MENA-OECD Ministerial Conference
Key Participants & Speakers – Biographies

Hosts

Mr. Beji Caïd Essebsi - President of the Republic - Tunisia

Mr. Essebsi is the President of Tunisia since 2014. Previously, Mr. Essebsi held the position of Prime Minister for a brief period – March to October 2011. During his career, the President has held various high level positions, including Head of the Administration of National Security (1963), Minister of Interior from (1965-1969), Minister of Foreign Affairs (1981-1986) and President of the Chamber of Deputies (1990-1991). The President was also ambassador of Tunisia to West Germany and France.

Mr. Youssef Chahed - Prime Minister - Tunisia

Mr. Chahed was appointed Tunisian Prime Minister in August 2016. Before taking office, Mr. Chahed was Minister of Local Affairs in the previous government and previously held the position of Secretary of State for Fisheries. The Prime Minister is also an international expert in agriculture and agricultural policies for the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the European Commission.

Mr. Angel Gurría - Secretary-General - OECD

Mr. Gurría is the OECD Secretary-General since 2006. The Secretary-General has held two ministerial posts in Mexico before joining the OECD - Minister of Foreign Affairs (1994-1998) and Minister of Finance and Public Credit (1998- 2000). Mr. Gurría chaired the International Task Force on Financing Water for All and is a member of several international initiatives, including the United Nations Secretary General Advisory Board, World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council on Water Security, International Advisory Board of Governors of the Centre for International Governance Innovation, among others.
Mr. Khémaïes Jhinaoui - Minister of Foreign Affairs - Tunisia

Mr. Jhinaoui was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in January 2016. Previously, Mr. Jhinaoui was Diplomatic and Foreign Affairs Advisor to the Tunisian President. The Minister was also Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 2011 to 2012. Mr. Jhinaoui served several Tunisian embassies during his career: Russia, Ukraine, former Republics of the Soviet Union, Court of Saint James (United Kingdom), Ireland, South Korea and India.

Ms. Lamia Zribi - Minister of Finance - Tunisia

Ms. Zribi was appointed Minister of Finance in August 2016. Previously, the Minister served as CEO of the Bank of Small and Medium Enterprises and held the position of Secretary of State to the Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation in the previous government. Prior to her appointment as Secretary of State, Ms. Zribi was the CEO of TradeNet (TTN). Until 2008, the Minister was Executive Director of forecasting at the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation.

Mr. Fadhel Abdelkefi - Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation - Tunisia

Mr. Abdelkefi was appointed Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation in August 2016. The Minister is also the CEO of the stock exchange company Tunisie Valeurs. From 2011 to 2014, Mr. Abdelkefi was Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Tunis Stock Exchange. The Minister is also Associate Director of the company Integra Partners, Manager of Integra Properties and member of the Board of Directors of three investment companies.

Ms. Majdoline Cherni - Minister of Youth and Sports - Tunisia

Ms. Cherni is the Minister of Youth and Sports since August 2016. Until her appointment, Ms. Cherni held the position of President of the General Body of the Martyrs and Wounded of the revolution and terrorist operations. The Minister was also Secretary of State for the Record of the Martyrs and Wounded of the revolution in the first government of Mr. Essid in February 2015. Ms. Cherni is also President of the Chamber of Kef Business Women within the Tunisian Confederation of Industry (UTICA).

Ms. Neziha Labidi - Minister of Women, Family and Children - Tunisia

Ms. Labidi is the Minister of Women, Family and Children since August 2016. The Minister was previously an independent consultant since 2011. Ms. Labidi served as Director of the Advancement of Women in the Ministry of Women and Family between September 2005 and December 2011 and was also Director of International Cooperation in the Ministry of Women and Family from September 1999 until June 2004.
Mr. Abid Briki - Minister of Public Service and Governance - Tunisia

Mr. Briki was appointed Minister of Public Service and Governance in August 2016. The Minister was spokesman and assistant to the Secretary-General of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT), one of the four organisations of the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet. Also, Mr. Briki was Project Manager and Advisor to the Arab Labour Organization.

Ms. Faten Kallel - Secretary of State for Youth and Sports - Tunisia

Ms. Kallel was appointed Secretary of State for Youth and Sports in August 2016. From February until July 2015, Ms. Kallel was part of the office of the Minister of Development, Investment and International Cooperation. In August 2015, Ms. Kallel became responsible for the overall monitoring of the program Smart Tunisia, a program for offshoring sector companies, with the aim of creating 50,000 jobs in five years in the areas of offshoring, nearshoring and colocation.

Mr. Houcine Abassi - Secretary-General - Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT) - Part of the Tunisia National Dialogue Quartet

Mr. Abassi is the Secretary-General of UGTT since 2011. Along with the three other representatives, Mr. Abassi founded the “The Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet” that won the Nobel Peace Prize award in 2015. Mr. Abassi started his career as a union member in a primary union. In 2002, the Secretary-General was nominated General Secretariat of the regional office of Kairouan and in 2006 was appointed to be in charge of the law department within the UGTT.

Mr. Ameur Mahrezi - Chairman of the Bar - Tunisian Order of Lawyers - Part of the Tunisia National Dialogue Quartet

Mr. Mahrezi was elected Chairman of the Bar of the Tunisian Order of Lawyers in July 2016. Previous to his election, Mr. Mahrezi was President of the governing board of the Tunis section of the Tunisian Order of Lawyers.

