



UN Alliance of Civilizations FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME Fall 2012 Edition

North African & Middle Eastern Fellows



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Wadia Ait Hamza (Morocco) is currently working at the **Rabat School of Governance & Economics**, the first international university of public affairs in the region (EgE Rabat). He holds a **Master Degree in Euro- Mediterranean Affairs (Università degli Studi di Perugia in Terni, Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Université Hassan II in Casablanca & Universidad de Granada)**, and a Bachelor degree in International Studies, with a minor in Women & Development from **Al Akhawayn University** in Ifrane. He worked in **Toyota Morocco** as Training & Human Resources Development coordinator, as well as in the **European Institute for the Mediterranean**. He is a former member of the **Youth Consultative Committee** of the **League of Arab States Youth**. He served as well as a **Youth Trainer** with the **Council of Europe** & the League of Arab States during many events. As a former member of the **Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament**, Wadia launched, with his peers, different projects such the Meda Youth Parliament & Euro-Med Academy for Young Journalists which became a successful project. Nowadays, he is launching, as part of the World Economic Forum initiative, the **Rabat hub of the Global Shapers**. Wadia is also the **Vice President of the Mediterranean Forum for Youth (FOMEJE)**.



Yousef Al-Helou (Palestine) is a **film maker** and works as **freelance journalist/TV and radio reporter** for a number of international media outlets, such as **The Real News, France 24, Al-Etejah**. He wrote many articles about life in Gaza and covered all major events since 2006, including the **2008/2009 Gaza war**. Yousef's work in **journalism**, the field of **human rights** and in **youth activism** has enabled him to have a wide network of contacts both locally and internationally. He is a member of a number of civil society organizations and regularly takes part in workshops related to human rights and international and humanitarian law. He holds a **MA in journalism** from the **University of Manchester** and a diploma in multimedia from Mediafly Academy in the UK. Yousef took part in many speaking tours and conferences in the UK and Ireland about his work experience and activism, relating not only to his coverage of politics but also in art, culture and sport. He was selected last November as one of the participants in the **DPI media-training program for Palestinian journalists** sponsored by the **UN's Department of Public Information**.



Shaikha Al-Shaalan (Bahrain) operates in the field of **television and radio programs** as a **presenter and editor**. Through her work in the field of media, she has been able to participate in some of the most important cases and events in the history of contemporary Bahrain, and specifically in the **reform project of the King of Bahrain**. Her interest is to consolidate the concepts of **democracy and justice**, which she has done through participation and supervision of the press coverage of the parliamentary elections in 2006. She also participates in the support side of media for a number of charity associations and the institutions of civil society, and to support their development projects to serve the community of Bahrain. Shaikha completed a **master's degree in media** and is preparing for a **doctorate in the field of social media and activating the concept of community partnership through the media**. She aspires to assume a leadership position in the Bahraini media to do everything possible to develop and consolidate the concepts of community peace, acceptance of other societies, and civilized image transfer from Bahrain to the world



Nabeel Ali (Jordan) is the **Senior Grants Officer** for GCC, Iraq and Yemen at the **Foundation for the Future**. His work entails assisting and providing oversight for such organizations' human rights and democracy related initiatives. He has worked on projects covering various areas including **good governance, women empowerment** and **youth civic participation**. Prior to that, Nabeel served as a Senior Resident Program Assistant at the **National Democratic Institute for International Affairs** to help **build the capacities of Jordanian political parties and members of Parliament**. While as the Projects Manager for **Al-Hayat Center for Civil Society Development**, he promoted the active **engagement of young people** in the public life. Nabeel also serves as the a Board Member of the **National Forum for Youth and Culture: Jordan Youth**, a Member of the Executive Board of the **Meda Youth Parliament**, and the Jordan Delegate to the **Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament**. He was a **Guest Speaker at the Clinton Global Initiative Med-Year Meeting 2007**, and a **Youth Spokesperson on behalf of the United Nations** with regards to the Millennium Development Goals in Jordan. Nabeel holds an **MBA degree** from the **New York Institute of Technology** and is a graduate of Actuarial Science from **Al-Bayt University** in Jordan.



Sondos Asem (Egypt) is the editor-in-chief of the **Muslim Brotherhood's** official English-language website **Ikhwanweb.com** and a member of the Foreign Relations team of the **Freedom and Justice Party**. After The Egyptian January 25 revolution, she launched the Muslim Brotherhood's **interactive social media platform @Ikhwanweb** on Twitter. She holds a Bachelor's degree in English language and Literature and Masters' degree in Journalism and Mass Communication. She is a non-resident research fellow at the **International Institute of Islamic Thought**, Washington, and a board member of a Cairo-based academic publishing house. Ms. Asem was an **active participant in the Egyptian revolution** that overthrew the country's longtime dictator Hosni Mubarak in January 25, 2011, and was invited to speak about the revolution in several international venues like the **Aljazeera Forum** in Doha, Oslo University, and New York's annual **Women in the World Summit**. She has been active for the past five years in multiple international platforms that promote cross-cultural dialogue such as the **Nyon Process**, the UNAOC, and the **Soliya** connect program's Terana fellowship. Sondos was a member of the Freedom and Justice Party's first official delegation to the United States in 2012. Her work has been featured in **New York Times, CNN, BBC**, and other international media.



