



THE 1st CAIRO FORUM

2024

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OUR FIRST ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
HOSTING EXPERTS FROM ARGENTINA, EGYPT, FRANCE, GERMANY, GREECE, INDIA,
ITALY, MOROCCO, SOUTH AFRICA, TUNISIA, UNITED STATES, AND MORE...

DISCUSSING THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES
ON THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND
INTERNATIONAL LEVELS



There are a lot of challenges in the world today. They are not only serious but they are constantly evolving and escalating, from the weaponization of geopolitical conflicts, to proactive action in facing deteriorating climate conditions, to serious debt accumulations suffocating the South, to unfulfilled youth aspirations especially in Africa, not to mention disappointing progress in SDGs, all this is occurring in the context of technology advancing at the speed of light creating both challenges and opportunities at the same time... and a lot more.

Like most other countries in the South, Egypt is in the middle of this turmoil being African, Arab, member of BRICS, the MED region and before all a member of the Global South.

The turmoil calls for close follow up of challenges and opportunities emerging.



THE 1st CAIRO FORUM 2024



The main objective of CAIRO FORUM is to join efforts of major international think tanks in such follow up, continue the dialogue and analysis of what's happening and how to deal with it at individual countries level, at the regional level as well as internationally.



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OPENING SESSION Welcoming Remarks

Amid the enormous challenges and crises, ECES took it upon itself to initiate an international dialogue and share insights to make the desired impact at all levels.

Steffen Krueger, Country Director for Egypt at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, expressed his enthusiasm for the cooperation between the foundation and ECES in organizing this significant event. "Egypt is confronting numerous economic challenges, and collaborating with think tanks like ECES will facilitate discussions on these issues and help identify viable solutions," he said.

Simeon G. Tsomokos, founder and president of the Delphi Economic Forum, congratulated ECES on its wonderful initiative to organize this event annually to exchange views and insights on the most important international issues. "The world faces many challenges, most notably geopolitical conflicts and instability, deteriorating economic conditions in many African countries, climate deterioration, debt accumulation, and rapid technological developments," he said. Tsomokos pointed out the Egyptian government's interest in the regional tension and its detrimental impact on several economic activities, such as tourism. This requires international cooperation and coordination of efforts to bring stability to the region.



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SPECIAL SESSION H.E. LTG Kamel Al-Wazir's Remarks

The second day featured a speech by his excellency the Minister of Transportation & Industry, who pointed out that the Ministry of Transport is committed to conducting economic feasibility studies for the Ministry's infrastructure projects, covering strategic, economic, commercial, marketing, and governance dimensions at all stages of each project.

Under the directives of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, to transform Egypt into a regional hub for transportation, logistics and transit trade, the Ministry of Transport implemented several strategic objectives as follows:

1. Planning and building 7 integrated international development logistic corridors to link production

industrial, agricultural, mining, service zones with seaports by fast and safe means of transportation passing through dry ports and logistic zones.

2. Developing a comprehensive plan to establish 32 dry ports and logistics zones across the country.

3. Planning intermodal connectivity between seaports, dry ports and logistic zones through:

- Building 7,000 km of new roads
- Upgrading and duplicating 10,000 km of the existing road network within the National Roads Project
- Building 35 new road axes across the Nile
- Building 1,000 new bridges.
- Building 2000 km of express electric railway network
- Upgrading 10,000 km of the existing railway network
- Building new railway lines to connect dry ports to the railway network nationwide such as the stations of Kafr Dawoud, Sadat, El-Roubeiki, 10th of Ramadan, Belbeis and EL-Manashey, and 6th of October city.
- Building new docks, bringing the total length of docks to more than 100 km at depths ranging from 18 to 20 meters.
- Constructing 25 km of breakwaters, and deepening the navigation channels to accommodate 400 million tons annually instead of 185 million tons, and 40 million containers annually instead of 12 million containers currently.

- Forming strategic partnerships with international major container terminal management companies and shipping lines to ensure receiving the largest number possible of international ships at Egyptian ports, and expanding transit trade.



SESSION ZERO

The Greek experience: Painful yet effective reform, any lessons for Egypt and other developing countries?



During the Greek debt crisis, Greece undertook a series of important structural and institutional reforms to stabilize its economy and restore fiscal health. These reforms included modernizing tax collection, overhauling pension systems, and enhancing public sector efficiency. In the labor market, Greece worked to improve competitiveness and foster growth. The progress of these reforms was closely monitored through rigorous internal mechanisms and robust international oversight. Domestically, the Greek government established regular reporting and auditing processes to ensure transparency and effectiveness. On the international front, the European Union (EU) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided valuable oversight, support, and technical assistance, helping Greece stay on track and make necessary adjustments.

Today, Greece's economy is demonstrating resilience and steady recovery. The country has managed to maintain economic stability by continuing to apply and adapt these reforms. Austerity measures, while challenging, were executed with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable to minimize hardships. Greece's ongoing success underscores the relevance of these reforms and the monitoring mechanisms established, which provide a valuable framework for maintaining economic health and transparency that should be taken into account to build a more prosperous economic future.

Thus, this session aims to explore how other countries can potentially benefit from such vibrant experience.



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DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What role did structural and institutional reforms play in Greece's economic recovery after the debt crisis?
2. How effective was the oversight from international bodies like the EU and IMF in guiding Greece's economic reforms and how did Greece develop its own internal monitoring mechanisms?
3. What insights from Greece's recovery can help other countries better balance economic reforms with social stability?
4. What key lessons from the Greek experience can help other countries potentially evade similar economic crises?

SPEAKERS



Nikos Vettas, PhD

General Director, the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE), & Professor, the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB)



Harry Theoharis

Member of the Hellenic Parliament for New Democracy, & Former Deputy Minister of Finance for Taxation Matters, Hellenic Republic (Greece)

MODERATOR



Abla Abdel Latif, PhD

Executive Director and Director of Research, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES)



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H.E. Rania Al-Mashat, PhD

Egyptian Minister for Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation

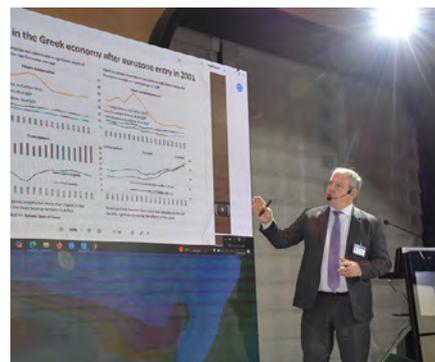
THE GREEK EXPERIENCE: KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- The oversimplification of the Greek debt crisis, coupled with critical budget imbalances, led to the downfall of eight governments and significantly delayed the initiation of necessary reforms. So it is vital not to oversimplify or underestimate the problem.
- Transparency and continuous public dialogue with various stakeholders about the problems and policies implemented are crucial to restoring confidence.
- Continuous local non-governmental (NGOs, think tanks, etc.) monitoring and evaluation are essential for assessing the impact and effectiveness of reforms and ensuring coherence.
- Even if the government is weak, the strength of independent institutions such as think tanks and universities is key.
- International institutions play an important role not only in providing finance but also in offering technical expertise and monitoring the reform agenda.
- Reforms are a continuous process, even when there are signs of success. They include institutional and cultural reforms, serious budget reforms, labor market decentralization, privatization, pensions, and tax administration reforms, as well as fiscal and monetary tightening.
- Establishing a Ministry of Coordination is necessary to ensure collaboration among different ministries, reinforcing the reform implementation process.
- The reforms have resulted in increased competition and exports by allowing SMEs to reach the global market.



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SESSION ONE

Global tourism in crisis: Navigating conflict and economic uncertainty



The global tourism sector is navigating a fragile path, facing significant challenges amid global conflicts and economic uncertainty. The ongoing war in Palestine, and now Lebanon, as well as the conflict between Russia and Ukraine have heightened concerns about regional stability, and caused disruptions in international aviation. Additionally, inflation and economic contraction in major tourism source countries have reduced demand in international travel; all casting uncertainty over the future of the industry. Egypt, a major tourism destination, is facing challenges like many others, but also holds promising opportunities, especially with the near-completion of the Grand Egyptian Museum, set to be the largest pharaonic museum in the world.



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SPEAKERS



Huw Tuckett
Executive Director, Euromic,
& Tourism Expert, UK



Haitham Nassar
General Manager,
Hilton Maadi



Tarek Sayed Tawfik, PhD
President of the International Association of
Egyptologists, & Former Director General of
the Grand Egyptian Museum



Elhamy ElZayat
Chairman and CEO,
Emeco Travel

MODERATOR



Prof. Ahmed Farouk Ghoneim
Managing Executive Director,
the Authority of the National
Museum of Egyptian Civilization



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CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EGYPT

- In 2023 and 2024, significant supply chain disruptions impacted the tourism industry, leading to heightened demand for more authentic experiences. Indeed, there's a generally optimistic outlook for market demand. A major focus is on making tourism more sustainable. Airports have become destinations in their own right, serving as the first touchpoint for tourists entering a country. They should be seen as the country's ambassadors. Corporates are slashing work travel expenses, making price a key factor. As a result, the demand is shifting from luxury tourist experiences to more affordable yet satisfying stays.
- Currently, B2B promotion is the main strategy for tourism, effectively targeting larger segments through institutions like airlines. Direct-to-consumer promotion is currently less feasible due to higher costs.
- Egypt possesses untapped potential, and the inauguration of the Grand Museum presents an excellent opportunity that should be fully leveraged. Despite the geopolitical challenges and the delayed opening of the Grand Museum, Egypt remains perceived as a safe destination by tourists, and the tourism sector continues to demonstrate resilience.
- Egypt's tourism sector faces several critical challenges that need urgent attention:
 - Delays in announcing major events (e.g., GEM)
 - Lack of diverse products to cater to various types of demand
 - Insufficient variety of hotels, particularly 3 and 4-star options
 - Limited availability of low-cost airlines
 - Deficiencies in hospitality services, including hotel capacity, motels, and related services
 - Low airport competitiveness
 - Weak B2B promotion strategies
 - Need for comprehensive promotional studies
 - Inefficient transportation system
 - Need for a revision of ticket pricing
 - Absence of a global hotel chain originating from Egypt
 - Need to expand into new tourism niches, such as wellness, conference, and culinary tourism

Addressing these issues can significantly enhance Egypt's appeal as a tourist destination.



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SESSION TWO

Geopolitical conflicts and their economic ramifications, where to?

What is the way out?



In an era marked by increasingly complex global challenges, the urgency for a unified response to geopolitical tensions has never been more apparent. Ongoing conflicts—such as those in Palestine, Ukraine, Yemen, and the South China Sea—require a concerted effort from the international community. Balancing the need to address aggressive actions while minimizing the impact on civilian populations is crucial. Additionally, the current instability of global energy markets and economic conditions underscores the need for coordinated efforts to manage these interconnected issues effectively.

Equally important is recognizing how geopolitical conflicts ripple through global stability and economic prosperity. The interconnected nature of today's world means that tensions in one region can profoundly affect economic conditions, trade dynamics, and social stability elsewhere. Addressing the broader implications, such as the effects on energy markets, supply chains, and international trade, is essential as well. Thus, this session aims to promote dialogue and collaboration for diplomatic and sustainable solutions to foster global political stability and economic prosperity.



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DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How do ongoing conflicts impact the global economy, and what mechanisms can be developed to address and mitigate these economic repercussions?
2. What roles can major powers like the USA, EU, and China among others play in facilitating conflict resolution and promoting global stability?
3. What practical solutions can be implemented to resolve ongoing conflicts, and how can global leaders ensure these solutions are effective?
4. What innovative strategies can the international community implement to not only resolve current geopolitical tensions but also create a sustainable and resilient global economic and political landscape for future generations?

