

*The Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program
for Strategic Research and Studies*

at the University of Central Florida

2013 Year End Report





UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
PRINCE MOHAMMAD BIN FAHD PROGRAM FOR
STRATEGIC RESEARCH AND STUDIES

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies
Year End Summary of Events
December 19, 2013

March 12, 2013

Venue: Class Presentation, UCF

Speaker: Ambassador Gary Grappo

Topic: History of U.S.-Saudi Relations

Ambassador Gary Grappo is the former President and CEO of the Keystone Center, and former Head of Mission of the Office of the Quartet Representative under the Honorable Tony Blair. Grappo has held a number of senior positions at the U.S. State Department, including Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; Minister Counselor for Political Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq; and U.S. Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman. Amb. Grappo has received numerous State Department awards, including the 2009 Senior Foreign Service Presidential Award for his service as Chief of Mission in Oman. Amb. Grappo discussed the strong and lasting relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. More specifically, he focused on how the relationship began and evolved through the decades. Grappo was also a featured guest on WUCF TV's *Global Perspectives*.

March 28, 2013

Venue: Class Presentation, UCF

Speaker: Thomas Lippman

Topic: Modern Saudi Arabia: Challenges and Opportunities

Thomas Lippman is an award-winning author and journalist with more than three decades of experience specializing in Saudi Arabian affairs, U.S.-Saudi relations, and Islam and the West. Lippman has authored numerous books, including: *Understanding Islam*; *Inside the Mirage: America's Fragile Partnership with Saudi Arabia*; and, most recently, *Saudi Arabia on the Edge: The Uncertain Future of an American Ally*. While at UCF, Lippman gave a presentation on Saudi Arabian culture, history, economy and recent reforms. Lippman gave special attention to the challenge posed by population growth – in including in education, healthcare, social

programs, job creation, and resource management. Lippman was also a featured guest on WUCF TV's *Global Perspectives*.

April 9, 2013

Venue: Central Florida Global Economic Forum, UCF

Speaker: David Dumke

Topic: Saudi Economic Development

The Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies cosponsored the event, and PMBF Director, David Dumke was featured on the Global Policy Panel. He discussed business and the economy in the Middle East region, particularly the development of Saudi Arabian economy. He also forecast likely areas of growth and development in the coming decade.

April 11, 2013

Venue: Interfaith Dialog Forum, UCF

Speaker: Dr. John O. Voll

Topic: Islam and Democracy in the 21st Century (UCF)

Dr. John Voll, Associate Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. He has lived in Lebanon, Egypt and Sudan, and has traveled extensively throughout the Muslim world. In 1991, he received an Egyptian Presidential Medal in recognition for scholarship on Islam. Voll has served on the Board of Directors of the American Council of Learned Societies, the New Hampshire Humanities Council, the New Hampshire Council on World Affairs and the Sudan Studies Association. In addition, Voll has edited, authored, or co-written multiple books, including *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* and *Makers of Contemporary Islam* (with John Esposito). Dr. Voll discussed the importance of interfaith dialogue, and how religion and democracy are evolving in the 21st century. He used Tunisia and Egypt as examples of countries that are transitioning to a more democratic society, and explained the means being used to accomplish these goals, including the role of social media. Voll was also a featured guest on WUCF TV's *Global Perspectives*.

April 17, 2013

Venue: Orlando Area Council on Foreign Relations

Speaker: David Dumke

Topic: Challenges of the Middle East in Transition

PMBF Director David Dumke gave a lecture and answered questions about changes underway in the Middle East and how they may shape U.S. policy and the region in the coming years.

Dumke paid particular attention to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. OACFR welcomed special guests visiting from UCF's partner Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU), who were visiting Orlando to explore areas of collaboration between UCF and PMU.

April 18, 2013

Venue: Special Event, UCF

Speakers: His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd, UCF President John Hitt, PMU Rector Dr. Issa Al Ansari

Topic: Kickoff of Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program

In a special event held at the UCF Student Union, HRH Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd, UCF President John Hitt, and Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University Rector Issa Al Ansari participated in an event officially kicking off the Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program for Strategic Research and Studies. President Hitt discussed the importance of the program and formally introduced the Prince. His Royal Highness explained the importance of educational partnerships and collaboration, which are the foundation of the PMBF Program. He also launched the PMBF web site. The event highlighted a week-long visit by a PMU delegation, which aimed to expand PMU-UCF educational collaboration.

