

To: Jeffrey Epstein[jeepproject@yahoo.com]
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Dubai Ruler Stresses U.A.E. Unity

By Andrew Critchlow

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DUBAI -- Dubai's ruler on Monday stressed unity with the sheikdom's oil-rich neighbor Abu Dhabi amid ongoing concern over its ability to meet its financial commitments.

In one of his strongest assertions of national unity in the seven member federation of emirates Sheik Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said "so to the people of you who nag over Dubai and Abu Dhabi, shut up!"

"There is no Dubai or Abu Dhabi," said Sheik Mohammed, who is also Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates. "We're one country."

Sheik Mohammed also reaffirmed that the second \$10 billion bond that Dubai plans to sell will attract interest from investors and be well subscribed.

He also stressed pride in Dubai for under-fire state companies that are largely blamed for most of its \$80 billion debt pile.

"We're proud to have national companies like Emirates (Airline), Dubai World and Nakheel," he said.

Bhoomica Reddy

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