Delphi Slemani Forum Speakers

Mohamed Al Hassan

Special Rep. for Iraq & Head of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Al Hassan is currently the Special Representative of the Secretary General and Head of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) from October 2024 to Present. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary/ Permanent Representative of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations. He presented his credentials to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. António Guterres on 21 August 2019. While incumbent, Dr. Al Hassan served as the Vice-President of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly; Vice-President of the Thirty-first Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly; Chairman of the 4th Committee of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly; Head of the Omani Delegation to the 67th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); Head of the Omani Delegation to the 61st Session of the Commission for Social Development; Co-Facilitator of the Summit of the Future on Our Common Agenda; Co-Facilitator of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism, in addition to presiding over the delegation of the Sultanate of Oman to the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. Prior to his current appointment at the United Nations, Dr. Al Hassan served as Acting Under-Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs at the Foreign Ministry of the Sultanate of Oman. He was also Chief of Staff to the Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman, from 2015 until 2019. Dr. Al Hassan similarly served as Head of the Minister's Department at the Foreign Ministry of the Sultanate of Oman between 2012 and 2015, and as Head of the Political Analysis Unit at the Foreign Ministry of the Sultanate of Oman in 2012. Dr. Al Hassan represented his country in a number of foreign diplomatic posts, including as Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Russian Federation from 2009 to 2012, concurrently holding the position of Non-resident Ambassador to the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of

Ukraine, the Republic of Armenia, and the Republic of Moldova. Between 1993-2005, he served at the Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations in New York, and between 1990-1993 at the Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nation in Geneva. He also represented the Sultanate of Oman in the Conference on Disarmament, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), in addition to holding the Vice-presidency of the Eighth Session of UNCTAD, held in Colombia in 1992. Dr. Al Hassan holds a PhD in Economics from Moscow State University of Statistics and Informatics (MESI). He also pursued graduate studies at the New School for Social Research in New York between 1997- 2005. In addition, he holds a Master's Degree in International Relations, as well as a Postgraduate degree in International Law from Saint John's University in New York, and a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Washington in Seattle. Dr. Al Hassan is an "Honorary Member and Academician of the International Academy of Philanthropy" of the Russian Federation and an "Honorary Doctorate in Diplomacy" at the Cugs University. Moreover, he is an "Honorary Professor" of the Belgorod State Institute of Arts and Culture. Dr. Al Hassan is also a member of the Foreign Policy Association in New York. Throughout his career at the foreign service of the Sultanate of Oman, Dr. Al Hassan has published numerous papers and articles amongst which an "Approach to Disarmament in the Middle East", "Myths and Realities of the International Criminal Court," "Divergent Perspectives on Labor Localization in an Oil Rentier Society," and "Peculiarities of Labor Market Transformation in Building up a Science-Intensive Economy". Dr. Al Hassan was born in Salalah, the Sultanate of Oman on 19 August 1963. He is married and has two daughters.

Raad Al Kadiri

Senior Director, BCG Center for Energy Impact, USA

Raad Alkadiri is a senior director at the BCG Center for Energy Impact. He is an expert in country risk, with more than 20 years of experience advising senior oil and gas industry executives and government leaders on the management of long-term investment strategies, above-ground risk mitigation, and stakeholder engagement. Previously Raad ran the petroleum sector risk capability at IHS and was a partner at PFC Energy. From 2003 to 2004,

Raad was policy advisor and assistant private secretary to the UK Special Representatives to Iraq.

Georgios Alamanos

Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Iraq

I was born in Corfu, Greece, where I attended the primary and secondary school. In 1980 I graduated from the Law School of the University of Athens. In 1984 I was accepted as a licensed lawyer in Corfu. In 1990 I gratuated from the National School of Public Administration. The same year I joined the Diplomatic Service. I have worked in the departments of NATO, Balkn countries, Council of Europe and OSCE, and Latin America. I have served in Australia, Canada, Armenia, OSCE in Vienna, Ukraine, and Albania. I am married and have four children.

Evangelos Apostolakis

MP, Hellenic Parliament, Minister of Defense (2019), Greece

Evangelos Apostolakis was born in Rethymno, Crete on 14th of May 1957. He joined the Hellenic Naval Academy in 1976, graduated and was commissioned as Ensign of the Hellenic Navy in July 1980. He has completed the Underwater Demolitions Team School of the Hellenic Navy, and he is a graduate of the Advanced Mine Warfare School (Belgium) and the Amphibious Warfare School (U.S.A.) as well as the Hellenic Naval War College. As a junior officer, his sea duty assignments, include various tours. He served mainly on Destroyers and Amphibious ships as Communications, Navigations and Operations Officer. He served as the Commanding Officer of MSC HS ATALANTI, MSC HS KISSA and FFGH HS NAVARINON. His shore and staff assignments as senior Officer include service as Deputy

Commander of Underwater Demolition Command, Commander of Underwater Demolition Command, Adjutant of the Minister of National Defence, Director of Administration of Souda Naval Base, Chief of Staff of Senior Naval Command Aegean, and Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) STRIKEFORNATO Naples IT. As o Commodore he assumed duties of Director of HNGS B' Branch. As o Rear Admiral he was assigned Deputy Chief of Fleet (H.R) and Chief of Staff of the HNDGS. As a Vice Admiral he served as Deputy Chief of HNDGS. On March 7th, 2013, upon decision of the Governmental Council for Foreign Affairs and Defence, he assumed the duties of Chief of the Hellenic Navy General Staff. In 2015 he assumed the duties of Chief of Hellenic National Defence General Staff and was promoted to Admiral. On January 14th, 2019, he was retired, awarded the title of Honorable Chief of Defence, and assumed the duties of Minister of National Defence. He is a Member of the Hellenic Parliament of State and a Member of the Standing Committee of National Defence and Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Parliament. He has been awarded with all the medals, decorations and commendations stipulated for an officer of his rank and seniority. He is married and he has two children.

Hallo Askari

Minister of Environment, Republic of Iraq

Dr. Hallo Askari is Iraq's Minister of Environment and a leading expert in Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE), with over 25 years of experience across various sectors. He holds a MSc and PhD in Environmental Sciences from Brunel University London and has led major national and regional initiatives in environmental policy, sustainability, and regulatory reform. As a former advisor to the Kurdistan Regional Government and senior leader in the oil and gas sector, Dr. Hallo Askari has played a pivotal role in shaping Iraq's environmental agenda, representing the country at international platforms including COP21 and COP26 and is leading the Iraqi delegation for climate change in COP30. He is widely recognised for his strategic vision, inclusive leadership, and commitment to sustainable development.

Dimitris Avramopoulos

MP; EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs & Citizenship (2014-2019), Greece

Dimitris Avramopoulos is a Greek politician and Member of the Hellenic Parliament who served as the European Union Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs, and Citizenship from 2014 to 2019.

Throughout his career in the Greek government, Mr. Avramopoulos has held several key ministerial positions, including Minister of National Defence (two terms), Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Health and Social Solidarity, and Minister of Tourism.

Additionally, he served two terms as Mayor of Athens. Before transitioning to a political career, Mr. Avramopoulos served in the Greek Diplomatic Service, where he held various positions and posts, including Spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Director of the Diplomatic Cabinet of the Greek Prime Minister, Consul of Greece in Liège (Belgium), General Consul in Geneva (Switzerland), and Representative to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE/Vienna).

His academic background includes degrees in Public Law and Political Sciences from the University of Athens, complemented by postgraduate studies in European Studies from the Institute of European Affairs of the Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium).

Furthermore, his contributions to academia have been recognized through honorary doctorates from prestigious universities in New York, Philadelphia, and London (e.g., Adelphi, Drexel, Kingston, Deree), as well as honorary professorships at renowned institutions such as the School of International Studies at Peking University and the European College of Parma. In recognition of his distinguished public service, Mr. Avramopoulos has been awarded as honorary citizen in more than 40 cities across Greece and 36 cities internationally.

He has also been bestowed with awards and state decorations from numerous countries (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, the Vatican, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, and Lebanon), as well as from the Ecumenical Orthodox

Patriarchate of Constantinople, the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and the Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria.

Soumen Bagchi

Ambassador of India to Iraq

Mr. Soumen Bagchi is the current ambassador of India to Iraq. Prior to this assignment, he has served overseas at Indian Missions in Brussels, Dhaka and San Francisco. He has served in India in the Ministry of External Affairs as a Regional Passport Officer, Director, Joint Secretary and Additional Secretary. During his tenure in New Delhi, he has handled work related to counter-terrorism, energy security, investment and technology promotion, SAARC & BIMSTEC groupings, India's relations with S-E Asia, and with Central & West Africa. Most recently, he served as deputy & then acting Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs, a New Delhi based foreign affairs think-tank.

