EL MOSTAKBAL: THE MIDDLE EAST
LOOKING FORWARD
MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN

In the 21st century, the international community is in a transformative stage and it is challenged to create more equitable global order respecting nation states, regional global perspectives, as well as individual rights and freedoms.

The Middle East, over the last decade, has seen unprecedented change – both good and bad. Today, it stands at a crossroads determining a future of opportunity, or one even more tumultuous than its recent past.

With a global outlook from the center of the Middle East and a commitment to youth, enlightenment and constructive engagement, The American University in Cairo is embarking on the in-depth, multiyear project El Mostakbal: The Middle East Looking Forward. Its participants are distinguished practitioners, highly reputable academics and diverse opinion-makers from all walks of life. These participants will have legitimate equity in the region’s future. In its blue-ribbon, multi-disciplinary concluding report, El Mostakbal will suggest policy guidelines on how to build a better future for the Middle East.

NABIL FAHMY
Founding Dean, AUC’s School of Global Affairs and Public Policy; Former Foreign Minister of Egypt
The Middle East has recently been undergoing what is arguably its deepest and most far-reaching transformation, capturing the attention of the international community like no other region since the former Soviet Union and Central and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s. The ramifications of this transition, however, are testimony that the region needs to be playing a more consequential role in determining its future.

For the Middle East, with the Arab World at its heart, to develop its capacity to resolve regional security challenges and successfully navigate the waves of social, political and economic change, there is an obvious need for a homegrown platform for conducting strategic dialogues, developing inspired solutions and paving the way for future development.

AUC proudly stands as a crossroads for the world’s cultures and is a vibrant forum for reasoned argument and spirited debate. For many years, AUC, Egypt’s global University, has assumed a leadership role in exploring and constructively addressing both domestic and regional challenges and utilizing its intellectual and creative capabilities to find potential solutions.

After 100 years in the service of Egypt and the region, AUC is commemorating its centennial by creating new opportunities for impact in the next century — starting with the El Mostakbal: The Middle East Looking Forward initiative.
SPARKING A NEW DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE

Established to provide a premier platform for high-level dialogue on the region’s most crucial socio-economic, political, security and development issues, the initiative serves as a focal point for understanding and addressing the challenges facing the Middle East and the Arab world. Led and hosted by AUC, in collaboration with a strong network of global partner institutions, the three-year project includes a multi-track series of workshops, conferences and publications engaging leading regional expertise to collaborate and make significant contributions to the Middle East’s development dialogue.

Launched in April 2019, the conference gathers renowned scholars, current and former government officials and senior experts from Egypt, the region and around the world to examine and discuss the opportunities and challenges facing the Arab world and the Middle East from now until the year 2030, making strategic policy recommendations to resolve current issues and longstanding conflicts.

The initiative convenes in major annual conferences to provide guidelines, assess progress and draw conclusions concerning the detailed work of two multidisciplinary working groups, whose participants meet biannually for two-day sessions covering these core areas:

- Social issues from education to youth employment, gender equality, inter-ethnic religious and identity-based tensions and violent extremism
- Economic issues such as regional economic cooperation/trade and investment, poverty and economic disparities, water resources, food and agriculture and energy
- Regional conflict and crises, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, Syria, Iraq and Libya
- Regional security and arrangements, including an Arab cooperative security regime, regional conflict prevention and resolution, Arab-Middle East relations and weapons proliferation
THE WAY AHEAD

The final outcome of the conference will be a blue-ribbon, evidence-based policy publication assessing the Arab world’s anticipated challenges and opportunities through 2030 and providing policy recommendations; a series of public policy articles in reputable media outlets; a full report of the discussions and debates of the conference and working groups; and rigorous academic papers published in ranking peer-reviewed academic journals.

With your support, this initiative has the potential to evolve into a wider ongoing global conversation, offering in-depth analysis and expert advising on the Arab world’s greatest challenges, allowing us to be more effective in our response to the needs of our region and the world at large.
DISTINGUISHED CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP

Chairman
Nabil Fahmy ’74, ’77, founding dean, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, AUC; former foreign minister of Egypt

Coordinators
Aly Erfan ’82, Egyptian diplomat; professor of practice, Department of Public Policy and Administration, AUC
Amr Adly, assistant professor, Department of Political Science, AUC

Political/Security Workshop Bureau
Paul Salem, president, Middle East Institute, Washington DC
Karim Haggag ’92, professor of practice and director of Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Alsaud Center for American Studies and Research, AUC
Robert Mason, associate professor and director of the Middle East Studies Center, AUC
Eman Ragab, acting head of the Security and Military Studies Unit, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies

Social/Economic Workshop Bureau
Mourad Wahba ’80, ’82, assistant secretary-general of the United Nations, assistant administrator of UNDP and director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States
Ibrahim Awad, professor of practice and director of the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies, AUC
Ghada Barsoum ’99, associate professor and chair, Department of Public Policy and Administration, AUC
Samer Atallah, assistant professor, Department of Economics, AUC
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