



## List of Biographies

### Opening Session



#### Rola Dashti

Rola Dashti is the Executive Secretary of ESCWA and is a leading Kuwaiti economist and long-time champion of women's rights and democratic reform. She served as member of the Supreme Planning Council in Kuwait. From 2012 to 2014, she was Minister for Planning and Development and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and played a pivotal role in advocating for a decree to allow Kuwaiti women to vote and run for parliamentary elections. In May 2009, she and three others became the first women to be elected to the Kuwait parliament. Ms. Dashti has held key positions in research and development institutions, such as the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, and has worked for major national and international financial and development institutions, such as the National Bank of Kuwait and the World Bank. She is a regular contributor to regional and international policy forums on global governance, economic development and integration, democratization, and women's empowerment. Ms. Dashti won the North-South Prize of the Council of Europe for 2010 together with Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev. She also received the Clinton Global Citizens Award for 2009, the Vital Voices Global Leadership Award for 2006, and the King Hussein Humanitarian award for 2005. She is listed among the top 150 women leaders by Business Week, and among the world's 100 most powerful Arabs by Arabian Business. Ms. Dashti holds a doctorate degree in population dynamics from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, a master's degree in economics and finance from California State University, and a Bachelor of Science in agriculture economics from California State University.

#### Omar Razzaz

Omar Razzaz is former Prime Minister of Jordan. His career was in the public sector, private sector, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, international organizations, and academia. He held several positions in government and in policy institutions in Jordan as Minister of Education, Director General of Jordan's Social Security Corporation, Chairman of Board of Directors of Jordan Strategy Forum and as Chairman of Jordan's Ahli Bank. Outside Jordan, he worked at World Bank and MIT. He holds a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning and PhD in Planning. He is currently senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.



## Mehrinaz El Awady

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Mehrinaz El Awady is the Director of the Gender Justice, Population and Inclusive Development Cluster at ESCWA. Previously, she was ESCWA Director for the Centre for Women and ESCWA Senior Coordinator (gender mainstreaming). She also served as International Civil Servant for Save the Children and worked for several international development organizations such as Education Development Center, Center for Development and Population Activities, and Care International. She holds a bachelor's in economics from Cairo University, a master's in international development from the American University in Cairo, and a PhD in Politics and International Studies from the University of Leeds, UK.

# Session 1. Discussion with global and Arab experts: What does inequality look like?



## Paul Ladd

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Paul Ladd is the Director of UNRISD at UNDP. He was the Team Director supporting consultations and technical inputs for 2030 Development Agenda. Previously he led UNDP's policy team on 'inclusive globalization' including trade, development finance, and migration'. He provided support to the Office of UN Secretary-General on the financial and economic crisis, and engagement with the G20. He worked in several capacities: Policy Adviser for the UK Treasury, Chief Economist and Acting Head of Policy with UK charity Christian Aid, Economic Adviser for the UK Department for International Development's and a Financial Adviser in the Central Bank of Guyana.



## Saba Almubaslat

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Saba Almubaslat started her position in April 2022 as the Regional Director- MENA- Ford Foundation; providing overall leadership to the Foundation's strategy and grant making programs in the region, promoting social justice and reducing inequality in collaboration with stakeholders in the ecosystem. She was the CEO of the Asfari Foundation and the CEO of the Humanitarian Leadership Academy, where she focused on the concept of democratising access to and production of humanitarian knowledge and learning. In her 25 years of experience Saba has led and participated in 16 humanitarian responses in Middle East and North Africa.



## Ibrahim Al-Badawi

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Ibrahim Al-Badawi is the Executive Director of the Economic Research Forum since 2017. He was the Director of Research at the Dubai Economic Council, and the Principal Economist in the Development Research Group of the World Bank. He has published widely on macroeconomic policies and development, democratic transitions and the economics of civil wars and post-conflict transitions. He holds a Ph.D. in Economics and Statistics from the University of North Carolina and North-western Universities. He is Associate Editor of *Understanding and Avoiding the Curse of Oil in Resource-Rich Arab Economies*. Cambridge University Press: 2016.



## Faiza Shaheen

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Faiza Shaheen is the Inequality and Exclusion Program Lead for the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies. An economist, writer, activist and commentator, she has published on inequality, austerity, immigration, youth unemployment and social mobility. She served as Director of the Centre for Labour & Social Studies, Head of Inequality and Sustainable Development at Save the Children UK, and Senior Researcher on economic inequality at New Economics Foundation. In 2017, Faiza was named Observer Rising Star for Campaigning, nominated as Asian Woman of the Year and included in the Top 100 Influencers on the Left list in UK.



