

RULE OF LAW  
FORUM

SECOND EDITION - 2024

**KONRAD  
ADENAUER  
STIFTUNG**  
RULE OF LAW PROGRAMME  
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

جامعة  
حمد بن خليفة  
HAMD BIN KHALIFA  
UNIVERSITY  
عضو في مؤسسة قطر  
Member of Qatar Foundation

UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law  
and Sustainable Development

كرسي اليونسكو في القانون البيئي  
والتنمية المستدامة

**unesco**  
Chair



# RULE OF LAW FORUM

**SECOND EDITION**

**23<sup>RD</sup> & 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024  
DOHA - QATAR**



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## FORWARD

Excellencies, honorable judges, attorneys, experts, panelists and guests, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

it is with great pride and anticipation that the Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung welcomes you to the Rule of Law FORUM – 2nd Edition. This prestigious event brings together esteemed legal minds, scholars, and decision-makers from across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

We are honored to host this year's FORUM at Hamad-Bin-Khalifa-University (HBKU) in Doha, Qatar, in partnership with the Youssef SADER Foundation for Legal Culture and the UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development at HBKU. It is a great pleasure and honor for us all to be able to be in Doha, Qatar.

In a rapidly evolving region, the rule of law serves as the foundation for justice, accountability, and stability. The complex dynamics of the MENA region call for collaborative efforts to address emerging challenges and foster progress. Through this FORUM we aim to explore and discuss the latest developments and forward-looking solutions in the legal landscape – focusing on topics that, with the ongoing tragic and horrible war in the Middle East, might have been somewhat overlooked this year.

Over the course of two days, the FORUM will engage with a diverse array of topics that reflect the growing need for robust legal frameworks and innovative thinking. Our panels have been carefully designed to address pressing issues, from the intersection of artificial intelligence and law to the enforcement of international environmental treaties, judicial transparency, and the role of law in driving entrepreneurship and human rights.

We believe that the discussions and exchanges that will take place here will not only shed light on urgent legal concerns but will also pave the way for concrete actions to reinforce the rule of law across the region. The insights shared by our distinguished speakers, moderators, and participants will contribute to shaping the future of legal systems and strengthen the rule of law in the MENA region.

On behalf of all the organizers, we are honored to have you all with us and sincerely thank you for your participation at this FORUM. We look forward to the fruitful and inspiring conversations that this FORUM will undoubtedly spark. Together, we hope to shape a more just and equitable future.

Yours sincerely,



Director  
KAS Rule of Law Programme Middle East & North Africa

## ABOUT "KONRAD ADENAUER STIFTUNG" WHAT IS KAS?

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) is a German political foundation closely associated with the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU). The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung developed from the Society for Christian Democratic Educational Work that was founded back in 1955. Since 1964, it has borne the name of the first Federal Chancellor of Germany, Konrad Adenauer. As KAS we feel bound to Adenauer's political memory and legacy; his principles serve as our guidelines, mission and commitment.

In our European and international cooperation efforts, we work to enable people to live self-determined lives in freedom, dignity and prosperity. By upholding our values, we contribute to helping Germany meet its growing responsibilities in the world. With more than 100 offices abroad and projects in over 120 countries, we make a unique contribution to the promotion of liberal democracy, the rule of law and a social market economy. To foster peace and freedom we encourage a continuous dialog at the national and international levels as well as the exchange between cultures and religions.

Similar to other political foundations, the KAS is mostly financed by public funds, i.e. the KAS is an institution funded by the German tax payer.

## WHAT IS KAS RULE OF LAW PROGRAMME MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA?

The Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa is one of five regional rule of law programs managed worldwide by the KAS. With the regional projects KAS seeks to facilitate ongoing exchanges of experience and information for the purposes of analyzing deficits and determining the need for reform as far as conformity with the rule of law is concerned. The Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa focuses on the following areas of interest:

- Promoting rule of law structures and institutions, as well as democracy, with a special focus on constitutional courts and councils.
- Separation of powers, in particular strengthening the independence of the judiciary.
- Protection of human and minority rights, with a focus on women's rights and female judges.
- Support of regional cooperation instruments promoting the rule of law and democracy.

The activities of the Rule of Law Programme in these areas of focus aim to promote the rule of law development through regional seminars, conferences, research and training activities. In its work the Programme always works closely with local partners. By cooperating with local partners, it seeks to ensure that it responds to the most urgent needs and developments both in each country, and in the region as a whole.

The Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa is based in Beirut, Lebanon and currently is a team of six. The projects are held all over the region. The Rule of Law FORUM is one of two flagship projects of the Programme.

## ABOUT "YOUSSEF SADER FOUNDATION" FOR LEGAL CULTURE

The Youssef SADER Foundation for Legal Culture is a prominent non-profit organization in Lebanon, named in honor of Youssef SADER, the second generation of SADER Legal and a key figure in the development of the legal knowledge industry in the Arab world back in the twentieth century. The foundation's mission is to cultivate legal education, promote a deeper understanding of legal frameworks, and foster a culture of lawfulness and intellectual exchange across the Arab region.

Rooted in a legacy of over a century and a half of legal knowledge, the foundation plays a vital role in advancing legal research, education, and reform. It serves as a bridge between academic legal theory and practical application, offering various programs to support legal professionals, scholars, and students. Among its initiatives, the foundation provides scholarships, organizes conferences, and sponsors legal forums to discuss contemporary legal challenges, with a particular focus on intellectual property, commercial law, and human rights.

A key feature of the foundation's work is the emphasis on accessibility to legal resources. It has taken steps to digitize and publish extensive legal texts, making them available to a wider audience both within Lebanon and across the Arab world. Through its partnership with various local, regional and international legal bodies, the foundation is at the forefront of promoting rule of law principles and sustainable development in the legal profession.

The Youssef SADER Foundation also collaborates with universities, legal institutions, and organizations. Its impact is seen in the enrichment of legal discourse and the development of legal professionals who are equipped to address the pressing legal issues of the modern world.

By fostering dialogue on topics like access to information, judicial independence, and legislative reforms, the foundation has positioned itself as a thought leader in the region, contributing to the strengthening of the legal system and rule of law. Through its work, it aims to create a more just and equitable legal landscape that supports innovation, economic growth, and the protection of fundamental rights.



### SADER, a Legal Knowledge Nexus, since 1863.

Since its establishment in 1863, with 5 generations under its wing, SADER is a wealth of knowledge, an establishment known across the Arab world for its legal expertise and know-how. Throughout the years, SADER has grown and diversified its activities, nurturing every aspect related to facilitating access to information for people from around the world.

SADER has evolved into a multi-disciplinary business, ranging from legal content provision, publishing, research, law services, translation, legaltech, and special projects to name a few. It strives at simplifying the understanding of the law for both the legal and non-legal communities at a regional and international level.

SADER believes in an educated public, aware of its legal rights and responsibilities and always does its part to foster knowledge that benefits the legal societies and general public by providing its expertise in all matters related to the Rule of Law to and for the Middle East, Gulf and Levant.

The mission of SADER is to promote a modern legal culture in the Arab world and to bridge international legal and business cultural gaps and divides.

SADER endeavors to continue in its long history of excellence and creativity by uncovering new and expedient legal solutions, in answer to the market needs.

SADER has been building a business structure that values the advancement of the Arab legal culture and systems through creativity, integrity, knowledge, good governance and transparency.

## ABOUT "HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY"

Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development (QF), was founded in 2010 to continue fulfilling QF's vision of unlocking human potential. HBKU is a homegrown research and graduate studies University that acts as a catalyst for positive transformation in Qatar and the region while having a global impact.

Located within Education City, HBKU seeks to provide unparalleled opportunities where inquiry and discovery are integral to teaching and learning at all levels utilizing a multidisciplinary approach across all focus areas.

HBKU is committed to actively contribute to achieving the Qatar National Vision 2030 by building and cultivating human capacity through an enriching academic experience and an innovative research ecosystem. Through applying creativity to knowledge, students will have the opportunity to discover innovative solutions that are locally relevant and have a global impact.