SPEAKERS



Mirette Mabrouk

Senior Fellow & Director of Egypt and Horn of Africa Programme, The Middle East Institute (MEI)



Prof. David Monyae

Director, Centre for Africa-China Studies (CACs), Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations, University of Johannesburg

MODERATOR



Tarek Tawfik

Vice Chairman, Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI) & ECES Vice Chairman



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H.E. Mr. Amre Moussa

Former Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs & Former Secretary General, the Arab League



H.E. Amb. Abou Bakr Hefny

Assistant Foreign Minister for African Affairs

GLOBAL DYNAMICS AND EGYPTIAN APPROACH

- The West has lost some of its influence and is less able to provide aid, creating opportunities for countries like Egypt to play a larger role in regional issues.
- Global dynamics are shifting, with countries like China and those in the BRICS alliance gaining more power. The new generation is re-evaluating traditional opinions on many political issues, including the Palestinian case.
- There is a movement from bilateral and multilateral cooperation towards mini-lateralism and nationalism.
- Technology will play a crucial role in shaping future global powers and the rise of developing economies, particularly through integration into education and breaking the Western monopoly.
- Ongoing uncertainty and global disruptions are anticipated.
- Technology and AI pose threats to international peace and security.
- Conflicts in the Middle East have global repercussions, not just regional ones.
- Cooperation is needed to address the fragmentation and weaknesses of the global political system and its double standards.
- The “international security system” is no longer functioning efficiently.
- International political organizations struggle to form unified positions on Middle East issues due to conflicting views among members.
- Peace, security, and economic development are interdependent and cannot be achieved in isolation.
- There needs to be a balance between sanctions and economic development.
- De-dollarization is emerging as countries increasingly use their own currencies.
- These global issues significantly impact Egypt’s economic stability. Egypt plays a significant role in the region, and there is optimism about the potential for a strong Arab alliance, led by Egypt and Saudi Arabia.
- Egypt does not solely rely on “strategic relations.” Instead, it maintains ties with various countries like the US, Russia, and China, while not always aligning with their approaches or actions. Additionally, Egypt has close relations with Europe and is committed to strengthening connections with Africa, focusing on positive language and rebuilding relations on a solid foundation.



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SESSION THREE

Near-shoring, investment for export and untapped export opportunities



As global supply chains evolve, near-shoring has emerged as a pivotal strategy for major economies like the European Union, shifting focus from traditional manufacturing hubs like China to emerging markets in Africa and the Middle East. Countries such as Egypt are well-positioned to become re-export hubs, taking advantage of their geographical proximity and improving infrastructure to facilitate trade with European markets. This shift has prompted major changes in export routes, highlighting the potential of these nations to tap into new opportunities and bolster their economies through enhanced export capabilities.

As the landscape of global trade continues to transform, the ability of developing countries to effectively engage in near-shoring will be crucial for their integration into international and European markets. Investments for exports are critical for these nations aiming to penetrate the European market, especially in light of non-tariff barriers and the EU's agreements on green exports. By aligning production practices with European standards and addressing logistical challenges, these countries can effectively substitute Chinese exports and cater to rising demand in Europe. Thus, this session aims to explore how developing nations can leverage near-shoring among other strategies to enhance competitiveness in the global supply chain.

DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What key factors position Egypt as a successful re-export hub for European markets, and how can these factors strengthen its trade partnership with major economies globally?
2. How can developing countries effectively leverage their geographical advantages and align production areas with European standards to substitute for Chinese exports in European and international markets?
3. What strategies can developing countries implement to navigate non-tariff barriers and EU green export agreements, enhancing their integration into European supply chains?
4. How can developing countries attract investments aimed at export growth, and what specific opportunities does Egypt have to capitalize on in this context?



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SPEAKERS



Nikolaos Zaimis
Head of Trade, Science and Enterprise section, the European Union Delegation to Cairo



Blanca Moreno-Dodson, PhD
Senior Advisor in International Economics, Former UN Director, World Bank Manager & Lead Economist

MODERATOR



Alaa Hashim
Founder and Executive Partner, Transcendium & ECES Treasurer



Mohamed Kassem
Chairman of Expolink & CEO of World Trading Company, & ECES Secretary General



H.E. Eng. Hassan El Khatib
Egyptian Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EGYPT TO LEVERAGE ON

- Some global trade policies—especially those addressing green production—need to be adjusted to better accommodate developing countries, as they are often designed to fit the economic structures of the EU and Western nations.
- The EU has initiated several programs that Egypt and other developing countries can benefit from. One of these is the establishment of a new Commission for Mediterranean countries, aimed at increasing trade within the region. Another is the “Sustainable Investment Facilitation” system, recently adopted by the EU and proposed for implementation in other countries.
- While Egypt has long been an attractive investment hub due to its strategic location, strong renewable energy sector, and recent infrastructure developments, there is still a need for a more diversified economic structure. To achieve this, several policies should be adopted, including but not limited to: removing trade barriers, improving transportation, promoting financial inclusion, and utilizing technology to produce higher value-added products. This should be done while maintaining a balance between the roles of the public and private sectors.
- A key priority is supporting SMEs (small and medium enterprises) to enhance exports and foster capital growth. The regulatory framework for exports, particularly for SMEs, needs significant improvements
- Access to credible and qualified suppliers should be granted, allowing high-quality products to be delivered directly to the global market without the need for multiple local and international quality checks after production.



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- Increasing exports requires clear fiscal, monetary, trade, and industrial policies. Furthermore, Egypt must attract more investments, which requires: credibility, transparency, modernization and improvement of both physical and non-physical infrastructure, as well as the overall business environment
- Specific sectors with high demand in the EU—where Egypt could replace China—include fertilizers, essential oils, plastics, and chemicals. Focusing on these industries would allow Egypt to leverage its comparative advantages.
- Currently, there are three initiatives to promote Egyptian exports:
 - Invest for Export
 - The Green Corridor for Industrial Parks
 - Greening the Industry
- There is also a need to modernize the “Association Agreement” between Egypt and the EU. This update would enable Egypt to benefit from technical support and financing to transition towards a more sustainable, green economic model.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



SESSION FOUR

The vicious circle of debt – The way out for the South



The vicious circle of debt can be particularly detrimental for countries like Egypt, where efforts to stimulate growth often rely on accumulating loans. As these nations seek to invest in economic projects and social programs, they turn to international lenders for financial support. However, the changing financial conditions, including fluctuating interest rates and external economic pressures, can exacerbate the situation. As debt mounts, countries may find themselves trapped, where the cost of servicing existing loans limits their ability to invest in growth initiatives or comply with climate objectives. This accumulation of debt not only stifles economic progress but can also affect the welfare of the people.

To break free from this cycle, collaboration among various stakeholders is essential. Traditional debtor organizations like the IMF and World Bank, along with emerging debtor countries such as China, must work together to develop sustainable solutions. The involvement of the indebted countries themselves is equally crucial. Addressing the debt issue requires a collective effort to acknowledge the unique challenges faced by nations like Egypt. This session aims to explore pragmatic, effective, and fair ways for indebted countries to regain financial sovereignty, enabling them to overcome debt constraints and build a more equitable future.



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DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. In what ways have the historical actions and policies of debtor countries influenced the debt cycles of indebted nations, and what insights can be gained to foster better outcomes moving forward?
2. What roles could the IMF, other international organizations, and debtor countries play in supporting sustainable economic policies for indebted countries to overcome the debt cycle?
3. What innovative solutions can countries like Egypt pursue to break the debt cycle and achieve sustainable economic development?
4. How can traditional international financial institutions and new debtor countries like China redesign their lending practices to better support countries in avoiding unsustainable debt in the future?

SPEAKERS



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Department, International
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Prof. Franco Bruni
President, the Italian Institute
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H.E. Ahmed Galal, PhD
Former Egyptian
Minister of Finance



H.E. Mahmoud Mohieldin, PhD
UN Special Envoy on Financing
Sustainable Development



H.E. Mr. Ahmed Kouchouck
Egyptian Minister of Finance

MODERATOR



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CHALLENGES AND THE WAY OUT

- The rate of debt growth in developing countries is twice that of developed nations, with 61% of the debt coming from private creditors rather than multilateral development banks (MDBs). This suggests that the loans are not effectively aligned with developmental goals.
- Additionally, the reduced share of Paris Club countries in lending has made it more challenging for countries to attract investors, as incentives must now be sufficiently compelling.
- In Africa, debt is growing faster than GDP, indicating that the debt is not generating additional value. This is particularly concerning as more money is spent on servicing debt rather than using funds for necessary reforms—and Egypt is no exception to this trend.
- Developing countries, including Egypt, face a vicious cycle of debt, where new borrowing is used to service existing debt. This creates strong linkages between the debt stock and debt flow. To break this cycle, it is essential to manage the flow by exploring alternative funding methods.
- The current incentive structure drives debt expansion on both the demand and supply sides. Borrowers are incentivized to over-borrow, as the costs of debt tend to become more apparent only in the medium term, while creditors are motivated to lend due to high returns. Therefore, changing the incentive structure is crucial to reducing global debt.
- Fiscal consolidation, while necessary to address high fiscal deficits, often has a negative impact on growth and social development. This impact is typically overlooked in the IMF agenda. Therefore, the magnitude, speed, and composition of fiscal consolidation are crucial, as adjustments in these areas can lead to different social outcomes.



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- Achieving both growth and debt sustainability is essential to resolving the debt crisis. Structural reforms are needed to stimulate growth, which is a key condition for successful fiscal consolidation. For debt to be sustainable, it must be prioritized at the national level, with government transparency regarding loans playing a vital role in boosting lender confidence.
- Initiatives that could help alleviate the debt crisis include fostering international cooperation, revising the indicators used to monitor external debt, and launching a “Cairo Club” initiative to manage domestic debt.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



SESSION FIVE

The unfulfilled promise of SDGs



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), launched with great optimism in 2015, are currently facing the stark reality of being off track. The global community set ambitious targets for eradicating poverty, improving health, and achieving gender equality, among others. However, progress has been uneven, with many countries struggling to meet their commitments due to a combination of factors including economic setbacks, political instability, and insufficient funding. For instance, recent reports indicate that poverty rates have not only stalled but, in some regions, have even worsened, while climate change continues to escalate, threatening to derail efforts across multiple SDGs.

Addressing these setbacks underscores the need to critically reassess the feasibility of the original SDGs and realign our strategies accordingly. The ambitious targets set in 2015 now appear increasingly unrealistic within the initially set time-frame of 2030. As the 2030 deadline looms, it is evident that a more pragmatic and flexible approach is needed to achieve progress in this horizon. Thus, this session aims to explore methods of aligning emerging challenges with the SDGs.

DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How can we advance the SDG agenda in light of current global challenges, ensuring that efforts are effectively aligned with the realities faced by different countries?
2. What strategies can be implemented to resolve the imbalances in funding for the SDGs, particularly to ensure fair distribution that supports the most vulnerable regions?
3. What role does effective monitoring play in assessing progress towards the SDGs, and how can we enhance accountability and transparency in tracking these goals?
4. Are SDGs still relevant in today's context, and how can we adapt them to better address the evolving challenges faced by communities around the world?



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SPEAKERS



Vikrom Mathur, PhD
Senior Fellow, Observer
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Dina Sherif
Executive Director, Legatum
Center for Development &
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MODERATOR



Ahmed Kamaly, PhD
Associate Professor of Economics, the
American University in Egypt (AUC) &
Former Egyptian Deputy Minister for
Planning and Economic Development



Stephane Guimbert
World Bank Country Director
for Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti

FACING THE SDGs CHALLENGE

The global progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been disappointing, with 70% of the SDGs regressing and the world falling short of the 2015 target. One of the primary obstacles to achieving these goals is the limited fiscal space available to many countries, especially developing nations. Political crises have exacerbated the financial gap, which, in 2019, was estimated at \$2.5 trillion for developing countries alone.