Mr. Abdessattar Ben Moussa - President - Tunisian Human Rights League - Part of the Tunisia National Dialogue Quartet

Mr. Ben Moussa was appointed President of the Tunisian Human Rights League in 2011. Along with the three other representatives, Mr. Ben Moussa founded the “The Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet” that won the Nobel Peace Prize award in 2015. Previously, Mr. Ben Moussa held the position of President of the Governing Board of the Tunis section of the Tunisian Order of Lawyers.
Ms. Ouided Bouchamaoui - President - Tunisian Confederation of Industry (UTICA) - Part of the Tunisia National Dialogue Quartet

Ms. Bouchamaoui is the President of UTICA since 2011. In 2013, Ms. Bouchamaoui founded, along with the three other representatives, the “The Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet” that won the Nobel Peace Prize award in 2015. The President is a member of the Oslo Business for Peace Award Committee since January 2016 and received the “Women in Business Award in 2013 from the G8 Deauville Partnership. Previously being nominated President, Ms. Bouchamaoui worked in the Private sector, leading the Hedi Bouchamaoui Group.

Mr. Rolf Alter - Director of Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development - OECD

Mr. Rolf Alter holds his current position since 2009. Previously, Mr. Alter was Chief of Staff of OECD Secretary-General Mr. Angel Gurría. Prior to joining the OECD in 1991, Mr. Alter was an economist in the International Monetary Fund. The Director also worked in the German Ministry of Economy in 1981 and is currently a member of the Global Agenda Council of the World Economic Forum and of the Advisory Group of the WEF Risk Report. In 2015, he joined the UN High Level Panel on Water.

Mr. Andreas Schaal - Director Global Relations and OECD G20 Sous Sherpa - OECD

Mr. Schaal is the Director of OECD Global Relations and OECD G20 Sous Sherpa. Previously, he served the OECD as the Head of the Sherpa Office and the Global Governance Unit between 2013 and 2016. Mr. Schaal has also held positions as Senior Policy Analyst in the Investment Division of the Directorate for Financial Markets and Enterprise Affairs and as Counsellor in the Office of the Secretary General. Prior to this, Mr. Schaal held various positions during his career for the German Federal Government.

Mr. Carlos Conde - Head of the Middle East and Africa Division - Global Relations Secretariat - OECD

Mr. Conde is Head of the Middle East and Africa Division in the Global Relations Secretariat of the OECD since 2014 and leads the implementation of the MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness for Development. Mr. Conde is also responsible for the OECD Initiatives in Sub Saharian Africa, as well as the collaboration with South Africa as key partner of the OECD. Before joining the OECD, Mr. Conde was Associate Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at the University of Granada in Spain.
Ms. Ana Novik - Head of the Investment Division - Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs - OECD

Ms. Novik holds her current position since 2014. Before joining the OECD, Ms. Novik was Ambassador Director of Multilateral Economic Affairs in the Economics Directorate of Chile’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. During this period, Ms. Novik acted as the country’s G20 Sherpa during the year 2012. Ms. Novik also headed and supervised negotiations on behalf of Chile in the investment and services areas, with China, Australia, TPP, Pacific Alliance and MERCOSUR, among others, and participated in Chile’s accession to OECD, particularly in the areas of investment and trade.

Mr. Martin Forst - Head of the Division of Governance Reviews and Partnerships - OECD

Mr. Forst is Head of the Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate at OECD since 2007. Mr. Forst has been with the OECD since 1992 in several positions including Head of the Enterprise Development Unit and of the Good Governance for Development Programme in MENA. Prior to joining the OECD, Mr. Forst was a researcher at the Institute for SMEs research in Bonn.

Representatives from MENA – OECD countries
(In alphabetical order)

Mr. Abdelkrim Mansouri - Director General - National Agency of Investment Development - Algeria

Mr. Gerhard Weinberger - Austrian Ambassador to Tunisia - Austria
Ms. Carol McQueen - Canadian Ambassador to Tunisia - Canada

Ms. McQueen is currently Canada’s ambassador to Tunisia and joined the Department of Foreign affairs, International Trade and Development in 2005. The Ambassador has held several positions within the Department such as Director of the Gulf States relations Division, Political Counsellor in Tanzania, Deputy Director in the Democracy and Governance Division, among others. Before joining the Department, Ms. McQueen worked as a Political Affairs Officer with the UN Peacekeeping Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr. Jiří Doležel - Czech Ambassador to Tunisia - Czech Republic

Mr. Doležel is the Czech Ambassador to Tunisia since 2014. Previously, the Ambassador worked for the Czech Embassy to Kosovo (2011-2014). In the past, Mr. Doležel has held positions in the Foreign Affairs Ministry such as Political Advisor, Sub-Director of the Common Security and Defense Policy and Director of Communication. Mr. Doležel also served the Czech Embassy to Congo, France and Belgium.

Ms. Margit Thomsen - Danish Ambassador to Algeria and Tunisia - Denmark

Ms. Thomsen holds her current position since 2015. Previously, Ms. Thomsen was also Ambassador to Ghana, Mali and Burkina Faso and in the past has held positions within the Danish Embassies to Costa Rica and Nicaragua. From 2011 to 2013, Ms. Thomsen was the Executive Director of the Board of the African Development Bank in Tunis and prior to that Ms. Thomsen worked for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the beginning of her career, Ms. Thomsen also worked for UNDP.

Dr. Nihal El-Megharbel - Vice Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform - Egypt

Dr. El-Megharbel is currently the Vice Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform of Egypt. Previously, the Vice-Minister was an Expert at the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait. In the past, Dr. El-Megharbel has held the following positions: Director of the Local Administration Reform Unit of the Ministry of Local Development, Principal Economist in the technical office of the Minister of Trade and Industry, Principal Economist in the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies and Policy Support Unit Manager at the Industrial Modernization Center.

