



Arab Center Washington DC
المركز العربي واشنطن دي سي

NINTH
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE

The 2024 Elections amid the Gaza War

The Future of US Democracy,
Foreign Policy, and Global Standing

SEPTEMBER 26, 2024
THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, WASHINGTON DC

About the Conference

Arab Center Washington DC's 9th Annual Conference is dedicated to discussing the 2024 presidential elections in the United States amid US policy toward the Gaza war. Experts will assess the current state and future of US democracy, explore the impact of the election results on US foreign policy in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and examine the potential changes in US global power and influence in light of US policy toward Israel's war on Gaza. The various conference sessions will also address the implications of the election outcomes for democracy and human rights in MENA, for international law and the global law-based order, for regional geopolitics and shifting alliances, and for the future of US foreign policy.

Agenda

9:20 AM

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Khalil E. Jahshan

Executive Director, Arab Center Washington DC

Tamara Kharroub

Deputy Executive Director and Senior Fellow,
Arab Center Washington DC

9:30 AM

OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The Future of US Foreign Policy in a Changing World: Challenges, Prospects, and Recommendations

Over the past two decades, US foreign policy objectives in the MENA region have largely failed, from the invasion of Iraq to the war in Afghanistan and US interventions in Syria, Libya, and Yemen. Today, as the US continues to support Israel's war on Gaza, it stands isolated in the world community, in opposition to international law, and at odds with its own population that is demanding an end to the war. This opening session will address the legacies of US foreign policy, the challenges facing the United States today, the factors impacting foreign policymaking in Washington, and prospects for reforming US politics, as well as recommendations for the next administration.

Jeffrey D. Sachs

Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University; President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network; SDG Advocate for UN Secretary General António Guterres; Former Special Advisor to UN Secretaries-General Kofi Annan, Ban Ki-moon, and António Guterres

Khalil E. Jahshan – Moderator

Executive Director, Arab Center Washington DC

10:00 AM

PANEL I

The Outcome of the US Presidential Election: Polling, Predictions, and the Impact of the Gaza War

This session specifically focuses on the potential outcomes of the 2024 presidential elections in the United States, exploring polls and surveys of various demographic groups and from different swing states. Panelists will discuss the impact of the Gaza war and US policy toward Israel/Palestine on election campaigning and results, the significance of the 'uncommitted' vote, the role of Arab and Muslim Americans especially in swing states, the politics and policies of the Democratic Party vis-à-vis progressive issues and voters, the prospects for a third-party candidate, and the structure of the two-party politics and electoral system in the United States.

Layla Elabed

Organizer, We the People Action Fund; Campaign Manager, Listen to Michigan

Osama Abu Irshaid

Executive Director and Board Member, American Muslims for Palestine (AMP)

Dalia Mogahed

Scholar and Former Director of Research, Institute for Social Policy and Understanding

James J. Zogby

Co-founder and President, Arab American Institute (AAI); Director, Zogby Research Services

Yousef Munayyer – Moderator

Head of Palestine/Israel Program and Senior Fellow, Arab Center Washington DC

Agenda

11:15 AM COFFEE BREAK

11:30 AM PANEL II

Threats to Democracy at Home and Abroad: Human Rights and Freedoms in US Domestic and Foreign Policy

Cracks in US democracy have been exposed in recent years by several developments, including the authoritarian tendencies of President Trump, the January 6 insurrection, anti-BDS legislation, and the violent crackdown on anti-war protests on college campuses. Additionally, US foreign policy regarding democratic governance and rights and freedoms in the MENA region has been consistently lacking under both Republican and Democratic administrations, with only slight differences in rhetoric. This session aims to examine the threats to democracy in the United States and in MENA, discuss US foreign policy toward democracy and human rights in the region, explore the impact of shifting regional and global alliances on prospects for democracy, and provide recommendations for the next administration regarding long-term US interests in the Arab world.