To address these challenges, the following is needed:

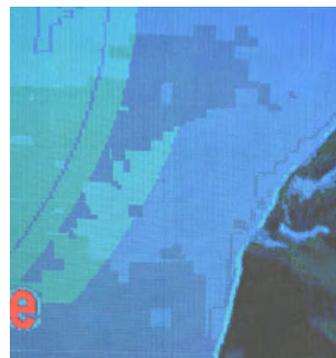
- To advance the SDGs, we must focus on achieving sustainable economic growth, prioritizing the reduction of inequality, and addressing climate change.
- Reallocate resources efficiently, make informed choices, and prioritize based on empirical evidence.
- Adopt a systems lens view to identify the root causes of problems and address them effectively.
- Enhancing the private sector's role in advancing the SDGs. This requires governments to create an enabling environment for collaboration, while also providing clear guidance on the appropriate channels and priority areas for directing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds. Additionally, fostering trust between the private sector and government is crucial, as the perception of government credibility strengthens the overall economic effort to achieve the SDGs.
- Expand the use of technology and digitization, while fostering South-South cooperation to share technology and facilitate investments between developing countries.
- Establish the principle of common but differentiated responsibility to ensure that developing countries have better access to finance and technology, enabling them to meet their specific SDG targets more effectively.



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- Setting goals related to consumption “sustainable consumption goals.”
- In that context, Egypt should maintain its efforts towards structural transformation and promote entrepreneurship to achieve its SDG targets. Additionally, focusing on social inclusion is crucial. Programs such as Takaful & Karama and Hayah Karima represent important steps in advancing this agenda.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



SESSION SIX

Increasing and Derisking Climate Finance



Increasing and de-risking climate finance presents a complex challenge, particularly for developing nations facing significant economic uncertainties. While frameworks like the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), aim to enhance transparency, they often fail to address the underlying economic risks that deter investment in climate initiatives. Investors are understandably cautious about committing resources without effective strategies to mitigate potential losses, making de-risking a central issue rather than a secondary consideration. This reality prompts a closer examination of how to create an environment where investment in climate solutions is perceived as less risky, thereby unlocking essential capital for sustainable development.

The roles of the EU, USA, along with other global powers are pivotal, merely extending financial contributions to serving as catalysts for frameworks that facilitate greater investment flows. While discussions often focus on financial aid, the potential for developed nations to provide technical expertise and innovative solutions deserves attention. There's a critical opportunity to explore how countries in the Global North, given their historical responsibility, can engage with the Global South in ways that genuinely support climate finance while addressing economic vulnerabilities. This exploration is vital for understanding the intricate nature of climate finance and the creative approaches necessary to overcome existing barriers. Thus, this session aims to illuminate these dynamics and foster a deeper understanding of collaborative strategies for enhancing climate finance.



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DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What are the key economic barriers that developing nations face in attracting climate investment, and how can these barriers be systematically addressed?
2. In what ways can developed countries effectively transfer innovative technologies and expertise to enhance climate finance initiatives in the Global South, especially given the historical responsibility of such nations to contributing to the current climate situation?
3. How can we design public-private partnerships that not only mitigate risks but also align the interests of investors and local communities in climate projects?
4. What mechanisms can be established to facilitate genuine collaboration between the Global North and South, ensuring that climate finance efforts address both immediate needs and long-term economic resilience?

SPEAKERS



Ian Mitchell

Senior Policy Fellow and Co-director of the Europe Programme at the Center for Global Development



Ahmed El Beltagui PhD

Climate, Energy and Transport Sector Manager Delegation of the European Union to Egypt

MODERATOR



Hussein Choucri

Chairman and Managing Director, HC Securities & Investment, & ECES Board Member



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Mark Ahern

Lead Economist for Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti, the World Bank



Prof. Jorge Chediek

Professor, National Foreign Service Institute, Foreign Ministry, Argentina, Professor, Catholic University, Argentina



Ibrahima Cheikh Diong

Special Representative of the President of BADEA on ESGs, Former UN-Assistant Secretary General (ASG), & Director General, the African Risk Capacity (ARC) Group



Nathalie Delapalme

CEO, Mo Ibrahim Foundation



H.E. Yasmine Fouad, PhD

Egyptian Minister of Environment

CLIMATE FINANCE GAP IN AFRICA- HOW TO LEVERAGE CLIMATE FINANCE FOR EGYPT

- African countries face barriers in accessing climate finance funds at the same level as other regions. This discrepancy hampers the ability of African nations to implement effective climate action.
- For African countries, adaptation is more pressing than mitigation. However, many current climate action plans prioritize mitigation over adaptation, failing to address the immediate challenges these countries face.
- Access to energy is a fundamental issue for Africa. Thus building climate-friendly, sustainable infrastructure, and promoting sustainable agriculture are key steps towards economic growth and climate resilience.
- African governments are not allocating sufficient budgets for climate change initiatives. Changing their perception of the importance of climate change is crucial. Effective climate finance should focus on both improving financial management and ensuring higher-quality investments.
- Private Sector Engagement: Private sector involvement is essential to reduce reliance on public funds for climate action. Public-private partnerships can be instrumental in raising funds for climate projects, with a tailored, case-by-case approach to suit different national contexts.



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- The performance of climate projects directly influences investor confidence and funding decisions. African nations should prioritize the quality of climate projects rather than focusing on the quantity, ensuring they are well-managed and impactful.
- If carbon taxes are to be implemented in countries of the global south, they should take into account their economic status. These taxes must be designed to facilitate the transition to a low-carbon economy, with the revenues reinvested into climate change initiatives, especially in developing countries.
- Green bonds, alongside mechanisms like World Bank funding and guarantee systems, are crucial to deepening climate investment in Africa. These financial instruments can provide the necessary capital to scale up climate action.
- Attracting private investment in Egypt's climate sector requires:
 - Access to reliable information
 - Certainty about the business environment
 - Government incentives to encourage investment
 - Bankability of projects to ensure financial viability
- Platforms like Egypt's Nexus of Water, Food, and Energy (NWFE) are essential for coordinating efforts across sectors and driving integrated climate action. These initiatives can bring together stakeholders and resources to tackle climate challenges in a holistic way.
- The private sector and investors must be provided with clear guidelines on how to implement projects that align with climate change goals. This ensures that investments are both financially viable and environmentally sustainable.
- It's not just about funding—efficiency in institutional regulations is critical. Misallocation of funds for climate action can undermine progress. Therefore, prioritizing sectors or projects with the highest urgency and potential for impact is essential.
- Water scarcity remains a major issue for Egypt, requiring urgent action to secure sustainable water resources and ensure resilience in the face of climate change.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



SESSION SEVEN

The Youth Bulge in Africa



The youth bulge in Africa presents both remarkable opportunities and formidable challenges for the continent and the global community. This demographic shift can drive economic growth, innovation, and social change, offering countries the potential for a dynamic workforce that enhances productivity and creativity. However, if not effectively managed, it can lead to high unemployment rates, social unrest, and increased pressure on resources, as governments struggle to provide adequate education and job opportunities for an ever-growing youth population.

For the world, particularly developed countries, Africa's youth bulge represents a potential reservoir of talent and labor that could address skill shortages and support global markets. Nevertheless, challenges such as migration pressures and geopolitical instability may arise if young people do not find opportunities at home. The integration of technology and artificial intelligence holds promise for enhancing educational access and vocational training, thereby enabling youth to thrive in a competitive global landscape. Thus, this session aims to explore the implications of Africa's youth bulge and the pathways to harness its potential.

DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What opportunities and challenges does Africa's youth bulge present, and how can we strike a balance to benefit both the continent and the global community?
2. What innovative strategies can local governments adopt to provide meaningful job opportunities and educational resources for their young populations?
3. How can international organizations along with developed nations effectively partner with African countries to tackle the challenges of the youth bulge and support sustainable development?
4. How can we address the migration concerns among Africans, particularly the youth, who seek opportunities in Western countries, especially in Europe?
5. How can emerging technologies and artificial intelligence reshape education and employment for young people in Africa, and what challenges might arise in this process?



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SPEAKERS



Pato Kelesitse
Founder, Sustain267
& Host, Sustain267 Podcast



Alexander Tsado
Director, Alliance4ai

MODERATOR



Sherif Kamel, PhD
Dean of the School of Business,
the American University in
Cairo (AUC)



Aziz Ajbilou, PhD
Professor, the Faculty of
Governance, Economics and Social
Sciences (FGSES), Mohammed VI
Polytechnic University (UM6P)



Mohamed Lamine El Dhaoui, PhD
Senior Consultant, Industrial Economist,
SMEs and Value Chains Specialist,
Former Director, United Nations for
Industrial Development Organization



H.E. Nabila Makram, PhD
Former Egyptian Minister of
State for Migration and Affairs of
Egyptians Abroad, & Head of the
Technical Secretariat of the Board
of Trustees, the National Alliance
for Civil Developmental Work

THE YOUTH BULGE: CHANGING PERSPECTIVE

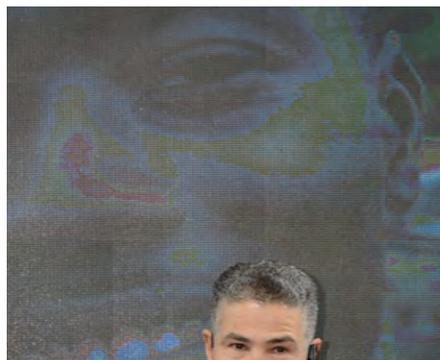
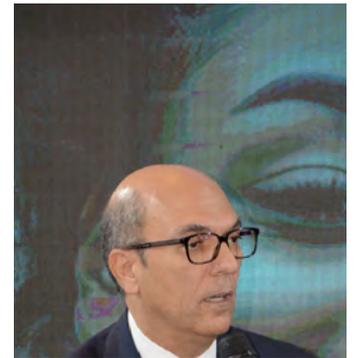
- In Africa, 60% of the population is under the age of 25, with a median age of 19 years. In the coming years, Africa will have more people entering the labor force than all other continents combined. However, this youth population faces significant challenges related to employment and migration. While young Africans are ambitious and full of potential, it is crucial to create opportunities within the continent to harness this potential and mitigate brain drain.
- Youth are digital natives, and hence they can bring unique perspectives that drive innovation. By focusing on higher-value sectors, these perspectives can be leveraged to foster national prosperity and growth.
- African youth are well-aware of the region's challenges and have viable solutions. However, to effectively address these issues, these solutions must be integrated into comprehensive national strategies, with greater cooperation between countries to boost economic development.
- To enable Africa's growing youth population to contribute to their economies, several key actions are needed:
 - Focus on education, including upskilling and raising awareness.
 - Leveraging technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), to enable job creation and foster independent learning among youth.
 - Improving the business environment and access to resources for young entrepreneurs.
 - Promoting youth-driven entrepreneurship as a means to combat unemployment and address business challenges with innovative solutions.



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- A clearer articulation and evaluation of government initiatives aimed at youth employment and empowerment.
- There is a need to shift perceptions both within the youth population and globally:
 - Encouraging youth to recognize the opportunities available to them within their own countries.
 - Shifting the global perception of Africa and its youth, emphasizing their potential and contribution to development.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



SESSION EIGHT

Asia, Middle East, EU Connectivity- Egypt's positioning



The growing connectivity between Asia, the Middle East, and the European Union represents a transformative opportunity for Egypt, positioning it as a vital hub in global trade and logistics. This connectivity offers numerous benefits, including enhanced economic cooperation, increased foreign investment, and improved access to diverse markets. However, it also presents challenges, such as the need for significant infrastructure upgrades, regional political instability, and competition from other emerging trade routes.

Ongoing initiatives, such as China's Belt and Road Initiative and many others, highlight the potential for Egypt to leverage its strategic location, particularly through the Suez Canal and its economic zone, which could become a key corridor for trade between Asia and Europe. The Suez Canal not only facilitates maritime transit but also has the potential for the development of logistics and industrial zones that can attract international businesses. In this new paradigm of connectivity, Egypt stands to benefit significantly, but it must also navigate the complexities of regional dynamics and infrastructural demands. Thus, this session aims to explore Egypt's strategic positioning in this evolving landscape and how to harness Egypt's strategic location to achieve a more integrated global economy.