Dr. Magdy Rady - Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs - Egypt

Dr. Rady holds his current position since 2012 and has been appointed as the “Sherpa” of Egypt to the G-20 meetings during the Chinese Presidency (2016). Dr. Rady also acts as the Egyptian representative to the G-7 Deauville Partnership activities. Previously, the Assistant Minister worked as the Spokesman of the Cabinet of Ministers and as the Advisor of the Prime Minister for International Relations for seven years. Dr. Rady has also served as a Senior Expert in the Ministry of Health and as an Advisor to the Minister of Health for International Affairs.
**Dr. Ghada Ali Moussa** - Director of the Governance Centre of the National Management Institute of the Ministry of State for Administrative Development - Egypt

Dr. Moussa is the Director of the Governance Centre of the National Management Institute since 2008. Since 2009, the Director is also the National Project Director for the project "Enhancing Transparency and Integrity in the Civil Service" at UNDP. Previously, Dr. Moussa held the position of Senior Program Specialist at the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, International Relations Consultant at the Ministry of State for Administrative and Secretary General of the Transparency and Integrity Committee in the Ministry of State for Administrative Development.

**Ms. Mona Zooba** - Vice-Chairman of General Authority For Investment (GAFI) - Egypt

Ms. Zooba Vice Chairman of GAFI in 2015. Prior to that, Ms. Zooba served as the Head of the Policy Advocacy Department at the Ministry of Investment and then at GAFI. Before joining the Ministry of Investment and GAFI, Ms. Mona Zobaa worked as Assistant/ Senior Assistant/ to the Ministers of Economic Affairs, International Cooperation, Economy, and International Trade. Ms. Zooba also participated in the negotiation, agreement and monitoring of grants and loans provided by the IMF, the World Bank, and the African Development Bank.

**Mr. Fathy El Masry** - Vice President of the Court of Cassation - Egypt

**Ms. Annick Girardin** - Minister of Civil Service - France

Ms. Girardin is the French Minister of Civil Service since February 2016. Previously, the Minister served for two years as Secretary of State for Development and Francophonie at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development. Since June 2014, Ms. Girardin is the President of France’s personal representative to the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and is also Vice-President of the French section of the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie.

**Mr. Pierre Duquesne** - Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD and Chair of the OECD Development Centre's Governing Board - France

Mr. Duquesne holds his current position since 2014. The Ambassador is also the Chair of the OECD Development Centre’s Governing Board since 2015. Previously, Mr. Duquesne served as Ambassador in charge of economic questions of reconstruction and development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development. The Ambassador also served the French Government in several occasions and held high-ranking positions in the Ministry of Economy and Finance. From 2001 to 2007, Mr. Duquesne served as French Executive Director for the IMF and the World Bank.
Dr. Joachim Ruecker - Special Representative of the Federal Government for the Middle East Stability Partnership - Germany

Mr. Ruecker is the Special Representative of the Federal Government for the Middle East Stability Partnership since February 2016 and Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany to the Office of the United Nations since 2014. In 2015, Mr. Ruecker was President of the UN-Human Rights Council. The Ambassador held positions in the German Government such as Ambassador of Germany to Sweden, Commissioner for Finance, Head of the Budget and Finance Division at the Federal Foreign Office, Foreign Policy and European Integration Adviser, among others.

Mr. Philipp Ackermann - Regional Director for the Near and Middle East and the Maghreb, Federal Foreign Office - Germany

Ms. Mary Hanafin - Counsellor and Former Cabinet Minister - Ireland

Mr. Thabet El Wir - Head of Jordan Investment Commission - Jordan

Mr. El Wir is the Head of the Jordan Investment Commission since January 2016 and also works for the Kingdom Investment Group Ltd. and for the Development & Investment Project Fund as a Commissioner General. In the past, Mr. El Wir was a Board member of the Housing Bank and Arab Bank and served the King Abdullah II Design and Development Bureau (KADDB), Jordan Chamber of Industry, Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Jordan and Jordan Transparency Center.

Mr. Satam Awad - Secretary General, Ministry of Youth - Jordan

Mr. Awad is the Secretary General of the Ministry of Youth since June 2016. Before, since April 2014, Mr. Awad served as the Secretary-General of its predecessor, the Higher Council for Youth, and as the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education (2010-2014). Mr. Awad is a board member of the Faculty of Educational Science at Jordan University, the Committee of Technical Training, Working and Education (2012) and the High League of H.H. Queen Rania Award for Excellence in Education (2011).
Ms. Alia Abbas - General Director - Ministry of Economy and Trade - Lebanon

Ms. Abbas holds her current position since 2014 and is also a Government Representative at the National Deposit Guarantee Institution. Within the Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ms. Abbas held the position of Head of Expenditures Directorate (1999-2014), was a member of the High Audit Committee and a Ministry of Finance Representative. The General Director also worked for the Lebanese Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education. Ms. Abbas also participates in all higher commissions and committees emanating from commercial international trade agreements signed between the Lebanese Government and other countries.