Lana Baydas

Program Director, Center for Human Rights,
American Bar Association

Matthew Duss

Executive Vice President, Center for
International Policy

Kenneth Roth

Charles and Marie Robertson Visiting Professor,
Princeton School for Public and International
Affairs; Former Executive Director, Human
Rights Watch

Sarah Leah Whitson

Executive Director, Democracy for the Arab
World Now (DAWN)

Laurie King – Moderator

Teaching Professor of Anthropology, Georgetown
University; Member of the Executive Board, Arab
Center Washington DC

12:45 PM LUNCH

1:00 PM LUNCHEON KEYNOTE CONVERSATION

The Gaza War and the Role of the International Community: Global Political, Legal, and Humanitarian Implications

Since October 7, 2023, Israel has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians in Gaza, the majority of whom are women and children. As Israel continues to target journalists, healthcare professionals, and humanitarian aid workers, there are at least 93,000 Palestinians injured and thousands arrested and tortured, including sexually assaulted, while the majority of Gaza's population suffers from displacement, famine, disease, and widespread destruction. This session will assess the role of western democracies—who claim to uphold the values of human rights, international law, and humanitarian causes—in supporting and sustaining the human-made devastation in Gaza, the obligations of the United Nations and its member states, and the global short- and long-term implications of the failures to protect civilians, prevent genocide, and end the war.

Martin Griffiths

Former Under-Secretary-General for
Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief
Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of
Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations

Yara M. Asi – Moderator

Assistant Professor, School of Global Health
Management and Informatics, University of
Central Florida; Nonresident Senior Fellow,
Arab Center Washington DC

Agenda

1:45 PM

PANEL III

US Global Influence amidst the Gaza War: Implications for US Foreign Policy and the International Law-Based Order

The wars in Gaza and Ukraine have exposed the hypocrisy and double standards of the West, especially the world's superpower the United States. For months after October 7, the US defied the international community and violated its own laws and obligations by blocking a ceasefire resolution at the United Nations Security Council, obstructing the work of the ICJ and the ICC in preventing genocide and violations of international law, and continuing to fund and militarily supply Israel's onslaught in Gaza, all of which have undermined US global standing and ability to invoke international law elsewhere. This session will discuss the impact of American policy toward the Gaza war on its global influence and standing, implications for the rules-based order and international law after Gaza, and recommendations for US foreign policy under the next administration after the 2024 presidential elections.

Phyllis Bennis

Fellow and Director of the New Internationalism Project, Institute for Policy Studies

H. A. Hellyer

Senior Associate Fellow in International Security Studies, The Royal United Services Institute (RUSI); Non-resident Scholar, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Wadie E. Said

Professor of Law and Dean's Faculty Fellow, University of Colorado School of Law

Sarah Yager

Washington Director, Human Rights Watch

Tamara Kharroub – Moderator

Deputy Executive Director and Senior Fellow, Arab Center Washington DC

3:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT

Opening Keynote Speaker

Jeffrey D. Sachs

Jeffrey D. Sachs is a University Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University, where he directed the Earth Institute from 2002 until 2016. He is President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, Co-Chair of the Council of Engineers for the Energy Transition, Commissioner of the UN Broadband Commission for Development, academician of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences at the Vatican, and Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah Honorary Distinguished Professor at Sunway University. Sachs has been Special Advisor to three United Nations Secretaries-General and currently serves as an SDG Advocate under Secretary General António Guterres. His most recent books are *The Ages of Globalization: Geography, Technology, and Institutions* (2020) and *Ethics in Action for Sustainable Development* (2022). Sachs spent over twenty years as a professor at Harvard University, where he received his B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees. He has also received 42 honorary doctorates, and his recent awards include the 2022 Tang Prize in Sustainable Development, the Legion of Honor by decree of the President of the Republic of France, and the Order of the Cross from the President of Estonia.



Luncheon Keynote Speaker



Martin Griffiths X@MARTINGRIFFS

Martin Griffiths served as the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) at the United Nations from 2021 to 2024. While in this position, he played a key role as a diplomat and mediator in navigating the United Nations' humanitarian response during a time of some of the most intractable crises in places like Gaza, Syria, Sudan, and Turkey. Prior to his tenure at OCHA, Griffiths was the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen from 2018 to 2021. Throughout his career, he also served as the first Executive Director of the European Institute of Peace and an adviser to all three Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for Syria and Deputy Head of the UN Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS). From 1999 to 2010, Griffiths was the founding Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva, where he specialized in developing political dialogue between governments and insurgents in a range of countries across Asia, Africa, and Europe. Griffiths also worked in the British diplomatic service and for various international humanitarian organizations, including UNICEF, Save the Children, and Action Aid. In 1994, he became the Director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva and, from 1998 to 1999, served as Deputy to the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator in New York. He has also served as UN Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes and in the Balkans. Griffiths holds a master's degree in Southeast Asian studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London and is a qualified barrister. He speaks English and French.