At Hamad Bin Khalifa University – our students, faculty, staff, partners, and leadership – all share a common belief in the power of higher education and research to make a positive impact in the development of nations.

## ABOUT "UNESCO CHAIR" ON ENVIRONMENTAL LAW AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT HBKU

UNESCO approved the establishment of a UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development (ELSD) at HBKU to harness research, teaching, knowledge exchange and international cooperation on Environmental Law as a tool for advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

This Chair established at HBKU is the first chair that focuses on Environmental Law. It is also one of the very first in the entire MENA region to focus on the Sustainability Science aspect of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme.

The Chair serves as the focal point for strengthening scientific research, and South-South cooperation between Environmental Law and Sustainable Development researchers in African Universities, and those in the Middle East, to collaboratively address environmental challenges across the MENA region. The Chair also advances international, North-South and North-South-South cooperation, knowledge exchange and capacity development on Environmental Law amongst key stakeholders in education, economic, financial, regulatory and development sectors, and beyond.



## RULE OF LAW FORUM PROGRAM

### 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION, 23<sup>RD</sup> & 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024, DOHA - QATAR

#### FIRST DAY: WEDNESDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER, 2024

08:30 - 09:00	Arrival & Registration
09:00 - 09:15	<p><b>Opening remarks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Professor Damilola S. Olawuyi</b> SAN– Professor of Law and UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development, HBKU; Chair of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities(ASSELLMU)</li> <li>• <b>HE.Ibrahim bin Ali bin Issa Al Hassan Al Mohannadi</b> Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs</li> </ul>
09:15 - 09:40	<p><b>Goodwill Messages/ Welcome:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mr. Philipp Bremer</b> Director of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa</li> <li>• <b>Me. Rany Sader</b> President of Youssef SADER Foundation for Legal Culture</li> <li>• <b>Dean Susan L. Karamanian</b> College of Law, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar</li> <li>• <b>HE. Lothar Freischlader</b> German Ambassador to Qatar</li> </ul>
09:40 - 09:55	<p><b>Keynote Speech: "The Evolving Role of Regional Courts in Advancing the Rule of Law and Sustainable Development"</b></p> <p><i>This topic will explore how regional courts, such as the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, are advancing the rule of law while contributing to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It will address the critical role these courts play in enforcing human rights across different legal systems and mediating the balance between economic growth and environmental conservation. Additionally, the keynote can highlight how African jurisprudence in this area serves as a model, particularly for regions like the Arab world, which has yet to establish a similar court, and how modern technology is shaping the future of regional courts.</i></p> <p><b>Keynote Speaker:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Judge Imani Aboud</b> President of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights</li> </ul>

09:55 - 11:25

**First Panel: Enhancing Judicial Transparency and Public Relations:  
How to strengthen the relationship and trust between courts and  
citizens.**

*In many legal systems, court judgements are pronounced in the name of the People, and trials are to be held publicly, for citizens to be able to witness court hearings. This creates accountability for both the citizens participating in the trial (claimants, defendants) as well as for the Judiciary, as a representation of State Power. Often enough, however, beyond the hearings, the details of cases and the respective judgements, are not accessible, even when they are of public interest. The media, too, is dependent on hearsay, witnesses and investigative research. Furthermore, judges are legally restricted in speaking publicly. In the region, there are often no court spokespersons, different to courts in Germany, for example. Why is that? Would access to justice and the faith in the legal system and the Judiciary not improve, if the courts publicly and formally explained their decisions – and were open to questions by the media, in order for them to report accurately? Enhancing the transparency and efficiency of the judiciary through digital transformation and effective communication practices is the focal point of this panel. Recognizing the importance of public understanding and trust in the judiciary, the panel aims to explore the rules and practices governing the communication of judicial activities, including the right of the public to access judicial decisions, the benefits of digitization in this process and the regulations pertaining to the judiciary's interaction with the media.*

*The hope is for the panel to contribute to bolstering public trust in the judiciary and promoting access to justice in a rapidly evolving and complex digital landscape.*

**Moderator:**

● **Dr. Marie-Christine Fuchs**

Spokesperson of the German Federal Ministry of Justice

**Experts:**

● **Judge Imani Aboud**

President of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights

● **Judge Dr. Adel Omar Sharif**

First Vice-President of the Egyptian Constitutional Court

● **Judge Ali Darwish Al Msaimi**

Secretary General of the Supreme Judicial Council in Jordan

● **Judge Dr. Najat Abou Chacra**

President of the Lebanese Judges Association

11:25 - 11:55

Coffee Break

11:55 - 13:25

## Second Panel: Enhancing business accountability for human rights.

*The role of the private sector in the MENA region is pivotal yet complex. This panel will explore how businesses can navigate challenging economic and regulatory environments while upholding human rights standards, focusing on actionable strategies to balance economic survival with ethical responsibilities.*

*Businesses often prioritize survival over adherence to international human rights standards, particularly in the banking sector, where many fail to implement human rights due diligence or engage affected populations, neglecting the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs). This regulatory failure, combined with corruption and crony capitalism, exacerbates human rights violations as businesses exploit lower labor standards.*

*Corporate transparency and accountability in MENA countries are minimal, hindering the disclosure of financial and ownership information and allowing corruption and abuses to persist. No MENA country has developed a national action plan to implement the UNGPs, despite calls from the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.*

*Conflict zones like Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Palestine heighten the risks of human rights abuses. Businesses and humanitarian organizations must find ways to mitigate these risks, as some companies finance militia groups and humanitarian aid is often diverted to armed actors, contributing to war profiteering.*

*Effective grievance mechanisms are crucial for addressing human rights abuses within businesses, providing victims access to remedies and ensuring accountability. This panel will discuss potential solutions to improve business compliance with human rights standards and recommend steps to enhance due diligence and foster a more transparent business environment in conflict-affected regions.*

### Moderator:

- **Mr. Philipp Bremer**  
Director of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung  
Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa

### Experts:

- **Ms. Mashaal Mohammed Al Sulaiti**  
Founder & Chairperson, Mashaal Alsulaiti Law Firm
- **Dr. Riyad Fakhri**  
Professor of Law, Universite Hassan 1, Settat, Morocco
- **Ms. Takoua Tayari**  
Business and Human Rights National Analyst - United Nations Development Programme

13:25 - 14:55

Lunch Reception

14:55 - 16:25

### Third Panel: The Implementation of International Environmental Treaties in Arab States.

*Temperatures in the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean are rising almost twice as fast as the rest of the world, according to experts. In 2023, the region witnessed several tragic natural disasters: earthquakes in Turkey, Syria and Morocco killed tens of thousands of people, Storm Daniel wiped out entire villages in Libya, where thousands remain missing and many more have lost their entire existences. While the dramatic numbers relating to the casualties are caused by many factors, climate change is proven to substantially contribute to the consequences of earthquakes and floods (a rapid attribution study suggested greenhouse gas emissions made storms like Daniel 50 times more likely).*

*Global efforts to fight climate change remain slow, with progress not as substantial as it could be. International environmental treaties are signed, but often lack accountability mechanisms and flexibility, which hinders their implementation. The UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28) held in Dubai in November 2023 highlighted these issues but also showcased initiatives and commitments from various countries.*

*As we reflect on the outcomes of COP 28 and look towards the future, the question remains: how can we improve international cooperation and the implementation of international environmental treaties? This panel aims to investigate this, particularly the treaty of Paris, in the Arab States, while also acknowledging the UAE's role as the host of a major climate change summit. By examining the region, including the initiatives and commitments showcased at COP 28, the panel seeks to assess the legal progress, challenges, and level of dedication demonstrated by Arab States in addressing environmental challenges and climate change. The insights gained from this analysis will contribute to identifying gaps, opportunities, and best practices for effective environmental governance and climate justice, ultimately fostering greater collaboration and advancing sustainable development in the Arab States and globally.*

#### Moderator:

- **Prof. Damilola Olawuyi**

SAN- Professor of Law and UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development, HBKU; Chair of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities (ASSELLMU)

