Message from the Director

It is my pleasure to announce the inaugural newsletter of the Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies (PMBF). This unique program, designed in cooperation with Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) in Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia, and the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando, Florida, aims to advance public knowledge and awareness about issues of interest to both U.S. and Saudi cultures, promote research and help facilitate educational ties and other mutually beneficial initiatives. Using an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach, the program aims to enhance debate, dialogue, partnership-building and scholarship in a number of fields such as culture, economy, security and U.S.-Saudi relations. PMBF will highlight these subjects through public presentations featuring distinguished visitors; an annual forum; special, topical seminars; scholarly and research activities; the exchange of scholars, practitioners and students; and course development. We invite you to attend events hosted by PMBF and expand your knowledge of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its relationship with the U.S.

David Dumke

Introducing the Aramco Experience

PMBF intends to implement “The American Experience in Saudi Arabia,” an oral history project exploring the American experience in the Eastern Province. The project will involve a series of in-depth interviews, primarily with individuals now residing in Florida who previously worked for Saudi Aramco. These individuals lived and worked in the Kingdom during times of profound social, economic and political change. UCF intends to publish the interviews in various forms, including in a monograph, booklet and on video.

Upcoming Events

October 14th, 2013
Dr. Paul Sullivan
Topic: International Water Security
Location: Association of Opinion Journalists Conference
Newport, R.I.
Time: 2:15 p.m.- 3:45 p.m.

October 24th, 2013
Khaled Al Maeena- Forum on Crisis and Transformation in the Middle East and Muslim World
Topic: Saudi Arabia’s reaction to the changing region
Location: Bush Auditorium, Rollins College
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Samar Fatany
Topic: Women in Saudi Arabia
Location: Select in-class presentations, UCF
Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

October 28th, 2013
Saudi Arabia: Balancing Modernity, Reform, and Traditional Values
Speakers: Khaled Al Maeena and Samar Fatany
Location: Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C.
Time: 12:00 p.m.- 1:30 p.m.

November 7th, 2013
Topic: Diplomacy in the Middle East
Location: Pegasus Ballroom, UCF Student Union
(Advanced Registration Required)
Time: 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Dr. Paul Sullivan is a professor of economics at the National Defense University and Georgetown University, teaching on the subjects of security studies, science and technology, and international relations. He is an internationally renowned expert on the subjects of energy development, security and economic markets, as well as international economic development, and political and military issues. Dr. Sullivan has published several books on the economy, security issues, resource development, water and energy security, and U.S.-Arab relations. Dr. Sullivan is a member of the Global Expert list. He obtained his B.A. at Brandeis University, and M.A., MPhil and Ph.D. from Yale. Dr. Sullivan lived in Egypt for several years and was a professor at the American University in Cairo.

Mr. Khaled Al-Maeena is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the *Saudi Gazette*, one of the largest and widely read newspapers in the Middle East, and is a well-known columnist throughout the Middle East and South Asian regions. Al-Maeena is a well-known expert on Saudi Arabia, GCC, Middle East and South Asian issues. His newspaper’s groundbreaking work in covering South Asian issues for the Indian and Pakistani expat community in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region has been recognized on numerous occasions. He regularly appears in the Western media – in print, TV and on radio. In an informal capacity, Al-Maeena has been a well-recognized, respected and discreet advisor to top Saudi government officials. He has represented Saudi Arabia at several important summit meetings in the Arab world and beyond – including on sensitive diplomatic visits to China and Russia. He is a co-founder and Vice Chairman of NAAM, an NGO dedicated, among other things, to cross-cultural communications.

Mrs. Samar Fatany is a writer and columnist for the *Saudi Gazette*, *Khaleej Times* and *Asia Week*. She is also Senior Radio Journalist at Radio Jeddah, where she has a regular show focusing on a broad range of topics including culture, religion and international relations. She has frequently appeared in the Western media, including BBC, CNN, NPR and NBC. She has made significant contributions in social awareness campaigns, including fighting extremism, enhancing the role of women in society and empowering Saudi youth. Fatany has authored three books: *Saudi Perceptions and Western Misconceptions*, *Saudi Challenges and Reforms*, and *A New Era for Saudi Women*. She is a co-founder and Vice Chairman of NAAM, an NGO dedicated, among other things, to cross-cultural communications.

Dr. Tamara Cofman Wittes is the Director and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution’s Saban Center for Middle East Policy. Wittes previously served in the Obama Administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs from 2009-2012, where she directed U.S. regional policy and served as deputy special coordinator for Middle East transitions. Before joining the State Department, Wittes was a senior fellow at Brookings, where she directed the Middle East Democracy and Development (MEDD) Project, and has also served as a specialist at the U.S. Institute of Peace and director of programs at the Middle East Institute. She is the author of *Freedom’s Unsteady March: America’s Role in Building Arab Democracy* (Brookings Press, 2008), and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and Women in International Security.