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DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How can Egypt leverage its strategic position to actively participate in ongoing initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative among others?
2. What strategies can Egypt pursue to enhance its position and aim for a new paradigm in international trade and logistics?
3. In what ways can the Suez Canal and associated new projects be developed to maintain its competitive edge against emerging trade routes?
4. In what ways can Egypt revolutionize its trade landscape to attract global investment, transforming the Suez Canal economic zone into an international business hub?

SPEAKERS



Abir Leheta
CEO, Egytrans



M. Sherine El Naggar
Chairman, Naggar Shipping
Company, & International
Expert for Connectivity

MODERATOR



Abla Abdel Latif, PhD
Executive Director and
Director of Research,
ECES



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Mohamed Abdel Gawad Allam, PhD
Vice Chairman (Deputy Minister) for
Investment and Promotion at Egypt's Suez
Canal Economic Zone (SCZONE)



Prof. Harsh Pant
Vice President for Studies
and Foreign Policy, Observer
Research Foundation (ORF)

EGYPT'S CONNECTIVITY: HOW TO REACH FULL POTENTIAL

There are 4 main global strategic roads:

- The Belt: Refers to China's road, with a transit time of approximately 16 to 20 days.
- The North-South Corridor: A key route for trade and transportation.
- Jebel Ali – Haifa Corridor: Connecting important ports in the Middle East.
- The Egyptian Golden Corridor: A pivotal route through Egypt, enhancing its significance in global trade

There is a macro vision and a micro vision for Egypt's role in global trade. The macro vision highlights the "Golden Road" and positions the Suez Canal as a key economic zone. On the micro level, the focus is on the Suez Canal Road itself, which plays a vital part in local and regional transportation, and Egypt has potential in both as follows:

A. The Golden Road

- Egypt plays a crucial role in the modern road network. There are numerous roads connecting the east and west, but they are often regarded as partial corridors rather than full transportation belts. China's Belt is considered only a partial belt, but the "One Belt, One Road" initiative forms a golden corridor that passes through Egypt. The country is unique in being the only location recognized as both a road and a belt within this global initiative.
- Egypt is fully prepared to launch this belt, offering advanced infrastructure, modern facilities, a comprehensive transport network, and state-of-the-art port facilities. These resources position Egypt as a key player in supporting and facilitating global trade.
- To achieve the "Golden Road", Egypt needs to focus on 4 elements:
 - Place: Strategic location and developed infrastructure.
 - People: A strong focus on youth, universities, and education to build human capital.



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- Process: Efficient systems and frameworks to support growth and operations.
- Publicity: Effective promotion and visibility to attract global attention and investment.

B. The Suez Canal Zone

- The area has long attracted international attention, with around 23,000 ships passing through the canal annually. Trade agreements with various countries provide customs exemptions, further boosting foreign investment.
- The development of the Suez Canal Zone not only enhances Egypt's logistics sector through revenues generated by the canal itself, but also improves social infrastructure, particularly through new road projects that increase connectivity between different regions of the country.
- Key drivers of development in the zone include business interest, facilitation efforts, and investment incentives, which focus on supporting industrial zones and ports. These are seen as crucial for promoting the region's growth.
- The zone is the main hub for green hydrogen industry supporting the whole supply chain, with a strong focus on integrating renewable energy sources from outside the zone.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



SESSION NINE

Digitalization and Inclusive Growth



Digitalization has the potential of playing a transformative role in shaping inclusive growth, and India's experience offers rich insights for other developing nations. The country has leveraged technology to enhance access to essential services like education, healthcare, and financial resources, significantly empowering marginalized communities. Initiatives such as the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) have improved transparency and efficiency in welfare distribution, ensuring that aid reaches those in need. Additionally, the rise of mobile payment systems and online platforms has fostered entrepreneurship, allowing individuals and small businesses to thrive in a more connected economy.

As we look at the experiences of countries like Egypt, it appears that while there are major initiatives to enhance digitalization in the economy, the full potential of a highly digitalized economy is yet to be realized. The Indian model illustrates how technology can bridge gaps and create opportunities for a broader segment of the population. Thus, this discussion aims to open up avenues for exploring how other developing nations can draw from these lessons to cultivate their own inclusive growth strategies. By sharing insights and experiences, we can better understand the complexities of digitalization and its impact on economic development across diverse contexts.

DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What lessons can developing nations learn from India's approach to digitalization and inclusive growth?
2. What institutional changes are necessary for effective digitalization?
3. How can we achieve a balance between national security and digitalization?
4. In what ways can technology support entrepreneurship in developing countries?
5. How might emerging technologies, such as AI and blockchain, transform economic opportunities for underserved communities and drive inclusive growth in the future?



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SPEAKERS



Lorraine Porciuncula
Co-Founder and Executive Director,
The Datasphere Initiative



Reem Baggash
Deputy Managing Director,
World Governments Summit

MODERATOR



H.E. Magued Osman, PhD
CEO and Managing Director,
Bassera, Former Egyptian
Minister of Communications
and Information Technology



Anirban Sarma
Director, Digital Societies Initiative,
Observer Research Foundation (ORF)

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

- Nearly two-thirds of the world is now connected to the internet, However, there is still significant imbalances that contribute to the digital divide. These imbalances are reflected in limited meaningful connectivity, the need for foundational and technical digital literacy, and the concentration of technology investments in major countries like the US and China.
- Digital transformation is not the responsibility of a single governmental institution; it requires collaboration across sectors, including the private sector. This is particularly relevant to Egypt's digitalization efforts.
- Investments in digital infrastructure should prioritize inclusive growth rather than focusing solely on physical infrastructure.
- One of the main challenges in digital transformation is adaptability. Governments recognize the importance of digitalization, the need for training, and the requirement for collaboration to achieve successful digital transitions. A multi-dimensional, collaborative approach between governments helps ensure they are working towards shared goals, facilitates the exchange of best practices, and enables policy discussions.
- Sandboxes are an effective way for governments to enhance their digitization strategies. These spaces allow for the testing of new digital solutions and technologies. The Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) uses sandboxes, as do industries like aviation, enabling the comparison of new technologies with traditional frameworks. This approach helps create more efficient, inclusive systems across various sectors.



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- Digital literacy and digitization should go hand in hand, both in organizations and educational institutions. Without this, many graduates will be unprepared for the labor market. Programs like Hayah Karima, which include internet access, aim to bridge this gap. However, access to the internet remains limited for lower social classes, raising concerns about their digital literacy. Although digitization has been increasingly integrated into the Egyptian educational system, it has not yet reached a stage of full dependence.
- Technology regulations are critical, but innovation and regulation should not be siloed, as this could hinder progress in both areas.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS





APPENDIX: SPEAKERS' BIOGRAPHIES

(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

A



Abir Leheta
CEO, Egytrans

Abir Leheta was elected as Chairman and CEO of Egytrans, the leading national transport and logistics provider, in 2015, thereby becoming the first woman to hold this position in the history of the company. She has continued as Chief Executive Officer since April 2022 with the implementation of corporate governance best practices separating board and executive leadership roles. Abir is also a Non-Executive Board Member of Alexandria Container and Cargo Handling Co. (ACCH).

Recognized by Forbes as one of the Middle East's 100 Power Businesswomen in 2020, 2023 and 2024, Abir's record of transformative leadership is demonstrated through successfully implementing programs and services that have significantly changed the company.

Abir holds a B.Sc. in Computer Science with a Minor in Business Administration from the American University in Cairo. She also has certifications in Quality and Organizational Excellence from the American Society for Quality (ASQ), Risk Management from the Institute of Risk Management (IRM) and Board Director Certification from the Egyptian Institute of Directors (EIoD) and IFC.



Abbla Abdel Latif, PhD
Executive Director and
Director of Research,
The Egyptian Center for
Economic Studies (ECES)

Dr. Abbla Abdel Latif is currently the Executive Director and Director of Research of The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES). She was the Chair of the Presidential Advisory Council for Economic Development for eight years until last September 2024.

She is an Egyptian national with a B.A. in economics from the American University in Cairo (AUC) (with highest honors) and an M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, California. She was a Professor of Economics at the American University in Cairo (AUC) for over twenty years, she has been selected to be a Life Time Research Fellow at the Economic Research Forum (ERF) and has authored a large number of publications in class A internationally refereed Journals. She also has very highly expertise in all aspects of SDGs.

Her professional experience is also extensive, starting from being the Policy Unit Manager in the Industrial Modernisation Centre (IMC) to being the Minister of Industry's Advisor shortly after the 25th of January Revolution and until 2015 when she became the Chair of the Presidential Advisory Council for Economic Development. She was also a Member of the Central Bank of Egypt's Coordinating Council, and a Board Member of the National Bank of Egypt – for over six years, the first female in this position. She has also been a senior international expert in several international organizations.



Abou Bakr Hefny
Assistant Foreign Minister
for African Affairs

Ambassador Abou Bakr M. Hefny Mahmoud is a distinguished diplomat with a wealth of experience in international relations, and multilateral diplomacy. Born on November 21, 1962, in Cairo, Ambassador Mahmoud embarked on his diplomatic journey in 1985 when he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt. Throughout his illustrious career, he held various positions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of State for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of International Cooperation, and Egyptian Diplomatic Missions abroad, showcasing diverse work scopes. With a master's degree in African studies from the University of Paris I-Sorbonne, Ambassador Mahmoud's expertise in diplomacy spans across continents. From serving as a Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs to holding key ambassadorial roles in countries such as Morocco, Ethiopia, Uruguay, and Paraguay, Ambassador Hefny has been instrumental in fostering international cooperation and strengthening bilateral relations. His contributions to the field of diplomacy extend beyond traditional roles, including serving as the President of the Board of Governors of the Anna Lindh Foundation and leading initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean region. Ambassador Mahmoud's dedication to multilateral cooperation was exemplified during his tenure as Egypt's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission to Africa, where he played a pivotal role in shaping Africa's strategic partnerships and advancing regional development initiatives. With a profound understanding of global affairs and a commitment to fostering harmonious relations between nations. Ambassador Hefny is fluent in Arabic, French, and English, with a good knowledge of Italian and Spanish.



Ahmed El Beltagui, PhD
Climate, Energy and
Transport Sector Manager
Delegation of the European
Union to Egypt

Dr. Ahmed El Beltagui has a longstanding experience in the Energy cooperation. He started his career in British Gas before moving to the Swiss Bank Corporation, the French Ministry of Finance, Directorate of international Relations, and the EU.

He is currently managing the Climate, Energy and Transport portfolio at the Cooperation of the Delegation of the European Union to Egypt. Dr. Ahmed El Beltagui has several majors in engineering, business law and economics and has a Ph.D in applied economics.



Ahmed Farouk Ghoneim, PhD
Managing Executive Director, the
Authority of the National Museum
of Egyptian Civilization

Ahmed Farouk Ghoneim is currently a Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University. He is a research fellow at the Economic Research Forum for Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey (ERF) as well as at Center for Social and Economic Research (CASE) in Poland. He works as a consultant to several international and national organizations including the World Bank, WTO, UNCTAD, UNDP, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). He holds a Ph.D. in Economics and his special interests in research include mainly trade policy, trade in services, regional trade integration, the multilateral trading system, the World Trade Organization, the economics of Intellectual Property Rights, institutional economics, law and economics, and political economy in which he has published widely. He held different policy oriented positions, among which was an advisor on foreign trade issues to the Minister of Foreign Trade, advisor to the Minister of Industry on foreign trade issues and international agreements, and advisor to the Minister of Planning and Economic Development on trade policy issues.



Ahmed Galal, PhD
Former Egyptian
Minister of Finance

Dr. Galal was Egypt's Finance Minister between July 2013 and February 2014 and the ERF Managing Director from 2007 to 2016. Previously, he worked for the World Bank for 18 years where he conducted research and provided policy advice to governments in several regions.