#### Experts:

- **Dr. Darina Saliba Abi Chedid**

Member of the UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES Governing Council;  
Faculty member at Qatar University

- **Dr. Romana Schweiger**

Programme Manager – Security Sector Reform  
Rule of Law Programme, United Nations Development Programme Iraq

- **Ms. Elena Athwal**

Research Fellow, UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development  
and S.J.D candidate, HBKU College of Law

16:25 - 16:35

Closure of the first day

## SECOND DAY: THURSDAY, 24TH OCTOBER, 2024

09:00 - 09:20 *Arrival & Registration*

09:20 - 09:30 **Opening remarks** by **Professor Damilola S. Olawuyi**  
SAN– Professor of Law and UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development, HBKU; Chair of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities (ASSELLMU)

### 09:30 - 11:00 **Fourth Panel: Artificial Intelligence (AI) – How do we best Use and Prepare for it in the Judiciary, Government and Legal Practice?**

*Artificial Intelligence (AI), with Large Language Models (LLM) such as ChatGPT, has a massive and fast-growing impact on legal practice. Already now, entire legal briefs and judgements are written by software, with just a few key points or words needed. The integration of AI will profoundly transform the legal field. For years to come it will reshape the way legal professionals operate and significantly influence the judicial system. Labor-intensive tasks will be streamlined; contract review, legal research, and document analysis will become easier, enhancing efficiency and accuracy. Predictive analytics and data-driven insights will enable lawyers to make more informed decisions, which will potentially reduce legal costs and expedite case resolutions.*

*The global discussion is fully underway. The proliferation of AI in the legal realm raises complex ethical, labor, and regulatory questions: Will legal jobs be lost – or will they just become time-efficient? Should the access and usage of AI and ChatGPT be restricted? Or should it be fully embraced? Most importantly: How will AI and its implications for the legal system and practice be controlled, including issues of bias and accountability? How do we balance the opportunities and challenges posed by AI, as the legal field navigates this technological revolution? All of these questions will be tackled by our panelists.*

**Moderator:**

- **Me. Rany Sader**  
President of Youssef SADER Foundation for Legal Culture

**Experts:**

- **Mr. Georges Abi Saab**  
General Counsel at Ooredoo Group
- **Mr. Khaled Shivji**  
Senior Technology Lawyer and Former Regional General Counsel for Microsoft in Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait
- **Dr. Aseel Zimmo**  
Corporate and Commercial Law Counsel, dispute resolution advisor, compliance advisor

11:00 - 11:30 **Coffee Break**

11:30 - 13:00

## **Fifth Panel: Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Legal Reforms and Challenges in the MENA Region**

*The rise of entrepreneurship and innovation is crucial for the MENA region's economic diversification and long-term development. From tech startups in Dubai to renewable energy projects in North Africa, innovative enterprises are reshaping the economic landscape. However, a supportive legal framework is necessary to promote innovation, protect intellectual property (IP), facilitate investment, and encourage cross-border trade. This panel will explore the legal challenges and reforms needed to foster a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.*

*Despite the region's potential, many MENA countries have underdeveloped legal frameworks for entrepreneurs, who often face bureaucratic hurdles, unclear regulations, and limited access to capital. Additionally, slow digitalization in legal processes hinders startups' competitiveness on a global scale.*

*To overcome these barriers, what steps are necessary to create a more efficient legal framework for startups? Strengthening IP protection is also vital, as weak enforcement discourages entrepreneurs from developing their ideas. Aligning patent laws, trademarks, and copyrights with international standards is essential for securing investment and protecting innovations.*

*Can the MENA region enhance its IP laws to foster innovation, and how would this affect local and international investment? Moreover, legal reforms are needed to incentivize venture capital and investment frameworks, ensuring startups have access to funding through angel investors, venture capital, or public-private partnerships.*

*What legal changes are necessary to unlock venture capital investment in the MENA region? Additionally, it's important to examine legal frameworks that enable women, youth, and marginalized communities to engage in entrepreneurial ventures, promoting inclusivity.*

*By addressing these challenges and exploring practical legal solutions, the panel aims to provide insights on creating a supportive legal environment for entrepreneurship and innovation, contributing to economic growth and diversification. Discussions will focus on key reforms, including modernizing commercial laws and strengthening legal infrastructures to attract international partnerships.*

### **Moderator:**

- **Ms. Cristina Porumb**

Workforce and Organizational Design Manager at Qatar Foundation  
Juris Doctor Candidate at Hamad Bin Khalifa University College of Law

### **Experts:**

- **Ms. Mona Daraei**

General Counsel & Compliance (Qatar and Kuwait) Siemens Energy

- **Mr. Khaled Al Rashed**

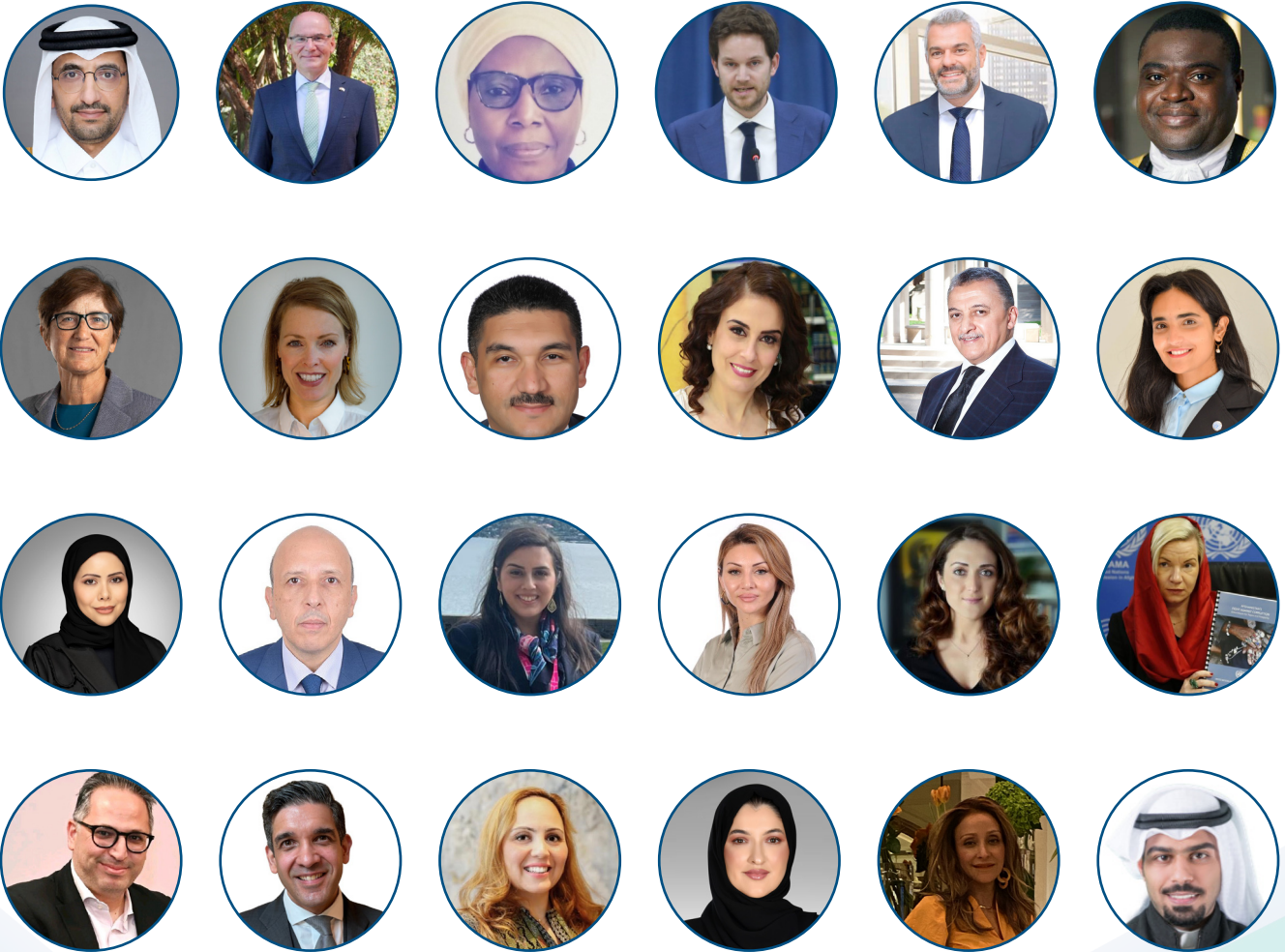
PhD student, holding an LLM in Intellectual Property and Franchise Legal Frameworks, as well as a professional certification in Legal Technology from MIT and ESADE  
Founder and CEO of Oqood. ai, founder of LegalTech MENA, and co-founder of Tentative

