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Fellowship Program 2015

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Participants from Middle-East and North Africa (MENA)

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Federal Foreign Office

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2015 UNAOC Fellowship – MENA Participants



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Ibrahim Fouda (Egypt) holds a BA and a MA in Political Science from the University of Cairo. He currently works as a diplomatic attaché at the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Concerned with bridging cultures and forging partnership among nations, he has been volunteering as a facilitator of Intercultural Dialogue at the Soliya Connect Program since September 2013. Before joining the Foreign Service in January 2015, he worked for two years at the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). He also worked for the International Organization for Migration's MENA Regional Office. His research tasks were to

collect primary data for the development of a regional background paper for the World Migration Report 2013, through conducting interviews and in-depth surveys of migrants from different social backgrounds in Cairo. Ibrahim's professional experience also includes working as a Political Science Research Assistant at the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera) where he conducted surveys and research projects about the Egyptian public opinion on different issues in 2012. In addition, he worked as an International Relations Specialist at the Egyptian Humanitarian Relief and Rehabilitation Organization from 2011 to 2012. In 2009, Ibrahim participated in the Model of American Congress exchange program, organized by the American Council of Young Political Leaders. He has also been involved in various community service activities, particularly in the field of education, and joined a local association for sustainable development where he volunteered as an English Instructor.



Issam Cherat (Morocco) is the editor in chief of *La Voix du Migrant* (The Migrant's Voice). He has experience in mediation, conflict resolution and migration issues. He is also the cofounder and coordinator of LEADERS. Aware of the importance of the current migrant crisis and its humanitarian dimension, he decided with a team of young journalists to create *La Voix du Migrant* with the mission to relay to the entire world the difficult challenges migrants and refugees face everyday. Being the first outlet of its kind in Morocco, the online newspaper has the ambition to become a

platform for migrants to share their struggles, and to widen the debate to all the components of society in order to find collective solutions.



Markrid Antossian (Lebanon) holds a BA in Political Science and is pursuing her MA in International Affairs at the Lebanese American University. Her involvement in the field of migration began when she became a Project Assistant for IOM on a regional project dealing with migrant workers. She interviewed migrant workers inside the Lebanese Detention Center to identify victims of human trafficking and help them benefit from voluntary return and repatriation services. She is currently a Senior Resettlement Assistant for the UNHCR with the mission of identifying vulnerable

Syrian refugees who could benefit from resettlement as a durable solution. She has worked in the field office in Tripoli and she is now based in UNHCR's Beirut office. Everyday she is in direct contact with Syrian refugees in Lebanon. It has inspired her to start her blog "RefugeeDays" (refugeedays.wordpress.com) where she reflects on refugees' stories. In March 2014, she was selected to be part of the Harvard Model United Nations in Seoul where she represented Lebanon and the Lebanese American University. Her future prospects are to soar more in the field of forced migration and refugees while embracing tolerance towards cultural diversity.



Mohamed Dhiaeddine Otay (Tunisia) is committed to provide assistance to marginalized citizens and actively involved in the protection of human rights. He is currently working for Dostourna Network, and previously worked with the Tunisian Red Crescent in a field partnership with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. In 1993 he received the Best Tunisian Youth Writer Award, and continues to publish articles and support Tunisian bloggers. He has twelve years of professional experience, as an election observer and as an executive in programs for social and humanitarian assistance. He is the

cofounder of the AVMSD (Maghreb Association for Solidarity and Development), and the TAF (Tunisian Federation for Air sports).



Nayef Alkhaldeh (Jordan) is a development practitioner who studied and worked in Jordan, Sweden and the United States. He recently completed a MA in International Development at Duke University (USA), where he studied “Development Policy” with special focus on development management, policy analysis, and economic development. Nayef also holds a MA in “E-government”, which is focused on the use of technology to improve the efficiency of public sector work. In addition to his technical background in governance and development, Nayef has a

professional experience working as a consultant and country program manager with international NGOs that operate in the areas of youth empowerment and democratic governance. For his commitment to support local CSOs and advance civil society work in Jordan, Nayef was recently awarded the Leaders for Democracy Fellowship administered by Syracuse University (USA, 2011) and the Middle East Rule of Law Fellowship with the Open Society Foundation (USA, 2013).



Rezhidar Fakhri (Iraq) was born in Iran in a refugee camp in 1990 and moved back to Kurdistan in Northern Iraq when he was two. Politics has always been part of his life. He started school in his home village and moved to the city to finish high school and university. He was very determined to bring change to Kurdish society on a cultural, social, political and traditional level. He decided to write about it. He worked for a local NGO as a project manager and then a board member. As a teacher, he realized that education is the best way to bring change to Kurdistan and that he had the duty to educate himself further to achieve real change for

his society. He now works for Mine Advisory Group, as a Community Liaison Coordinator. Growing up in a war-torn environment, he has been writing about conflicts and issues related to the political, cultural and social situation in Kurdistan. In his articles, he insists on the human dimension of conflicts to highlight that people at war have more in common than they think and should concentrate on that instead of their differences. He shares some personal insights too. Since he has never travelled abroad, his favorite place to be is his kitchen where he finds refuge and can set his creativity free.



