UAE is receiving encouraging feedback on its pursuit to host the headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) in Abu Dhabi.

IRENA was officially established in Bonn, Germany, on January 26. More than 70 states have signed its statutes.

The agency seeks to become "the main driving force for promoting a rapid transition towards the widespread and sustainable use of renewable energy on a global scale," according to its charter.

Renewable energy is considered a key response to the energy challenges the world could face in future, in light of increasing global warming and climate change, and the constant rise in energy demand amid dwindling resources.

As a major energy player and a growing regional hub not only for business, but also for knowledge, the UAE is within its rights in wanting to host the agency's headquarters.

To begin with, it is time for the Middle East and Arab states in particular to host an international organisation. They have the resources and the talent to host such bodies.

Secondly, the UAE has proved its credentials to host this particular agency. Despite the fact that it is a major oil producer, the UAE is on track to becoming a global centre for developing and promoting clean renewable energy.

The most prominent example is Masdar, the bold initiative launched by the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company.

"The Masdar city is the world's first carbon-neutral, zero-waste city," as rightly stated by company officials. It aims to become "the source of energy, knowledge and innovation" in the field of renewable energy.

The UAE is up against a strong competition, but it can offer the world much expertise and leadership when it comes to an organisation like IRENA.