While on leave from the Bank (2000-2006), he was the Executive Director and Director of Research of the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES). Galal authored or co-authored more than dozen books, including Welfare Consequences of Selling Public Enterprises and The Road Not Traveled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa. He also authored several journal articles and book chapters. In 2004, he was awarded the prestigious regional prize for Economic and Social Sciences by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences. Galal holds a PhD in economics from Boston University.



Ahmed Kamaly, PhD
Associate Professor of Economics,
the American University in Egypt
(AUC) & Former Egyptian Deputy
Minister for Planning and Economic
Development

Ahmed Kamaly is Associate Professor of Economics at the American University in Cairo. He joined AUC in 2002 after receiving his PhD from the University of Maryland. Before joining AUC, Ahmed Kamaly was a visiting researcher in the International Policy Research Institute in Washington, DC and a research coordinator in the Economic Research Forum.

Ahmed Kamaly has served as the economic advisor of the General Authority of Investment and Free Zones (GAFI) of Egypt as well as a senior advisor of the Board of Trustees of GAFI. He was also an advisor at the World Bank and a visiting professor at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University.

Currently, he serves as the director of the Egyptian National Contact Point associated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). He is also a research associate with the Economic Research Forum and a member of Lahore Journal of Economics editorial board.

He holds both a BA and an MA in Economics from AUC in 1991 and 1995 respectively and a PhD in Economics from the University of Maryland in 2002.



Ahmed Kouchouk
Egyptian Minister of Finance

Mr. Ahmed Kouchouk was appointed the Minister of Finance of Egypt in July 2024. He served as the Vice Minister of Finance for Fiscal Policies and institutional Reform from March 2016 to July 2024. Since then, he has been playing a leading role in planning and implementing Egypt's macroeconomic and fiscal policies and reforms. He has also been the chief negotiator and Government focal point with the IMF since 2016.

Mr. Ahmed Kouchouk serves as Egypt's non-resident Executive Director at the Asian International Infrastructure Bank Board (AIIB) for the past 7-years. Additionally, he leads Egypt's inter-ministerial team managing the annual economic dialogue with the EU. He is currently a board member at the Monetary-Fiscal Coordination Council, the Arab African Investment Bank, Talaat Mostafa Holding, Egypt National Training Academy, National Defense Council, Heliopolis for Housing Development Company, Electricity Utility and Consumer Protection Regulatory Body, Misr Phosphate Company, the Egyptian Central Depository and Registry Company, as well as the Urban Development Economic Authority.

He earned his master's degree in public policy from Harvard Kennedy School of Government in 2010 and a master's degree in economics from York University in the United Kingdom in 2002. He also had a B.S., in Economics in 1999 from the American University in Cairo.



Alaa Hashim

Founder and Executive Partner, Transcendium, & ECES Treasurer

Alaa Hashim is a co-founder and executive partner at Transcendium, a boutique management services firm focused on large-scale business transformations. He is also the chairman of Delicious Inc. and owner of the local coffee shop chain, Cilantro Café. Mr. Hashim serves on several boards, including Giza Seeds & Herbs, CACC Cargolinx, and B-Tech. He has a background in mathematics and has previously served in multiple roles in the industry, rising to co-CEO of MAC Carpet. He is also involved in various committees and organizations, including the Industry Committee at the AmCham Egypt, the Egypt-US Business Council, and Educate Me. Mr. Hashim teaches Business Planning and Strategy at the American University in Cairo and serves on its Dean's Strategic Advisory Board.



Alex Segura-Ubierno

Senior Resident Representative Middle East and Central Asia Department, International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Mr. Alex Segura-Ubierno has been the Senior Resident Representative of the International Monetary Fund in Egypt since October 2023. Prior to that he was a Strategic Communications Advisor in the Communications Department of the IMF. He has also been Advisor in the African Department where he had been mission chief for Cabo Verde, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Mozambique, as well as Resident Representative in Senegal, The Gambia and Mozambique. Earlier in his career Mr. Segura-Ubierno had been Deputy Division Chief in FAD, mission chief for Ecuador and senior economist for Brazil (WHD). Mr. Segura-Ubierno is the author of *The Political Economy of the Welfare State in Latin America* (Cambridge University Press) and co-author of *Good Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa. Opportunities and Lessons*, among other publications. He holds Bachelor and Master's degrees in both Economics and Political Science from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and a PhD, with distinction, from Columbia University.



Alexander Tsado

Director, Alliance4ai

For the past decade, Alex Tsado has championed initiatives making AI cheaper and accessible for innovators worldwide. He deployed the first Nvidia AI GPUs to the largest cloud providers globally, and now focuses on putting Africa on the AI innovation table. He is working with key African governments to operationalize their AI strategies and establish large-scale AI clusters within Africa.



Amre Moussa

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Former Secretary General, League of Arab States

Chairman of the High-Level Advisory Council of the High Representative for the United Nations Alliance of Civilization, and former foreign minister of Egypt, former Permanent Representative of Egypt to the U.N and former Secretary General of the League of Arab States. Moussa was elected chairman of the 50 member Constituent Committee to amend the constitution in 2014. He was chairman and member of the panel of the wise of the African Union, and was elected chairman of the board of trustees of the Nile University, member of the board of trustees of the British University in Egypt (BUE) as well as member of the board of the Library of Alexandria. Mr. Moussa also serves as a member of the boards of the Sulaimania American University in Kurdistan, Iraq, and Nizami Ganjavi international center, in Azerbaijan. He was awarded the Order of the Nile from Egypt, the Order of the Two Niles from the Sudanese Republic, the Supreme Order of the Renaissance from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, a high order from the State of Qatar, the rank of Commander First Class of the Royal Order of the Polar Star of Sweden, in addition to orders and decorations from Brazil, Argentina, Germany, Ecuador and Venezuela.



Anirban Sarma

Director, Digital Societies Initiative, Observer Research Foundation (ORF)

Anirban Sarma is Deputy Director of ORF Kolkata and a Senior Fellow at ORF's Centre for New Economic Diplomacy. He is also Chair of the Think20 Task Force on 'Our Common Digital Future'. Anirban's research focuses on the use of technology for sustainable development, the digital economy, the media, and international cybersecurity cooperation. In the tech-for-development space, his research has explored issues around online safety, the future of work, digital public infrastructure, data for development, digital health, cleantech, and women's empowerment and inclusion, among other areas.

Anirban was formerly the Chief International Outreach and Communications Officer at the National Digital Library of India, a flagship project of the Ministry of Education. He earlier served at UNESCO for over eight years, designing and managing UNESCO's initiatives on ICTs, access to information and media development across South Asia. He has also worked at Weber Shandwick, a global public affairs agency, supporting projects for leading clients at the firm's Centre of Excellence. In 2007, Anirban was awarded the Inlaks Scholarship to pursue a second master's degree in media and communications at the London School of Economics and Political Science, from where he graduated with a Distinction the following year. He was earlier a double gold medallist at Jadavpur University in Kolkata.



Aziz Ajbilou, PhD

Professor at the Faculty of Governance, Economics and Social Sciences (FGSES), Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P)

With an expertise in statistics, applied economics and demographics, Prof. Ajbilou has an extensive practical experience related to public policies from numerous leadership positions he held within the public sector. He was Secretary General of the Ministry of General Affairs and Governance between 2013 and 2019, and Secretary General of the department of governance and General Affairs, Ministry of Economics and Finance (2019-2022).

He also served as Director of Studies, Cooperation and Legislation in the Social Economy at the Ministry delegated to the Head of Government in charge of general affairs and governance.

Prof. Ajbilou was also the Director of the Center for Demographic Studies and Research. Prior to that, he was a professor at the National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics (INSEA).

He also led various projects in cooperation with international organizations such as UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, OECD and the World Bank. His work covered a wide range of topics, namely Statistics, Demography, Social Economy, Governance, Social Protection, Poverty, Publics Policies, etc.

Prof. Ajbilou is a laureate from the National Institute of Statistic and Applied Economy (INSEA-Rabat) and PhD graduate in demography from the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium.

B



Blanca Moreno-Dodson, PhD

Senior Advisor in International Economics, Former UN Director, World Bank Manager and Lead Economist

Blanca Moreno-Dodson holds a Doctorate (Ph.D.) and a Diplome D'Etudes Approfondies in International Economics and Finance from the University of Aix-Marseille, France, and a Graduate Degree in Economics from the University Autonomous of Madrid, Spain. She also earned Executive Education Certificates on Growth and Development, and Public Enterprise Management from Harvard University, Kennedy School of Business, USA. She is fluent in Spanish, French, English, and Portuguese.

She started her career as a Robert Shuman scholar at the European Parliament and as junior economist at the European Commission, before joining the World Bank Group. She worked as Economist at various positions (Junior, Senior and Lead) in Washington DC and was later appointed as the Manager of the World Bank office in Marseille France (Center for Mediterranean Integration), before becoming a Director in the United Nations (UN Office for Project Services).

She has over thirty years of professional experience in international development, including several assignments as World Bank economist with global, regional and country responsibilities, including in the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia (China, India, and Indonesia).

D



David Monyae, PhD

Director for the Centre for Africa-China Studies (CACS), Associate Professor of Political Science and International Relations, University of Johannesburg

Professor David Monyae is the Director of the Centre for Africa-China Studies (CACS) and an Associate Professor of Political Science & International Relations at the University of Johannesburg. With a background in international relations and foreign policy, he obtained his PhD from the University of Witwatersrand. Prof. Monyae's extensive experience includes roles such as Section Manager for International Relations Policy Analysis at the South African Parliament and Policy Analyst at the Development Bank Southern Africa (DBSA). At DBSA, he conducted research on Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa, focusing on infrastructure investment opportunities. Prof. Monyae has represented the DBSA on major infrastructure projects across the continent. He has also participated in academic delegations to meetings of the India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum and the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) summits. With nine years of lecturing experience at the University of Witwatersrand, Prof. Monyae is a prolific author and respected political analyst, frequently contributing to national and international media outlets.



Dina Sherif

Executive Director, Legatum Center for Development & Entrepreneurship at MIT
Senior Lecturer, Sloan School of Management

Ms. Dina H. Sherif is the Executive Director of the Legatum Center for Development & Entrepreneurship at MIT and a Senior Lecturer at the Sloan School of Management. With over 20 years of experience in sustainable development, corporate sustainability, youth engagement, social entrepreneurship, and women's economic inclusion, she is interested in the role of the private sector in sustainable development. She founded her own social enterprise, Ahead of the Curve, in 2012 and is a Senior Advisor to Ashoka. Dina previously held the Willard Brown Chair for International Business at the American University in Cairo and was a founding director of the Center for Entrepreneurship and the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement. She has published several works, including a book and reports on philanthropy and responsible business practices in the Arab region.

E



Elhamy El-Zayat
Chairman and CEO,
Emeco Travel

Mr. Elhamy El-Zayat started his career in the travel business as a Sales Representative with Pan America World Airways. Few years later, he started Emeco Travel and became the GSA of PAN AM. Through the 35 years, he expanded his business, for Emeco group which is involved in tourism transport, Airline GSAs, Nile Cruising and hotels ownership. He was the Chairman of Euomic, the leading consortium for MICE Business for 9 years. He served on the board of Egyptian Travel Agents Association for 12 years and was sharing this Association for 2 terms of 3 years each. He became Chairman of the Egyptian Tourism Federation in 2002 till 2005 and from 2012 till 2016 and he is serving this second term. He was appointed as member of the 50th persons committee drafting the new Egyptian Constitution. He was also the Honorary Consul General of New Zealand for 9 years at the end of which he received the Award of Merit from Queen Elisabeth the Second in 2007, becoming the second none New Zealander to receive such a recognition. Elhamy El-Zayat is presently serving as member of the board of the Egyptian Holding Company for Tourism and Cinema, the Egyptian Holding Company for Egypt Airports and the Media City Company for Hotels. He is also a member of the General Assembly of the Holding Company of EGYPTAIR. He is the author of many articles related to the tourism industry and has been lecturing all over the world. He is a tennis player and reads a lot about history and politics. He is fluent in French, English and Spanish beside Arabic his mother tongue.