Mr. Louay el Hajj Shehade - Director of the Revenue Directorate - Ministry of Finance - Lebanon

Mr. Bassem Nomani - Lebanese Ambassador to Tunisia – Lebanon

Mr. El Moctar Ould Diay - Minister of Economy and Finance - Mauritania

Mr. Ould Diay is the Minister of Economy and Finance since 2015. From 2010 until his nomination, the Minister was the General Director of Taxes. Previously, Mr. Ould Diay held positions like Advisor to the Minister of Education in charge of strategies, monitoring and evaluation (2003-2010), Responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the project Education and Training, Director of the Office of the literature in the field of statistics and economics (2003-2008) and Head of project data Labour market in the national employment policy funded by UNDP (1998-2003).

Mr. Mohammed Louafa - Minister Delegate to the Head of Government in Charge of General Affairs and Governance - Morocco

Mr. Louafa holds his current position since 2013. From January 2012 to October 2013 Mr. Louafa was the Minister of Education of Morocco. The Minister Delegate held positions like President of the General Union of Moroccan Students, Chair of the City Council of Marrakech, member of the Moroccan parliament and others, namely within the Istiqlal party. Between 2000 and 2011, Mr. Louafa was also an Ambassador of Morocco to India, Nepal, Iran, Tajikistan, Brazil, Paraguay, Suriname and Guyana.
Mr. Ahmed Laamoumri – Secretary-General, Ministry of Civil Service and Modernisation of the Administration - Morocco

Mr. Laamoumri was appointed Secretary General of the Ministry of Civil Service and Modernisation of the Administration in May 2016. Previously, Mr. Laamoumri served as the Ministry’s Director for Higher Education, Communication and Cooperation. The Secretary-General has also held the position of Director of Modernisation of the Administration.

Mr. Yacine Bellarab - Director of Cooperation, Communication and Legal Studies - Ministry of Youth and Sports - Morocco

Mr. Bellarab holds his current position since 2013. Previously, Mr. Bellarab was a Focal Point of UNESCO in Morocco in charge of Youth and Sports. The Director also took positions of Focal Point of CONFEJES in charge of the Directorate of Youth and Children and Women Affairs until 2009 and was Head of Youth Division and Head of Cultural Tourism Youth Service. Between 2002 and 2004, Mr. Bellarab held the position of National Coordinator of the Euromed Youth Programme of the European Commission and was previously a consultant to the Intergovernmental Agency of the Francophonie (AIF) in Paris.

Mr. Mohammed Diyer – Secretary-General, Court of Accounts - Morocco

Mr. Diyer is the Secretary-General of the Court of Accounts of Morocco. From 2009 to 2012, Mr. Diyer was Chargé de mission to the Office of the First President and the Coordinator of the regional Courts of Accounts between 2013 and 2014. Since 2006, Mr. Diyer has also been in charge of the coordination of the Court of Accounts’ Working Group on Environmental Auditing. In this context, the Secretary-General is involved in research activities, conferences and workshops on environmental auditing within the context of the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI).

Ms. Abeer Odeh - Minister of National Economy - Palestinian Authority

Ms. Odeh was appointed Minister of National Economy in 2015. The Minister also chairs the Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency, Palestine Industrial Estates and the Free Zones Authority and the Palestine Standards Institute. Before taking office, Ms. Odeh was the CEO of the Palestine Capital Market Authority for six years. Ms. Odeh has held several senior management positions in her career such as Chief Financial Analyst of United States Agency for International Development and Chief Controller of the Palestine Industrial Estate Development Company.
Mr. Mousa Abu Zaid - President - General Personnel Council - Palestinian Authority

Mr. Abu Zaid is the President of the General Personnel Council in the state of Palestinian since 2011. Previously, the President was acting as the Minister of Youth and Sport from 2006 to 2011. Currently, Mr. Abu Zaid is also the Chairman of the supreme committee for job planning for the civil servants since 2014 and Head of the National Team to join Open Government Partnership (OGP) since 2015. Mr. Abu Zaid has long experience in public administration and is a member in several public administration networks at the national, regional and international level.

Mr. Salman El-Herfi - Ambassador, Head of Mission of the Palestinian Authority in France - Palestinian Authority

Ambassador El-Herfi took up his duties as Head of Mission of the Palestinian Authority in France in December 2015 and is also the Ambassador of Palestine to Tunisia since 2006. From 1995 to 2005, Mr. El-Herfi was appointed the State of Palestine’s first ambassador to South Africa. As Deputy Dean of the diplomatic corps, El-Herfi supported the South African Government’s policies also on issues such as the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, Iraq and the reform of the United Nations.

Ms. Anabela Pedroso - Secretary of State of Justice - Portugal

Ms. Pedroso was nominated Secretary of State of Justice in October 2015. Ms. Pedroso has worked for the Portuguese Government for several occasions within the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration, among others. Ms. Pedroso has also collaborated with OECD regarding OECD-SIGMA initiatives for administrative modernisation and innovation.

Mr. Paulo Vizeu Pinheiro - Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD - Portugal

Mr. Vizeu Pinheiro took up his duties as Permanent Representative of Portugal to the OECD in 2013. The ambassador’s diplomatic career includes positions in the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and Ministry of National Defence. Mr. Vizeu Pinheiro was also an ambassador for Portugal in Washington and Moscow. Until his nomination as Permanent Representative of Portugal to the OECD, Ambassador Vizeu Pinheiro was Diplomatic Counsellor to the Prime Minister of Portugal.
Dr. Abdullah Al Abdulkader - Vice Chairman of the National Anti-Corruption Commission - Saudi Arabia

Dr. Al Abdulkader holds his current position since 2012. Previously, the Vice Chairman was a member of the Shura Council (2009-2012). For more than 25 years, Dr. Al Abdulkader was the CEO of Saudi Pharmaceutical Industries (ADWAIEH – SPIMACO). Dr. Al Abdulkader took part of several Committees and Board of Directors such as Riyadh Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Saudi Export Development Center and General Corporation Of Military Industries.