Theo Benos

Researcher, Athens University of Economics and Business & AE4RIA network, Greece

Dr. Theo Benos is a member of the Research Laboratory on Socio-Economic and Environmental Sustainability (ReSEES) at the Athens University of Economics and Business & the AE4RIA network. He is also affiliated with the Sustainable International Business (SIB) Research Center at Zuyd University of Applied Sciences. Theo Benos holds a BSc in International Economics, two Master's degrees, and a PhD in Cooperatives from Wageningen University. He has previously worked as a researcher at the University of Crete,

served as an advisor to the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and taught as a Lecturer at Maastricht University. Additionally, Dr. Benos has collaborated with the Italian Institute for Agricultural Research "CREA" and the Research and Policy Institute "diaNEOsis". His research and policy work focuses on cooperatives, agricultural policy, agri-food systems, and sustainable development.

Steven Bitner

U.S. Consul General to the Kurdistan Region

Steven Bitner began his service as the Consul General at U.S. Consulate General Erbil in August 2024. Prior to his arrival in Erbil, Mr. Bitner served as the Director of the State Department's Office of Iraq Affairs in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2022 to 2024. Previously, he served as the Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark where he led our diplomatic engagement with the Kingdom of Denmark, a key NATO and Arctic ally. Prior to that posting, Mr. Bitner was the Counselor for Economic Affairs at U.S. Embassy Athens where he advanced U.S. support for Greece's economic crisis and recovery and supported European energy security via the Southern Gas Corridor.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Bitner served as the Deputy Chief of the Economic Section at U.S. Consulate General Jerusalem, contributing to the economic track of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. He has also served in the economic sections at U.S. Embassy San Jose and U.S. Embassy Warsaw. Mr. Bitner was posted in the Anbar and Babil provinces of Iraq as a Foreign Policy Advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority from 2003 to 2004. In Washington, he supported the Secretary of State both as a Watch Officer in the State Department's Operations Center and as a Line Officer in the Executive Secretariat. Mr. Bitner is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and the recipient of multiple Superior and Meritorious Honor Awards as well as the Department of State's James Clement Dunn Award.

Mr. Bitner earned a Master of Science from the National War College, where he was recognized as a distinguished graduate. He earned a BA in International Politics with a minor

in Arabic from Brigham Young University, graduating summa cum laude. Mr. Bitner speaks Arabic, Spanish, Dutch, and Polish. He is married with four children.

Andrew Bizley

Consul General of the United Kingdom in Erbil

Andrew Bizley is His Majesty's Consul General in Erbil, the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.Before arriving in Erbil, Andrew was Deputy Head of His Majesty's Government's Iran Unit (2022 to 2024). He has previously been posted to Iraq as First Secretary Political-Military, and then Acting Political Counsellor, in Baghdad (2019 to 2021). In London, Andrew was a senior lawyer covering Europe and Human Rights from 2015 when he joined FCDO. Prior to this, Andrew held various roles covering a range of energy and climate issues in the Department of Energy and Climate Change, from 2008.

Yann Braem

Consul General of the Republic of France in the Kurdistan Region

Yann Braem, born on May 5, 1977, currently serves as the Consul General of France in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. A graduate of the Institut d'Études Politiques de Toulouse, and PhD holder in Geopolitics Dr. Braem has had a distinguished career in French diplomacy, marked by postings in diverse and often complex regions.
Before his appointment in Erbil, he held several diplomatic roles, particularly focused on Middle-East and Northern Africa and Crisis management.
As Consul General in Erbil since late 2023, Mr. Braem has worked to strengthen the partnership between France and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. His tenure has been marked

by an emphasis on economic cooperation, educational and cultural exchange, and support for regional stability and development. He actively engages with local institutions, civil society, and international partners to foster long-term collaboration.
Mr. Braem is known for his deep understanding of regional dynamics and his commitment to advancing France's diplomatic mission through dialogue, inclusivity, and mutual respect.

Radu Butum

Head of EU Liaison Office in Erbil, Delegation of the European Union to Iraq

Radu Butum is a Romanian diplomat, currently serving in the European Union's diplomatic service. As of September 2024, he is the Head of the European Union Liaison Office in Erbil, the EU Delegation to Iraq. Previously, he served as the Deputy Permanent Representative of the EU to UNESCO and the EU Delegation's Energy Advisor liaising with the International Energy Agency and the Nuclear Energy Agency, based in Paris. During his country's rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union, he vice-chaired the Cooperation for development and the Agenda 2030 Working Parties. Between 2017 and 2018, he coordinated the Romanian Government's technical work for its bid for accession to OECD. He was previously Head of Unit for European Affairs at the Romanian Ministry of Energy (2016) and his earlier experience includes policy harmonisation in the field of services in the EU Internal Market. Radu Butum is fluent in English, French and German. He is a graduate of the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin (Master) and of the Babeș- Bolyai University in Cluj Napoca (BA). He is married and has 2 daughters.

Nick Carter

UK Chief of the Defence Staff (2018-2021); Hoover Institute and Atlantic Council

General Sir Nick Carter is an accomplished strategic leader and advisor. He has over 45 years' military experience culminating at the top of his profession as the Chief of the Defence Staff where he was the principal military advisor to the Prime Minister, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of State for Defence, and the Head of the UK Armed Forces. He also served as the Chief of the General Staff, professional Head of the British Army. He is an expert on Defence and Geopolitical Affairs, Transformational and Strategic Leadership, and Inclusivity. Nick Carter has commanded military operations at every level of command and in a variety of different contexts, including the Troubles in Northern Ireland, UN peacekeeping in Cyprus, NATO peace enforcement in both Bosnia and Kosovo, and commanding the UK-led Brigade in Iraq in 2003-04. He has multiple years of experience in Afghanistan since 9/11, commanding 55,000 US and NATO troops in Helmand and Kandahar during President Obama's surged in 2009-10, designing approaches to counter insurgency, and acting as the key facilitator to build confidence between the Afghan and Pakistani governments. He has commanded more American troops and marines than any other foreigner. An accomplished military diplomat, he has developed several coalitions and military communities of interest including in the Middle East with the GCC, Iraq, Jordan, and Egypt, in the Caribbean, and a Joint Expeditionary Force with the Nordics and Baltic States to counter Russian belligerence. He also sought to develop a relationship with his Chinese opposite number, the Chief of CMC Joint Staff Department Li Zoucheng. A moderniser and reformer, Nick Carter is a leader who shapes events rather than be shaped by them, using data, strategic acumen, and operational insight and experience to create and sell a compelling vision of the future challenge, aligning teams behind a creative concept for why and how an institution must transform at pace. His hallmarks are the Defence element of the 2020 Integrated Review, leading to the largest uplift in Defence spending since the end of the Cold War the fundamental restructuring of the British Army (known as Army 2020) following the national Defence Reviews of 2010 and 2015 and the design of the Armed Forces' support to the national COVID-19 response.

Nick Carter initiated and drove significant cultural change, instituting a strategic culture, a programme of empowerment and Maximizing Talent. A strong advocate for equality of opportunity, enabling everyone to maximise their talent, he was recognised by Business in the Community naming him UK Gender Champion in 2017 after making and winning the case for legislation to be changed to open all roles in the military to all people based on ability and potential rather than outdated notions of gender.

Nick Carter is a Strategic Counsellor at the Tony Blair Institution, a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University in California, and a member of the Atlantic Council's International Advisory Board.

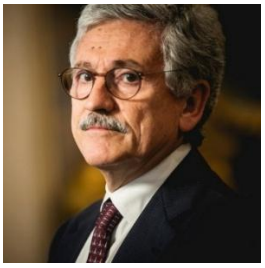
Marianna Charountaki

Senior Lecturer in International Politics, University of Lincoln, UK

Marianna Charountaki is Senior Lecturer in International Politics at the University of Lincoln (School of Social and Political Sciences). She has acted as Director of the Kurdistan International Studies Unit (2016-2019) at the University of Leicester. She is a BRISMES and BISA trustee and co- convener of the BISA Foreign Policy Working Group. She is also Research Fellow at Soran University (Erbil, Iraq). She has worked as consultant at the Iraqi Embassy in Athens (Greece, 2011-2012). Marianna has been researching the Middle Eastern region, in light of IR discipline, but also through extensive field work research (2007 to present). Her research lies at the intersection of IR theories, foreign policy analysis and area studies with an emphasis on the interplay between state and non-state entities as well as the latter's conceptualisation and foreign policy standing. She is the author of the monographs The Kurds and US Foreign Policy: International Relations in the Middle East since 1945, (Routledge, 2011) and Iran and Turkey: International and Regional Engagement in the Middle East (I.B. Tauris, 2018) and co-author of Mapping Non-State Actors in International Relations (Springer, 2022). She has published articles in Harvard International Review, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, International Politics Journal, Third World Quarterly, British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies and others.

