



# UNAOC FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME Fall 2001 Edition

## Middle East & North African Fellows





**Ms. Soumia Alloui (Algeria)** is an Editor, Reporter and TV News presenter working for the State run Arabic language, Algerian TV for the past Nine years. After being a presenter for several years, she is now also responsible for editing and completion of documentaries on political topics, national and international issues. Much of her work is focus on youth and human rights issues. She has been working on sensitive stories. It is for this reason that Soumia works very close with youth organizations in Algeria including the Scout organization, which enables her to work closely on issues on the ground and relate them in her media work. Soumia is also a Journalist at EMAJ Magazine, the Euro Mediterranean Academy for Young Journalist, available in English on line. The magazine is a result of positive intercultural dialogues which aim to correct misunderstanding and prejudice for a better world. She has taken part in other UNAOC programs including “Breaking out Stereotypes and misconceptions to build bridges among peoples and communities” in Malta as well as UNAOC Plural + program, a youth video festival. Soumia is completing her Master thesis in Science of Information and Communication from Algiers's University.



**Mr. Dhari Hamad Al Wazzan (Kuwait)** has been inspired by his father and his late grandfather and their hard work to improve their family business. He attended the American International School of Kuwait to graduate with an International Baccalaureate Diploma. He then attended Bentley University in Boston, where he completed his Bachelor in Corporate Finance and Accounting. There, he joined the Muslim Student Association and initiated a committee after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks to meet the needs of the Bentley Muslim Community. Upon his return home, he entered his family business to become the business development manager within the company Arabian Motors Group, the world's fourth largest dealership for Ford, Lincoln, and Mercury automobiles. He was successful in implementing the latest cost cutting techniques adding more profit and he created several departments such as the Customer Relationship and Marketing & Communication Departments. He opened successful businesses such as Autozan, an aftermarket automobile as well as an international franchise operation called ProntoWash which provides new and unique car washing and detailing services that are both convenient and economically friendly. At the community level, he founded the Proud to Be Kuwaiti Organization ([www.p2bk.com](http://www.p2bk.com)) which is a non-profit organization promoting small & medium businesses and entrepreneurs in Kuwait. He also created Thunderbirds which gives the opportunity to students to attend a summer internship to gain work experience and to aim at promoting community service and giving back to the community



**Mr. Abdellah Yassine BOUKOURIZIA (Morocco)** was born and raised in the oldest medina of Casablanca in Morocco. Yassine was involved in social work and volunteering since his early age. In June 2006, he graduated with research honors, earning a Bachelor of Arts in English studies with a minor in Communication and Mass media at Hassan II University. After graduation, Yassine was selected from a pool of 100 young leaders to represent Morocco in MENA program in the US. He received intense courses at Georgetown University on leadership, entrepreneurship and civic activism. His main personal interests are intercultural dialogue, religions and faith. While there, he developed a great interest in reading and publishing editing and then went on to obtain a professional bachelor degree in publishing editing sciences at Hassan II University in 2009. Yassine is an expert in leadership and social entrepreneurship. He works as consultant, speaker, advisor and leader who speaks nationally and internationally for civil society organizations in communication, ICT, business fundraising and management.

He is Proactive self-starter with track record of initiative, personal responsibility, ownership of work and reputation for removing obstacles and making things happen. Yassine engineers sustainable networks towards community development and civil society advocacy. As a civil society actor, he is the founder and president of Coup de chance association for youth leadership and member of the steering committee of Moroccan association for Harm reduction. He is also member of Junior Chamber International (JCI)

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**Wasel Elgayar (Libya)**

Wasel first studied engineering and architecture in from 1998 to 2002 at Garyounis University in Benghazi, Libya. He concluded his professional training with a Masters degree and qualified as an architect and urban planner in Central Europe at the Slovak University of Technology, Bratislava. While there, he did an internship in building management in the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After working in an architectural practice for one year in 2006, in Geneva, he undertook a volunteer role in an urban development project in Karak and Tafila, Jordan with UN-Habitat to improve facilities and habitat in several rural settlements. He was then recruited to work in a multilateral agency in UNDP Amman where he was responsible for designing the safety and security features of the UN compound, and also held the position of Special Assistant to the UN Resident Coordinator. He then returned to work as an architect in Geneva. His most recent position was Deputy Head of the Swiss Development Cooperation Office in Benghazi at the height of the crisis in Libya. The work included bringing through a medical convoy, setting up a bilateral humanitarian aid mission and organizing facilities for refugees and internally displaced persons. Wasel's understanding of the importance of intercultural dialogue and understanding has been nurtured by a long-standing membership of the Scout Movement and by human rights training opportunities with the Euro-Mediterranean programme of the Council of Europe and Beirut Arab University. He is now a doctoral student at the Graduate Institute of the University of Liechtenstein. His PhD focuses on sustainable urban development in new Arab cities.