Panelists



Lana Baydas X@LANABAYDAS

Lana Baydas is Program Director at the American Bar Association Center for Human Rights. Prior to joining the ABA, she was a senior fellow with the Human Rights Initiative (HRI) at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where she led research and policy efforts related to closing civic space. Baydas held posts at headquarters and in field operations with the United Nations, Crisis Action, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. She holds a Ph.D. and LL.M. in public international law from the University of Glasgow in Scotland and a B.A. in political science from the American University of Beirut in Lebanon.



Phyllis Bennis X@PHYLLISBENNIS

Phyllis Bennis is a fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington DC, where she directs the Institute's New Internationalism Project, focusing on the Middle East, particularly Palestinian rights, US militarism, and UN issues. She is also a fellow of the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam. In 2001, she helped found the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, and now serves on the national board of Jewish Voice for Peace as well as the board of the Afro-Middle East Center in Johannesburg. Bennis worked as a journalist at the UN for ten years, focusing on US domination of the UN leading up to the Gulf War, economic sanctions on Iraq, international interventions, and US foreign policy in the Middle East. She has also served as an informal adviser to several top UN officials on Middle East issues and was twice shortlisted to become the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Bennis regularly contributes to and frequently appears on US and international radio and television and has authored and edited numerous books on Palestine, Iraq, the UN and the New World Order. Bennis has written and edited 11 books. Some of her most recent publications are *Ending the Iraq War: A Primer* (2008), *Understanding the US-Iran Crisis: A Primer* (2008), and *Understanding the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Primer* (7th ed. 2019).

Panelists

Matthew Duss X@MATTDUSS

Matthew Duss is Executive Vice President at the Center for International Policy (CIP). Before joining CIP, he was a visiting scholar in the American Statecraft Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. From 2017–22, Duss was foreign policy advisor to Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt). From 2014–17, he was the president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace. From 2008–14, Duss was a National Security and International Policy analyst at the Center for American Progress, where his work focused on the Middle East and U.S. national security, and as director of the Center's Middle East Progress program. He travels frequently to the Middle East, meeting with government officials, analysts, journalists, and civil society activists. Duss's work has been widely published, including in The New York Times, The Washington Post, Foreign Affairs, The Nation, The American Prospect, and Foreign Policy. Duss has an M.A. in International Studies from the University of Washington's Henry M. Jackson School and a B.A. in political science from the University of Washington.



Layla Elabed X@LULUELABED

Layla Elabed is a regional community organizer with 'We the People MI', amassing over a decade of experience organizing within the Arab American and Muslim American community of Michigan. Layla specializes in electoral organizing and power building to grow a multi-racial, progressive, and working class coalition. She is the co-founder and co-director of the Uncommitted National Movement, and campaign manager of Listen to Michigan, earning a national voter base and coalition of anti-voters to object US policy toward the Gaza war and bring an end to Israel's genocide and occupation of Palestinians. Layla is the daughter of Palestinian immigrants and one of 14 siblings. She is now raising children of her own, three proud Palestinian American daughters.



H.A. Hellyer X@HAHELLYER

H.A. Hellyer is currently a Senior Associate Fellow in International Security Studies at the Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security (RUSI) and a nonresident scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Hellyer previously served as a nonresident Fellow in Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution and as the first Arab world-based Senior Practice Consultant at the Gallup Organization, where he analyzed public opinion data worldwide. Formerly Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Centre for the Middle East, Hellyer was also appointed as fellow at the Institute for Strategic and International Studies in Malaysia. He has also held positions at academic institutions including the University of Warwick, the American University in Cairo as a professor of law, at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University as research associate, and as visiting professor at RZS-CASIS at the University of Technology in Malaysia. Hellyer's insights on current events are regularly sought by the international media networks such as CNN and the BBC, with op-eds for publications like the Washington Post, Foreign Policy, the New York Times, the Guardian, Politico, the Financial Times, New Straits Times, and Daily News Egypt. His publications in his specialist subject areas include 7 books, more than 20 book chapters, journal articles, and monographs to various academic presses. Hellyer received his B.A.-level law degree at the University of Sheffield's School of Law, his M.A. in international political economy at the University of Sheffield's Department of Politics, and his multidisciplinary Ph.D. in the social sciences at the University of Warwick as a UK Economic and Social Research Council scholar.