Massimo D'Alema

Prime Minister of Italy (1998-2000), Italy



His political commitment began in 1963, when he joined the Italian Communist Youth Federation (FGCI), of which from 1975 to 1980 he was National Secretary. The first card of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) dates back to 1968. He is among the young leaders of the "turning point" who, in 1989 transformed the PCI into the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS). On the first of July 1994 he was elected National Secretary of the PDS.

He entered for the first time in the Chamber of Deputies in 1987. From October 1998 to April 2000, he held the position of President of the Council of Ministers. In June 2004 he was elected to the European Parliament where he held the position of President of the Permanent Delegation for relations between the European Union and Mercosur. On 17 May 2006 he was appointed Vice-President and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Prodi Government. Is a professional journalist, he has collaborated with "Città futura", "Rinascita" and "l'Unità" of which he was director from 1988 to 1990. He is currently President of the Italianieuropei Foundation and works as a consultant with his company DL&M Advisor Srl.

Dhaval Desai

Senior Fellow and Vice President, ORF, India

A Senior Fellow at the Mumbai office of the Observer Research Foundation, Dhaval's core areas of research include diverse topics include international affairs and urban renewal. He started his career as a journalist, spending 14 years in both print and electronic media. He joined ORF in 2008.

Anna Diamantopoulou

President, DIKTIO; EU Commissioner for Jobs & Social Rights (1999-2004), Greece

Anna Diamantopoulou is President of DIKTIO – Network for Reform in Greece and Europe, a leading non-partisan, Athens-based think tank. Ms. Diamantopoulou served as the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and has held several significant portfolios as a Minister in the Greek government as well. She was Minister of Development, Competitiveness and Shipping, and, prior to that, Minister of Education, Research and Technology, and Lifelong learning. Ms. Diamantopoulou is a member other Advisory Board of Brenthuster Foundation in South Africa. She is member of the Board of Trustees of the Brussels-based think tank Friends of Europe, a Council Member of the European Council on foreign relations (ECFR), and a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and member of the Advisory Board of the Delphi Economic forum. Anna also sits on corporate boards, an FTSE 100 company and the Global Advisory Board of KEKST CNC, a global strategic communications firm, member of Publicis Groupe.

Luis G. Franceschi

Assistant Secretary General, The Commonwealth of Nations, UK

Prof Luis G. Franceschi, LLB, LL.M, LL.D is the Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth. He coordinates the Political, Democracy, Electoral, Public-Sector Governance, Good Offices, Rule of Law, Judicial Transformation, Human Rights, and Countering Violence and Extremism work in the 56 member countries. He is also the

Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) Conference Secretary, and the Head of the Host Country Task Force.

Prof Franceschi was the founding Dean of Strathmore Law School. As a thinker, educator, and writer, he loves positive and disruptive innovation. He was the recipient of the 2019 legal excellence CB Madan Award and the 2018 Utumishi Bora National Award. In 2019, he was a visiting scholar at the University of Oxford and U.C. Berkeley Law School. He specialises in judicial transformation, comparative constitutional law and innovation in legal education. He has been a legal advisor to several international and national government agencies, regional courts, and legal advisor to the United Nations and the World Bank. He sits on several boards and has been a Governing Council Delegate and the Legal Advisor to the President of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, where he co-drafted the UN Nairobi Declaration.

A few of his publications are “Mapping the Legal Contours of Presidential Electoral Law in Kenya: A Case Review of Raila Odinga v Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission”, (The Routledge Handbook of African Law, coordinated by Prof Muna Ndulo, Cornell Law School, Routledge, 2022) “The Rule of Law, Human Rights and Judicial Control of Power”, Springer “Judicial Independence and Accountability in Light of the Judiciary Code of Conduct and Ethics of Kenya” ICJ Kenya. He was also a weekly columnist with the Daily Nation Newspaper (Kenya). Prof Franceschi likes cycling, running and mountain climbing and has reached Point Lenana, Mt Kenya (5000 Meters ASL) 5 times, Uhuru Peak on Kilimanjaro (5895 Meters ASL) and the Rwenzori Mountains circuit (Uganda-Congo).

Basil Gavalas

Managing Partner, Asinin Corporation, Cyprus

Basil is a lawyer and entrepreneur with extensive activity across diverse sectors. He serves as a partner, director, or shareholder in several companies operating in Greece, Cyprus, and Iraq, including the investment and trading firm Asinin Corporation, consultancy Milhous Associates, mineral trading company Centurion Atlantic, and timber trading firm Royal Tree Corp, among others.

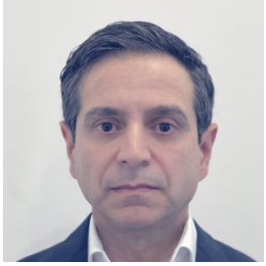
In addition to his business ventures, Basil plays an active role in policy and business diplomacy initiatives. He is the Vice President of the Hellenic-Iraqi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, co-founded with MEP, President Nikos Papandreou. He is also a member of the Leadership Council of the London-based Democracy and Culture Foundation, a member of the Strategic Council of DIKTIO—one of Greece's leading think tanks—, a member of RUSI, and serves as a Senior Advisor with Delphi Economic Forum.

Previously, Basil served as a political advisor with the Government of the Hellenic Republic and EU Commissioners and collaborated with major think tanks and policy institutions across Greece, Europe, and the MENA region, such as the European Council on Foreign Relations and the Konstantinos Karamanlis Institute for Democracy.

He's a published poet and holds an LLM from the University of Paris.

Safeen Ghafour

Senior Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government



Safeen Ghafour is a Senior Executive Advisor for Public Sector Reform who has worked at the Cabinet level within the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) for over a decade. During this period, the Kurdistan Region has navigated serious challenges—including ISIS, the COVID-19 pandemic, economic migration, waves of displacement, and financial crises. Reporting directly to the Deputy Prime Minister, he leads the flagship public service reform initiative—*The Services Portal*—transforming how citizens access government services. He also led the Biometric Registration Program, delivering significant cost savings and building a centralised system for over a million wage-earners that introduced the Unique Person Number (UPN) to streamline payroll and service delivery. Safeen has long championed open-source software and IT excellence across Kurdistan and Europe. A former developer, he co-founded *Kurditgroup*, the first Kurdish IT professionals' network, and *The Foundation Hub*, a coworking and entrepreneurship incubator in Slemani. He pioneered the first Kurdish Unicode font and keyboard layouts for digital communication. He holds master's degrees from the University of Queensland and Universiteit Utrecht.

Nik Gowing

Founder and Director, Thinking the Unthinkable, UK

Nik Gowing founded the Thinking the Unthinkable project in 2014. He is co-author of Thinking the Unthinkable (2018) and Director of Think Unthinkable Ltd. Nik was a main news presenter for the BBC's international 24-hour news channel BBC World News 1996-2014. He presented The Hub with Nik Gowing, BBC World Debates, Dateline London, plus location coverage of major global stories. He spent 18 years at ITN in senior roles including bureau chief in Rome and Warsaw, plus Diplomatic Editor, Channel 4 New. He collected a prestigous BAFTA award in 1982 for his coverage of martial law in Poland. Nik has been a two-term member of the councils of major think tanks like Chatham House and the Royal United Services Institute. He is a Visiting Professor at Kings College London and held a similar position at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He has been a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Geo-Economics. He was an adviser on leadership challenges to the President of the UN General Assembly. Nik's peer-reviewed study at Oxford University 'Skyful of Lies and Black Swans' (2009) predicted what is now labelled 'Fake News'. It identified the new vulnerability and brittleness of institutional power in the new all-pervasive public information space. Nik was awarded Honorary Doctorates by Exeter University and Bristol University. They recognise his ongoing cutting edge analysis and distinguished career in international journalism. Since 2021 he has been a Distinguished Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute.

Sheikh Saad Hassan

Executive Chairman, Onex, Republic of Iraq

As a self-made entrepreneur, Saad's inspirational leadership has grown Onex Group into a global player in the infrastructure investment space, specializing in large scale complex energy, logistics and technology businesses. But he has never measured success in numbers alone. From a large, tightly knit family, Saad continues to be driven by a sense of duty and responsibility to provide for those he leads. He believes in integrity, candor, discipline and results. Those values define his leadership and approach to life and business. This includes his relationship with 1,500 employees at Onex and extends to his home nation, where he aspires to provide the people of Iraq with infrastructure to raise living standards and provide enduring improvements to their lives. Specifically, he wants every Iraqi to have access to electricity around the clock. Saad's humble, straight-talking approach in the face of these challenges belies a fierce desire to win and overcome any obstacle. He lives by his promise to complete every project to which he commits. His delivery rate is 100%.Despite I ts extraordinary record of growth, Saad remains as focused as ever on building Onex. He is actively exploring ventures that will facilitate expansion into Europe and North America. Saad remains driven to achieve success, yet his experience has brought new perspectives. Through his board positions, including the American University of Sulaymaniyah, and Onex's CSR initiatives, he now thinks not in terms of short-term wins but long-term impact and legacy. He is passionate about improving healthcare, education and social wellbeing locally and internationally. His new mission is to build upon the culture and beliefs he has instilled in Onex to positively influence and inspire the next generation.