**Ms Rasha Kamal Fawzy (Egypt)** holds a bachelor degree in Egyptology, faculty of Tourism and Hotels where she graduated in 1999 with honors. She started her career path at the American Chamber of Commerce as the Senior Programs Coordinator. In 2007 she joined the Canada-Egypt Business Council as their Executive Director. CEBC was launched as a non-governmental organization in 2002 and committed to foster growth in business interests between Canadians and Egyptians as well as acting as an organization that bridges, interacts and communicates with the community of Canadian-Egyptians across Canada. Twelve years of experience in the field of NGOs, public relations, events and clients management, Ms. Kamal acquired extensive experience in establishing and maintaining strategic relationships with key economic and political decision makers in Egypt, U.S. and Canada, dealing with high-profile governmental entities, policy makers and members of the civil society. During this period, she has established a track record in managing and coordinating numerous collaborative functions, business missions and research projects in various sectors. She has been an

active member of UN Volunteers "Injaz Programme", helping youth to enhance their skills to enter the job market as qualified employees and entrepreneurs. She is also a member of the American Red Cross and the ASAE Center for Association Leadership



**Ms. Sofana R. Dahlan (Saudi Arabia)** is CEO and founder of Tashkeil, a Multidisciplinary Center for Culture and Design. Sofana has used her law and business experience to create Tashkeil, a social enterprise that promotes independent designers in order to assist them with their operations, branding, strategic positioning and legal matter. They help foster the skills and creativity of Arab designers and facilitating their direct participation in the development of suitable projects. She was chosen this year to participate in the Harvard Executive program "Leading for the Future: The Arab Region in a Changing World" where she was representing Tashkeil as a social platform for change and development. Sofana also represented Tashkeil's social cycle at the Doha pre-forum for the UNAOC. As a legal scholar, she has lived in different parts of the Arab World, including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Kuwait. She completed a Bachelor in Law (LL.B.) degree and a Masters degree in Islamic Law at the Faculty of Law in Cairo University. She also received her MBA degree from the American University of Technology and is the first Saudi female to be given the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education permission to study law. Since 1999, she has served as a legal consultant for Husam Wegfi Law Office, Meshari

Al-Ghazali Law Firm and as a legal adviser in Comparative Arab Law for Institution Quraysh for Law & Policy in Kuwait. Sofana is currently a member of the board of directors of the RSDFHD Foundation for Human Development, a foundation focused on building leadership capacity in the field of human development in the Arab World. She has written extensively on topics such as women's rights, social values and interreligious dialogue.



**Mr. Anas Nihad Dharweesh (Syria)** is the head of SHABAB, the executive arm of the Syria Trust for Development that addresses youth empowerment, employability and entrepreneurship. As founding member, Anas has contributed since 2005 to develop, innovate and implement several programmes tackling youth skills, knowledge and attitudes aiming at integrating them into the job market. Supported with 11 years experience in the NGO and the Civil Society sector and in collaboration with wide spectrum of organizations, he was able to attain successful records in the field of partnership building, training and development as well as in fundraising domain. Between 2007 and 2010 he succeeded to support the aforementioned programmes and activities with a portfolio of funds that started with 40,000 USD in 2007 to more than 3,100,000 USD in 2011, in close cooperation with internationally-recognized entities such as the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, UNRWA, UNFPA, and other related EU projects. He also launched the Business Clinic Programme (BCP) in 2008; the first career guidance and entrepreneurship centre in Syria. His voluntary profile involves different levels of engagement with youth institutions such as Junior Chambers International (JCI), the Syrian Young Entrepreneurs Association (SYEA), the Institute of Human Recourse Management (IHRM) and other civil society actions. Anas Dharweesh holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor from the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences.