- **Ms. Suzanna Kalendzhian**

VP Legal Operations and Strategy Consilio LLC

<b>13:00 - 13:30</b>	<b>Closing Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Mr. Philipp Bremer</b> Director of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa</li><li>● <b>Me. Rany Sader</b> President of Youssef SADER Foundation for Legal Culture</li><li>● <b>Dean Susan L. Karamanian</b> College of Law, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar</li></ul>
<b>13:30 - 15:30</b>	<b>Lunch Reception</b>

## BIOGRAPHIES OF KEYNOTE SPEAKERS, HOSTS AND LEGAL EXPERTS





## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### HIS EXCELLENCY IBRAHIM BIN ALI BIN ISSA AL HASSAN AL MOHANNADI

#### Biography

His Excellency Ibrahim bin Ali bin Issa Al Hassan Al Mohannadi was appointed as Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs in January 2024.

#### Career

His Excellency the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs has held several positions in the legal sector. Between 2013 and 2024, he served as the Director of the Legal Affairs Department at the Amiri Diwan with a ministerial rank. Before that, he worked in various entities across Qatar, including the Armed Forces, where he held the rank of second lieutenant between 2004 and 2005.

His Excellency has participated in many joint professional committees in the legal field locally and internationally. He prepared and reviewed various regional and international publications and agreements. His Excellency also took part in legal meetings around the world.

#### Education

His Excellency obtained a bachelor's degree in Law from Durham University in England, graduating with honours. He also holds a master's degree in Law from the University of Swansea in Wales, where he graduated with both distinction and honours. His Excellency has undertaken training courses and programs specialising in building leadership skills and decision-making strategies at local and international institutions.

#### Responsibilities

As the Minister of Justice and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, His Excellency oversees all issues concerning the Ministry of Justice and the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, including:

Promoting and developing the legal and legislative framework to achieve the Qatar National Vision 2030. Improving services provided by the Ministry of Justice and its various subsidiaries.

Raising the standard of laws in government entities and developing their practical capabilities and skills.

Promoting legal awareness.

Organising the Cabinet, implementing its decisions and overseeing all its financial and administrative affairs.

Overseeing the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers.

Representing the State of Qatar at regional and international conferences and meetings.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### HIS EXCELLENCY LOTHAR FREISCHLADER

Lothar Freischlader was born in Mainz, Germany, in May 1960. He pursued higher education in Medieval and Modern History, Political Science, and Law, specializing in Public Law. Freischlader studied at the Universities of Mainz and Dijon, earning his Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in 1986.

In May 1987, he embarked on a distinguished career in diplomacy by joining the German Foreign Service as an Attaché. His early assignments included serving as a Press and Political Officer at the German Embassy in Riyadh in June 1989 and later as Chargé d’Affaires ad interim at the Embassy in Doha from January to March 1991.

Following his time in the Gulf region, Freischlader held various significant positions around the world. In August 1991, he was appointed as a Political Officer at the German Embassy in Washington, followed by his posting to the Federal Foreign Office’s Middle East Division in August 1994. He took on the role of Chargé d’Affaires ad interim at the Embassy in Praia, Cape Verde, in July 1997.

In August 1999, he transitioned to economic diplomacy as the Economic Counsellor at the Embassy in Stockholm. He then moved to the

Chancellery of Thuringia in April 2001, where he served as Head of Division for International Affairs.

Freischlader’s career continued to gain momentum with key postings, including First Counsellor for Political Affairs at the Embassy in Paris in August 2004, and later as Diplomatic Adviser to the Federal Minister of the Interior, Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble, in March 2006.

In August 2009, Freischlader assumed leadership as Head of Division for OSCE and Council of Europe Affairs at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin. Three years later, in August 2012, he became Minister and Deputy Head of Mission (DHM) at the German Embassy in Tehran.

His next major appointment took him to Australia, where he served as Consul General in Sydney from July 2015. In August 2018, Freischlader returned to Europe to head the Division for Foreign, Security, and Economic Cooperation Affairs at the Federal Press and Information Office.

In November 2019, Freischlader became Director of the Press and Communications Department at the German Embassy in Paris. A year later, in August 2020, he was appointed German Ambassador to Mozambique, where he served until July 2023.

Currently, Lothar Freischlader holds the prestigious position of German Ambassador to Qatar, a role he has undertaken since July 2023.

Throughout his career, Freischlader has been recognized with various honors, including being named “Chevalier de l’ordre national du mérite” by French President Jacques Chirac on 15 November 2004. He also received the “Großes Ehrenzeichen für Verdienste um die Republik Österreich” (“Grand Medal for Merits on the Republic of Austria”) from Austrian Minister of Interior Ms. Maria Fekter on 13 February 2009.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### JUDGE IMANI ABOUD

Justice Imani Daud Aboud is a national of Tanzania and the current President of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Court).

Elected Judge of the African Court in July 2018. Re-elected as African Court Judge in 2020 and a year later was elected President of the African Court for two-year period (2021-2023) and re-elected in the position of President of the African Court for the second term (2023-2025) on the 6th of June 2023. Justice Aboud holds a Master of Laws (University of Malta) and a Bachelor of Laws (University of Dar es Salaam).

Prior to her election as President of the Court, Justice Aboud was a Presiding Judge of the High Court of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam. Before serving in the High Court, she had held several key positions both in the judiciary and public service, including as Assistant Director in the President's Office (Public Service Management) and State Attorney at the Attorney General's Chambers. She was also involved in the preparation of Tanzania's periodic reports on human rights submitted to United Nations and other monitoring bodies such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Justice Aboud has also represented the Government Tanzania at various international meetings or served on bodies involved in human rights, international justice and governance. She was a Member of the Board of Directors of the International Association of Women Judges (IAWJ), representing the Africa Region; the Advisory Board of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Citizen for Justice (CFJ); and the Monitoring Team assigned by the United Nations Mechanism for the International Criminal Tribunal (MICT) on the 1994 Tutsi genocide cases.

Justice Aboud has also served as Vice Chairperson of the Independent Review Electoral Commission (IREC or Krigler Commission) in Kenya. The Commission was formed to facilitate the work of the Panel of Eminent Personalities under the leadership of the late UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan. The Commission's responsibility was to review the 2007 election process in Kenya.

Justice Aboud has an extensive experience as expert in various national judicial and human rights committees and institutions.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE HOSTS



### ATTORNEY PHILIPP BREMER

Philipp Bremer has been Director of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Rule of Law Programme Middle East and North Africa, based in Beirut, Lebanon, since July 2021. Previously, he worked as an attorney-at-law for an international law firm in Düsseldorf, Germany for 3 1/2 years, during which time he also spent six months as an on-site external advisor in the Litigation Communications Department of an international German car manufacturer. He studied law at the University of Mannheim and completed his legal traineeship, among other stations, at the European Parliament with Axel Voss, MEP in Brussels and in the office of the Minister of State Prof. Maria Böhmer, MP at the German Federal Foreign Office.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE HOSTS



### ATTORNEY RANY J. SADER

Rany Sader is a distinguished Lebanese lawyer and thought leader in the fields of intellectual property (IP), legal innovation, and business development. With over two decades of experience in the legal industry, he has established himself as a pivotal figure in the Arab world's legal community, particularly through his leadership at SADER Legal 1863, one of the region's most influential legal publishing and information companies.