Enver Hoxhaj

Vice President of the Assembly; Deputy PM (2017-2019), Kosovo

Dr. Enver Hoxhaj is a Member of Parliament in the Republic of Kosovo and a Professor of Political Science at the University of Prishtina. His extensive political career includes serving as Deputy Prime Minister (2017-2020), Minister of Foreign Affairs (2011-2014/2016-2017), and Minister of Education, Science and Technology (2008-2010). He can be reached at cell: +383 44 165 642.

Zisis Ioannidis

Energy & Environmental Consultant , Greece

I am an energy and environmental consultant at the Ministry of Environment & Energy. I specialize in designing net-zero-energy buildings as well as energy-sustainable buildings. I have extensive experience in designing subsidised programmes, while I am also privately involved in many energy and environmental projects in Greece, Canada, China and Cyprus. I am also Secretary-General at the Antonis Tritsis Metropolitan Park and a special adviser in the Environment and Climate Change Secretariat of New Democracy.

Markus Jerger

President, Council for International Cooperation, Germany

Markus Jerger is a Swiss / German business executive, experienced entrepreneur and 5th generation descendant of a 160 years old Swiss/German manufacturing family. He is a renowned connector of business and politics in Europe as the past and long-term Chairman of the Federal German Association of SMEs and former President of the European Entrepreneurs Association as well as past Vice-President of the International SME Alliance. He chaired and supervised over 2.4 million corporate memberships in his associations. Also he is known for his work in international trade, business development, and innovation. He holds various leadership positions and is actively involved in promoting economic cooperation between Europe and other countries. In 2024 Mr. Jerger was appointed Chairman of the EUPIC FOUNDATION. The European Project Innovation Center (EUPIC) is an organization dedicated to promoting collaboration and innovation between

Europe and China. EUPIC serves as a platform for facilitating partnerships, technology transfer, and business opportunities between European and Chinese companies, research institutions, and governmental organizations. EUPIC was established in 2006 as a joint initiative between the European Union and the Chinese government to support the ties between European and Chinese innovation ecosystems. Markus Jerger is involved in a variety of companies as an owner, shareholder and/or member of the supervisory board. The activities include manufacturing, trade, finance, investments, and advisory services. He speaks fluent German, English and French.

Liu Jun

Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Erbil

Mr. Liu Jun currently serves as the Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Erbil. He was born in China's Anhui Province, graduated from China Foreign Affairs University, joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1993. He has worked in the Department of Press, Communication and Public Diplomacy, the Department of Latin American and Caribbean Affairs, the Department of External Security Affairs, the Department of North American and Oceanian Affairs etc. His overseas experience includes the Chinese Embassy in the Republic of Korea, the Chinese Consulate General in New York, and the Chinese Consulate General in Chicago.

Konstantina Karabatsoli

Member of the Hellenic Parliament; Ambassadress in Greece of the organization "World Political Leaders WPL"

Since June 2023, I have served as a Member of the Hellenic Parliament, elected with the New Democracy party in the Prefecture of Evia. In April 2025, I was honored to be appointed as an Ambassador of Women Political Leaders (WPL), an international network dedicated to promoting the participation and representation of women in politics.

During my parliamentary tenure, I have actively contributed as a member of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, the Special Standing Committee on Road Safety, and the Standing Committee on Social Security Monitoring, focusing on issues that directly impact the well-being and safety of Greek citizens.

Alongside my legislative responsibilities, I continue to operate my private law practice in Kifissia, Attica, where I have been professionally engaged as a practicing attorney for the past twenty years. My legal career has been marked by dedication to the principles of justice and service to clients across a broad range of legal matters.

I am also the proud mother of two children, balancing my professional and public service roles with my responsibilities as a parent.

Emmanuel Karagiannis

Reader in International Security (Defence Studies), King's College- London

Dr Emmanuel Karagiannis is a Reader (professor without chair) in International Security at King’s College London's Department of Defence Studies and an internationally recognised expert in terrorism and violent non-state actors. He has a diverse academic background, obtaining two PhDs from British universities, and has held research positions at prestigious institutions such as Cambridge University, Oxford University, LSE, the US Military Academy at West Point, Princeton University, and the University of Pennsylvania. His work has been cited extensively, and he has been interviewed and quoted by major media outlets, including the Economist, The Financial Times, the Wall Street Journal, Le Monde, CNN International, Newsweek, and Al Jazeera. Currently, he also serves as the Programme Director of the Masters of Research in Defence Studies in King's College London.

Sherri Kraham Talabany

President of SEED

Sherri Kraham Talabany is the President of SEED, a women-led, local non-profit development organization in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. A human rights lawyer with over 25 years of experience in foreign policy development, strategic leadership, advocacy, and managing international programs, she has worked extensively in conflict and post-conflict settings, as well as in humanitarian response, peacekeeping, and development. She previously served in the U.S. Government (1998–2012), shaping foreign policy and assistance programs worldwide, including in Iraq. Sherri has also served on the boards of nonprofits, policy centers, and a university, contributing to global development and human rights initiatives.

Nikoletta Kritikou

Chief Foreign Affairs Editor, Skai TV; freelancer KATHIMERINI newspaper, Greece

Nikoletta Kritikou is an international journalist with two decades of experience in political and diplomatic reporting all over the world. Currently serving as Chief Foreign Affairs Editor for SKAI TV and freelancer journalist for Kathimerini newspaper, she has built a reputation for her in-depth interviews with global leaders, including former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, IMF President Christine Lagarde, and U.S. Senator Robert Menendez. Nikoletta's work spans diplomatic, political, and global affairs, with a focus on critical international issues.

Previously, Nikoletta was the Chief International Correspondent for Euronews, where she

covered major international events and conducted high-profile interviews with figures such as NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. With a background in political science and media studies, she has also served in various advisory governmental roles. Her extensive experience in both television and written journalism has established her as a leading voice in international news coverage.

Seungcheol Lim

Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Erbil

Seungcheol LIM is the current Consul General of the Republic of Korea in Erbil, Kurdistan Region, having assumed his post in Oct. 2023. With an academic background in public policy, LIM studied in South Korea, the United States, and the United Kingdom. With the majority of his diplomatic career focused on the Middle East. As Consul General, LIM has prioritized Economic Development of Kurdistan Region, by focusing on well-developed economic policy in the region. Throughout his tenure, he has demonstrated a commitment to fostering economic collaboration and sharing Korea's development experiences to support the Kurdistan Region's prosperity.

Abdulsalam Madani

Advisor to the President of the Kurdistan Region

Salam M. Islam is a civic activist with experience in civil society program management and training, he have a good understanding of the evolution and development of societies in post-conflict environments. Salam has done and still doing consultancy work with international and local NGOs, government institutions and companies and conduct

trainings and facilitate events inside and outside Iraq since 2004. Salam won the Sheikh Isa bin Ali Al Khalifa Award in 2024 for Volunteer Work Leadership in the Middle East and North Africa. Salam is also an author. He has written five books (Youth Problems); (Modernity, its Origin and Associations); (What is Terrorism); (Ten Pulses, Dialogue between Babel and Erbil) it is on coexistence; (How to design and deliver training with impact, co -author); (A training manual on “leadership and management” for NGOs); (A main reviewer of training manual on “Citizenship and coexistence” for Iraqi youth).

In addition, he has more than 700 articles in local Iraqi and international newspapers and magazines about developing democracy, civil society and developing leadership skills. He also served as a lecturer at multiple universities in Iraq and had his own TV and radio shows. Salam served as an adviser for the Deputy Prime Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government on Civil Society and Youth issues. For the period 2025-2024 Salam served as the Chief Executive Director for Rwanga Foundation. He is now advisor for the President of Kurdistan Region – Iraq. He is also a Governing Board member in University of Kurdistan Hawler since 2019. People know Salam as, AbdulSalam Medeni, the pseudonym that he used as a writer, trainer and lecturer.