F



Franco Bruni
President, the Italian Institute for
International Political Studies (ISPI)

Franco Bruni is Emeritus Professor at the Department of Economics of Bocconi University, where he was full professor of International Monetary Theory and Policy and member of the University's Board of Directors. He studied at Bocconi University and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

At Bocconi, he is a Fellow of the Institute for European Policymaking. He is an Honorary Member of the Société Universitaire Européenne de Recherches Financières (Suerf), which he chaired until 2000. He is the Italian member of the European Shadow Financial Regulatory Committee. He was Vice President of the UniCredit & Universities Foundation. In the context of the Italian G20, he chaired for several years the T20 task force on international financial architecture.

Since 2022, Professor Bruni is member of the Board of Directors of Banca Sella Holding. He has been member of the board of several companies including: Saipem (1998-2005), Unicredit Banca Mobiliare (2000-2007), Pirelli (2005-2014), and Mediaset (2015-2018).

H



Harry Theoharis
Member of the Hellenic Parliament
for New Democracy, & Former
Deputy Minister of Finance for
Taxation Matters, Hellenic Republic

Mr. Harry Theoharis was first elected in 2015 and on December 18, 2018, he joined the New Democracy party. Mr. Theoharis holds a MEng (Hon) in software engineering—first class from Imperial College, London, and has held high-ranking positions in companies of the private sector in Greece and abroad. He has also worked in start-up companies. During 2011-2012, Mr. Theoharis served as secretary general for information systems and he is known for introducing new digital services to assist the public, helping reduce bureaucracy and its resulting costs.

Mr. Theoharis was Minister of Tourism from 2019 to 2021 and the Parliamentary Spokesperson of New Democracy political party at the Hellenic Parliament from 2021 to 2023.

In the national elections of May and June 2023, he was re-elected Member of Parliament with New Democracy political party and on June 27, 2023, Mr. Theoharis was appointed by the Prime Minister Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis as Deputy Minister of Finance of Greece for Tax Policy.

With the recent government reshuffle in June 2024, Mr. Harry Theoharis continues to perform his duties as a Member of Parliament. He is known for his active participation in the political scene and continues to work on representing the citizens of the Southern Sector in the Greek Parliament.



Harsh Pant
Vice President for Studies and
Foreign Policy, Observer Research
Foundation (ORF)

Professor Harsh V. Pant is Vice President – Studies and Foreign Policy at Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi. He is a Professor of International Relations with King's India Institute at King's College London. He is also Director (Honorary) of Delhi School of Transnational Affairs at Delhi University.

Professor Pant has been a Visiting Professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore; a Visiting Professor at Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi; a Visiting Fellow at the Center for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania; a Visiting Scholar at the Center for International Peace and Security Studies, McGill University; a Non-Resident Fellow with the Wadhvani Chair in US-India Policy Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC; and an Emerging Leaders Fellow at the Australia-India Institute, University of Melbourne.

Professor Pant writes regularly for various Indian and international media outlets including the Japan Times, the Wall Street Journal, the National (UAE), the Hindustan Times, and the Telegraph.



Hassan El Khatib

Egyptian Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade

Hassan El Khatib, the Egyptian Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade, brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his role. With a career spanning over 35 years, he has made significant contributions to private equity, investment management and corporate governance. El Khatib currently serves as a non-executive Board Member of the Central Bank of Egypt and has served as an Independent Board Member of the Sovereign Fund of Egypt from 2019 to 2023. His commitment to economic development is exemplified by his involvement with the Egyptian Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Committee.

From 2014 to 2023, he served as Managing Director Equity at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), managing a portfolio valued at \$8-10 billion. He oversaw direct and quasi-equity investments across 38 countries, achieving successful exits exceeding \$6 billion and substantial profits for the bank. Prior to his role at EBRD, El Khatib held significant positions in the private equity sector. As Managing Director at the Carlyle Group and as Managing Partner at EFG-Hermes Private Equity.

El Khatib holds a Master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) from California State University, Sacramento, where he graduated with highest distinction, and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Structural Engineering from Cairo University. H.E. El Khatib is also a visiting lecturer of the Private Equity Venture Course for Master of Finance Student at Imperial College London.



Haitham Nassar

General Manager, Hilton Maadi

Nassar has over 35 years of experience serving in multiple locations, both locally and internationally within the Hilton and hospitality industry, with proven track records in driving business growth, managing large scale operations and diverse team members.

Nassar has held several managerial positions within the Hilton Worldwide portfolio, including leadership roles at the Hilton Luxor, Nile Hilton, London Hilton, Hilton Al Ain in the United Arab Emirates, and, most recently, as General Manager of Hilton Pyramids Golf.

Beyond his contributions to Hilton Worldwide, Nassar has been actively involved in various public service roles and professional organizations. He served as Chairman of the Greater Cairo Branch of the Egyptian Hotel Association; and as a Board Member of the Egyptian Tourism Federation. During his tenure, he has chaired the Hospitality Criteria (HC) Committee (formerly known as the NN Committee) and worked closely with the Minister of Manpower to update hiring regulations for the hotel industry.



Hussein Choucri

Chairman and Managing Director, HC Securities & Investment, & ECES Board Member

Mr. Hussein Choucri is the Founder, Chairman and Managing Director of HC Securities & Investment. Mr. Choucri has led HC Securities and Investment to become one of the most renowned financial institutions in the MENA region with operations in Egypt and the UAE. Mr. Choucri joined Morgan Stanley in New York in 1980 and was Managing Director from 1987 to 1993, and Advisory Director until December 2007. He was responsible for business activities in the emerging markets of the Middle East and the Indian Subcontinent. He was involved in a variety of privatization projects in Turkey, India and Argentina. Additionally, Mr. Choucri undertook a number of advisory services for clients of Morgan Stanley inside and outside of the USA. Prior to joining Morgan Stanley, he worked with the Abu Dhabi Investment Company and participated in arranging several Euroloan and Eurobond financings for sovereigns and private sector companies. Mr. Choucri is currently a board member of Fawry Banking and Payment Technology Services, Edita Food Industries, Integrated Diagnostics Holdings (IDH). He is a GA member of the Egypt Sovereign Wealth Fund and a board member in the Egyptian British Business Council (EBBC) and the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES). Mr. Choucri acquired the position of board member in; Delta International Bank during the period of 1995-2007, Banque Misr 2002-2004, SDDIC 2015-2020 and The Holding Company for Tourism and Hotels (HOTAC) 2005-2018. He received a Management Diploma from the American University in Cairo in 1978 and his B.A. from the Faculty of Commerce, Ain Shams University in 1972.



Huw Tuckett

Mr. Huw Tuckett
Executive Director of euomic, ILM Accredited Leadership Skills Trainer, & Crystal Award-Winning Incentive Expert

Huw Tuckett is a distinguished executive with a robust background in the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) industry. As the Executive Director of euomic, a premier global MICE Destination Management Company (DMC) association, Huw leads and manages a network of some of the world's most esteemed DMCs. His role encompasses daily operations, strategic planning, financial oversight, marketing, and fostering international collaboration.

His key areas of expertise includes: Incentive and Performance Improvement, Leadership and Management, Event Design & Management, Strategic Thinking and Marketing, Training and Development.

Mr Tuckett received several awards and recognitions including SITE Crystal Award for designing a sustainable incentive travel program in Botswana, which included a unique elephant collaring project contributing to significant research data, and Judge, SITE Crystal Awards, where he served as a judge for three years, bringing his expertise to evaluate the best in the incentive travel industry.



Ian Mitchell

Senior Policy Fellow and Co-director of the Europe Programme at the Center for Global Development

Mitchell leads CGD's work on UK development policy and climate finance, and is responsible for the Commitment to Development Index (CDI) and the Quality of Official Development Assistance (QuODA) assessment. His research also covers international food security and the role of agriculture and trade policy. He has regularly provided evidence to UK Parliament; and his work has been widely cited in the media, including the BBC, Bloomberg, the Economist, Financial Times, New York Times and the Washington Post. Mitchell has previously been an associate at Chatham House, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Until 2016, he was an economist and senior civil servant in the UK government. At the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), he was Deputy Chief Economist and was responsible for economic analysis on EU, agricultural and environmental issues. Between 2014 and 2015, he chaired the Agricultural Markets Information System established by the G20 to mitigate global food commodity volatility. At DEFRA, Mitchell was also responsible for the UK's economic analysis on food & resource security and animal disease risk. In his career, Mitchell undertook economic analysis on education and social mobility at the UK Department for Education. He led the evaluation of higher education reform including the introduction of tuition fees and researched social mobility in the UK using both income and broader measures of well-being. Mitchell's career began at Ernst and Young and has also included roles at HM Treasury and the Centre for Economics and Business Research.



Ibrahima Cheikh Diong

Special Representative to the President of BADEA on ESG, & Executive Director of Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD)

Cheikh Diong is a seasoned leader and manager with more than three decades of experience in Africa, USA, Europe, and Asia. Currently, he serves as Special Representative to the President of Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa on ESGs. He served for four years from 2020 as United Nations Assistant Secretary General (UN-ASG) and Director General of the African Risk Capacity Group (ARC Group), a specialized agency of the African Union that provides climate risk insurance and capacity building to African countries. At ARC Group, Ibrahima led the definition, shaping and execution of the mandate, vision, strategy, program of work, resource mobilization, communication, advocacy and strategic positioning of the organization to help support its growth and impact on climate resilience building across Africa.

Cheikh Diong served previously as Chairman of the Dakar-based ACT Afrique Group, which he had founded in 2012. Prior to that, Cheikh Diong has held several senior positions: Senior Africa Banker at BNP Paribas in London; Minister, Special Adviser and Ambassador at Large to the President of Senegal; Ambassador and Director General of International Cooperation of Senegal; Permanent Secretary of Energy of Senegal; Chairman of the Board of Senegal Airlines; Manager (SMEs) at the Africa Department of International Finance Corporation; Regional Coordinator for Africa for Public Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (PPIAF) at the World Bank.

Ibrahima graduated from the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at Columbia University in New York City with a Master of International Affairs (MIA) specialized in int'l finance and environmental policy management. He also holds a BSc. of Civil Eng. specialized in water resource management from HoHai University, China. He also holds a diploma in Design of PPP structure in infrastructure.



Jorge Chediek

Professor, National Foreign Service Institute, Foreign Ministry, Argentina, Professor, Catholic University, Argentina

Chediek is visiting professor at the Catholic University, Argentina, professor at the National Foreign Service Institute, Foreign Ministry, Argentina, and chair of the Advisory Board, International Studies Center, Catholic University, Argentina. Previously, he was director of the United Nations Office for South South Cooperation (UNOSSC), and Envoy of the Secretary General for South South Cooperation (2015-2020). He was also United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Brazil (2010-2015), director of the International Policy Center for Inclusive Growth, Brazil (2011-2015), and United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Peru (2005-2010).

He holds a master's degree in Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington DC.



Kamel Al-Wazir

Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Transport and Industry

Previously, he served as chief of staff (2014–2015) and Chairperson of the Engineering Authority of the Armed Forces since December 2015.

He was responsible for overseeing several projects, including: the New Suez Canal excavation project in 2015, the side canal excavation for East Port Said Port, execution of the national road project, the Galala Plateau project in Ain Sokhna, and Rod El-Farag Axis, among others.

He was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and the Excellent Service Medal.

Al-Wazir graduated from the Military Technical College with a specialization in construction, and holds a master's degree in military science from the Command and Staff College, a fellow of the Higher War College, and completed the senior leadership course at Nasser Military Academy.