Currently serving as the Chief Legal Innovation Officer at SADER, Rany is responsible for driving the company's efforts at the intersection of law and technology. His expertise lies in leveraging cutting-edge solutions like artificial intelligence (AI) and legal tech to transform traditional legal processes and enhance access to legal knowledge. His leadership has also extended to SADER's various initiatives in intellectual property, access to justice, knowledge dissemination, and the preservation of legal heritage.

As an IP specialist, Rany has made significant contributions to intellectual property rights protection across the Middle East. His work includes combating counterfeit and illicit trade, and he is recognized for his active role in promoting IP as a tool for economic development and brand protection. He has represented some of the world's leading brands, providing expert counsel in trademark law, copyright, and licensing. In addition to his legal practice, Rany serves as the Secretary General of the Arab Union for Trade Facilitation and Risk Management (AUTFRM),

where he contributes to regulatory improvements and trade facilitation across the Arab world.

Rany is the President of the Youssef SADER Foundation for Legal Culture, where he leads initiatives to promote legal education, research, and access to legal resources.

He is also actively involved in rule of law activities, playing a key role in promoting legal reforms and strengthening judicial independence in the region.

He is also the President of the Brand Protection Group Lebanon, where he works to protect intellectual property rights and combat counterfeiting across the country, advocating for strong legal frameworks to support businesses and innovation.

An innovator at heart, Rany is also at the forefront of the AI and legal tech revolution in the Middle East. He has spearheaded the LegalTech Evolution Program in collaboration with ZaKA and other partners, aiming to integrate AI into daily legal operations and enhance the legal profession's efficiency. His work in this space reflects his vision for a future where law and technology converge to improve access to justice and streamline legal processes.

Rany holds an impressive academic background, including a law degree from La Sagesse University, a Master's in Law from USEK, and several certificates from leading global law schools, including Harvard and George Washington Universities.

Beyond his professional career, Rany is an active participant in legal forums across the world and a speaker at major events. He is deeply involved in capacity-building efforts for young lawyers, partnering with universities and legal associations to promote legal education and awareness. He also plays a significant role in SADER's partnerships with leading institutions like LexisNexis, promoting collaborative projects that strengthen the rule of law and the legal industry in the Arab world. Outside of his legal endeavors, Rany has a diverse range of hobbies, including sports, literature, fashion, and the TBA industry.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE HOSTS



### PROF. DAMILOLA OLAWUYI

Professor Damilola S. Olawuyi, SAN is a Professor and UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development at Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar. He is also an Independent Expert on the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights.

A prolific and highly regarded scholar, Professor Olawuyi has published several articles and books on energy, environment, and natural resources law, including *Environmental Law in Arab States* (Oxford University Press, 2022), which received the 2023 American Society of International Law (ASIL) Certificate of Merit. In 2024, he received the H.E Judge Weeramantry International Justice Award in recognition of his scholarly contributions to environmental law and sustainable development.

Professor Olawuyi serves on the executive committees and boards of several organizations. He is Vice Chair of the International Law Association (ILA) globally; President of the Nigerian branch of the ILA; Chair of the Academic Advisory Group, International Bar Association's SEERIL; Chair of the Legal Education Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association; and Chair of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities (ASSELLMU).

Professor Olawuyi holds a doctorate (DPhil) in energy and environmental law from the University of Oxford; a Master of Laws (LLM) from Harvard University; and another LLM from the University of Calgary. He has been admitted as Barrister and Solicitor in Alberta, Canada; Ontario, Canada; and Nigeria. He is a regular media commentator on all aspects of natural resources, energy and environmental law.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE HOSTS



### DEAN SUSAN L. KARAMANIAN

Susan L. Karamanian is Dean of HBKU's College of Law. She previously held leadership positions at the American University of Sharjah and the George Washington University Law School. Susan is a member of the Executive Council of the American Society of International Law (ASIL) and was previously Vice President of ASIL. She was also President of the Washington Foreign Law Society. She has lectured on international law at the University of Paris, the OAS Academy of International Law, Tamil Nadu National Law School, the National Law School of India University, Bangalore, and the Hague Academy of International Law (Director of English Studies). She has presented two lectures ("The Right to Property under International Law" and "The Intersection of Public International Law and Private International Law") as part of the United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law. She is a trustee of the Center for American and International Law, where she chairs the Southwestern Institute for International and Comparative Law, and a director of Texas Appleseed. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the American Council on Germany, the American Bar Foundation, and the Texas Bar Foundation.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### DR. MARIE-CHRISTINE FUCHS

Marie-Christine Fuchs is a German lawyer. Currently she works as a press spokesperson in the German Federal Ministry of Justice in Berlin. She holds a PhD in Law from the Universität des Saarlandes, Saarbrücken, Germany and a Master in International Public Law, Law of the European Union and Human Rights at the Europainstitut of the same university. Besides being admitted to the bar in Germany she holds an undergraduate title in French law. She has been a research assistant at the Max Planck Institute for Foreign Private Law and Private International Law in Hamburg as well as a research fellow and assistant professor at the Europainstitut. From 2011 to 2015 she worked as a lawyer at an international law firm in Berlin. From 2016 to 2021, she directed the Rule of Law Programme for Latin America at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Bogotá, Colombia. She is the author of several publications on international, especially Latin American human rights law, inter alia.



## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### JUDGE DR. ADEL OMAR SHARIF

The Honorable Dr. Dr. (h.c.) Adel Omar Sherif is the First Deputy Chief Justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt. He arrived at the bench of the Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt in 2002 and served as a Deputy Chief Justice since then until he became the Senior, First Deputy Chief Justice early 2022. He holds a number of law degrees, including LL.B. in Law and Economics, Advanced Studies Diploma in Public Law, Advanced Studies Diploma in Administrative Law, and Ph.D. in Constitutional Law, from Cairo and Ain Shams Universities in Egypt.

After working in private practice for a short period of time, he was appointed to the Council of the State (Egypt's system for administrative judiciary), where he served between 1980 and 1992 in the various positions within the judicial section and other departments of the Council. In 1992, Justice Sherif moved to the Supreme Constitutional Court as an Assistant Counselor for the Commissioners' Body. He was promoted to full Counselor in 1993 and was assigned Acting Head of the Commissioners' Body that same year. In December 2002 he was promoted to the position of Deputy Chief Justice.

Prior to his arrival to the bench as a DCJ in 2002, Justice Sherif, had occasionally been delegated to serve, in addition to his main judicial mandate, as a part-time Legal Adviser to several governmental agencies, including the Prime Minister's Office, the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, the Cultural Palaces Organization, the Real-Estate Bank of Egypt, and the Cairo Regional Center for International Commercial Arbitration, and also served as a member of the Specialized National Councils, Administrative Development Sector. Following his arrival to the bench, he has continued to being member of the board in a number of academic institutions, including the law school at Helwan University in Cairo, the law school at Cairo University and many other legal associations and academic institutions, both inside Egypt and outside. At the international level, Justice Sherif served as Vice-President of the International Judicial Academy in Washington DC. Also, he is a Council Member of Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law (CIMEL) at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) of the University of London, a Member of the International Board of Judicial Advisers for the Judges Newsletter of The Hague Conference on Private International Law and a Member of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' Judicial Reference Group.

In the Environment and Sustainable Development area, Justice Sherif was a Member of both the Judicial Advisory Board to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); a Member of the Specialist Judicial Group and the Soil Specialist Group at the International Union for Conservation of the Nature (IUCN). In addition, Justice Sherif served as a Secretary General for the Arab Supreme Courts Union for the Protection of the Environment, and he was also a Member of the Executive Planning Committee of the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement, INECE, Washington, DC, USA.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS

Further, he also served for four years as a Member of the Steering Committee of the Commission on Environmental Law at the IUCN.

Justice Sherif was a Visiting Fellow at the Human Rights Law Centre of the College of Law, DePaul University in Chicago, IL in 1992; the Human Rights Centre of the University of Essex from 1993–94; the Federal Judicial Center in Washington D.C. in 1996; a Visiting Professor at the Faculty of Law, McGill University from 1998-99. Justice Sheif also taught Islamic Law and Comparative Law as a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Comparative Law at Dedman School of Law, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, USA, from 2008-2016.