Mr. Robert Kokalj - Director-General for Economic and Public Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Slovenia

Mr. Kokalj holds his current position since April 2016. Previously, the Director General was the Acting Director General for Economic and Public Diplomacy and the National Coordinator for cooperation of Central and Eastern European Countries and China. In 2014-2015, Mr. Kokalj was the Head of Department for Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania of Slovenia. During his career, the Director General also served the embassies of Slovenia, with seat in Cairo, to Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and to the League of Arab States.

Mr. Jesús Gracia Aldaz - Secretary of State for International Cooperation - Spain

Mr. Aldaz has been the Spanish Secretary of State for International Cooperation since 2012. From 1999 to 2001 the Secretary of State held a position of Secretary-General of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI). Mr. Aldaz has also served as Technical Cooperation Adviser at the Embassy of Spain in Costa Rica, Consul General in Cordoba (Argentina), Ambassador of Spain to Cuba and Minister-Counsellor at the Embassy of Spain in Buenos Aires.

Mr. José Ignacio Wert - Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD - Spain

Ambassador Wert took up his duties as Permanent Representative of Spain to the OECD in 2015. From 1983 to 1987 Mr. Wert was elected Counsellor for the City Hall of Madrid and subsequently Congressman. The Ambassador worked for several years in the private sector and founded two companies. From December 2011 until his appointment as Permanent Representative of Spain to the OECD, Mr. Wert served as Minister for Education, Culture and Sports.
Republic of Tunisia

Mr. Luis Tejada Chacón - Director for Cooperation with Africa and Asia - Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation

Mr. Chacón was appointed Director for Cooperation with Africa and Asia in September 2015. The Director has been a Spanish ambassador for Gabon, Syria and Bangladesh. Mr. Chacón held other positions in the Spanish Government like adviser in the Secretary of State to the EU at the Foreign Affairs Ministry and Counsellor at the Spanish Representation to the EU, among others. The Director was also a permanent delegate to the Spanish Delegation to the OECD.

Ms. Annika Markovic - Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD - Sweden

Ambassador Markovic is the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OECD and UNESCO since 2014. Ms. Markovic started her diplomatic career at the Foreign Ministry in 1990 and was Sweden’s Ambassador to the Philippines, Palau, Brazil and Suriname. From September 2011 until her nomination as Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OECD and UNESCO, Ms. Markovic worked for the Swedish Ministry of the Environment.

Mr. Fredrik Florén - Ambassador of Sweden in Tunisia and Libya - Sweden

Mr. Florén is Sweden’s Ambassador to Tunisia and Libya since 2014. Before his current assignment, the Ambassador was Head of Section at the Department for MENA in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (2008-2014). During the Swedish EU Presidency in 2009, Mr. Florén chaired the COMEP and COMAG capitals’ Working Group in Brussels. Between 2005 and 2008, Mr. Florén was Desk Officer for the Middle East Peace Process and bilateral relations with Palestine. The Ambassador also served the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Swedish Delegation in Vienna and the Swedish Embassy in Havana.

Ms. Marie-Claire Swärd Capra - Swedish Ambassador to Algeria - Sweden

Ms. Swärd Capra is Sweden’s Ambassador to Algeria since September 2016. Before her current assignment, Ms. Swärd Capra served as Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the OECD and UNESCO. Prior to this, the Ambassador has held several positions at the Swedish Embassies in Seoul and Copenhagen and also served as Sweden’s permanent representative to WTO and European Commission in Brussels.

Mr. Mehmet Şimşek - Deputy Prime Minister - Turkey

Mr. Şimşek serves as a Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey since 2015. He previously served as the Minister of Finance (2009-15) and as the Minister of Economy (2007-09). Before entering politics, Mr. Şimşek worked for Merrill Lynch in London and for Deutsche-Bender Securities in Istanbul. Earlier in his career, Mr. Şimşek also worked as a senior economist at the US Embassy in Ankara (1993-97). Mr. Şimşek is also a member of the Global Economic Symposium (GES) advisory board.
Mr. Erdem Başçi - Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OECD - Turkey

Mr. Başçi holds his current position since May 2016. From 2011 until his appointment as Permanent Representative of Turkey to the OECD, Mr. Başçi was Governor of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey. Between 1995 and 2003, Mr. Başçi worked as an Assistant Professor at Bilkent University in the Economics Department, and in 1999 he was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor. The Ambassador also lectured at the University of York, UK.

Mr. Sultan Al Shamsi - Assistant Minister for International Development at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation - United Arab Emirates

Mr. Al Shamsi holds his current position since 2016. Until then, Mr. Al Shamsi served as the Assistant Under-Secretary for International Development at the Ministry of International Cooperation and Development (MICAD) from 2013. He also acted as the Coordinator of the UAE Committee for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance, and chaired MICAD’s Innovation Committee and Shaping the Future Committee. Before this, Mr. Al Shamsi was, for five years, the Executive Director of the UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid.

Mr. Hamish Cowell - British Ambassador to Tunisia - United Kingdom

Mr. Cowell is currently the British Ambassador to Tunisia. Previously, the Ambassador headed the Libya Crisis Unit since 2011 and before that he was Head of the FCO’s North Africa Department. Mr. Cowell has held positions in the British Government such as Deputy Head of Mission in Tehran, Head of the Political and Economic Section in Cairo, Foreign Secretary’s Speechwriter and Private Secretary to Minister of State. The Ambassador also worked closely on MENA issues when posted to the UK Representation to the EU in Brussels from 2001 to 2004 and the British Embassy in Paris from 2004 to 2009.