Greg Mills

Director, Brenthurst Foundation, South Africa

Dr Greg Mills heads the Johannesburg-based Brenthurst Foundation, established in 2005 by the Oppenheimer family to strengthen African economic performance.He holds degrees from the Universities of Cape Town (BA Hons) and Lancaster (MA cum laude, and PhD), and was, first, the Director of Studies and then the National Director of the SA Institute of International Affairs from 1994-2005. With Brenthurst he has directed numerous reform projects with African heads of state, including Rwanda (2007-8), Mozambique (2005-11), Swaziland (2010-11), Malawi (2012-14, and again 2020/1), Kenya (2012 and 2020), Lesotho (2008;2019-20), Liberia (2006/7), Zambia (2010 2016), Zimbabwe (2009-13), Ghana (2017), Ethiopia (2019- 20), Nigeria (2017-18), and almost continuously at various levels of government in South Africa from the Foundation’s outset.He also sat on the Danish Africa Commission and on the African Development Bank’s high-level panel on fragile states, and served four deployments to Afghanistan with the British Army as the adviser to the commander. He has also worked extensively in Colombia, and with a variety of African governments in both improving the conditions for peacebuilding and investment, including

through the Zambezi Protocol on the natural resource sector. A member of the advisory board of the Royal United Services Institute, he is the author of the best- selling books Why Africa Is Poor and Africa's Third Liberation, and together with President Olusegun Obasanjo Making Africa Work: A Handbook for Economic Success. In 2018 he completed a second stint as a visiting fellow at Cambridge University, in producing a book on the state of African democracy, which was published as Democracy Works in 2019. The Asian Aspiration: Why and How Africa Should Emulate Asia (again with President Obasanjo and former Ethiopian Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn) followed in 2020, which identifies the relevant lessons from Asia's development and growth story. His writings won him the Recht Malan Prize for Non-Fiction Work in South Africa. His latest books – Expensive Poverty – which details the failings of aid, and suggests several ways to improve development outcomes, was published by Pan Macmillan in October 2021 while The Ledger: Accounting for Failure in Afghanistan was published by Hurst/Oxford University Press at the start of 2022. An edited compendium on Better Choices for the South African economy was also published by Pan Macmillan in March 2022, another on Populism in August 2022 and a volume on South African scenarios The Good, the Bad and the Ugly in August 2023. Dr Greg Mills heads the Johannesburg-based Brenthurst Foundation, established in 2005 by the Oppenheimer family to strengthen African economic performance. He holds degrees from the Universities of Cape Town (BA Hons) and Lancaster (MA cum laude, and PhD), and was, first, the Director of Studies and then the National Director of the SA Institute of International Affairs from 1994-2005. With Brenthurst he has directed numerous reform projects with African heads of state, including Rwanda (2007-8), Mozambique (2005-11), Swaziland (2010-11), Malawi (2012-14, and again 2020/1), Kenya (2012 and 2020), Lesotho (2008;2019-20), Liberia (2006/7), Zambia (2010 2016), Zimbabwe (2009-13), Ghana (2017), Ethiopia (2019- 20), Nigeria (2017-18), and almost continuously at various levels of government in South Africa from the Foundation's outset. He also sat on the Danish Africa Commission and on the African Development Bank's high-level panel on fragile states, and served four deployments to Afghanistan with the British Army as the adviser to the commander. He has also worked extensively in Colombia, and with a variety of African governments in both improving the conditions for peacebuilding and investment, including through the Zambezi Protocol on the natural resource sector.

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start of 2022. An edited compendium on Better Choices for the South African economy was also published by Pan Macmillan in March 2022, another on Populism in August 2022 and a volume on South African scenarios The Good, the Bad and the Ugly in August 2023. His latest book is Rich State, Poor State: Why Some States Succeed and Others Fail, published by Penguin Random House in September 2023. His current research encompasses understanding the means by which outsiders can best assist African governments in meeting contemporary security challenges. He was appointed to the Advisory Panel of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 2022. His leisure interests include cycling and motorsport. A grandson of the pre-war Grand Prix driver Billy Mills, he has received his national colours for motorsport, and provincial colours for rowing and motorsport. In 2019, he headed the first South African team to participate at Le Mans, in the Road to Le Mans, driving a Bentley GT3, and was appointed as the President of the Western Province Motor Club the same year. He has served as a board member of Motorsport SA, and is a member of the FIA's Historic Commission. He has written eight books on Southern African motorsport for various charities, the last being Saloons, Bars and Boykies: Southern African Motorsport Heroes. He is married to the artist, teacher and SA-representative rower Janet Wilson and they have three (very!) strong-willed children: Amelia (22), Beatrix (19) and William (17).

Peshawa Mohammed

Head of Diplomatic Relations at the DPM Office

Dr. Peshawa A. Muhammed currently serves as Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister for Diplomatic Affairs and Head of Diplomatic Relations at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). He previously led the Kurdology Centre, a research institute affiliated with the University of Sulaimani. He holds an MA in Strategic Studies from the University of Leeds, UK and a PhD in Politics and International Relations from Keele University, UK. His academic research focuses on U.S. perspectives on secessionist movements, particularly the U.S. approach to Kurdish independence from Iraq, and more broadly on U.S. foreign policy in Iraq and the Middle East. Dr. Muhammed began his career in print journalism, and has published over 100 articles on Iraq's political challenges and the future of the Kurdistan Region. His work has included interviews with internationally recognised scholars and policymakers. He is also a frequent commentator on Kurdish and Middle Eastern affairs in national and international TV channels and

newspapers. He has presented at numerous international conferences and workshops, and is an associate member of the Journal of Global Faultlines, a peer-reviewed academic journal published by Pluto Journals and based at Keele University, UK.

Ahmad Mufti

Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Kurdistan Regional Government

Ahmed Mufti is a seasoned professional currently serving as Deputy Minister of Natural Resources in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). He has played a key role in shaping the region's energy strategy, particularly in the development and management of the natural gas sector. With over 15 years of senior leadership experience, Mufti has served as Chairman of key strategic projects, including the Khormor Gas Field and the Chamchamal project in the Sulaymaniyah area. He is actively involved in the daily management of gas production across the Kurdistan Region and has been instrumental in addressing critical security challenges at the Khormor site. In addition to his operational responsibilities, Mufti is a key figure in the KRG's negotiations with the Federal Government of Iraq on vital energy matters. His work has been pivotal in navigating complex political, legal, and technical issues to protect the region's energy interests. Prior to his appointment as Deputy Minister in the 9th Cabinet in 2019, he served as a long-standing ministerial advisor and Director General of Audit within the Ministry of Natural Resources. Mufti holds a BSc in Chemical Engineering from Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and an MSc in Natural Resources Management from VU University in Amsterdam, equipping him with the academic foundation and technical expertise to support his strategic leadership in the energy sector.

Sana Nawzad

University of Sulaimani, Kurdistan Region, Iraq

Sana Nawzad holds a Master's degree in International Relations and serves as a Lecturer Assistant at the University of Sulaymaniyah. She is also a researcher at two respected research centers, where her work focuses on political analysis, Kurdish culture, and Middle Eastern geopolitics. With a strong background in security studies and political systems, she contributes regularly to academic publications and strategic reports.

Ulrich Nussbaum

State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs & Energy (2018-2021), Germany

Dr. Ulrich Nußbaum is CEO and managing partner of a group of companies in the seafood industry, as well as chairman of the advisory board of Alba Group, a leading company in the international waste management industry. From 2018-2021 Dr. Ulrich Nußbaum was State Secretary in the German Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs, responsible for the directorates-general for economic, industrial and external economic policy, for digital and innovation policy and for SME policy. He was the Federal Government's coordinator for projects abroad that are of strategic interest to the Federal Republic of Germany. Before he chaired the Executive Board of Deutsches Verkehrsforum (German Transport Forum) from 2015- 2018. He has been Professor of International and European Commercial Law and Financial Relations at Jacobs University Bremen since 2011. From 2008 to 2014 Nußbaum was Minister of Finance in the State of Berlin. From 2003-2007 he held the same position in the State of Bremen. Prior to this, he held various executive positions in the seafood

industry. He completed his law and political science studies at the Universities of Saarbrücken, Trier, Geneva, Strasbourg and London as a doctor of law in 1985.

Layla Omer

President, Municipal Council, Sulaimani

I have a bachelor's degree in law and politics, graduated from Salahaddin University (1996–1997). I started working in the public sector and was employed as deputy manager in the Slemani Real Estate directorate in (1998), and then I became the director of the same directorate (2005- 2020). Throughout this period with my colleagues, we successfully established an electronic database system for the Real Estate. We were the first city in Iraq to implement such modern system to register the citizen's real estate data.

I became the deputy governor of Slemani for one year (2021-2022). At that time, I represented Slemani in France to launch the Sister City project with the city of Nantes. Currently, I am serving as the mayor of Slemani. I have dedicated my career to urban development, public service, and community empowerment. As the Mayor, I led the completion of twenty-nine infrastructure projects, including major intersections and road expansions. Internationally, I represented the city of Slemani by attending various events such as the World of Concrete and the Select USA Investment Conference.