Osama Abu Irshaid X@DRABUIRSHAIID

Osama Abu Irshaid is the Executive Director and a board member of American Muslims for Palestine (AMP). He is also a board member of the U.S. Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO), an umbrella organization of eight major national American Muslim organizations. Abu Irshaid lectures frequently on Middle East and American politics. He is a regular commentator on Palestinian and Middle Eastern affairs as well as on American domestic and foreign policy on various Arabic satellite television channels, such as Al Jazeera. Abu Irshaid has authored or coauthored several books in Arabic and published dozens of studies and articles in Arabic and English on issues relevant to the Middle East and its political climate. He is the co-author of the study *Hamas: Ideological Rigidity and Political Flexibility*, which was published by the United States Institute of Peace in 2009. Abu Irshaid completed his Ph.D. in Political Science at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom.



Panelists



Dalia Mogahed [X@DMOGAHED](#)

Dalia Mogahed is a scholar at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU). She is the former Director of Research at ISPU, where she led the organization's pioneering research and thought leadership programs on American Muslims. Mogahed is also the former Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, where she led the analysis of surveys of Muslim communities worldwide. With John L. Esposito, she co-authored the book *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*. President Barack Obama appointed Mogahed to the President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships in 2009. She was invited to testify before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations about US engagement with Muslim communities. In 2016, Mogahed's TED talk was named one of the top TED talks that year. She is a frequent expert commentator in global media outlets and international forums. Mogahed is also the CEO of Mogahed Consulting. She received her B.S. from the University of Wisconsin and her M.B.A. at the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh.



Kenneth Roth [X@KENROTH](#)

Kenneth Roth is the Charles and Marie Robertson Visiting Professor at the Princeton School for Public and International Affairs. Until August 2022, he served for nearly three decades as the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, one of the world's leading international human rights organizations, which operates in some 100 countries. Before that, Roth was a federal prosecutor in New York and for the Iran-Contra investigation in Washington. He has conducted numerous human rights investigative and advocacy missions around the world, meeting with dozens of heads of state and countless ministers. Roth is quoted widely in the media and has written hundreds of articles on a wide range of human rights issues, devoting special attention to the world's most dire situations, the conduct of war, the foreign policies of the major powers, the work of the United Nations, and the global contest between autocracy and democracy. Roth is currently writing a book, *Righting Wrongs*, to be published by Knopf, about the strategies used by Human Rights Watch to defend human rights, drawing on his years of experience. Roth received his B.A. in history from Brown University and his J.D. from Yale Law School.



Wadie E. Said

Wadie Said is a professor of law at the University of Colorado School of Law. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Colorado, he was the Miles and Ann Loadholt Chair in Law at the University of South Carolina. He has also been a senior visiting fellow at Georgetown University-Qatar, a visiting professor at UC Davis Law, and a visiting professor in the Law and Society Program at the University of California, Santa Barbara, as well as an assistant federal public defender in the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Middle District of Florida, where he represented one of the defendants in *U.S. v. Al-Arian*, a complex terrorism conspiracy case. Upon graduation from law school, he served as law clerk to Chief Judge Charles P. Sifton of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York and as a litigation associate in the New York office of Debevoise and Plimpton, where he helped coordinate the firm's pro bono political asylum program. Said's scholarship analyzes the challenges inherent in adjudicating issues that touch on foreign policy, national security, and criminal law more broadly. His most recent work has appeared in the *Wisconsin Law Review*, the *UCLA Law Review*, and the *South Carolina Law Review*, among others. He is the author of *Crimes of Terror* (Oxford University Press 2015, paperback 2018), a comprehensive study of modern terrorism prosecution, covering such topics as coercive interrogation, the use of informants, and the ban on providing material support to designated foreign terrorist organizations. He teaches courses in criminal law, criminal procedure, immigration law, and seminars in international human rights, counterterrorism, and advanced criminal justice. He is a graduate of Princeton University and the Columbia University School of Law, where he served as an articles' editor of the *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*.

Panelists

Sarah Leah Whitson [✉@SARAHLEAH1](#)

Sarah Leah Whitson is the Executive Director of DAWN. Previously, she served as Executive Director of Human Rights Watch's Middle East and North Africa Division from 2004–2020, overseeing the work of the division in 19 countries, with staff located in 10 countries. Whitson has led dozens of advocacy and investigative missions throughout the Middle East, focusing on issues of armed conflict, accountability, legal reform, migrant workers, and human rights. She has published widely on human rights and foreign policy in the region in international and regional media, including The New York Times, Foreign Affairs, The Washington Post, Foreign Policy, The Los Angeles Times, and CNN. Whitson appears regularly on Al Jazeera, BBC, NPR, MSNBC, and CNN. Previously, she worked in New York for Goldman, Sachs & Co. and Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton. Whitson is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and is on the boards of the International Centre of Justice for Palestinians, Artistic Freedom Initiative, Freedom Forward, ALQST for Human Rights, Sinai Foundation for Human Rights, Action for Hope, and the Armenian Bar Association. Whitson received her B.A. in political science and Middle Eastern studies from the University of California, Berkeley, and her J.D. from Harvard Law School. She speaks Armenian and Arabic.