## Hania Sholkamy

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Hania Sholkamy is an Egyptian anthropologist. Focused in her work on gender, health and social protection in Egypt. She designed and piloted the cash transfers programs of the government of Egypt and is a proponent of feminist social protection. She has lobbied for the right of women. She was regional coordinator of “Pathways to Women’s Empowerment Research Consortium” with the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex. She is currently a member of UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Committee and associate research professor at the Social Research Centre of AUC. She holds PhD in Economics and Political Sciences.

# Session 2. The face of inequality in the Arab region



## Ahmad Majdalani

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Ahmad Majdalani is the Minister of Social Development in the State of Palestine. He served in many positions and was the General Secretary of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, A member of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and Chairperson of the Palestinian Planning and labor Department. He holds a B.A in Political Sciences and Ph.D. in Economic Philosophy. He is the author of various studies and research. Supervised many projects in Ramallah like Institutional Support to the Palestinian Agricultural, the First conference for Enhancing Accountability, Integrity, and transparency in Palestine (Amman), A study on the Infrastructure Investment in Palestine, etc.



## Amal Belhaj

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Amal Belhaj is the Minister of Family, Women, Childhood, and Elderly of Tunisia. She is a poet and university professor (sociology) at Manouba University in Tunis. She holds Ph.D. in religious and political sociology, a certificate of in-depth studies in sociology, two postgraduate degrees in the sociology of the Maghreb and cultural sociology, and a master’s in journalism and news sciences. She has five books and has several research activities. An active member of several committees and lectured in scientific and cultural symposiums inside and outside Tunisia. She participated in intellectual cultural activities and thinking committees. She participated in several Tunisian, Arab, and foreign poetry festivals and won three prizes.



## Mohammed AlZaouri

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Mohammed AlZaouri is the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor in Yemen



## Barq Al-Damour

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Barq Al-Damour is the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Social Development and the Acting Director-General of the National Aid Fund in Jordan. He served previously in different positions for the National Aid Fund and chaired the Steering Committee of the Women, Security, Peace and Humanity Fund (WPHF), in partnership with the UN Women and the Steering Committee of the European Union-funded Social Protection Strengthening Project. He also served as Director of the project “Strengthening Capacity Building of National Social Protection Systems” UNICEF. He holds a BA in Economics and Political Science, Diploma in political science, Master’s degree in political science, and Ph.D. in Political Science.



## Taher Belhassan

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Taher Belhassan is the General Director of the Planning Institute at the Libyan Ministry of Planning and Head of the Libyan Sustainable Development Committee. He was the Chairman of the Libyan Survey Department and the General Director of Technical Affairs and Project Feasibility at the Ministry of Planning, where he also worked as an advisor to the Minister of Planning. He served as the Director of the Ministry of Energy’s Planning and Studies Office and the Director of the Ministry of Scientific Research’s Projects Department. He holds a master’s degree in survey engineering and spatial information systems, and a Ph.D. in Engineering Project Management.



## Lamia Moubayed

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Lamia Moubayed is a visiting scholar at the IMF Fiscal Affairs Department and an international consultant. She teaches public management at Saint Joseph University in Beirut, and gender and governance at the American University of Beirut. Designated twice by the UN Secretary-General to serve on the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and was elected vice-chair. She has twenty years of multidisciplinary experience in countries of the Arab region and Africa. Ms. Moubayed holds an M.Sc. degree from the American University of Beirut and Professional Certificates in Strategic Policy Planning and Management from the UK.



## Session 3: Dialogue with decision makers: policies that reduce inequality



### Nivine EL Kabbaj

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Nivine EL Kabbaj has more than 25 years of experience in the field of international cooperation, strategic management, and institutional development. She also had considerable experience in social policies and in evaluation. She is the Minister of Social Solidarity in Egypt. she broadened her policy scope of the ministry through working for poverty alleviation, economic empowerment equity, as well as disability. She is currently managing the secretariat of the Ministerial Committee for Social Justice led by the Prime Minister. She worked for UNICEF, America's Development Foundation in Egypt, and in National Council for Negro Women.



### Ayman Al-Mufleh

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Ayman Al-Mufleh is the Minister of Social Development of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Prior to that, he was the Secretary-General of the Jordan Hashemite Charity Organization. Throughout his 35-year career, H.E held various leadership roles in both the government and private sectors: Director of Local Affairs and Parliament Relations at the Royal Hashemite Court of Jordan, Director of the Civil Status and Passport Department, Advisor to His Royal Highness Lt General Prince Faisal Bin Al Hussein. He was granted the title of Director Governor and he led the Internal Audit Department. He holds two awards and a degree in Public Policy.