Mr. John Desrocher - Deputy Assistant Secretary, Egypt and Maghreb Affairs - State Department - United States

Mr. Desrocher is a Deputy Assistant Secretary since 2014. He has served several United Stated embassies such as Baghdad, Cairo, Monrovia and Bonn. Mr. Desrocher served in Baghdad from 2009-2010 as Minister Counselor for Economic Coordination, responsible for U.S.-Iraq economic policy issues. He has also participated in Palestinian-Israeli economic negotiations while serving at the U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem and served as State Department Desk Officer for Iraq.
Ms. Aimee Breslow - Senior Advisor for Democracy and Governance in the Office of Assistance Coordination of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs - United States

Aimee Breslow is an employee of One Federal Solutions who serves the US State Department as the Senior Advisor for Democracy & Governance in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of Assistance Coordination. Before joining NEA/AC Ms. Breslow also served in the Office of the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance. Prior to her work at the State Department, Ms. Breslow spent two decades as a democracy specialist working globally with numerous non-profit, government, and international organizations.

Ms. Helen LaFave - Deputy Chief of Mission - Libyan External Office (LEO) - United States

Ms. LaFave is Deputy Chief of Mission for LEO since 2015. Previously, Ms. LaFave spent two years as a Consul General at the US Consulate General in Kolkata, India. From 2011 to 2013, Ms. LaFave was a Deputy Director at the Near Eastern Affairs/Arabian Peninsula Affairs within the US Government. The Deputy Chief has also served several US Embassies and Consulates such as Iraq, Bahrain, South India and Angola.

Dr. Michael Köhler - Director - Southern Neighbourhood, DG NEAR, European Commission

Dr. Köhler holds his current position since January 2015. Previously, he served as Director at EU Neighbourhood Policy, DG DEVCO-F for two years. He has also been Head of Cabinet to Commissioner for Energy between 2010 and 2013 and Head of Cabinet to Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries between 2008 and 2009. Since Dr. Köhler joined the European Commission in 1994, he has held several positions. Before this, the Director was a representative of Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation in Morocco and Tunisia and has worked in the Policy Planning Department of the Federal Ministry of Economic Co-operation and Development in Germany.

Mr. Angelos Pangratis - Senior Advisor - European External Action Service (EEAS)

Mr. Pangratis is Senior Advisor at EEAS since 2015. Previously, Mr. Pangratis was the EU Ambassador to WTO (2011-2015). Mr. Pangratis also held the position of Chargé d’Affaires of the Delegation of the EU to the UN during 2011. Formerly, the Senior Adviser served as Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to the USA and was Acting Head and Chargé d’Affaires. In the past, Mr. Pangratis also held the position of Ambassador and Head of the EU Delegation to Argentina, South Africa and South Korea.

Ms. Armelle Lidou - EU Head of Cooperation to Tunisia - European Union
Ms. Bettina Muscheidt  - EU Ambassador to Libya - European Union

Ms. Muscheidt is currently the EU Ambassador to Libya. Previously, the Ambassador served as Political Desk Officer for Afghanistan in the European External Action Service (EEAS). Ms. Muscheidt was previously the political Desk Officer for Afghanistan in the European Commission’s External Relations Directorate-General. For more than 11 years, Ms. Muscheidt worked on issues related to the Palestinian territories for the European Commission and European Investment Bank.

Mr. Patrice Bergamini - EU Ambassador to Tunisia - European Union

Mr. Bergamini is a French diplomat and current EU Ambassador to Tunisia. Mr. Bergamini has co-chaired the Committee of Ambassadors of the Union for the Mediterranean from 2012 to 2016.

International Organisations

Mr. Fakhry Alhazaimah - Executive President - Agadir Technical Unit (ATU)

Mr. Alhazaimah is the Executive President of Agadir Technical Unit since September 2016. Prior to this, Mr. Alhazaimah served as Advisor for WTO and Multilateral Trade Issues at the Ministry of Economy, UAE. The Executive President has extensive experience in the fields of international trade, FTAs and multilateral trading systems and also represents Jordan in the WTO negotiations in a wide range of Multilateral Trade subjects, including its accession to the WTO.

Mr. Mustapha Tlili - Executive Secretary - Arab Trade Union Confederation (ATUC)

Mr. Tlili is the Executive Secretary of ATUC since 2014. Previously, Mr. Tlili was the Regional Director for the Arab countries in the International Trade Union Confederation. The Executive Secretary has held several high level positions such as Executive Director of the Maghreb Trade Union Confederation, Advisor of the General Secretary of Arab Maghreb Union and Director of EuropeAid Project in the South Mediterranean Region. Mr. Tlili was also a Tunisian Diplomat and a Member of the Permanent Mission of Tunisia in Geneva in charge of the relations with the International Labour Organization.
Ms. Milica Delevic - Director for Governance and Political Affairs - European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

Ms. Delevic is the Director for Governance and Political Affairs since June 2016. Previously, Ms. Delevic was Deputy Secretary General (2013-2016). Before that, the Director has been working in Serbia in positions related to European integration such as Chairperson of the European Integration Committee and Director of the European Integration Office. Ms. Delevic also held positions in the Serbian Government like Assistant Minister for EU affairs and regional cooperation and Deputy Director for Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ms. Delevic was also coordinator of the national strategy of Serbia to become a member of EU.

