

# WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

We scour the globe to source the brightest ideas and bravest moves going into 2022, from the UK's new meteorological machine and Egypt's medical resort to the Austrian townsfolk happy to be Fugging.

USA

## Mission statement

*UAE's new diplomatic presence*

In Manhattan's Turtle Bay are streets on which cars with blue diplomatic number plates outnumber the Empire State's black-and-yellow ones. The heart of this neighbourhood is the headquarters of the UN, around which an arterial network of diplomatic activity has evolved. Three blocks from the General Assembly building is the latest architectural addition to this network: the new home of the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the UN.

Speaking to *The Forecast*, Chris Cooper, a partner at architecture firm SOM, which designed the building, sums up the central challenge to the commission. "How do you design a building that's culturally appropriate to the UAE but isn't foreign to the city that's hosting it?" he says. For the answer, look to the structure's façade: it's grounded in place through the use of Indiana limestone,



PHOTOGRAPHER: MAX BURKHALTER

**"It's a very significant and reflective space where high-level delegations from the UAE can meet their counterparts"**

the same material used in the city's Empire State and Rockefeller buildings but is adorned with Emirati symbolism through piers sculpted to evoke the curves of a palm frond.

That's not the only symbolism to be found in the structure. The new Permanent Mission building is emblematic of the UAE's sustained investment in diplomacy since the country was founded in 1971. Its efforts have turned the small nation into a leader when it comes to foreign policy. In 2020 it became the first Persian Gulf state to normalise diplomatic relations with Israel, while on 1 January 2022 the UAE will commence a two-year term on the UN Security Council.

Behind the country's foreign relations is a dedicated diplomatic staff.