Justice Sherif has contributed significantly to the development of the international judicial cooperation movement, especially throughout his direct engagement in the activities of various international judicial FORUMs, including his membership of the Judicial Group on Strengthen Judicial Integrity, who developed the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct. In addition, he often represents the Egyptian judicial community in international events, conferences and seminars. Moreover, he has served as the Rapporteur of a series of international human rights conferences known collectively as “The Cairo Conference” and for a number of regional and

international conferences’ in collaboration with UNEP, on Capacity Building of Judges on Environmental Law. Also, he founded and acted as Secretary General and Rapporteur of the annual gatherings of the African Chief Justices, known as ‘Cairo High Level Meeting for the Chief Justice and Presidents of African Constitutional Courts and Supreme Courts & Constitutional Councils’ since its beginning in 2017 until In 2005, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan awarded Justice Sherif ‘The Medal of the Constitution of Kazakhstan’. In addition, in 2007, the Ateneo de Davao University in the Philippines conferred upon Justice Sherif an ‘Honorary Doctorate Degree in Laws’. Also, in 2014, he was awarded ‘The Key of the City of Lucknow’ by the State of Uttar Pradesh, India. Further, in 2020, the 21st International Conference of Chief Justices of the World (The World Judiciary Summit 2020) convened at City Montessori School, Lucknow, India, awarded Justice Sherif ‘The Hope of Humanity Award’. Justice Sherif, in 2020, received for the second time, ‘The Medal of the Constitution of Kazakhstan’, awarded to him by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Justice Sherif has written and published widely on various legal aspects including human rights, constitutional issues, Islamic law and environmental law.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### JUDGE ALI DARWISH AL MSAÏMI

The secretary general of Jordanian judicial council, has LL.M degree (Master in law) in the comparative law from Brigham Young University, U.S.A (M.A) Master degree in private law from university of Jordan. Worked as a judge in appeal court of Amman, director of planning and development unit Judicial council, judge at the court of cassation technical office, Director of Human Rights and Family affairs Department in the Ministry of Justice, first instance court judge, chief of Criminal Court, Attorney General assistance, general prosecutor of Amman.

The vice president of the permanent committee of negotiation and drafting an international convention for judicial cooperation. Lecturer in the judicial institute of Jordan, International trainer in alternative sanction, human trafficking, human rights. juvenile law, money laundry, legal aid. Head of the working team to develop the alternative sanction in Jordan, Member of the judicial committee to resolve all legal matters regarding the alternative sanction in Jordan, Member of the steering committee for implement the justice sector strategy 2022-2026.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### JUDGE DR. NAJAT ABOU CHACRA

I am an Investigative Judge at the Military Court in Beirut since October 2010. During this period I have been, and currently am, in charge of several critical case files, related to terrorism, financing of terrorism, espionage, treason, war crimes, crimes against humanity, murders, torture, drugs trafficking, humans trafficking and minors involved in terrorism acts. In line with this occupation, I have occupied the position of Penal Unique Judge at Aley Court from June 2014 until October 2017, and the post of Civil Unique Judge at Aley Court competent of rental and real estate cases from March 2009 until June 2014.

I was a member in the First Instance Chamber in the South of Lebanon with full jurisdiction from October 2004 until March 2009.

I joined the judicial authority as an apprentice Judge and permanent member of the Court House in August 2001 and became an accredited judge in September 2004.

I have attended several training sessions and conferences, with both local and international organizations, such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Bank, FATF (The Financial Action Task Force) and CEF (The

International Monetary Fund's Middle East Center for Economic and Finance). I have participated in some of them as a trainee and in some of them as an expert trainer. I am an accredited trainer at the World Bank, and an Assessor at the FATF.

I am currently a member of the Lebanese National Team representing Lebanon in the ongoing assessment by FATF.

I have published many studies and articles in legal journals in Lebanon. In 2023, I have published a book entitled "Pages from the History of Lebanon in the Decisions of a Military Investigative Judge". In 2021, I have published a book entitled "Cyberterrorism in Lebanese Law/ Comparative Study". In 2022 I have supervised a Master thesis for a Captain in our Internal Security Forces entitled "The Efficiency of Lebanese Laws in Countering the Financing of Terrorism". This thesis allowed the Captain to be promoted to the rank of Major and obtained a Master's degree in Internal Security Studies from the University of Lyon 3 Jean Moulin in France in collaboration with the ENSP (Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Police/ France). I hold a PHD in Law from Beirut Arab University with an excellent grade. My doctoral thesis was entitled: "Guarantees of the Military Investigation in Lebanon between the National Law and the International Conventions, Comparative Study" I have obtained the Bachelor's Degree in Law from Beirut Arab University in 2000, a Diploma in Private Law in 2002, and a Master's Degree in International Criminal Law in 2021 with an excellent grade. The title of my thesis was "The Cyberterrorism Crimes under the circumstances of the Limitation of Legal Texts".

In June 22, 2024 I was elected president of the Lebanese Judges Association, for a 3 years mandate.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MS. TAKOUA TAYARI

Takoua Tayari is an expert at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Tunisia, specializing in Rule of Law, inclusive growth, and sustainable development. She is currently serving as a Business and Human Rights International Specialist (a detachment) at UNDP in Djibouti, where she is sharing her experience in the development of National Action Plans on Business and Human Rights to advance the topic in the Horn of Africa.

Throughout her career, Takoua has demonstrated a strong focus on stakeholder engagement and capacity building. She has played a pivotal role in advancing the Business and Human Rights agenda in Tunisia and the broader Arab region.

Takoua's contribution within the United Nations helped initiate the conversation on responsible business and national action plans for the first time in Tunisia. Her experience included a pilot project at the local and sectoral levels in Medenine (southeast Tunisia), where she was in charge of raising awareness among the fisheries value chain stakeholders, varying from the fishermen, women clam collectors, hotels, restaurants, to transformative and export companies. The field work Takoua conducted helped collect analysis, build trust, and engage dialogue with both public and private entities.

Takoua's commitment in advancing the Business and Human Rights agenda extends beyond her current role. She oversaw trainings for government officials, state-owned, multinational corporations, and private sector business on human rights due diligence and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Prior to her current position, Takoua Tayari served as a Business and Human Rights Technical Expert for the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Arab States. In this capacity, she conducted consultations to analyze emerging and evolving contexts and identify critical issues for programming on Business and Human Rights for Arab States. This contribution helped develop a road map for strategic regional programming, which included the primary elements to hold a regional dialogue on Business and Human Rights for Arab states.

During the past months, Takoua organized capacity building and awareness raising activities for country offices, including Morocco, targeting UNDP teams and national partners to equip them with the knowledge and resources to effectively integrate Business and Human Rights principles into their programming and operations.

Takoua Tayari supervised knowledge management on justice and human rights, where she provided analysis on national and international developments related to Rule of Law, Governance, and security within the United Nations Development Programme in Tunisia. She has organized awareness-raising activities, developed knowledge products, and managed partnerships with human rights institutions and civil society organizations.

Takoua kicked off her professional career as a university assistant professor, where she lectured on public and international law within Carthage University in Tunisia.

Takoua Tayari is pursuing a PhD in Business and Human Rights, further deepening her understanding of the complex intersection between these two fields.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MS. MASHAEL MOHAMMED AL SULAITI

Mashael Al Sulaiti is the Qatari founder and chairperson of Mashael Al Sulaiti Law Firm, a leading practice specializing in international arbitration, commercial law, and construction law. Since founding her firm in 2012, she has gained a reputation as a highly regarded arbitrator and legal counsel, representing clients in high-stakes, multi-million-dollar disputes across Qatar and the broader MENA region. Her work spans complex commercial, construction, and investment arbitrations, including notable cases such as representing an Italian joint venture in an ICC arbitration valued at 2 billion Qatari riyals, and acting as a party-appointed arbitrator in construction disputes exceeding 1 billion riyals.

