

# UAE's support after Christchurch attack gave psychological relief to New Zealand: Deputy PM

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ABU DHABI, 29th November 2019 (WAM) – The support from the United Arab Emirates after the Christchurch terrorist attack was a "psychological relief" to New Zealand, a top official told the Emirates News Agency, WAM.

"We are grateful for what countries like the UAE did almost instantaneously – they came out and supported us – that was a huge psychological relief for my country," Winston Peters, New Zealand's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, said in an exclusive interview in Abu Dhabi.

"It was a terrible shock to New Zealand and we never thought such a thing might happen in our country," he added.

"Our job was to be calm and pick up the plans as fast as we could to demonstrate that we understood the misery and sacrifice of people who died."

The official was referring to the 15th March attack that saw a gunman open fire on Muslims at the Al Noor Mosque and the Linwood Islamic Centre, both located in Christchurch.

The main suspect Brenton Tarrant, a 28-year-old Australian, allegedly fired on men, women and children for about five minutes and live-streamed it from a head-mounted camera.

He was arrested and charged with the murder of 51 people.

The UAE had sent an official delegation to New Zealand to express its support immediately after the incident. It also organized some events in New Zealand in solidarity with its government and people.

**The deputy prime minister said his government immediately put together a package to ensure that families of the victims would be taken care of for the rest of their lives.**

"Terrorism has been a curse of our time. It costs hundreds of billions of dollars," he said referring to security arrangements to prevent terrorist attacks.

"All those money could be used for development and advancement," Peters stressed.

About the bilateral relations, New Zealand has the best of the relationship with the UAE, he affirmed. "Both countries can be really proud of it."

Peters is the fourth New Zealand minister visiting the UAE this year. H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, visited New Zealand earlier this year.

Around 5,000 New Zealand nationals living in the UAE are actively contributing to people-to-people relationship, Peters said, adding that they are working in education, sports [as trainers and coaches] and various industrial and commercial sectors.

New Zealand's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai will further help strengthen the relations, he noted. "It is a chance for us to display what New Zealand has in all areas."

He expressed his astonishment on the UAE's development in a short span of time.

"Most impressive aspect of an outsider's point of view, including myself, about the UAE is its progress and development. It is a staggering record. It is very successful, and that does not happen without a leadership and vision," the official said.



In November 1976, the United Arab Emirates was on a date with the birth of the Emirates News Agency, as a news and knowledge media entity that expresses the country, and on June 18, 1977, "WAM" practically began its long and professional career in broadcasting news