As a committed advocate for women and youth, I have emphasized job creation and empowerment initiatives. My long-standing political involvement with the PUK includes participation in multiple party congresses and advisory roles, reflecting my influence in both governance and political leadership.

Nikos Papandreou

Member of European Parliament, Greece

Nikos Papandreou is an economist He is currently a Member of the European Parliament affiliated to the Socialists and Democrats (S&D), Member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON), Member of the Delegation for relations with the United States (D-US) and Member of the Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (DMED) He is also substitute Member of the Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) and substitute Member of the Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries. He is an author, columnist and he worked as an Academic Lecturer on Economics for several years and at the World Bank. Nikos Papandreou has written ten books translated in English, German and Arabic. He participates in the informal network "Everyday Citizen" of the Party of European Socialists, he is co-founder of the Committee for the Conservation of the Christian Community in the Middle East (USA), Member of the Council of World Leadership Brookings and co-organizer of Symi Symposium.

Fanis Papathanasiou

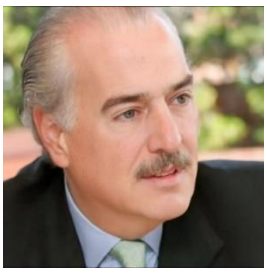
Journalist, ERT, Greece

Fanis Papathanasiou is an anchor and senior diplomatic correspondent at ERT TV (Greek Public Television) with over twenty-five years of experience in covering significant diplomatic and international events. A longtime correspondent based in New York, he is currently located in Athens and reports on global crises, wars, and various other major news events, including conflicts in Iraq, Lebanon, and other regions of the Middle East. Throughout his career, Fanis Papathanasiou has conducted exclusive one-on-one interviews with

numerous international figures, including Donald Trump, George W. Bush, Secretary Mike Pompeo, Turkish leaders Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Ahmet Davutoğlu, and Abdullah Gül, as well as former Israeli Prime Ministers Shimon Peres and Ehud Olmert, former Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin, and IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, among others. He has also made appearances on global networks such as CGTN, CNN, BBC, and Al Jazeera. Fanis holds a Master of Arts degree in Digital Media, Communication, and Journalism from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Andres Pastrana

President, Christian Democrat International; President, Republic of Colombia (1998-2002)



Andrés Pastrana Arango (Bogotá, 1954) is a distinguished Colombian statesman and international leader whose career blends public service, journalism, and diplomacy. A lawyer from Universidad del Rosario (founded 1653), he deepened his global perspective as a Harvard's Center for International Affairs fellow in 1978. Early on, Pastrana made his mark as director and anchor of TV Hoy News, earning two King of Spain Journalism Awards. A vocal enemy of drug traffickers, Pastrana, then 34 years old, was kidnapped by drug lord Pablo Escobar and rescued by the Colombian Police. He was soon elected Bogotá's first mayor by popular vote in 1988. He founded Nueva Fuerza Democrática, earning the highest congressional vote ever for an independent movement. In 1998, Pastrana became Colombia's 30th president. His administration forged Plan Colombia—a landmark partnership with the United States against drug traffic and communist guerrillas that strengthened national security and boosted rural development—and initiated groundbreaking peace dialogues. Since leaving office, Pastrana has continued to champion democratic values worldwide. He serves as president of the Centrist Democrat International, sits on several global advisory boards, and shares his insights as an author and speaker. His lifelong dedication to public welfare and peace-building makes him an inspiring figure on the international stage.

Volker Perthes

Senior Distinguished Fellow, German Institute for International & Security Affairs (SWP)

Dr Volker Perthes, currently a Senior Distinguished Fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) and a freelanced author, is a former UN Under-Secretary-General (January 2021 to March 2024). Among other things, he served as Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sudan and Head of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). He also led the Independent Strategic Review on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI). Prior to this, from 2005 to 2020, Perthes was Executive Chairman and Director of SWP, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. In 2015-2016, he also served as UN Assistant Secretary-General and Senior Advisor to the UN Special Envoy for Syria. Perthes earned his doctoral degree in 1990 from the University of Duisburg. From 1991 to 1993, he was an assistant professor at the American University of Beirut from 1991 to 1993. He was a professor of international relations at Humboldt University Berlin from 2006 to 2019, and also taught at other schools. Perthes is a renowned scholar, speaker and policy advisor, and author of numerous books and articles on the Middle East, Europe, and international affairs.

Shishir Priyadarshi

President, Global Relations Adani Group, India

Shishir Priyadarshi is currently President, Global Relations for the Adani Group, one of the largest infrastructure, power and renewable energy entity in the world. Earlier for over 25

years he worked in the World Trade Organization, including as the Director of the Development Division. Prior to that he served as a senior civil servant in the Indian bureaucracy. He is an academician by heart, having taught in many Universities, written many articles and think pieces, and leads the research vertical of the Adani group.

Dara Rashid Mahmud

Minister of Planning for the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)

Dr. Dara Rashid Mahmud is the current Minister of Planning for the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Dr. Mahmud holds a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (M.B.Ch.B), a Master of Science in Radiology, and a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Clinical Oncology—a testament to his intellectual depth and unwavering commitment to professional excellence. His journey—from a medical professional to a transformative figure in government—reflects a lifelong dedication to public service, evidence-based policymaking. Prior to his ministerial appointment, he built a distinguished career in the health sector, he has demonstrated visionary leadership and a profound commitment to improving public health services. As Director of Shorsh Military Hospital, he led one of the region's most critical medical institutions, introducing innovative protocols that significantly improved patient outcomes. In his subsequent role as General Director of Health Affairs, he played a central role in shaping healthcare policy, expanding service delivery, and strengthening the health system across the Kurdistan Region. A dedicated advocate for cancer care, Dr. Mahmud served as Head of the Cancer Fund of Kurdistan, where he championed groundbreaking initiatives to expand treatment access and enhance support services for patients and their families. Under his leadership, the Cancer Fund not only provided critical support to cancer patients but also strengthened the capacity of public oncology hospitals and supported the establishment of specialized screening centers, and bone marrow transplantation centers—ensuring that advanced diagnostic and treatment services became more accessible across the region. He further advanced healthcare governance as Chairman of the High Commission for Public and Semi-Private Clinics, where he established rigorous standards and oversight mechanisms that elevated the quality and reliability of healthcare services throughout the region. Since his appointment as Minister of

Planning, Dr. Mahmud has redefined the role of the ministry as a hub of strategic vision and data-driven development. His most notable achievement to date is his leadership of the 2024 Population Census as Chairman of the High Census Commission of the Kurdistan Region. Under his supervision, this historic effort—the first comprehensive census in over 37 years—was successfully conducted in parallel with Iraq, providing critical demographic insights that will inform policy, economic planning, and social development for generations to come. Dr. Mahmud has ability to bridge scientific expertise with strategic governance. His commitment to data-driven, evidence-based planning has positioned him as a transformative force in public administration, ensuring that policies and development initiatives are grounded in accurate data and aligned with the real needs of society. By fostering strong partnerships between government institutions, academia, and international organizations, he has cultivated an ecosystem of collaboration and innovation that continues to drive the Kurdistan Region toward a more prosperous and sustainable future.

Luis Ravina

Dir., Navarra Center for Int'l Development & Prof. of Int'l Economy, Univ. of Navarra, Spain

Prof. Ravina is Director of the Navarra Center for International Development (NCID) and Professor of International Economy at the University of Navarra. External Advisor at Strathmore Business School, Strathmore University, Nairobi. Holding a PhD in Economics, Special Prize, Complutense University, Madrid. He has been visiting scholar to the Hoover Institution, Stanford University and the University of Chicago. Coordinator of the Course "International Political Economy" at Princeton, NJ. Former Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the University of Navarra (1993-2008). Founder of CINDERE Universidad del Itsmo, Guatemala. He has been chairman of the Advisory Board of the Foundation of Financial Studies, Madrid.

Alicia Rico Perez del Pulgar

Ambassador of Spain in Iraq

Mrs. ALICIA RICO PEREZ DEL PULGAR- Date of birth: 23/07/1965 in Madrid, MADRID- Date of entry into the Spanish Diplomatic Corps: 18/10/1991 - Current category: Minister Plenipotentiary - Academic Qualifications: Law Degree DESTINATIONS:- 29/09/2021 Director General for Africa, MOFA- 06/08/2021 Advisor to the Director General for Latin America and the Caribbean, MOFA- 09/09/2017 Ambassador of Spain to Ghana and the Togolese Republic. - 01/08/2015 Seconded national expert at the South America Division, European Union- 20/04/2010 Counsellor in charge of the European Space at the Permanent Representation of Spain to the European Union.- 27/08/2008 Deputy Director General of Chancery, at the Protocol Department, MOFA- 10/07/2006 Head of Foreign Representation Area, at the Protocol Department, MOFA- 14/04/2004 Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Spain in Oman- 04/04/2001 Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Spain in Kuwait - 14/04/1997 Counsellor at the Spanish Embassy in Luxembourg- 01/02/1993 Technical Advisor in the Cabinet of the Minister, MOFA - 01/08/1992 Head of African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries office at the Sub-directorate General for Coordination of European Community Programs, MOFA- 04/11/1991 Head of African Countries office at the Sub-directorate General for Coordination of European Community Programs, MOFA* Mrs. Alicia Rico Perez del Pulgar holds a number of Spanish and Foreign decorations.