October 14, 2013

Venue: Association of Opinion Journalists Annual Convention, Newport, Rhode Island

Speakers: Dr. Paul Sullivan and Dr. Tim Hoyt

Topic: North Africa and Middle East Water Security

The PMBF Program sponsored a panel on regional water security at the Association of Opinion Journalists (AOJ) annual conference. The PMBF panel was moderated by PMBF Director David Dumke, and featured Dr. Paul Sullivan of the National Defense University and Dr. Tim Hoyt of the Naval War College. Dr. Sullivan is a professor of economics at the National Defense University and teaches at Georgetown University on the subjects of security studies, science and technology, and international relations. He is an internationally renowned expert on the subjects of water, 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 US-Arab relations. Dr. Timothy D. Hoyt is a Professor of Strategy and Policy at the U.S. Naval War College, teaching on a range of topics including strategy, terrorism, insurgency, maritime warfare, weapons of mass destruction, contemporary conflict, and South Asian security. Dr. Hoyt received his Ph.D. in International Relations and Strategic Studies from Johns Hopkins University, and has worked for the U.S. Army, the Congressional Research Service, and other government agencies. At the AOJ conference, Sullivan provided an overview of the water situation facing the Arab world. Hoyt focused on the water situation in South Asia, particularly Pakistan.

October 24, 2013

Venues: Coffee Discussion with Students and Class Presentations, UCF

Speaker: Samar Fatany

Topic: Women in Contemporary Saudi Arabia

Samar Fatany is a writer and columnist for the *Saudi Gazette*, *Khaleej Times* and *Asia Week*. She is also the Senior Announcer and Radio Journalist at *Radio Jeddah*. Fatany has covered on a broad range of topics including culture, religion, international conferences, and interviewed dignitaries and officials throughout the Kingdom and the world. She has made significant contributions in social awareness campaigns – combating extremism, enhancing women’s rights, and empowering Saudi youth. She is a participant in King Abdullah’s women’s dialog initiative. In addition, Mrs. Fatany has published 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. While at UCF, Fatany had a coffee discussion with students on the major political, economic and social challenges facing Saudi Arabia today. She also gave presentations to two classes in the Women’s Studies Department, discussing the role of women in Saudi Arabia and how the Kingdom is managing change. Fatany also recorded a special video for e-classes at UCF.

October 24, 2013

Venue: Coffee Discussion with Students and Class Presentation, UCF

Speaker: Khaled Al Maeena

Topic: Saudi Arabia Today, Saudi Reforms, Saudi-South Asian Relations

Khaled Al Maeena is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Saudi Gazette*, and is one of the most prominent columnist in the Middle East and South Asian regions. Previously, he was the longtime Editor-in-Chief of the *Arab News*. Al Maeena is a well-known expert on Saudi Arabia and the GCC region, the Middle East, and South Asia. His work on South Asia has been recognized on numerous occasions, including by the government of Pakistan. He regularly appears in the Western media – in print, TV, and on radio. In an informal capacity, Al Maeena has been a respected and discreet advisor to top Saudi government officials. He has represented Saudi Arabia at several important summit meetings in the Arab World, and was a member of diplomatic delegations to China and Russia after relations with Saudi Arabia were established. Dedicated to improving ties and understanding between the West and Saudi Arabia, he is co-founder and Vice Chairman of NAAM, an NGO dedicated, among other things, to cross-cultural communications. While at UCF, Mr. Al Maeena gave a lecture to UCF students on the expanding nature Saudi-South Asian relations. Additionally, Mr. Al Maeena also discussed the role of the media in the Kingdom, the importance of education reform to Saudi Arabia's future, and other challenges facing Saudi Arabia today. Al Maeena was also a featured guest on WUCF TV's *Global Perspectives*.

October 24, 2013

Venue: Rollins College Forum on Crisis and Transformation in the Middle East

Speakers: Khaled Al Maeena, David Dumke

Topic: Arab Spring and Impact on Saudi Arabia, the GCC, Egypt, and the U.S.