Rouba Mhaissen (Lebanon) is an economist and development practitioner. She is an expert on the Syrian refugee crisis generally, and its implications for Lebanon in particular. She has participated in conferences, consultancies and research focus groups on the humanitarian crisis of Syrian refugees, issues of migration and displacement, activism in the Arab world, and building solidarity. Rouba is also the founder and director of Sawa For Development and Aid, a grass-roots non-profit organization supporting Syrian refugees in Lebanon, which works with women, youth and children in the areas of economic

projects, education, psychosocial support, and development. Rouba is a PhD candidate in Gender and Development at SOAS, University of London. Her academic work has focused on women in labour markets in lower-income Beirut, with issues pertaining to household economics and marital negotiation dynamics, rethinking notions of 'empowerment' in this context. She has also worked in the areas of violence, conflict, and development; gender and development; and the political economy of development and has participated in several research networks/consultancies about women during civil war, women refugees, gender and practices of faith, gender and violence, and forced migration among other issues.



Ruba Jayyousi (Jordan) has several years of experience in the NGO sector, managing different projects ranging from development to relief programs in Jordan. She has developed key skills in program and team management. She managed a youth employment program in one of the Palestinian refugees' camp in Jordan. The project aimed at helping individuals who dropped school acquire skills to increase their chance to get a job. She has also worked for Islamic Relief Worldwide where she designed and implemented projects to respond to Syrian refugees' plights. Her competency

and skills brought in more than 8,000,000 million GBP fund in less than a year and half. She succeeded in building strong relations with donors such as the Department for International development (DFID), Open Fund for International Development (OFID), Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC), Emergency Relief Fund (ERF). Currently she is studying development and poverty in the UK, at Sussex University (International Development Center). Her master dissertation is a qualitative policy research, analyzing the relevancy of vocational training to youth wellbeing in Jordan. It presents a nuance analysis of the existential gap between market needs and youth needs with a special focus on gender implications. She aspires to pursue a career in development, working in issues related to poverty, gender equity and inequalities.



Sally Ashour (Egypt) is a Political Science Assistant Lecturer at the National Center for Social and Criminological Researches. She holds a degree in Political Science and Public Administration from the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University. Currently she is pursuing a PhD in International Relations and International Law. Her thesis focuses on "The Role of The INGOs in implementing the Millennium Development Goals. Case study: International Federation for Red Cross and Red Crescent". In January 2015, she was appointed Assistant to the Minister of Social

Solidarity for International Cooperation and Research.



Sarwat Dalal Bashi (Syria) is a human rights and international development specialist, currently working as a Protection & Rule of Law Manager with the International Rescue Committee (IRC)/ Turkey. He has worked as a Research Consultant for Human Rights Watch, spending more than a year in the emergency division in the Northern Syria, investigating and documenting human rights violations. Sarwat holds a BA in Law from the University of Aleppo. In 2008, he was honored by the Syrian Bar Association as a Master Lawyer. He practiced law and provided legal consultations for

eight years, specializing in human rights and criminal cases. Sarwat has achieved certificates through the completion of several intensive courses covering protection and human rights, management of international organizations, and conflict/interfaith conflict management and negotiation. In 2008, he published a book entitled "International Human Rights and Development" that reflected the situation of countries in the Middle East. His fieldwork and legal background contribute to his interest in writing on democracy, legal development and human rights. Sarwat is a member and past president of the Aleppo Free Lawyers for Rule of Law and Democracy, an association founded in 2011 to promote a free, democratic society in Syria.



Souad Ahmadoun (Morocco) is a Research Assistant at Carnegie Middle East Center in Rabat. She focuses on Political Islam, Jihadism and Youth Radicalization in North Africa, as well as social and political dynamics in Morocco. She is also a PhD candidate in Political Science at Galatasaray University in Istanbul, on the Turkish Civil Society role in Political decision-making process, and on a comparison with the Arab world of the transformation processes of Turkish civil movements. She holds a MA in International Cooperation. As an intern for the German Institute for International and

Security Affairs, she worked on a project related to Syrian refugees in Turkey and their impact on the whole region. She also worked as a Consular Affairs Officer at the Consulate General of Qatar in Istanbul, and was a non-resident researcher at Khaled Al-Hassan Institute in Rabat, Morocco. In addition to her academic background, Souad has an important experience with civil society. She participated in a program on the role of women in preventing violent extremism, in the frame of the International Visitor Leadership program (IVLP) led by the US State Department. She also volunteered to work with NGOs involved with youth and the promotion of democracy and pluralism through pacific strategies.



Zein Tayyeb (Jordan) is an education Officer at UNICEF Jordan. She joined UNICEF in May, 2013 and has been working in Zaatari refugee camp. Zein holds a Master's degree in International Relations and Human rights from the University of East London, UK. Her research interests focus on human rights-based issues, especially children rights. She has always been very concerned by humanitarian work and now that she is part of the global effort, she hopes to help improve the future of every child. More recently, Zein received a Scholarship from BROWN University to take part in a program in the US where she received

intensive training in Human Security and Humanitarian Response. It has allowed her to develop a better understanding of the global issues and challenges that the world is facing. It has also broadened her horizons regarding the span of humanitarian actions to be taken in situations of emergency. During her free time, she loves travelling to new adventures, she is passionate about all kinds of food, and enjoys reading. She is hoping to expand her experience in the humanitarian field within the United Nations team.