Omar Shaban

Head, PalThink for Strategic Studies Policy Institute; Sen.Advisor, European Inst. for Peace, Palaistine

Omar Shaban is the founder of PalThink for Strategic Studies in Gaza-Palestine. He was a candidate for the 1st Palestinian parliamentary elections in 1996. Omar regularly writes for various international magazines and has been interviewed by many well-known international newspapers. He occasionally participates in conferences on political and economic issues, as well as Palestinian affairs, such as the reconstruction of Gaza, national reconciliation, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Euro-Med cooperation. His political independence and strict adherence to democratic values and principles made him a trusted advisor to all stakeholders. Omar is regularly invited to speak at conferences in Europe and the US. He has also published dozens of articles and policy papers for research reports and think tanks and has been quoted in numerous books such as “Dignity under Siege” (Brussels, 2008) and “Palestiniens” by Mélinée Le Priol and Chloé Rouveyrolles (Paris, 2018). Omar and Pal-Think for Strategic Studies received the World Movement for Democracy Award in Recognition for its Civil Society Role in 2024. Omar was born in Gaza in 1962. He holds a BA in economy from Egypt (1984), an MSc in Entrepreneurial Studies from Stirling University, Scotland (1995), and a Master's degree in development from Geneva Graduate Institute in 2023.

Muhammed Shukri

Chairman of the Board of Investment, Kurdistan Regional Government

Dr. Muhammad Shukri, BA in economics and master’s degree in privatization of industrial projects in Iraq, and PhD in consumer protection in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Since 2001 he held several governmental positions. He also worked as an effective member of the Economic Reforms Committee in the Kurdistan Region‘s Presidency. He is now the Chairman of the Kurdistan Board of Investment in the 9th cabinet of Kurdistan regional government.

Dimitris Skalkos

Secretary General for International Economic Affairs, MFA, Hellenic Republic

Dimitris Skalkos was born in Athens in 1971. He graduated from the Department of Political Science and International Studies of Panteion University and holds a master's degree in International Relations from the University of Kent. Since 2004, he has been working for the Management Organization Unit of Development Programmes S.A. as an executive on the EU co-financed programmes. Mr Skalkos has served for several years as an adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Public Works, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Economy and Development. He has authored four books on political theory, economic reform and regional development and has published numerous research papers in academic journals. In the period 2019-2024, Mr Skalkos has served as General Secretary for Public Investments and Partnership Agreement at the Ministry of Development and Investments, a member of the Greek National Resilience and Recovery Plan Steering Committee, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Hellenic Development Bank. He is currently serving as the Secretary General for International Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as the Chairman of Enterprise Greece SA.

Rebwar Taha

Governor of Kirkuk

Rebwar Taha holds a Bachelor's degree in Education, a Bachelor's degree in Law, a Diploma in Administration and Law, and a Diploma from the Security Forces Training Academy. From 2003 to 2014, he worked in the field of security and counter-terrorism. He served as a

member of the 3rd term of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, where he was part of the Integrity Committee, and during the 4th term, he held the position of Deputy Chairman of the Oil and Energy Committee. In 2018, he was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Internal Regulations Drafting within the Iraqi Council of Representatives. He became a member of the Leadership Council of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in 2019, was elected to the Kirkuk Provincial Council in 2023, and in 2024, he assumed office as Governor of Kirkuk.

Begard Talabani

Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Kurdistan Regional Government

Begard Dilshad Shukrallah (Begard Talabani) is the current Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). She has held this ministerial position since 2019, bringing her scientific background and experience to bear on the management of Kurdistan's agricultural sector and water resources. Mrs. Begard holds a Bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences, which provides her with a strong scientific foundation for overseeing the region's agricultural development and water resource management. Before her ministerial appointment, she served as a Member of the Kurdistan Parliament where she held several key positions. From 2013 to 2017, she was the Head of the Green Faction in the Kurdistan Parliament, demonstrating her leadership capabilities. Following this role, she served as the Secretary of the Kurdistan Parliament from 2017 to 2018.

Qubad Talabani

Deputy Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government

Qubad Talabani is the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Running on a platform of stability, jobs and improved services in the 2018 Kurdistan region parliamentary elections, Talabani won more votes than any other candidate in Iraq. He was first sworn in as Deputy Prime Minister of the Eighth KRG Cabinet in June 2014, where he took office during an immensely difficult time. Receiving no fiscal transfers from the Government of Iraq (GoI), coupled with rapidly declining oil prices, the Kurdistan region was in the midst of a severe financial crisis. Moreover, the Islamic State was rampaging its way throughout Iraq, claiming territory and establishing itself as one of history's most brutal terrorist organizations, resulting in a major humanitarian crisis that forced 1.8 million people to flee war and violence and seek refuge in the Kurdistan region. During this period, the KRG successfully oversaw a package of reforms. A major part of the KRG's economic reform plan included improving oversight of government expenditures. To that end, Talabani successfully oversaw the design and implementation of his government's biometric registration program. This system aimed at eliminating ghost employees and right-sizing the government, helped to remove 50,000 fake jobs, which saved the KRG millions of dollars monthly. In a period of six months, 1.2 million people were registered in the biometric registration system. Talabani also launched the KRG's services portal, aimed at streamlining government services and citizens interactions with the government. During the KRG's Seventh Cabinet, Talabani established and headed up the Department of Coordination and Follow-up to facilitate interministerial coordination and ensure that decrees are effectively implemented. He directed that KRG agency on behalf of the Prime Minister for two years. Prior to his return to the Kurdistan region's capital Erbil, starting in 2000, Talabani served in the KRG's representation office in the United States. He was appointed the KRG Representative to the US after the Government's unification in 2006, a position he held until his departure in 2012. While Talabani served as the KRG's top diplomat in the US, the representation office was recognized by many as Kurdistan's de-facto embassy in Washington, DC. During Talabani's posting, the KRG representation in the US deepened Kurdistan's relations with both the executive and legislative branches of the US government. Among other successes, Talabani launched the Kurdish American Congressional Caucus, a bipartisan caucus that in 2011 was formally supported by fifty-two members of Congress. The caucus, established in May 2008, now symbolizes continued amity and cooperation between the United States and Kurdish Americans as well as the people of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. During his tenure as the KRG representative to the US, Mr. Talabani was also instrumental in the formation of the United States Kurdistan Business Council (USKBC), in November 2011. The USKBC is dedicated to facilitating trade and commerce for U.S. companies in the Kurdistan Region and strengthening ties between the private sector in the U.S. and the Kurdistan Region. The USKBC also works closely with the KRG to ensure that foreign investment provides needed value and benefit to the region and is made in such a way as to reinforce and strengthen the

already enormous economic opportunities there. Talabani also strengthened Kurdish grassroots activities and engaged the Kurdish American community in shaping US policy. This included mobilizing the Kurdish community in the US, and the Kurdish American Congressional Caucus to pass legislation calling on the State Department to open a US Consulate in the Kurdistan Region. After Operation Iraqi Freedom in the spring of 2003, Talabani was named Senior Foreign Relations officer of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), operating mainly out of Baghdad and Suleimani. There, he worked closely with the American-led Coalition Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, serving as the PUK's top liaison to the Coalition Provisional Authority and to US forces in Iraq. Talabani was also a key negotiator in drafting the Transitional Administrative Law, the forerunner to the current Constitution of Iraq. Following high school, Talabani took a keen interest in engineering. He obtained a Diploma in Motor Vehicle Engineering at Carshalton College and later received a B.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering (majoring in Automotive Systems Engineering) at Kingston University in Greater London. Deputy Prime Minister Talabani was born in 1977. He was raised in the United Kingdom by his maternal grandparents, Ibrahim Ahmed, a novelist, poet and founder of the modern intellectual Kurdish movement, and Galawejh Ahmed, also a novelist. His family has been involved in Kurdish politics for decades. His father, Jalal Talabani, was the President of the Republic of Iraq from 2006 until 2014. Deputy Prime Minister Talabani lives with his wife Sherri and their two children, Ari and Lara, in Erbil. He is fluent in Kurdish and English. Mr. Talabani is a football fan and an enthusiastic supporter of Manchester United.