Mashael's expertise has earned her recognition as an influential legal professional. She was recently honored with the Advocates Award at the Lexis Nexis Middle East Legal Awards 2024, and was named Lawyer of the Year in Infrastructure & Construction at the MENA Legal Community Awards 2024. These accolades reflect her exceptional contributions to the legal profession and her leadership in handling complex legal matters within the region.

In addition to her legal practice, Mashael is a respected scholar with influential publications on Qatari law, showcasing her deep understanding of both local and international legal frameworks. She holds an LLB and an LLM in International Commercial Law, both from the University of Swansea, United Kingdom, where she graduated with Merit. Mashael is actively involved in key legal and professional organizations, including the Qatari Lawyers Association, ICC Qatar, CIArb, and The Legal 500, among others.

Mashael is also deeply committed to giving back to the community. She contributes to pro bono legal work through the Qatar International Dispute Resolution Centre (QIDRC), offering support to individuals in need through their legal clinic. Additionally, she serves in honorary roles such as a member of the Qatari Business Women Association, a strategic legal partner with the Ehsan Elderly Foundation, and a board member of the Qatari British Business Forum.

Her leadership within the legal sector, combined with her philanthropic efforts, underscores her dedication to advancing Qatar's legal and business communities.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### PROF. RIYAD FAKHRI

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Prof. Riyad Fakhri is the Director of the Business Law Research Laboratory and a seasoned lawyer, arbitrator, and mediator. With numerous works, book chapters, and scientific articles published in indexed journals on business law, he is a recognized expert in the field. Serving as Vice President of the Association of Environmental Law Lecturers in Middle East and North African Universities (ASSELLMU), he has contributed to three collective books on environmental law and published extensively on environmental protection in Morocco, biodiversity, climate change law, and water resources in North Africa, with a focus on Sustainable Development Goals.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MS. ELENA ATHWAL

Elena I. Athwal is an S.J.D. Candidate (2027) at the Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) College of Law in Doha, Qatar. Elena is a graduate of Harvard Law School (2024), with an LL.M in Environmental & Energy Law and holds a J.D. from HBKU College of Law. Currently, she is a Research Fellow for the UNESCO Chair of Environmental Law & Sustainable Development at HBKU, as well as a Research Associate for the United Nations Working Group on Business & Human Rights. She is also the Global Media Officer for the International Law Association (ILA), and the Vice President of The Diwan. She is also a Research Associate for the Institute for Oil, Gas, Energy, Environment & Sustainable Development (OGEES), as well as an Associate Fellow for the Centre for Sustainable Development Law at the University of Cambridge (CISDL). During her time at Harvard Law, she was the LL.M. and Symposium Chair of the Harvard Human Rights Law Journal and the Harvard Environmental Law Society. She was the President of the Law Society of the HBKU Law School, and Founder and President of the HBKU Energy & Environmental Club. She is a member of the International Bar Association Section on Energy,

Environment, Natural Resources & Infrastructure Law (SEERIL), and works on oil and natural gas, climate change, international law, environmental law, and energy law. She has written several publications 1) 'Energy in WTO Law & Policy', in the Elgar Companion to WTO, Julien Chaisse & Christián Rodríguez-Chiffelle, eds (2022); 2) 'ESG Considerations for Midstream & Downstream Oil and Gas', in the Encyclopaedia of Midstream & Downstream Oil & Gas, Globe Law & Business (2022); 3) 'Law & Governance Innovations on Sustainability in Qatar: Current Approaches & Future Directions' (2022) Sustainable Qatar (Logan Cochrane & Reem Al Hababi eds), Springer Publishing; 4) Damilola S. Olawuyi & Elena I. Athwal, Addressing Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Risks of Net Zero Energy Transitions (forthcoming 2023), in Natural Resources Law and Policy for a Net Zero Energy Future: Addressing Sovereignty, Solidarity and Security Dimensions of Low Carbon Initiatives (DS Olawuyi, C Banet, H Mostert, MF Montoya & JJ Gonzalez M eds., Oxford University Press); among others. Elena was the research and editorial assistant for the Palgrave Handbook of Natural Gas & Global Energy Transitions, by Eduardo Pereira & Dr. Damilola Olawuyi (2022), examining the guiding principles of the role of natural gas in the global energy transition.



## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### DR. DARINA SALIBA ABI CHEDID

Dr. Darina Saliba Abi Chedid has more than a decade-long multidisciplinary academic and professional experience. She is currently a faculty member at Qatar University. She has served as Director of the UNESCO International Center for Human Sciences (CISH), in Lebanon from 2018 to 2023. During the past 14 years, she taught International Relations, International Law, Human Rights, International Organizations, and International Humanitarian Law, at different universities in Lebanon and France, such as Université Paris Saclay and Université Catholique de Lyon in France, and the Lebanese American University (LAU), Notre Dame University (NDU), Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK), Lebanese University, and the Lebanese Military Academy in Lebanon. She

has been a jury member of the scientific committee of the UNESCO Silk Roads Youth Research Grant since 2020 and was nominated in 2024 among the 5 international members of the Governing Council of the UNESCO-MOST BRIDGES for humanities-driven transdisciplinary sustainability science. She launched in 2022 the first "Historical Eco-Friendly Center" in the Arab region and has organized the International FORUM on Environmental Humanities as a parallel event to COP 27 in Sharm El Sheikh and COP28 in Dubai. She has prepared and organized multiple international conferences, trainings, and other academic activities and has many publications in the fields of law, human rights, and sustainable sciences.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MS. SUZANNA KALENDZHIAN

Suzanna Kalendzhian is a transformative leader in legal service delivery. She leverages AI, design, and legal technology to reshape how law firms and legal departments operate. As the VP of Legal Operations and Strategy at Consilio LLC, she spearheads AI-driven initiatives that enhance legal, governance, and compliance functions, driving operational efficiency and fostering innovation in organizations.

Suzanna founded the Legal Advice Middle East platform, an AI-powered legal services marketplace operating in 18 countries in the region. This platform expands access to justice through technology. Additionally, as an ambassador for the European Legal Technology Association (ELTA) in the UAE, she champions legal tech adoption and innovation.

Her methodology combines behavioral science, AI, and data analytics with a profound understanding of legal workflows, allowing her to deliver customized, impactful solutions. Suzanna has partnered with various organizations to streamline legal operations, enhance decision-making, and innovate compliance processes.

An accomplished author and thought leader, Suzanna co-authored the book *Technology, Innovation, and Access to Justice* for Edinburgh University Press. Recognized as the Most Innovative Woman in Legal Technology by the EMEA Awards, she continues to redefine the future of legal operations through AI and strategic innovation.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### DR. ROMANA SCHWEIGER

Dr Romana Schweiger, studied law with focus on international criminal law at the University of Vienna, where she also worked as researcher and lecturer on criminal law. In 2007, Ms Schweiger started to work for the United Nations at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. She also worked the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on Rule of Law, Justice and Human Rights Issues. Between 2017 and 2022, Ms Schweiger worked on diverse rule of law, justice, integrity and security reform issues in Afghanistan and Sudan with the UN Missions and on short assignments in Mali and Central African Republic. Since 2023, Ms Schweiger, leads the Rule of Law and Security Sector Reform Programme in UNDP in Iraq, in this role she conceptualized an environmental justice programme in close collaboration with Iraqi partners and currently implemented in collaboration with the UNESCO Chair on Environmental Law and Sustainable Development.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MR. GEORGES ABI SAAB

George Abi Saab is the General Counsel at Ooredoo Group since 2020, where he plays a pivotal role in managing and overseeing all legal aspects of the Group. In this capacity, he provides vital support to the Chairman and the Board of Directors on legal matters, develops the overarching legal strategy for mergers and acquisitions, and ensures the successful implementation and dissemination of these strategies. George collaborates closely with the strategy, digital, and finance teams to optimise financial, tax, and transaction structuring.