Emna Ben Yedder (Tunisia) is a manager in **Mergers & Acquisitions** at **SWICORP**, a corporate **finance advisory, private equity** and **principal investment** firm with a specific regional focus on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Since she joined SWICORP in 2007, Emna has been involved in various financial advisory assignments ranging from several acquisitions, greenfield, and joint venture projects to sale mandates. Before joining the group, she gained two years experience as a financial modeling analyst for **ABN Amro** in London. In her personal time, Emna is also an activist working with an NGO she helped found called "**ACT – Think & Decide**". Along with five other NGOs and independents, ACT has implemented a project in Tunisia called Bus Citoyen of which she is the treasurer, which focuses on **raising political awareness among citizens** and **encouraging civil society participation** in the democratic transition process and the constitutional writing process. Emna is also a founding member of the "**Citizens' Association of Carthage**", a residents association created to foster local governance. She holds a **Masters in Business** specializing in finance from the **Rouen Business** school. Emna speaks Arabic, English, French and Spanish.



Mbarka Bouaida (Morocco) is a member of the National Council of the political party “**National Rally for Independents**” (RNI), which forms the first party in the Opposition against the current Government led by the Islamists. **Member of Parliament from 2007 to 2011**, Mbarka was elected as a **Chair of the Committee of Foreign Affairs** in the **Moroccan House of Representatives**. She was in charge of relationships between Moroccan and European Parliaments as a Co-Chair of the Mixed Committee created between both parliaments. Since January 2012, Mbarka is in charge of Foreign Affairs within her political party, and is freshly elected as a **Vice President of the Parliamentarian Forum for Democracy**. She is a member of the **Think Tank of the North South Center** within the **Council of Europe**. Mbarka dedicates her community life to **local associations** in her native region in the Southern Sahara, and is very sensitive to the **emancipation of women** in her region. Mbarka has an **MBA in General Management** in **Hull University** in England, and has made different political trainings as Young Leader with **Kroeber Foundation** in Munich, and **Aspen Institute** in France. She is **co-founder of RadioMars.ma**, a radio station specializing in youth and sport.



Rihab Elhaj (Libya) began work on **human development** in the Middle East in 2006 following a **nomination by the United Nations as the UNGYLS delegate for advocacy of the MDGs in Libya**. Extending her work toward human development with a **focus on horizontal leadership development**, Rihab co-founded **Inara** in 2009, as a leadership **coaching and human resource development company**. At the onset of the Libyan revolution, Rihab also co-founded **The New Libya Foundation (NLF)**, a **capacity building organization** currently operating in Tripoli and Misurata. The NLF was initiated through a series of humanitarian aid projects during the revolution. Today, its "incubator" offices **provide training, coaching and mentorship for civil society organizations** on the role of civil society in democracy, organizational development, community outreach, advocacy and horizontal leadership. NLF also conducts research and coordinates the development of CSO networks and campaigns for national advocacy. Rihab is **trained as a professional coach** through Accomplishment Coaching, and accredited by the International Coaching Federation (ICF.) She received a B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Political Science from **Marymount University** in Washington D.C. graduating summa cum laude.



Dima El Sayed (Lebanon) is the **Information and Protection Officer** at the **Norwegian Refugee Council** in Lebanon where she provides Syrian refugees with information and legal support to surviving displacement. While studying law in Beirut, Dima became a founding member of the **Students Struggle Organisation** and wrote, directed and acted in a theater piece that predicted the assassination of her mentor, **Samir Kassir**. Dima received an LLM in Comparative Legal studies from **La Sorbonne University** and wrote her short story « Pourquoi voyagent les voyageurs » (“Why do Travelers Travel”) during the suicide bombings in London. She enrolled in a **PhD program at La Sorbonne**, with articles published around a **comparative approach between the Western and Arab worlds** to denounce the myth of a civilizations clash. Dima became the **International Affairs coordinator** of the **General Union of Arab Students in Europe**, worked as a consultant to a peace program that supported Palestinian students and later became the **Legal and Policy consultant** at **UNESCO Staff Union**. Dima then decided to pursue her musical and poetic studies through the **sacred art of singing Dhrupad** in India. There she **finished her first collection of poems**, written in three languages and telling of the many possible seasons of the Arab Spring.



Adlane Meddi (Algeria) is the **editor-in-chief** of the weekend edition of the French-language daily Algerian newspaper **El Watan** since its launch in 2009. He began his career in the press in 1998 after **studies in journalism at Algiers** (1994-1998) and in **sociology in Marseille** (2002-2003). During this career, he has **specialized in the event of violations of human rights in Algeria**, and then in **internal policy**. From 2006, he began to cover the Arab countries for El Watan, with the most significant experience being the **coverage of the war in Lebanon during the summer of 2006**. Adlane is also the **author of two novels**, « **Le casse tête turc** » (“The Turkish Puzzle”) and « **La prière du Maure** » (“The Prayer of the Moorish”). His next novel, « 1994 », will be available from early 2013. Interested in **new technologies and their applications in art**, Adlane wrote the texts accompanying the video installation by Amar Bouras, Ez-zaïm, le roi est mort, vive le roi {Ez-Zaim, the king is dead, long live the king} exhibited at the Stenersen Museum in Oslo during October 2005. He is also the co-author with the same artist, Amar Bouras, Tablod'bord, for the experimental video presented in February 2006 at the festival 17th Traveling in Rennes (France).