Alexia Tasouli

Diplomatic Correspondent, Greece

Alexia Tasouli is an international correspondent, accredited in Hellenic Presidency, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the Minstry of Defence of Greece. She has worked for more than 2O years in MEGA TV station and other media print and digital platforms, interviewing political leaders and covering all the major political international events. She has participated as a speaker in a number of international conferences including Delphi Economic Forum since 2016. She has been awarded as a distinguished journalist from the Ecumenical Hellenism Organization. She has also been awarded by the Greek Union of

Photoreporters and Cameramen for her ethos and work. She is a member of the International Chamber of Commerce.

Umberto Tavolato

Director, Med-Or Italian Foundation, Italy

Director for Special Projects at the Med-Or Italian Foundation, with 20 years of history in working in diplomacy across Europe, Africa and the Arab Gulf, at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU foreign service, and EU Special Representatives' offices in Sudan, Ethiopia, the AU and the Horn of Africa.

Tofiq Hawre

Head of International Relations and Organizations, Presidency of the Republic of Iraq

Hawre Tofiq is a seasoned professional with extensive experience in international relations, humanitarian programs, and electoral management. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Law and currently serves as the Head of International Relations and Organizations at the Presidency of the Republic of Iraq. Throughout his career, he has held key positions including Program Manager at Norwegian People's Aid, Program Coordinator at the International Organization for Migration, and Director General at the Independent High Electoral Commission in Sulaymaniyah. His work reflects a strong commitment to governance, international cooperation, and public service.

Symeon G. Tsomokos

Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum

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

Erol User

CEO, Erol User Corporation, Türkiye

Multi-Award-winning entrepreneur, philanthropist, business/financial coach and educator, Erol User is one of Turkeys pioneering game-changers in the business world. Born in Istanbul in 1960, User brings over 30 years' experience in a wide range of industries and sectors. As a distinguished entrepreneur and Blockchain Analyst, he holds a proven track record and

demonstrated excellence to transform digital services in the fields of Investment Banking, Energy, Blockchain, Cryptocurrency, Mergers & Acquisitions, Privatizations and IT in general. Mr. User is currently the President and CEO of User Corporation, a world-leading investment banking company, offering advisory services both to Turkish and International companies. He is a graduate of Economic Sciences with double majors in Business Administration and Finance from Istanbul University. As someone who loves to broaden his knowledge of study, Mr. User holds an MBA degree from Harvard Business School, a postgraduate degree in International Leadership from Sophia University, Japan, an MSc degree in Renewable Energy from Vienna Technical University. He has also obtained a postgraduate degree in Blockchain Strategy from Oxford Said Business School and in Cryptocurrency and Disruption from the London School of Economics (LSE), such as in Blockchain Technologies from MIT Sloan School. He is a visionary leader, with strong entrepreneurial background adept with the knowledge of organizational development, through visioning, strategic planning, evaluation, monitoring, and trusted advisory support. Mr. User is also the Founder, President and Board Member of several organizations or associations to include: JCI Turkey, Worldwatch Institute Europe, TUGIAD, DEIK, TESEV, TEMA, Conference Board, Club Of Rome, Club of Budapest, European Business Roundtable, R. Kennedy Human Rights Foundation Leadership Global Compact, Abraham's Path, Mahatma Gandhi Arise India, The Aladdin Project and Kids parliament. User actively did sports like ski, tennis, athletics, football and also served as Vice President of Fenerbahce Sports Club in Turkey. He is The Chairman of the Supervisory Board of the Blockchainacademy Istanbul at Aydin University. As someone who loves giving back to his community, User is passionate about supporting many philanthropic initiatives. Seeking to impact his passion to many, he has written several books on Economy, Energy, Internet of Things, Metaverse, Crypto Money and Blockchain. User is Founder of Coinarmy, Charter Member of INATBA. User is Co-Chair of the INATBA Metaverse Task Force. User is Charter Founder of the Metaverse World Council.

Konstantin Valkov

Director of Special Projects, New Bulgarian University

Konstantin Valkov is an university lecturer, accomplished media specialist and journalist from Bulgaria. Writing stories and doing interviews for Rhythm newspaper, Egoist magazine, the Bulgarian Section of the BBC, and Bulgarian National Darik Radio, he began his career at the age of 15.

Since the beginning of 2025, he serves as the Director of Special Projects and a journalism lecturer at New Bulgarian University. He has also been the Program Director of Darik Radio for 20 years. He has written for numerous magazines, such as Monocle, Port, and L'Europeo, and frequently appears as an expert on Bulgarian TV. He publishes Perfect Day, a biannual magazine, and serves as its editor-at-large. Additionally, he hosts the recently created and incredibly prominent "The Bureau of Konstantin Valkov" podcast, which has interviews with experts and politicians such as Ivan Krastev, Ehud Olmert, and Ahmed Davutoglu.

Albrecht von Wittke

Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Erbil

Born in Hamburg on July 21, 1966, he is married with four children (two sons and two daughters). He studied economics and political science at the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn and at Université Paris IX-Dauphine, earning a Diplom-Volkswirt in 1994 and a Maîtrise d'Économie Appliquée in 1991. Following reserve officer training with the German Federal Armed Forces (Armored Reconnaissance Battalion 7, Augustdorf), he entered the training program for the Higher Foreign Service at the Federal Foreign Office in Bonn. He has held various diplomatic positions in Germany and abroad, including Deputy to the German Permanent Representative at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Minister Counsellor for Political Affairs at the German Embassy in Washington, D.C., and Head of several divisions at the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin, focusing on arms control and export controls. From January 2022 to June 2023, he also chaired the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition, negotiating the "Global Framework on Through-Life Management of Conventional Ammunition." Since October 2024, he has been serving as Consul General in Erbil.

Zebari Hoshyar

Foreign Minister, Republic of Iraq (2003-2014); Member of the Political Bureau, KDP

Mr. Zebari was born in 1953 in Aqra, Iraqi Kurdistan, and educated in the Iraqi city of Mosul, the University of Jordan, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, and the University of Essex in the UK, obtaining a Master of Arts in Sociology of Development.

Mr. Zebari was responsible for the Kurdish Student Society in Europe and Chairman of the Overseas Student Committee in the UK between 1978 and 1980 and in 1979 he was elected to the Kurdistan Democratic Party's Leadership (Central Committee). Mr. Zebari participated in the armed national resistance campaign against the regime of Saddam from 1980 -1988 and became an elected member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party's (KDP) Political Bureau and Chief Representative of the Kurdistan Front in Europe in 1989. Mr. Zebari held the post of the KDP's Chief Foreign Representative from 1988-1991 and acted as a spokesman during the 1991 Gulf War. Following the Gulf War, he liaised with the coalitions' Operation Provide Comfort and Military Coordinating Centre in Zakho, Iraqi Kurdistan, until 1995.

Mr. Zebari became Head of KDP's International Relations Bureau in 1992, a position he held until his most recent appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs, during which time he carried out public diplomacy, media outreach and organized conferences for the Iraqi opposition. He also became an elected member of the Kurdistani National Assembly in 1992 - date. In 1994 Mr. Zebari became the principal negotiator in the Kurdish peace process and participated in peace talks held in Paris, Ireland, Ankara, London and Washington which produced the 1998 Washington Peace Agreement between the KDP and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Mr. Zebari was elected to the Executive Council of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) in 1992 and became Head of International Relations of the Iraqi Opposition. He was elected as a member of the INC Leadership Council in 1999 and in 2002 he became a member of the Iraqi Opposition Coordination and Follow-Up Committee.

Mr. Zebari has been responsible for outreach and public diplomacy in the USA, Europe, Arab countries and Iraq's neighbouring countries over many years. His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar

Zibari was first appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Iraqi Governing Council in Baghdad on September 3rd 2003. On June 28/2004, he was reappointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs by the Iraqi Interim Government (I.I.G) under Prime Minister Dr. Ayad Allawi. On May 3rd ,2005 he was sworn in as Minister of Foreign Affairs by the Iraqi Transitional Government (I.T. G.) under Prime Minister Dr. Ibrahim Al-Ja'afari On May 20th , 2006 ,he sworn in for the fourth consecutive time as Foreign Minister in the government of Mr.Nouri Kamil Al-Maliki which is the first constitutional government since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime On Dec 21th , 2010 ,he sworn in for the fifth consecutive time as Foreign Minister in the government of Mr.Nouri Kamil Al-Maliki which is the second constitutional government.

Momen Zellmi

Center for Future Studies (CSF); Editor in Chief, The Future Media

Dr. Momen Zellmi is a political analyst and researcher based in Sulaimaniya, Iraqi Kurdistan. He is Editor-in-Chief of Kfuture. Media at the Center for Future Studies (CFS) and Head of Department at Cihan University Sulaimnaiya. With a PhD in Language Education Policy and an MA in English Language and Literature, he has published widely on politics, security, education, gender, and culture.