Dr. Bjorn Rother - Advisor - Middle East and Central Asia Department - International Monetary Fund (IMF)

Dr. Bjorn Rother is an Advisor in the Middle East & Central Asia Department at the IMF. Mr. Rother worked previously as a consultant with Mckinsey & Company Inc. and holds a Doctorate in Economics from the Free University of Berlin.

Eng. Hani Salem Sonbol - CEO - International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC)

Eng. Sonbol is the CEO of the ITFC since May 2016. His career in development Banking includes services in many positions across the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDBG). Eng. Hani held positions like Director of the IDBG President’s Office, Director of IDBG Regional Office Morocco, Director Trade Finance and Promotion Department and Deputy CEO ITFC and Acting Chief Executive Officer at Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC).

Mr. John Evans - General Secretary - Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD

Mr. Evans is General Secretary of TUAC to the OECD since 1985 and Chief Economist of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) since 2012. Previously, Mr. Evans worked at the Trade Union Congress in London and held positions in the UNI Global Union and European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). The General Secretary is also a member of several World Economic Forum Global Agenda Councils on Employment and Inclusion.
Mr. Wissam H. Fattouh - Secretary-General - Union of Arab Banks

Mr. Fattouh became the Secretary-General of the Union of Arab Banks in 2010. Before his current position, Mr. Fattouh served as the Acting Secretary General, Deputy Secretary General, Director of Conferences Department at UAB and Manager of Databank & Information Technology. Mr. Fattouh is a member of Board of Trustees of The Arab Academy for Banking & Financial Sciences and Advisory Board Member of Child & Youth Finance International. Mr. Fattouh is also a Member of the Steering Committee for United States – MENA Private Sector Dialogue and a Member of Board of Trustees of the Lebanese for Voluntary Activities.

Mr. Sudqi Al-Omoush - Deputy Secretary-General for Business Development and Secretariat’s Spokesperson - Union for the Mediterranean (UFM)

Mr. Al-Omoush was recently appointed Secretary-General of the UFM in charge of Business Development. Mr. Al-Omoush previously served as Minister Plenipotentiary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan. Mr. Al-Omoush worked in the diplomatic service of the Ministry for 20 years on missions in Malaysia, Romania and Egypt. In 2012, Mr. Al-Omoush served as Deputy Director of the Department of European Affairs of the UFM and as Head of Unit and Vice President of the Jordanian co-presidency of the UFM.

Mr. Gustavo Gonzalez - Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Syria Crisis - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Mr. Gonzalez holds his current position since 2013 and is also Co-Chair of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) for the Syria Crisis since 2014, in partnership with UNHC. Previously, Mr. Gonzalez was an UNDP Senior Country Director in Yemen (2011-2013) and the UNDP Country Director in Burundi (2008-2011). Mr. Gonzalez is a specialist in post-conflict situations and has been part of Post-Conflict Units in several African countries. As a peace building advisor, the Sub-Regional Coordinator has also participated in high level negotiations.

Mr. Abdallah Al-Dardari - Deputy Executive Secretary – Programme United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA)

Prior to his appointment as Deputy Executive Secretary in 2014, Mr. Al-Dardari served for three years as ESCWA’s Chief Economist and the Director of the Economic Development and Globalization Division. Before joining ESCWA, Mr. Al-Dardari worked as Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs (2005-2011) and Minister for Planning and Chairman of the State Planning Commission (2003-2005) in the Syria. Mr. Al-Dardari was also Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP Syria (2001-2003).
Ms. Leila Rhiwi - Representative in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria - UN Women

Ms. Rhiwi is the Representative of the Office of the UN Multi-Country Women for Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria since 2012. Before joining the United Nations system, Ms. Rhiwi was in charge of coordination with the presidency of the Equity and Reconciliation Commission, and taught communication for over 15 years in Mohammedia School of Engineers. Throughout his militant career and her professional career, Ms. Rhiwi played a significant role in promoting women’s human rights, the fight against violence based on gender, political participation of women, and their role in building peace.

Mr. Boštjan Skalar - CEO - World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA)

Mr. Skalar is the CEO of WAIPA since 2015. Previously, Mr. Skalar held the position of Senior Counsellor at the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology of Slovenia. Before that, Mr. Skalar was the Director of Public Agency for Entrepreneurship, FDI and Tourism SPIRIT of Slovenia. The CEO is also a former Consul for Economic Affairs in Turkey.

Civil Society and Private Sector

Ms. Anne Reevell - Country Director, North Africa - BBC Media Action

Ms. Reevell is BBC Media Action’s Country Director for North Africa, responsible for the management of all BBC Media Action projects and teams across the Maghreb. Ms. Reevell joined BBC Media Action in 2013 as Country Director for Libya. Ms. Reevell has worked as a co-producer on large-scale international projects for channels such as BBC 1, BBC World News, Channel 4, Al Jazeera, Discovery and Denmark’s Radio. Since joining Media Action Ms. Reevell has led the launch of the innovative El Kul Facebook project and the establishment of a new digital training hub for the region based in Tunis.

Dr. Soukaina Bouraoui - Executive Director - Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR)

Dr. Bouraoui has been Executive Director of the CAWTAR since 1999. Dr. Bouraoui founded and directed the Tunisian Centre for Information, Documentation, Studies and Research on Women for six years. Dr. Bouraoui also took the role of Chairman of the Women’s Development Plan Committee for the Eighth Tunisian National Economic and Social Development Plan. The Executive Director is also a founding member of the International Forum of Mediterranean Women (1992) and a board member for several international organisations related with law.
Mr. Abdulwahab Alkebsi - Deputy Director - Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)

Mr. Alkebsi is the Deputy Director of CIPE since 2007. Prior to joining CIPE, Mr. Alkebsi served as the Director of the MENA division at the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), where he oversaw a portfolio that included Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, North Africa, the Levant, the Gulf nations and Yemen. Prior to working at the NED, Mr. Alkebsi served as the Executive Director at the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID), a non-profit think tank.

