

## Speakers' Bios (In Alphabetical Order)



### **Dr. Abla Abdel Latif**

**Executive Director and Director of Research, ECES**

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Abla Abdel Latif, originally a Professor of Economics at AUC, is currently the Chair of the Presidential Advisory Council for Economic Development; and the Executive Director and Director of Research of The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES).

In 2013, she was honored with membership of the Committee of Fifty, whose mission was to draft Egypt's Constitution following June 30, 2013.

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### **Dr. Akila Rifaat**

**Strategy and Development Consultant**

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Akila Rifaat is an SME's development consultant possessing 25 years of consultancy experience with Egyptian SMEs and private sector development in various sectors of industry within the framework of multi-party assignments. She is specialized in value chain development, cluster development, sector strategies as well as business development services (BDS) for SMEs. Akila has in-depth experience in the development of the Egyptian handicrafts sector.

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### Mr. Bassel Rahmy

**Chief Executive Officer, MSME Development Agency, MSMEDA**

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Bassel Rahmy is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA), with more than 27 years in banking and financial sector as well as extensive experience in all business banking, retail banking, SMEs management, market risk, and asset and liability management.

He held progressive senior positions, with several prominent multinational and regional banking entities in which he had a proven track record of achieving accelerated portfolio growth while boosting revenue and profit margins. Bassel Rahmy graduated from Freed-Hardeman University- Henderson, Tennessee, USA.

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### **Mr. Hesham El Gazzar**

#### **Sustainable Development Consultant**

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Hisham El Gazzar is a sustainable development consultant with extensive expertise in empowering micro, small, and medium-sized manufacturers, and exporters in Egypt, specializing in home decoration, handicrafts, gift items, and home textiles.

He is Chairman of the World Fair Trade Organization for Africa and the Middle East, and a member of several organizations concerned with handicrafts such as Egypt's Chamber of Handicrafts; the UNHCR; and the ILO. Previously, he served as Chairman & Vice Chairman of the Export Council for Handicrafts; Vice Chairman, Chamber of Handicrafts; and Board Member of the Federation of Egyptian Industries.

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### **Ms. Jaya Jaitly**

**Founder and Chairperson, Dastkari Haat Samiti**

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Jaya Jaitly has worked for over four decades with craftspeople. Her interests are wide ranging and she has been the Assistant General Secretary of the Hind Mazdoor Kisan Panchayat, a major trade union. She joined active politics and the Janata Party in 1984. She has been the Secretary of the Janata Dal, General Secretary (1994) and President (2001) of the Samata Party. She moved away from party-bound politics in 2003.

She is the founder and Chairperson of Dastkari Haat Samiti, an organization for crafts people and among her many activities she conceptualized the concept of Dilli Haat, a unique craft space in New Delhi. She regularly organizes workshops to upgrade craft skills and products; is a prolific writer and has several publications including five books on handicrafts to her credit.

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### **Ms. Josline El Kholy**

**Co-Founder, Jozee Boutique**

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Josline El Kholy has 10 years of experience in Jozee Boutique - Co founder of Jozee designing and producing modern and comfy women garments with an emphasis on our Egyptian heritage and culture, with hand-made embroidery by local artisans in different parts of Egypt. Fabrics are handwoven on old traditional looms in the Upper Egypt. She is a Development Consultant specializing in artisan product identity and design development. Also an Expertise in empowering artisans to create marketable and appealing products, leading to increased job opportunities. She is skilled in market research, creative design, and business development, and has strong project management abilities and a track record of successful collaborations. Prior to her private business, she worked for 15 years in the telecom field in Egypt in different roles and responsibilities mainly in the areas of planning, strategy and product/retail marketing. She holds a Bachelor of Political Science- Cairo University.

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### **Ms. Manjeet Kripalani**

**Executive Director, Gateway House**

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Manjeet Kripalani Prior to the founding of Gateway House, Kripalani was India Bureau chief of Businessweek magazine from 1996 to 2009. During her extensive career in journalism (Businessweek, Worth and Forbes magazines, New York), she has won several awards, including the Gerald Loeb Award, the George Polk Award, Overseas Press Club and Daniel Pearl Awards. Kripalani was the 2006-07 Edward R. Murrow Press Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, New York, which inspired her to found Gateway House. Her political career spans being the deputy press secretary to Steve Forbes during his first run in 1995-96 as Republican candidate for U.S. President in New Jersey, to being press secretary for the Lok Sabha campaign for independent candidate Meera Sanyal in 2008 and 2014 in Mumbai. Kripalani holds a master's degree in International Affairs from Columbia University, New York.

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### **Dr. Preet Deep Singh**

**Vice President, Invest India**

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Preet Deep Singh leads the One District One Product (ODOP) initiative, which aims to put one product from each district of India on the world map. His expertise lies in entrepreneurship, economic development, India's start-up ecosystem along with local and global governance. Singh has played a vital role in navigating policy challenges and opportunities of artisans and promoting Artificial Intelligence (AI) in public policy. A Company Secretary by profession, he has been a consultant at KPMG and EY. Preet holds a PhD in Finance from Indian Institute of Management (IM) Ahmedabad, where he was awarded the Chaudhary-Padmanabhan-Pant Gold medal.