Khaled Al Maeena and PMBF Director David Dumke participated in a forum entitled, "Crisis and Transformation in the Middle East," at Rollins College in Orlando, Florida. They discussed the impact of the Arab Spring and regional change on Saudi Arabia, the GCC, and Egypt – and the effectiveness of the American reaction to it. They pivoted away from the causes of conflict and political decision-making, focusing instead on changing dynamics in the region – demographic, economic, and cultural and how they are creating both challenges and opportunities. Al Maeena believes that despite the violence and heartbreak in places such as Syria, the changes underway will be of great benefit to the region in time – and are evidence of the region's growth and development.

October 28, 2013

Venue: Congressional Lunch Briefing, Washington, DC

Speakers: Khaled Al Maeena and Samar Fatany

Topic: Saudi Arabia: Balancing Modernity, Reform and Traditional Values

In cooperation with NAAM, a French-registered NGO, and the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC), the PMBF Program sponsored a lunch discussion panel entitled, “Saudi Arabia: Balancing Modernity, Reform, and Traditional Values.” The discussion was held on Capitol Hill at the Rayburn House Office Building, and attended by a variety of reporters, business people, academics, and congressional staff. The panel featured Khaled Al Maeena, Editor-in-Chief of the *Saudi Gazette*, and noted author and journalist Samar Fatany. After brief presentations by the speakers, audience members participated in an interactive and lengthy question and answer session. Panelists focused on change and continuity, reform, and the role of women in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The event was televised by Alhurrah TV.

November 2014

In November 2013, the Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd Program published “The Water-Energy-Food Nexus in MENA,” a research paper by Dr. Paul Sullivan which was based largely on his October 14 remarks at the Association of Opinion Journalists Annual Conference. The paper was the first of a series of topical research papers the PMBF Program intends to publish.

November 7, 2013

Venue: Global Issues Conference: What is Global is Local, UCF

Speaker: Dr. Tamara Wittes

Topic: Diplomacy in the Middle East

Dr. Tamara Cofman Wittes is the Director and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution’s Saban Center for Middle East Policy. Wittes 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. In this capacity, Dr. Wittes oversaw the Middle East Partnership Initiative and was a special coordinator for Middle East transitions. Previously, Wittes was a senior fellow at Brookings, a Middle East specialist at the U.S. Institute of Peace, director of programs at the Middle East Institute, and an Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University. She is the author of *Freedom’s Unsteady March: America’s Role in Building Arab Democracy*, and was editor of *How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate: A Cross-Cultural Analysis of the Oslo Peace Process* (USIP, 2005). She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and Women in International Security. While at UCF, Wittes spoke about the future of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East, addressing the practicality and incentive for further U.S. involvement in the region. She also discussed the importance of foreign policy to the American public at large, and the public’s role in shaping policy. Wittes was also a featured guest on WUCF TV’s *Global Perspectives*.

November 13, 2013

Venue: Student and Community Discussion, UCF

Speaker: Negin Farsad

Topic: Interfaith Understanding

Comedian and movie director Negin Farsad is on the short list for an Oscar for her work as Director and Producer of the film *The Muslims Are Coming!*. She was recently named one of the 50 Funniest Women by the *Huffington Post* and was awarded the Lifetime Women Filmmaker Award for her short film, *Hot Bread Kitchen*. In addition, Queen Rania of Jordan commissioned a video from Farsad as part of a web series to combat Middle Eastern stereotypes, which won the first ever YouTube Visionary Award. Her work has been called “smart, funny, and fascinating” by the *Wall Street Journal*, a Critic’s Choice by the *Chicago Tribune* and “a shining exception,” by the *Dallas Morning News*. During her presentation at UCF, Farsad discussed *The Muslims Are Coming!*, a film which follows a group of Muslim-American comedians as they visit big cities, small towns, rural villages, and everything in between. The aim of the film was to combat misconceptions about Islam, and teach understanding.

November 15, 2013

Venue: University Club of Winter Park, Florida

Speaker: David Dumke

Topic: Middle East Update: Saudi Arabia and Egypt

PMBF Director David Dumke gave a talk to 100 members of the Winter Park, Florida University Club on Saudi Arabia and Egypt. He focused on changes underway in the region, demographic and resource concerns, reforms, opportunities, and what it may mean for the United States.