### Wafaa Al Kilani

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Wafaa Al Kilani is the Minister of Social Affairs of Libya.



### Kaouter Krikou

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Kaouter Krikou is the Minister of National Solidarity, Family, and Women in Algeria. Before that, she served as the Minister of Labour, Employment, and Social Security, a Member of the Advisory Board of the Dialogue Committee, and a Member of the Independent National Electoral Authority. She holds a Master of Business Law, Postgraduate studies in business law, a Certificate of professional competence for the lawyer, and a bachelor's degree in Law.



## Sultan Aljorais

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Sultan Aljorais is the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development for Social Security and Empowerment since 2021. He held the position of Secretary-General of the Saudi Authority for Accredited Residents for five years, since 2016. He holds a master's degree in business administration and a bachelor's degree in computer engineering.



## Lina Khatib

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Lina Khatib is director of the Middle East and North Africa program at Chatham House. She was formerly director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut and co-founding head of the Program on Arab Reform and Democracy at Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law. Her research focuses on the international relations of the Middle East, political transitions, and foreign policy.

# Session 4: Youth unemployment as a type of inequality in the Arab region



## Geannina Dinarte

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Geannina Dinarte Romero is a political scientist with a master's degree in Development Project Management, she has assumed relevant roles in public administration in Costa Rica for 15 years. She began her career as an adviser in the Legislative Assembly and has subsequently served as a minister in different Ministries. From the Ministry of Economy, Industry, and Commerce, she worked to generate favorable conditions for entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises. At the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, she was responsible for leading programs addressing the effects of Covid on people and companies. Her last position was as Minister of Presidency.



## Ahmad Masa'deh

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Ahmad Masa'deh is the first elected Secretary-General of the Union for the Mediterranean, Jordan's Ambassador to EU, NATO, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Norway, and Minister for Public Sector Reform. He was an Assistant Professor of International Business Law at the Faculty of Law at the University of Jordan and assumed office on management boards, advisory boards, or councils of various companies/institutions including the Council of World Trade Law Association in London, Royal Jordanian Airlines, Panel of Arbitrators of World Bank's International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICISD), NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome. Today he is the Managing Partner of Khalaf Masa'deh LLC.



## Nurhayati Assegaf

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Nurhayati Assegaf is the Associate Professor of Ankara Haci Bayram Veli University. She is the President of the Geneva Council for International Affairs and Development and the Board Member and Global Ambassador for SDGs, Women political Leaders, besides being a Lecturer and President of the International Association. She is a member of different Parliaments. She is a member of the steering committee for WTO, a member of OECD Global Inter-Parliamentary Network, and a member of the Parliamentary Network on World Bank and International Monetary Fund. She holds Ph.D. in Social & Politics, Master in American Studies, BA in HRM, and BS in Medicine.



## Charlotta Sparre

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Charlotta Sparre is the Director of the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa. Previously served as Ambassador of Sweden to Egypt and Jordan and held other positions in Swedish Foreign Service on MENA issues. She is a member of the Swedish Women's Mediation Network and board member of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and on the advisory council to the Secretary-General of Religions for Peace. An active participant in MENA region meetings, focusing on regional security, democratic development, human rights, and gender equality. She is the co-editor of the book 'Reconstructing the Middle East and other articles.



## Rania Ayman

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Rania Ayman is the Founder and CEO of Entreprenelle. Concerned with socioeconomic gender rights, she started her Initiative in Cairo 7 years ago. Been chosen to represent Egypt and speak at many international conferences such as The Global Entrepreneurship Summit in India, Social Enterprise World Forum in the United Kingdom, the World government summit in UAE, and African Youth Conference in Kenya, etc. Featured as one of the most active influential. Rotarian, with more than 10 years of experience in social development with a degree in Business Administration and further studies in Gender.



## Reem Abu Hassan

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Reem Abu Hassan is a Jordanian attorney and human rights activist focusing on legislation and public policy around family protection and women's empowerment. She is a former Minister of Social Development in Jordan. She is currently a director of the Board for the International Women's Forum (IWF). Previously She had served as the President of the Leadership Foundation, the educational arm of IWF dedicated to training emerging women leaders. She is one of the founding members of IWF Jordan and was instrumental in establishing IWF forums in Morocco, Turkey, Egypt, and Lebanon. Reem headed the Covid 19 Jordanian emergency relief fund to support individuals and families affected by the pandemic.