One of George's notable achievements was leading Ooredoo's M&A expansion such leading the acquisition in Iraq, Tunisia and Kuwait as well as obtaining a license in Myanmar as well as leading many corporate finance work such as a USD 1.25 billion sukuk issuance. In addition, Georges has been leading the implementation of the first compliance framework agreement at the Group level. This groundbreaking initiative aims to enhance understanding of the relevant laws and regulations across the company's business units. By doing so, it serves as a safeguard against violations and plays a crucial role in protecting the long-term sustainability of the business.

Currently, George is at the helm of a transformative project involving the sale and leaseback of up to 30,000 towers in Qatar, Kuwait, Algeria, Tunisia, Iraq, and

Jordan. This initiative represents a significant step towards establishing a jointly owned independent tower company through a cash and share deal. In addition, Georges is also leading the agencies carve out in Data Center and Fintech.

Prior to his current role, George served as the Senior Director and Head of Corporate Governance at Ooredoo Group. During his tenure, he spearheaded the development of the Corporate Governance policies and procedures framework. This framework was designed to enable the function to effectively meet its objectives and targets, in alignment with overall risk policies, procedures, and the Group's strategic direction.

George was also actively engaged in board governance, currently serving as the Board Secretary of Ooredoo Myanmar, Ooredoo Algeria and Ooredoo Tunisia.

With extensive experience in the legal and M&A fields, George has held significant positions in the industry, including Senior Associate at Baker & McKenzie in Saudi Arabia and Legal Affairs Manager at M1 Group (the Parent Company of Investcom). His contributions extend to the drafting of policy papers and laws, such as Lebanon's Consumer Protection Law and the Lebanese Trademark Law.

George's educational background includes a bachelor's degree in law from the University of La Sagesse, Lebanon and an LLM in Business Law from University of Westminster. Furthermore, his commitment to lifelong learning is evident in his completion of a mini MBA in Telecoms, Data Privacy & Technology from Harvard Business School, AML and Compliance Regulatory from Qatar Chamber of Commerce and in Intellectual Property Rights from the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MR. KHALED SHIVJI

With over two decades of experience in the technology sector, Khaled Shivji is a senior lawyer who works with governments, think-tanks, and business leaders to drive policy and complex transactions involving AI, cloud computing, cybersecurity, data protection diversity & inclusion and ESG.

Khaled's portfolio includes advocating for improving access to justice by leveraging AI, and digital transformation at all levels of the legal sector, judiciaries, and ministries of justice within the middle east.

Khaled has spoken at conferences organised by the International Institute for Communications, the Bar Association of Kuwait, and he was a member of the DIFC Courts' General Counsel FORUM contributing

thought leadership to the 'Courts of the Future' programme.

Khaled is a former senior attorney at Microsoft and has led legal teams and departments across the MENA and APAC regions serving DEWA, Aggreko and Expereo.

His academic accomplishments include a LL.M International Legal Practice, a LLB Law, and a B.Eng. Internet Engineering. Khaled is also a practising Solicitor (England & Wales).

He is based in Dubai with his family, and enjoys building communities, cycling, and progressing his passions for astrophysics, and AI.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### DR. ASEEL ZIMMO

Aseel Zimmo is an accomplished legal professional with over 20 years of experience, specializing in corporate and commercial law. Holding a PhD in Law from the London School of Economics and a master's degree in law from King's College, London.

She has a robust background in legal research, drafting, and compliance, with a particular expertise in digital transformation in courts. She was the project manager of Bahrain's judicial and legal digital transformation where over 50 e-services were launched.

Fluent in both English and Arabic, Aseel is qualified to practice law in New York and Jordan. She has served in several highprofile roles, including Managing Partner at The First Link in Bahrain, Legal Advisor to the Bahrain's Chief Justice and Ministry of Justice.

Her extensive experience includes advising on

litigation strategies, judicial reform, and data protection and privacy laws.

Aseel has drafted and reviewed key regulations, managed stakeholder relations, and successfully implemented innovative judicial performance dashboards and compliance frameworks.

Aseel is also an experienced educator, having taught law at prestigious institutions like the American University of Bahrain and University of Bahrain. She has extensive training in dispute resolution, arbitration, and mediation, and has been involved in high-level advisory roles for family business governance and government-related legal projects.

Her dedication to mentorship, leadership, and continuous learning is reflected in her careerlong commitment to fostering professional growth within her teams.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MS. CRISTINA PORUMB

Cristina Porumb is an accomplished professional with 15 years of experience in human capital strategic planning and organizational development. She is currently serving as Workforce Planning and Organizational Design Manager at Qatar Foundation. Throughout her career, she managed multiple human capital transformation projects and contributed to the development of human capital policies and programs in areas such as workforce capabilities development, the future of work (work flexibility, remote and hybrid work schedules), employee health and well-being, employee experience and engagement, employer value proposition, gender equity, diversity and inclusion, corporate culture, etc. She is a Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Associate and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (CI Arb).

Cristina is a third-year Juris Doctor (JD) student at Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), Qatar. She was awarded the inaugural Lord Thomas Prize by the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Center (QICDRC) in recognition of her academic excellence. Her research interests include governance

for sustainable development, innovation, technology, and intellectual property law. Cristina actively contributes to the HBKU community, having served as Vice President of the HBKU Students Representative Council for the academic year 2023-2024 and Director of Career Affairs at the HBKU Law Society for two consecutive academic years. She participated in various international competitions with HBKU, having won two moot court competitions organized by the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) Courts on the topics of space law, and digital economy law. She was a semi-finalist in the DLA Piper Sustainability Moot organized around COP 28 in the UAE, addressing legal issues related to sustainability and ESG. She is participating in the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, applying her knowledge of international commercial law and arbitration, and representing the HBKU College of Law internationally.

Cristina also holds a Master's Degree (with Distinction) in Strategic Business Unit Management from HEC Paris in Qatar. She is dedicated to leveraging her expertise in both the legal and business sectors to address societal and organizational challenges.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MS. MONA DARAEI

I am a seasoned legal professional with a strong track record of corporate leadership and a unique blend of technical prowess and a deep understanding of crucial domains. My profile is enriched by extensive corporate experience, including roles such as Secretary on the Board of Activities for Siemens Energy in Kuwait and Qatar. My key attributes include:

- Expertise in Complex Business Agreements
- Comprehensive understanding of business and commercial Law: possessing a solid foundation in business and commercial law, I ensure that all actions and decisions align seamlessly with legal requirements and regulations.
- Keen Business, Legal, and Regulatory Insight: My finely tuned acumen spans across commercial, legal, and regulatory landscapes, allowing me to make informed and judicious judgments.
- Proficiency in leading and supporting complex negotiations: I excel in both leading and providing invaluable support in high-stakes negotiations, leveraging my skills to achieve favorable outcomes.

- Mastery in contract drafting: my strong contract drafting abilities ensure that agreements are not only legally sound but also optimized for the best interests of the organization.

- Adept knowledge of risk management: I have a deep understanding of risk management principles, allowing me to proactively identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks, safeguarding the organization's interests.

In addition to my diverse skill set, I have served as the Secretary on the Board of activities for Siemens Energy in Kuwait and Qatar. This experience has honed my leadership abilities and provided valuable insights into corporate governance and strategic decision-making at the highest levels.

In summary, my profile is marked by a wide array of skills and expertise, complemented by a strong corporate background. I bring a holistic and valuable perspective to any organization, facilitating its success and stability while contributing to its strategic growth and governance.



## BIOGRAPHIES OF THE LEGAL EXPERTS



### MR. KHALED EL RASHED

PhD student at Sharjah University with an LLM in Intellectual Property and Franchise Law. Holds certifications in Legal Tech and Digital Transformation from MIT and ESADE. With 14 years of experience as a corporate lawyer, he founded Taqneen Law Firm and has consulted on franchise and business development for regional, international, and government entities, including the Saudi Franchise Project. He has contributed to international Legal Tech and Legal Design conferences and projects, such as with Booking.com and Dubai Design Lab. Currently, he is a mentor for Legal Tech startups in MENA and the founder of Oqood AI, an AI-powered legal workspace transforming legal services.

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