Lorraine Porciuncula

Co-Founder and Executive Director, The Datasphere Initiative

Lorraine Porciuncula is the Executive Director of the Datasphere Initiative. For the last 15 years, her professional and academic experiences have been focused on issues around data, Internet governance, infrastructure regulation, and communication policy. Prior to leading the Datasphere Initiative, she was the Director for the Data Program at Internet & Jurisdiction Policy Network (2020–2021), where the Datasphere Initiative was incubated. She worked at the OECD (2014–2020) as the Strategic Advisor and Internet Economist for Digital Economy Policy Division, coordinating issues related to data governance, artificial intelligence, and blockchain, and leading the production of several reports and country studies related to connectivity, infrastructure regulation, technology convergence, and inclusion.

Lorraine is an affiliate to the Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University, conducting research on data for development. She holds a master's degree in development economics from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID), Switzerland, an Executive MBA from the Quantic School of Business and Technology, and an International Relations bachelor's degree from the University of Brasilia (UnB), Brazil. She speaks English, Portuguese, Spanish and French.



Magued Osman, PhD

CEO and Managing Director, Bassera, & Former Egyptian Minister of Communications and Information Technology

Dr. Magued Osman was previously head of Information and Decision Support Center in the Cabinet of Ministers, then, was appointed as the Minister of Communication and Technology Information in the transitional government in February 2011.

He is a member at the National Council for Women, and Vice Chairman of the Union for Arab Statisticians, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Egyptian Initiative for Inclusive Development "Nidaa".

He obtained his Ph.D from Case Western Reserve University, USA.



Mahmoud Mohieldin, PhD

Mahmoud Mohieldin, PhD
UN Special Envoy on Financing Sustainable Development

Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin is an economist with more than 30 years of experience in international finance and development. Dr. Mohieldin is the UN Climate Change High-Level Champion for Egypt. Prior to that, he served as the Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund representing the Arab States and The Maldives. He has been the United Nations Special Envoy on Financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda since February 2020.

Previously, Dr. Mohieldin was the Minister of Investment of Egypt from 2004–2010, and more recently, served as the World Bank Group Senior Vice President for the 2030 Development Agenda, United Nations Relations and Partnerships.

He is a Professor of Economics and Finance at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University and as a Visiting Professor at several renowned Universities in Egypt, Korea, the UAE, the UK and the USA. He is a member of the International Advisory Board of Durham University Business School.

Dr. Mohieldin holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Warwick, United Kingdom; an M.Sc. in Economics and Social Policy Analysis from the University of York, United Kingdom; a Diploma of Development Economics from the University of Warwick; and a B.Sc. in Economics from Cairo University.



Mark Ahern

Lead Country Economist for
Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti
The World Bank

Mr. Ahern is currently based in Cairo where he is the Lead Country Economist for the World Bank covering Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti.

He joined the Bank in 2008 and before his current role he worked for the Bank on Palestine and Indonesia. Prior to joining the Bank, he was an advisor for the IMF with assignments in Africa, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East.

Mr. Ahern is originally from New Zealand where he worked for the New Zealand Treasury, focusing on overseeing SOE reform, tax policy, and leading the Budget team preparing the New Zealand Government budget.



Mirette Mabrouk

Senior Fellow & Director
of Egypt and Horn of Africa
Programme, The Middle East
Institute (MEI)

Mirette F. Mabrouk is an MEI senior fellow and founding director of the The Middle East Institute's Egypt Studies program. She was previously deputy director and director for research and programs at the Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East at the Atlantic Council. Formerly a fellow at the Project for U.S. Relations with the Middle East at the Brookings Institution, Mabrouk moved to D.C. from Cairo, where she was director of communications for the Economic Research Forum (ERF). Before being appointed associate director for publishing operations at the American University in Cairo Press, Ms. Mabrouk had over 20 years of experience in both print and television journalism. She is the founding publisher of the Daily Star Egypt, (now the Daily New Egypt), at the time, the country's only independent English-language daily newspaper, and the former publishing director for IBA Media, which produces the region's top English-language magazines. Her writing has appeared in publications like Foreign Policy, the Hill and HuffPost and she has been quoted and appeared on the BBC, VOA, Sky News, the Wall Street Journal and the Christian Science Monitor, among others. She recently authored "And Now for Something Completely Different: Arab Media's Own Little Revolution," a chapter in a book on the Arab transitions; Reconstructing the Middle East and is the editor of a multi author report, Rethinking Egypt's Economy.

She holds a BA in mass communication and MA in broadcast journalism from the American University in Cairo



**Mohamed Abdel Gawad
Allam, PhD**

Vice Chairman (Deputy Minister)
for Investment and Promotion,
Suez Canal Economic Zone
(SCZONE)

For more than 23 years, Dr. Allam has been a commercial diplomat at the Egyptian Commercial Service, where he was lately the Head of the Commercial Office for Egypt's Permanent Mission to the United Nations/ World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva, Switzerland. Additionally, he was the WTO facilitator for fisheries subsidies negotiations on special and differential treatment for developing countries and Institutional arrangements. He possesses experience in commercial, investment policy, and development cooperation and a solid background in environmental economics. He has diversified experience and knowledge in intergovernmental and corporate negotiations in international economics and economics policy, with an outstanding record in resolving complex issues.

Dr. Allam previously served as a commercial diplomat in the Commercial Offices at the Egyptian embassies in Washington, D.C., and Brussels. During his term, he participated in negotiating several trade and investment agreements, including the Qualified Industrial Zones Protocol.

Dr. Allam holds a PhD in Development Economics from Ain Shams University, and an MSc. in Environmental Economics from the same University, and a B.Sc. in management sciences, along with Business Development executive Diplomas from specialized institutions in the US, Spain, India, and China.



Mohamed Kassem

Chairman of Expolink,
& CEO of World Trading Company,
& ECES Secretary General

Mr. Mohamed Kassem chairs the boards of directors of several institutions and companies, including the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera), the World Trading Company, and the Egyptian Exporters Association (Expolink). Previously, he held several esteemed positions, including commercial attache at the Ministry of Foreign Trade. He is member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, the Egyptian Businessmen Association (EBA) and the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs.



Mohamed Lamine El Dhaoui, PhD
Senior Consultant, Industrial Economist,
SMEs and Value Chains Specialist,
Former Director, United Nations for
Industrial Development Organization

Dr. Dhaoui has more than 38 years of experience in the area of inclusive and sustainable industrial and socio-economic development. He currently works as team leader and senior expert with international and regional organizations (UNIDO, EU, AFD, AfDB, etc.) Previously, he held several esteemed positions with the African Development Bank, Golf Organization for Industrial, and UNIDO. He was also professor at Tunis University. He was awarded the "UNIDO DG Award of Excellence" in 2006 and "Best Tunisian International Expert in 2015" by the Association of Tunisian Businessmen Abroad (AHATE). He holds PhD from Paris Dauphine University, France. He has published extensively on restructuring, upgrading, industrial competitiveness, entrepreneurship, local clusters and corporate social responsibility, among others.



Mohamed Sherine El Naggar
Chairman, Naggar Shipping Company, &
International Expert for Connectivity

Previously, Mr. Sherine El Naggar held several positions at Naggar Shipping Co. (family business), including operations manager and chartering manager. He succeeded in 1990 in starting the first container transshipment hub in Egypt at the port of Damietta. In 1995, he introduced the first two gantry cranes owned by private sector in Egypt as additional capacity for Damietta Port. He established a joint venture with Suez Canal Authority to operate two coastal vessels for movement of containers between Egyptian Ports (vessels: Nagda I and Nagda II), the Egyptian Container Line (NVOCC), a Ropax line connecting Mersin with Port Said and Suez with Dibah in Saudi Arabia, and Norna Shipping Corporation (a tanker owning company with a fleet of 6 tankers.) In 2005, he started Egyptian container line service with two RORO vessels. In 2007 he started Red Sea bridge service with RORO ships between Suez, Jeddah, Aqaba and Port Sudan. He edited the first port information guide "Naggar's Ship owners' guide to Egyptian Ports and the Suez Canal" in 1983, and issued second port information book "Tanker Ports of Egypt" in 1991. El Naggar holds BSc. engineering from the American University in Cairo (AUC).

N



Nabila Makram, PhD
Former Egyptian Minister of State for
Migration and Affairs of Egyptians
Abroad, & Head of the Technical
Secretariat of the Board of Trustees,
the National Alliance for Civil
Developmental Work

Ambassador Nabila Makram has extensive experience working for Egypt's embassies around the world, including Brazil, the U.S.A, and the UAE. Throughout her diplomatic career, she has been widely recognized for her outstanding contributions. Previously, she held several prominent positions including deputy consul General in Dubai, advisor of the diplomatic and consular corps management, first Secretary, Embassy of Egypt in Italy, second secretary, Consulate General of Egypt in Chicago among other esteemed positions. The founder and head of board of Fahim Foundation for Mental Health support: Raising awareness through lectures, workshops, events, media campaigns, and other outreach initiatives under the foundation's slogan "Understand, listen, and speak". Signed a cooperation protocol with the ministry of Health and Population. Signed a cooperation protocol with the ministry of Youth and Sports. Signed a cooperation protocol with the National Council for Women. Signed a cooperation protocol with the Coordination Committee of Party's Youth Leaders and Politicians. Signed a cooperation protocol with the International Forum of Fine Art for Development Foundation. H.E. has been chosen to be a member of the World Federation for Mental Health.



Nathalie Delapalme
CEO, Mo Ibrahim Foundation

She was previously Inspecteur General des Finances at the French Ministry of Economy and Finance (2007-2010). Prior to this, Nathalie served the French Government as an advisor for Africa and for Development in the offices of various Foreign Affairs Ministers, between 1995-1997 and 2002-2007. She also served the French Senate as advisor for the Finance and Budgetary Commission, where she assessed fiscal and public policies between 1984-1995 and 1997-2002. She is co-Secretary General of the Africa-Europe Foundation and sits on the Board of International Crisis Group and on the Advisory Board of IFRI (Institut Francais des Relations Internationales). She is a Member of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR). Nathalie is Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and Chevalier de l'Ordre du Mérite.



Nikos Vettas, PhD

General Director, the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE) & Professor, the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB)

Nikos Vettas is the General Director of the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE) since 2013 and Professor of Economics at the Athens University of Economics and Business (AUEB) since 2003, where he has also served as the Chairman of the Economics Department and a member of the University Council. He holds a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, USA, and has been an Associate Professor at Duke University, USA, and a visiting Professor at INSEAD in France and Singapore. He serves as Associate Editor of the International Journal of Industrial Organization, a Research Fellow at CEPR, UK, and a member of the Executive Committee of the European Association for Research in Industrial Economics. He has served as an Associate Editor of the Journal of the European Economic Association and the Journal of Industrial Economics, a member of the Hellenic Competition Commission and the Economic Advisory Group for Competition Policy at the European Commission. He is a co-organizer of the annual Conference for Research on Economic Theory and Econometrics, since 2002. His research has been published in leading journals such as the International Economic Review, European Economic Review, Rand Journal of Economics, and the Review of Economic Studies. Co-editor of Beyond Austerity: Reforming the Greek Economy (MIT Press, 2017). Vice-Chairman of the Growth Plan Committee of the Hellenic Republic for the Greek Economy, 2020.



Nikolaos Zaimis

Head of Trade, Science and Enterprise section, the European Union Delegation to Cairo

As from September 2022, Nikolaos serves as Minister Counsellor and Head of the Trade, Science and Enterprise section of the European Union Delegation to Cairo, Egypt overseeing trade and investment relations between the EU and Egypt. Previously, Nikolaos served in the European Commission as Senior Adviser on Trade and Sustainable Development with a focus on the General Scheme of Preferences (GSP) and the Economic Partnership Agreements with Africa and the Pacific countries.