## Session 5: Launch of practical initiatives and tools to address inequality with a focus on youth Unemployment



### Elissa

Elissa is a Lebanese artist, who started her singing career in 1998 and achieved distinguished success by launching more than 12 artistic albums and singles. Throughout her career, she won 3 World Music Awards for best sales in the Middle East. Remarkably, she is the first Arab artist to exceed 3 billion views on YouTube, and the only Arab artist to consistently occupy the list of the top 100 most listened to artists on the internet. She sold millions of copies of her albums, which made her known for her romantic color. She contributed to the art scene in the Arab region.

Elissa is one of the most concerned artists in public affairs and social issues. She is a human rights advocate, and through her work, she has contributed to raising awareness of violence against women, suicide prevention, and others. She also has different political and patriotic stances, which made her an "activist" throughout her career with all boldness and will. After a journey of breast cancer treatment in 2018, she became an ambassador for this cause and contributed to raising awareness about prevention and early diagnosis. And she dedicated many of her looks to this topic.



### Khaled Hanafy

Khaled Hanafy is the Secretary-General of the Union of Arab Chambers and a Professor of Economics and International Business. He held several Governmental, academic, business, and consultancy positions: Minister of Supply and Internal Trade in Egypt, Chairman of Internal Trade Development Authority, and Dean of College of International Transport & Logistics in the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport. Was awarded "The Best Minister" for two years. He holds a Ph.D. degree in International Trade and an MSc degree in Regional Development. He also holds many diplomas in International Trade, & Business Administration from top American universities.



### Ali Awdeh

Ali Awdeh is a Senior Economist, Academic, and Researcher. The Head of Economic Research at the Union of Arab Banks. Holds a PhD in Finance from Cass Business School in London, obtained in 2005. In addition, a university full professor with a strong record of academic research in Banking, Monetary Policy, Sustainable Finance, and Financing for Development.



### Sherine Helmy

Sherine Helmy has 40 years of professional experience in the pharmaceutical industry. Throughout the years, he was appointed as CEO of Pharco Corporation, Pharco Pharmaceutical International, board member of Batterjee Pharmaceuticals, consultant of SEEG Pharm, and Presidio Pharmaceuticals, USA that discovered a new HCV drug. He is the Technical CEO of Circle- Africa, Touran Investment, Cleo Pharmaceuticals, Sarapharma of Import & export, FEED International for industry and trade Co, and Wealth & Resource Mining, and Board Member of Sai for Medical Devices, BioGeneric Pharma S.A.E, MAKERS, and ITICO Pharma, Lebanon. Holds a BS degree from the Faculty of Pharmacy.





## Sarah Alharthey

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Sarah Alharthey is a Business Development Manager at ACWA Power. She holds a bachelor's degree in electrical and Computer Engineering and master's in Renewable Energy Engineering. Sarah is a climate change, youth, and gender advocate.



## Salim Araji

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Salim Araji is an Economist at ESCWA. His research agenda is focused on employment creation, skills matching, and economic diversification. Dr. Araji is currently leading ESCWA's future of work initiative and ESCWA skills monitor to see the relation between Arab skills and jobs and the Fourth Industrial Revolution using state-of-the-art Machine learning techniques. He has multiple academic publications on economic growth, macroeconomics, and the macroeconomic effect of natural resource revenues. He is an associate research fellow at the Economic Research Forum (ERF). He holds a Ph.D. in economics, MBA, and BA in finance.



## Rola Dashti

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Rola Dashti is the executive Secretary of UNESCWA (See full bio on p. 1).



## Mayssoun Azzam

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Mayssoun Azzam is one of the most prominent media figures in the Arabic world. Working for the Dubai-based Al-Arabiya news channel as a news presenter, program anchor, interviewer, and lecturer. She has interviewed prominent figures and decision-makers. Her reputation as a highly professional media expert qualified her to work as an instructor at the American University in Dubai. She is focusing her work on humanitarian issues and is the main anchor of a special one-hour daily news bulletin focusing on regional human-interest stories. Maysoun participated in many conferences as a moderator and wrote political and social articles published on Al Arabiya.net



## Lara Tamash

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Lara Tamash is a producer, TV presenter, and writer. She has worked in various positions since 1991, most notably as a media trainer, trainer in the Gender Program in Arabic, organizer, and presenter of programs at Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, Secretary of Arab Women Media Center, and a member of an administrative and advisory board. She wrote A Woman with Two Memory book and was the writer of a weekly article in the Jordanian daily Al-Dustour. She holds a master's degree in media and a bachelor's degree in sociology. She received many local, Arab, and international awards and honors, including the Al-Jazeera Documentary Film Festival Award, Golden Award from the Cairo Festival, and honor from International College in London as one of 45 influential personalities in Jordan.

# Closing Session



## Lara Tamash

Lara Tamash is a producer, TV presenter, and writer (see full bio above).



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