Sarah Yager [✉@YAGERSARAHH](#)

Sarah Yager is the Washington Director at Human Rights Watch and leads the organization's engagement with the US government on global human rights issues. She was the first senior advisor on human rights in the Chairman's Office at The Joint Staff of the US Department of Defense and, prior, served as deputy chief of staff for policy at the US Mission to the United Nations under Ambassador Samantha Power. For nearly a decade, Yager was the Executive Director of the Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC), leading efforts to advise warring parties on civilian protection and responsible use of force. She was a member of the Clinton White House, a senior associate at West Wing Writers, and consulted for the Ford Foundation, the William J. Clinton Foundation, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Yager was a senior fellow on security issues at Open Society Foundations and the US Institute of Peace. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, an adjunct professor at Georgetown University, and a professor of practice at Arizona State University. Yager received her B.A. in political philosophy from Georgetown University and her M.A. in security policy from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University.



James J. Zogby [✉@JJZ1600](#)

James Zogby co-founded the Arab American Institute, a Washington, DC-based organization that serves as the political and policy research arm of the Arab American community, in 1985 and continues to serve as its president. He is also the Director of Zogby Research Services, a firm that has conducted groundbreaking surveys across the Middle East. In September 2013, President Obama appointed Zogby to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. He was reappointed to a second term in 2015. He was twice elected Vice Chair. Zogby has also been personally active in US politics for many years; in 1984 and 1988, he served as Deputy Campaign Manager and Senior Advisor to the Jesse Jackson Presidential campaign. In 1988, he led the first ever debate on Palestinian statehood at that year's Democratic convention in Atlanta, GA. In 2000, 2008, and 2016, he served as an advisor to the Gore, Obama, and Sanders presidential campaigns. For the past 3 decades, he has served in leadership roles in the Democratic National Committee. Zogby currently serves as Chair of the DNC Ethnic Council, an umbrella organization of Democratic Party leaders of European and Mediterranean descent. He served on the DNC's Executive Committee from 2000 to 2017 and for more than a decade served as Co-Chair of the party's Resolutions Committee. Zogby is featured frequently on national and international media as an expert on Middle East affairs. Since 1992, he has written a weekly column that is published in 12 countries. In 2010, Zogby published the highly acclaimed book, *Arab Voices*. His 2013 e-books, *Looking at Iran: The Rise and Fall of Iran in Arab Public Opinion* and *20 Years After Oslo*, are drawn from his extensive polling across the Middle East with Zogby Research Services. His most recent book is *The Tumultuous Decade: Arab, Turkish, and Iranian Public Opinion - 2010-2019*. Zogby was a National Endowment for the Humanities Post-Doctoral Fellow at Princeton University in 1976 and is the recipient of a number of honorary doctorate degrees. He received his B.A. from Le Moyne College and his Ph.D. from Temple University's Department of Religion.



Moderators



Yara M. Asi ✉@YARA_M_ASI

Yara M. Asi is an Assistant Professor at the University of Central Florida in the School of Global Health Management and Informatics. Her research agenda focuses on global health, human rights, and development in fragile populations. She is a Senior Non-resident Fellow at the Arab Center Washington DC, a 2020-2021 Fulbright US Scholar to the West Bank, and the Fall 2021 US Fellow at Al Shabaka Policy Network. She has also worked with Médecins Sans Frontières, Amnesty International USA, and the Palestinian American Research Center on policy and outreach issues. She has presented at multiple national and international conferences on topics related to global health, food security, health informatics, and women in healthcare, and has published extensively on health and well-being in fragile and conflict-affected populations in journal articles and book chapters. Her work has been featured in The Washington Post, The Guardian, The Nation, +972 Magazine, The Conversation, Al Jazeera, The World, and other outlets. Asi is the author of *How War Kills: The Overlooked Threats to Our Health* (2024), which examines war as a public health crisis. Asi received her Ph.D. in public affairs from the University of Central Florida.