Mr. Greg Simpson - Regional Director of the Middle East and North Africa Division - Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)

Mr. Simpson is the Regional Director of the MENA division at CIPE where he manages democratic and free-market reform programs in 15 countries of the MENA region. Mr. Simpson has more than twenty years of experience with democracy and civil-society-strengthening initiatives. Prior to CIPE, Mr. Simpson held three successive country director posts in the Balkans for the International Republican Institute (IRI). The Regional Director has also held positions at New Media Communications, the American Council of Young Political Leaders (ACYPL) and the Center for Civil Society in Southeastern Europe.

Ms. Tinkara Oblak - Member of the Board - European Youth Forum

Ms. Oblak is a member of the board of the European Youth Forum since 2014. Currently, Ms. Oblak is a student at Graduate School of Governmental and European Studies. In the past year, Ms. Oblak was actively involved in campaign for European elections as one of the leaders of the volunteer teams, was running for a Member of Slovenian Parliament and is actively involved in policy making process in Youth of the European Peoples Party.

Dr. Fadli Zon - President - Global Conference of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC)

Dr. Zon is the President of GOPAC since 2015, member of parliament in Indonesia and Chairman of Badan Komunikasi Partai Gerinda since 2010. Also, Dr. Zon was elected Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian Parliament in 2014 and Vice-Chairman of Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya (GERINDRA) in 2008. In the past, Dr Zon was a member of the People Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia (1997-1999).
Prof. Dr. Christoph Stueckelberger - Executive Director and Founder - Globethics.net

Dr. Stueckelberger is the Executive Director of Globethics.net since its foundation in 2008. From 2004 until 2008, Dr. Stueckelberger was the Director of the Institute for Theology and Ethics of the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches and previously, since 1993 until 2004, he was the General Secretary of the development agency Bread for All. Dr. Stueckelberger was also the Founding President and Vice-President of Transparency International Switzerland – Forum against Corruption (1996-2004) and a member of the Consultative Commission for International Cooperation of the Swiss Government and President of its Sub-commission on WTO (1995-2008).

Mr. Mohammad Zomlot - Chairman of the Board - Grand Park Hotel Bethlehem (GPB)

Mr. Zomlot is the Chairman of the Board at GPB since 2011 and holds other positions as well such as a Committee Member at The Palestinian Hotel Classification System (PHCS) and Board Member of the Palestine Tourism Investment Company. In the past, Mr. Zomlot has held several management positions in the hotel business and was the Founder and Director of two companies.

Dr. Antoine Haddad - Managing Director - HBC - Consultants in Public Policies

Dr. Haddad is a Consultant/Advisor on Conflict Resolution, Social/Political Dialogue, Governance, Legislation, Regulation and Human Development. Dr. Haddad was, during 20 years, the managing partner of Dar al Tanmiya, a consultancy specialized in Socio-Economic Development, Demography, Living Conditions, Education, Employment and Labour Policies, and providing services to the Governments and public administrations in Lebanon and MENA countries, International bodies (UNDP, UNESCWA, ILO, World Bank), NGOs/INGOs, and the private sector.

Mr. Majdi Hassen - Executive Director - Institut Arabe des Chefs d’Entreprises (IACE)

Mr. Hassen is the Executive Director of IACE and an assistant professor at School of Economic and Management Science in Tunisia. Mr. Hassen is a Senior Private Sector Development Specialist and has been involved in international projects to reform the entrepreneurship ecosystems in Egypt and Tunisia. The Executive Director is also a certified trainer for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in entrepreneurship and for the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in corporate governance. Mr. Hassen also serves on the Advisory Board at Injaz, Tunisia, and as an international advisor of the Syrian Economic Forum.
Mr. Habib Zitouna - General Director - Institut Tunisien de la Compétitivité et des Études Quantitatives (ITCEQ)

Dr. Sami Hourani - Executive Director and Founder - Leaders of tomorrow
Dr. Hourani is the Founder and the Executive Director of the regional organisation Leaders of Tomorrow, created in 2007, and a fellow at Ashoka, the largest hub for social innovators worldwide. Dr. Hourani received the King Abdullah II Demoqrati award in 2014 and the EUROMED youth award in 2013. The Director was elected as the Jordanian Role Model of 2011 among youth networks and received the Jordanian title “Knight of Change” in 2008 given by the King Abdullah II Fund for Development of Jordan.

Ms. Ruba Masrouji - CEO - United Securities Company-Palestine
Ms. Masrouji is the CEO of United Securities Company-Palestine since 2005 and also sits on the Board of Directors of Quds Bank, Al Quds Holding Company, United Securities and Masrouji Group. Ms. Masrouji is also a consulting board member of a prominent news agency in Palestine. Previously, Ms. Masrouji worked as a lecturer at Birzeit University (2005-2006) and as the Deputy General Manager at Masrouji Company (1996-2005).

Mr. Joel Martinez - Director of Engagement - World Justice Project
Mr. Martinez is the Director of Engagement for the World Justice Project. Prior to joining the WJP, Mr. Martinez worked with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination in its enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, focusing on outreach to low income communities.