Nikolaos joined the European Commission in 1995 and initially worked in the area of anti-subsidy policy and then as Deputy Head of the WTO Dispute Settlement Unit in the Directorate General for Trade. In 2005, he served in Washington DC as Head of the Trade Section of the EU Delegation to the US. In 2009, he was posted to Tokyo as Head of the Trade Section of the EU Delegation to Japan. In September 2013, Nikolaos was appointed Deputy Head of DG Trade's GSP Unit where he oversaw the implementation of the EU's scheme of unilateral preferences for developing countries.

Nikolaos studied law in Greece and the UK and worked for several years as a lawyer in the private sector before joining the EU.

O



Omar Mohanna

Chairman, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES), Chairman, Chubb Insurance Egypt, Prometeon Tyre Egypt Co. (Pirelli) & Coca-Cola HBC Egypt

Omar Mohanna is former Chairman of Suez Cement Group of Companies (SCGC), a subsidiary of the German Multinational Group Heidelberg Cement AG.

With over 25 years of commercial and investment banking experience with Egyptian and international financial institutions, he was Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Egypt Arab African Bank (EAAB). He also held the position of Managing Director of Accor Hotels Group in Egypt and has been a member of the Board of Directors of diverse companies.

He is the former President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt (AmCham Egypt) and is Chairman of the Egypt-US Business Council. He is also a member of the Italian Egyptian Business Council, the French Egyptian Chamber of Commerce in Egypt, the Egyptian Businessmen Association and Egypt's International Economic Forum among others.

At the broader community level, he is a Board member of the Association for the Protection of the Environment, and member of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Relations.

As an economist, industrialist and active member of the business community, Mohanna has brought his knowledge and expertise to bear at the policy level in his capacity as Chairman of the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES).

P



Pato Kelesitse

Founder of Sustain267 and host of Sustain267 Podcast

Pato Kelesitse is a sustainable development practitioner, climate justice advocate, and founder of Sustain267. She hosts the Sustain267 Podcast, which amplifies African voices, solutions, knowledge, and research in climate action. Pato serves as an official party delegate to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where she negotiates on Loss and Damage issues. She is also a board member of the Climate Justice Resilience Fund and an adviser for Urgent Action Fund-Africa. Recently, she was appointed to the Botswana National Youth Council by the Minister of Youth, Gender, Sports, and Culture.



Rania Al-Mashat, PhD
Minister for Planning, Economic
Development and International
Cooperation

Previously, Al-Mashat served as the Minister of International Cooperation (Dec 2019 - July 2024), and was the first female Minister of Tourism (Jan 2018 - Dec 2019). She held several esteemed positions at the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC., served at the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE), as the Sub-Governor for Monetary Policy (Aug. 2005 - Jun. 2016) and was CBE's liaison with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the sovereign rating agencies. She is a member of several boards, including those of the Egyptian Stock Exchange, the Egyptian General Authority for Free Zones and Investment, the Arab International Bank and the Arab Investment Bank, among others.

She is also a member of several Advisory councils and international alliances including, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) GenU, a Founding Member of the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP) launched by the Rockefeller Foundation, Founding Member of the Resilience Consortium of the World Economic Forum (WEF), and Member of Mission Possible for Climate Action (WEF), Co-Chair of the MENA Stewardship Board (WEF), among others.

Al-Mashat holds PhD and MA in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park, USA, and BA in Economics from the American University in Cairo (AUC). She completed Executive Education certificates in Leadership and Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and Transformational Leadership from Said Business School at Oxford University.



Reem Baggash
Deputy Managing Director,
World Governments Summit

Reem Baggash is the Deputy Managing Director at the World Governments Summit Organization, and has been shaping the World Governments Summit's strategic and global positioning as a platform to shape the future since 2016.

As part of her role at the World Governments Summit Organization, Ms. Baggash leads a number of teams, overseeing the Summits flagship programme, including; marketing, research and signature global awards such as the 'Best Minister in the World' award. Ms. Baggash oversees overall operations of the Summit as well as strategic relationships and interactions with government officials, international organizations, thought leaders and distinguished international speakers.

She is also the President of the American University of Sharjah Alumni Association (AUSAA), which represents a dynamic platform to enhance communication between AUS graduates. The Alumni Association also aims to promote exchanging experience and developing new initiatives to better assist students.

Reem holds a master's degree in international studies from Wollongong University and a Bachelor of Finance from the American University of Sharjah. She also completed executive training in Innovation Immersion from UC Berkeley and is recognized as certified digital marketing professional by the Digital Marketing Institute (DMI).



Sherif Kamel, PhD
Dean of the School of Business, the
American University in Cairo (AUC)

Dr. Sherif Kamel is professor of management at the American University in Cairo (AUC). Before joining the AUC, he served as director of the Regional IT Institute and managed the training department of the Cabinet of Egypt Information and Decision Support Center. He consults with government organizations and corporations, addressing organizational transformation, executive development, IT, management and strategy. He was a guest lecturer, and taught degree and non-degree programs for Middlesex University (United Kingdom), Kellogg School of Management (Northwestern University, United States), Maastricht School of Management (Netherlands), Claremont Graduate University (United States), the Wharton School (University of Pennsylvania, United States), Carlton University, University of Ottawa and McMaster University (Canada). He was invited as a panelist/speaker on a variety of policy issues at IS, management, development and leadership conferences and expert meetings, including Asia-Middle East Dialogue, EBRD, European Foundation for Management Development, ITU UNDP, Internet Governance Forum, World Summit on the Information Society, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Atlantic Council, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, Middle East Institute, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. He served as a judge in IT and business plan competitions including IBM Watson Entrepreneurial Project Showcase at the University of Toronto and the Stockholm challenge. He won a number of organizational leadership awards for serving the IT community from Conf-IRM (Canada), Cabinet of Egypt and IRMA (USA).

Kamel holds a PhD in information systems from London School of Economics and Political Science. In addition, Kamel is an Eisenhower Fellow and a Center for Global Enterprise Fellow. He is a member of the AACSB International Middle East Advisory Council and Eduniversal International Scientific Committee. He was a member of the World Bank Knowledge Advisory Commission and founding member of the Internet Society of Egypt. He was a member of the Institute of Corporate Directors (Canada).



Steffen Krueger
Country Director Egypt,
Konrad Adenauer
Foundation (KAS)

Steffen Krüger has headed the Adenauer Foundation's office in Egypt since February 2024. Previously, Mr. Krüger managed the KAS country program Morocco / Mauritania (2018-2023) and an EU program to promote the political participation of women in Benin and Morocco (2018-2022). From 2015 to 2018, he was a consultant for the francophone countries of sub-Saharan Africa at the headquarters of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Berlin. He was head of the KAS country program in the DR Congo with a focus on the reform of the security forces, promotion of civil society and the rule of law from 2012 to 2015. From 2006 to 2011, Mr. Krüger worked for different US-based organizations. Prior to that, he started as a project assistant (2002 - 2005) with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Benin, West Africa. Mr. Krüger holds a Diploma in Political Science (University of Marburg) and a Graduate Degree in International Education (SIT Graduate Institute).



Stephane Guimbert
Country Director for Egypt,
Yemen and Djibouti,
the World Bank

Prior to this assignment, Guimbert was the Bank's Operations Policy Director in the Operations Policy and Country Services Vice Presidency (OPCS). In this role, he led the Bank's operations policy reform and interpretation for all financing instruments. He co-led the coordination of the IDA/IBRD COVID-19 vaccines program, the steering of the new Country Climate and Development Reports, and the methodology for Paris Alignment of all IDA/IBRD financing flows. He also established a coordination mechanism with other multilateral development banks (MDBs) on operational policies and strengthened the partnership with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). He joined the World Bank in 2001, leading projects and analytical work in areas such as economic management, public finance management, private sector development, governance and trade. His work has taken him to Afghanistan, Cambodia, China, India, Kenya, Nepal, and Thailand. Prior to joining the Bank, he was economist at the Ministry of Economy and Finance in France, working on trade and tax policy. He holds master's degrees from Ecole Polytechnique, ENSAE Paris and the Sorbonne University.



Symeon G. Tsomokos
Founder & President,
Delphi Economic Forum

Symeon Tsomokos is the Founder and President of Delphi Economic Forum, an independent and impartial non-profit organization committed to deliver and promote innovative ideas for sustainable and competitive growth for Southeast Europe and the East Mediterranean. He established SGT S.A in Athens in 1997, and TGI in Belgrade in 2001 and in Brussels in 2016, which he presides successfully all these years. He is also the Founder of the Business Council for Greece-United States, the Greek-Hungarian Business Council, the Greek-Egyptian Business Council, while in 2006 he established the Greece-Serbia Chamber of Commerce which he presides. In the past he has served as Commercial Specialist at the US Embassy in Athens (1973-1980) and CEO at the American-Hellenic Chamber of Commerce (1980-1997). He has also served as Secretary General & Treasurer of the Council of the American Chambers of Commerce based in Europe (1990-1993) and as Secretary General of the Business Council Greece-Turkey (1993-1998). In 1993, he was an Eisenhower Exchange Fellow.

T



Tarek Sayed Tawfik, PhD
President of the International
Association of Egyptologists, &
Former Director General of the
Grand Egyptian Museum

Prior to his current position, he was elected vice president of the International Association of Egyptologists; head of the Committee for Culture, Arts & Science at the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, and deputy head of mission of the excavations of the Faculty of Archaeology, Cairo University in Saqqara. Dr. Tarek is a professional trainer and expert at the Professional Management Expertise Center (PMEC) and the German Academy of the DAAD (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst - German academic exchange). He is also guest lecturer at the Faculty of Tourism & Hotel Management, Helwan University, the Faculty of Arts, Dep. of Tourist guiding, Ain Shams University, and the Department for Egyptology at the University of Bonn. He is Head of the committee for Culture, Arts & Science at the Egyptian Academy of Scientific Research & Technology. Dr. Tarek is member of the International Council of Museums (ICOM); the German Archaeological Institute; the editorial board of the British Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (JEA); the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Berlin; the High Committee of the Ministry of Antiquities for Museums and the High committee of the Ministry of Antiquities for external museological exhibitions. He holds a PhD in Egyptology, Bonn University.



Tarek Tawfik

Vice Chairman, Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI), & ECES Vice Chairman

President of The American Chamber of Commerce in Egypt
Chairman Cairo Poultry Group
Deputy Chairman of The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES).
First Vice President of The Federation of Mediterranean Business Organization (BUSINESSMED)
Tawfik is a Board Member of the General Authority for Investments and Free Zones (GAFI), Egypt Sovereign Wealth Fund, Egyptian Countryside Development Company, the Egyptian Food Safety Authority, the Chamber of Food Industries, Agricultural Bank of Egypt, Industrial Modernization Center-Ministry of Foreign Trade & Industry, Egyptian Poultry Federation, The Holding Company for Cotton, Spinning, Weaving & Garment. Tawfik holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering - Cairo University, a master's of engineering from California Polytechnic State University (Pomona), and an MBA degree from San Francisco State University.

V



Vikrom Mathur, PhD

Senior Fellow, Observer Research Foundation (ORF)

Mr. Mathur curates research at ORF's Centre for New Economic Diplomacy (CNED). He also guides and mentors researchers at CNED. Mr. Mathur has 20 years of professional experience, straddling research and policy advice, at the interface of social and environmental change. His research explores international partnerships, foreign policy and economic diplomacy related to the implementation of the global development, sustainability and human security agenda with a focus on India's development cooperation with African nations and the countries in India's neighbourhood. Mr. Mathur received his PhD from Oxford University, Institute for Science, Society and Innovation (2011). He received his Bachelors in Chemical and Environmental Engineering from McGill University, Canada, and master's degree in Regional Planning from the Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden.

Y



Yasmine Fouad, PhD

Egyptian Minister of Environment

Prior to her current position, Dr. Yasmine Fouad was Assistant Minister of Environment. She has more than 20 years' experience in environment and international cooperation, working with Government, UN organizations, NGOs and Universities. At the Academic level, she has been selected as a lead author to chapter four of the IPCC Special Report on "Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems" in 2017. Dr. Fouad holds MSc in environmental science and PhD in political science from Cairo University.



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