**Mr. Mohamed Nabeel El Hommosany (Egypt)** holds a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy from Cairo University in 2004 and an MBA from Arab Academy for Graduate School of Business (AAGSB) in 2009. Nabeel started his political and social advocacy in 2005. From the years 2001 to 2005, he has been prominently active in the extracurricular activities related to his field of studies "Pharmaceutical Sciences". He was a member of the Students' Union of the Faculty of Pharmacy at the Cairo University and later elected to be the chairperson of the Cairo Scientific Pharmaceutical Students Association (CSPSA). He then became the Publication Officer of the Egyptian Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (EPSF) and helped set up the Youth Pharmacists Group (YPG) within the pharmacists' syndicate a member in the National Association for Change in Egypt, where he had a great role in gathering signatures for the "Statement of Change" announced by "The National Association for Change" from lawmakers, supporters, advocates and politically active youth. These past months, he proudly and actively participated in the Arab Spring and the 18 days of the Egyptian Revolution sit-in in Tahrir Square. He participated in the pre-negotiations phase with the toppled regime of Mubarak and was an active moderator and participant in the Facebook groups on the Egyptian Revolution. Now with the new political environment in Egypt after the Revolution, since parties are more freely formed and socially and politically active within the society, he founded Al-Adl (The Justice) Party.



**Ms. Dala Ghandour (Lebanon)** holds a degree in public & private Law and a Master in Management, from Lebanon & France. She has a global understanding of the MENA region, as she was born & raised in Lebanon, worked in Qatar and travelled to many countries. She speaks five languages. Interested in social development, she ran as an independent candidate for Beirut municipality elections: Her initiative inspired young citizens over the country to participate in their own political process: She frequently gives talks to empower youth & women to be engaged in the public field as she believes that politics should not be only left to politicians. She was invited to participate in the 1<sup>st</sup> Arab-European Young Leaders Forum, held in Vienna in November 2010. She is currently a lawyer specialized in family status legal matters and is a certified mediator. Since 2009, she has been developing the mediation culture, as she believes in its power to resolve conflicts & restore relationships. She has been offering her mediation services to the unprivileged populations in North Lebanon with the American Bar Association, as an instructor in Lebanese jails & and as a family mediator for divorced couples, in Beirut Charia Courts. She aims to introduce mediation into the legal system and spread this culture of forgiveness & reconciliation in the Lebanese society.

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**Ms. Rasha Fityan Saleem (Palestine)** has been a program manager & capacity building manager in TA'AWON for conflict resolution institute - Palestinian youth NGO - since 2002, after finishing her Bachelor in Business administration in 2000. She is an international youth activist working to build networks & partnerships with interested groups /organizations in the field of conflict resolution and peace building. Rasha is seeking to explore our world through her wide world communications and working to promote the Respect and understand the differences. She has been a member of the youth advisory committee of the League of Arab States/youth and sport Moderate since 2008 and regularly takes part in international activities as groups' facilitator and as a public speaker. Rasha is helping host the 4<sup>th</sup> Euro Arab meeting in Palestine end of 2011. This meeting was implemented annually since 2007 by the League of Arab states and the Council of Europe in different Arab countries



**Ms. Sarah Zaaimi (Morocco)** is a Moroccan based in Alexandria, Egypt. Born in Rabat in a multicultural family, she spent an important part of her life travelling and bridging cultures. Sarah has a MA in Communication studies, from EHTP and le College Polytechnique of Paris, an M.A. in International Studies and Diplomacy from Al Akhawayn University and a B.A. in Journalism and Communication from l'ISIC of Rabat. Mrs. Zaaimi started her career at the age of 18 while studying journalism. She worked in many national and international newspapers such as *Ashark Al Wassat* daily newspaper, then as a TV reporter for 2M TV, before working as a communication specialist for the UNFEM and later as a Youth and Education Program Officer for the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures in Egypt. Sarah is also very active within the Euro-Mediterranean civil society, as she is one of the youth ambassadors of the Middle East Youth Initiative at Brooking, a former member of the Youth Advisory Committee of the League of Arab States, a UNFPA peer-educator, and a Soliya connect program facilitator. Furthermore, she is the author of a tool-kit on Training Bloggers on Intercultural Dialogue, and of a research on the Moroccan Religious Identity and the Media. You can learn more about her ideas and experience on her award winning blog <http://wordsforchange.wordpress.com>