Khalil E. Jahshan ✉@KHALILEJAHSHAN

Khalil E. Jahshan is a Palestinian American political analyst and media commentator. He serves as Executive Director of Arab Center Washington DC. Between 2004 and 2013, he was a Lecturer in International Studies and Languages at Pepperdine University and Executive Director of Pepperdine's Seaver College Washington DC Internship Program. Previously, Jahshan served as Executive Vice President of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) and Director of its government affairs affiliate, the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA)-ADC. Throughout his career, he held numerous leadership positions in Arab American organizations, including Vice President of the American Committee on Jerusalem, President of the National Association of Arab Americans, National Director of the Association of Arab-American University Graduates, Assistant Director of the Palestine Research and Educational Center, and Lecturer in Arabic at the University of Chicago Extension and at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. Jahshan also served on the boards of directors and advisory boards of several Middle East-oriented organizations, including ANERA, MIFTAH, and Search for Common Ground. He appears regularly as a political commentator on Arab and American media outlets.



Tamara Kharroub ✉@TAMARAKHARROUB1

Tamara Kharroub is the Deputy Executive Director and a Senior Fellow at Arab Center Washington DC. Her research work focuses on the intersection of technology and human rights and democracy in the Middle East and North Africa. She publishes research and policy analysis papers and editorials exploring the role of media and communication technology in the political process, including issues of digital authoritarianism and repression, disinformation and information environments, cyber power and geopolitics, surveillance technologies, propaganda and media representation, identity politics online, artificial intelligence and autonomous weapons, and digital rights, in addition to research on Palestine/Israel and US policy there. Kharroub holds a Ph.D. from Indiana University Bloomington and an M.A. from the University of Westminster and is the recipient of several awards and fellowships, including Fulbright.



Moderators

Laurie King [✉ @ZINJABEELAH](#)

Laurie King is a cultural anthropologist and human rights advocate who focuses primarily on Palestine and Lebanon. King is a teaching professor at Georgetown University in the Department of Anthropology and a member of the Board of Directors of Arab Center Washington DC. She conducted her doctoral dissertation field research on a Fulbright grant in Nazareth from 1991-1993 on political identity, urban governance, and the anthropology of affect among Palestinian citizens of Israel. From 1993-1998, King lived and worked in Beirut, Lebanon, where she conducted field research and did journalistic writing on post-war reconciliation, human rights, and urban reconstruction. From 1998-2001 she was editor-in-chief of Middle East Report, the quarterly publication of MERIP, in Washington, DC, before moving to Victoria, British Columbia, where she taught anthropology at the University of Victoria. King has also served as managing editor for the Journal of Palestine Studies (2007-2009) and continues to do consulting work and editing for the Institute for Palestine Studies. In addition, she was one of the four co-founders of the award-winning alternative news website, The Electronic Intifada, and coordinated media and outreach for the International Committee for the Victims of Sabra and Shatila during the landmark legal attempt to bring the architects of the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres to justice in Belgium under the principle of Universal Jurisdiction. King recently published a book entitled *Universal Jurisdiction for Humanitarian Crimes: A Retrospective Ethnography of Belgium's Legal Experiment* (2024), a multi-site ethnographic account of the Sabra and Shatila massacre survivors' legal case that took place in Belgium between 2000 and 2003.



Yousef Munayyer [✉ @YOUSEFMUNAYYER](#)

Yousef Munayyer is Head of the Palestine/Israel Program and Senior Fellow at Arab Center Washington DC. He also serves as a member of the editorial committee of the Journal of Palestine Studies and was previously Executive Director of the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights. Some of his published articles can be found in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Nation, Boston Globe, Foreign Policy, Journal of Palestine Studies, Middle East Policy, and others. Munayyer holds a Ph.D. in International Relations and Comparative Politics from the University of Maryland.




About Arab Center Washington DC

Established in 2015, Arab Center Washington DC (ACW) is a nonprofit, independent, and nonpartisan research organization dedicated to furthering the political, economic, and social understanding of the Arab world in the United States and to providing insights on US policies and interests in the Middle East and North Africa. As a Washington-based, authoritative research center on the Arab world, ACW addresses fundamental aspects of US-Arab relations through timely and objective academic research, policy analysis, and educational exchange.

Our Values

- › Providing independent, timely, objective, and evidence-based research and analysis
- › Highlighting justice-based and human rights-centered approaches to policymaking
- › Bringing Arab and diverse perspectives to US policy conversations
- › Centering democracy, international law, and just and peaceful resolution to conflict
- › Recommending policies that emphasize long-term US interests in the MENA region



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