

Global Policy Dialogue on MENA Perspectives on Global and Regional Governance during Turbulent Times

SUMMARY REPORT



On Friday, December 6, 2024, the College of Public Policy at Hamad Bin Khalifa University and Stimson Center, in partnership with the Doha Forum and Global Governance Innovation Network, convened the **Global Policy Dialogue on Middle East and North Africa Perspectives on Global and Regional Governance during Turbulent Times**. Bringing together leading experts and policy-makers from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and beyond, the dialogue explored ways to innovate and strengthen the policy and operational interplay between the United Nations system (including the international financial institutions), World Trade Organization, G20, the Arab League, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Islamic Development Bank, Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Maghreb Union, and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States. Held in conjunction with the 7-8 December 2024 **Doha Forum**, this Track 1.5 Policy Dialogue commenced the process of standing up a new Arab research network dedicated to exploring issues and institutions at the intersection of regional and global governance. Furthermore, discussions sought to advance, within the MENA regional context, recent (22-23 September 2024) Summit of the Future agreements, namely the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact, the Declaration on Future Generations, and the Agenda for Peace.

The following report summarizes the discussions across two plenary sessions and four thematic breakout groups (whose recommendations were highlighted in the closing plenary session), namely: i) International Peace and Security; ii) Environmental Governance; iii) Sustainable Development; and iv) Bridging the Digital Divide and the Future of Artificial Intelligence Governance.

Overview of Plenary Discussions

The opening and closing plenary sessions explored the key challenges and opportunities facing the Middle East and North Africa region, focusing on how global governance frameworks can better address the region's unique needs and priorities. The Global Policy Dialogue's (GPD) wide-ranging discussions highlighted critical themes such as peace and security, environmental governance, sustainable development, and the future of digital and artificial intelligence governance. Participants further examined the region's many systemic challenges, emphasizing the importance of aligning global initiatives with the MENA-specific context.

A central focus of the opening and closing plenaries was the need for stronger cooperation between regional and global actors to improve their policy and operational interface to address cross-cutting issues, together, more effectively. The discussions also underscored the interconnected nature of challenges such as socio-economic inequality, climate resilience, and technological governance, emphasizing the importance of cohesive and inclusive strategies to ensure sustainable, high-impact outcomes for the benefit of countries and their citizens.

During the opening plenary, Professor Sultan Barakat (Senior Professor in Public Policy at Qatar Foundation's Hamad Bin Khalifa University) was interviewed by Mona Ali Khalil, an internationally recognized public international lawyer with 30 years of UN and other experience. Among the major issues confronting the Middle East and North Africa, Professor Barakat noted that how the international community facilitates an end to the conflict between Israel and Hamas and sets the stage for progress toward the elusive peaceful co-existence between the people of Palestine and Israel is fundamental to addressing wider systemic issues facing the region, including concerns about youth unemployment, poor natural resource management, and limited trade and financial flows between countries. With substantive contributions from Arab researchers and policy analysts on improving the performance of international organizations, Professor Barakat shared that global multilateral institutions (including the UN and international financial institutions) and regional institutions (including the Arab League, Organization for Islamic Cooperation, Islamic Development Bank, and Gulf Cooperation Council) are poised to support reconstruction efforts in Gaza, as well as assist countries across the region in tackling their most pressing development, security, and environmental challenges.

Following an initial "deep dive" discussion among Arab scholars and policy researchers in attendance, participants largely agreed during the concluding plenary session on the need to establish a new Arab research network dedicated to exploring issues and institutions at the intersection of regional and global governance. At the same time, given national and regional sensitivities, participants agreed to take more time in discussing the name and precise scope of work for the new network.

In the remaining portion of this GPD summary report, highlights of the four thematic breakout group sessions are shared, which were presented and critiqued by GPD participants in the closing plenary session, with an eye toward strengthening the group of scholars, policy researchers, and former policy-makers' collective analysis and policy recommendations.

Group 1: International Peace and Security

Moderator/Spokesperson: **Mona Ali Khalil** (Director, MAK Law International and ACUNS Board of Directors); *Participants:* **Karim Makdisi, Maha Yahya, Guma El-Gamaty, Lise Howard, Ellen Laipson, Paul Porteous, Jeevan Thiagarajah, Sultan Barakat, Erin McCandless, and Daria Bobarykina**

Overview:

The first breakout group focused on the peace and security challenges in the Middle East and North Africa region, emphasizing the critical need for reforming global governance structures to address systemic inequities and regional disparities. Participants underscored the pervasive influence of double-standards and exceptionalism in international governance, a factor that has hindered the consistent application of global norms and undermined trust in multilateral institutions. The dialogue also highlighted the urgency of addressing human security challenges, including socio-economic inequality, gender disparities, and the lack of inclusive regional institutions.

A key takeaway was the need to transition from traditional security paradigms to a holistic human security approach that integrates peacebuilding, socio-economic development, and climate resilience. Discussions called for reimagining the social contract to reflect current realities and threats, with particular attention to empowering youth and women, fostering regional mobility, and ensuring justice and accountability in governance.

Major Challenges and Threats:

- **Fragmented Governance and Institutional Weakness:** A lack of strong regional institutions, leadership, and shared vision across the MENA region hinders efforts to address cross-cutting challenges effectively.
- **Socio-Economic Inequalities:** Profound inequalities within and between states in the region exacerbate vulnerabilities, with resource-rich countries failing to support weaker states sufficiently. This inequality undermines efforts to build regional cohesion.
- **Marginalization of Civil Society and Youth:** The exclusion of non-state actors, particularly youth and women, from meaningful participation in governance and decision-making processes has limited the region's ability to foster sustainable peace and development.
- **Challenge of Defining the MENA Region:** Without prejudice to the role of Iran, Turkey, and Israel, as well as the influence of global powers such as China, the European Union, Russia, and the United States, participants in Group 1 focused primarily on the peace and security needs and aspirations of the Arab States of the Middle East and North Africa.
- **Human Rights of the Palestinian People under sustained Threat:** Many participants voiced serious concern and regret about the double-standards and disregard for international law toward the people of Palestine demonstrated by many in Israel's political and military establishments.

They further concurred with recent statements by noted scholars on the urgent need to revive negotiations on the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, while promoting their peaceful co-existence with the people of Israel.

- **Ineffectiveness of Global Governance and Double Standards:** Abuse of veto powers in the UN Security Council and inconsistencies in applying international norms and laws, particularly in conflicts involving Syria and Palestine, have rendered global institutions ineffective in addressing regional crises.

Select Recommendations:

Ensure Accountability and End Exceptionalism

- Advocate for the consistent application of international law and implementation of UN resolutions. Address exceptionalism and double standards of any countries (powerful or weak) in the international system, by ensuring their accountability under international legal frameworks.
- Strengthen regional mechanisms for justice and equity, ensuring that international norms are applied fairly across all states.

Empower Youth and Women

- Invest in initiatives that promote leadership and socio-economic inclusion for youth and women, including education, technology access, and participation in governance structures.
- Establish regional benchmarks to protect children in armed conflicts and prevent gender-based violence, ensuring adherence to international human rights standards.

Build Regional Capacities for Holistic Human Security

- Transition from traditional notions of security to holistic approaches that integrate socio-economic development, climate resilience, and inclusive governance.
- Encourage sub-regional collaborations to address governance disparities and develop infrastructure that promotes regional mobility and connectivity.

Foster Community-Led Reconstruction

- Promote regional ownership of reconstruction and development initiatives by leveraging local resources and knowledge. Emphasize community-led efforts to rebuild conflict-affected areas.
- Strengthen partnerships with regional and global institutions to enhance the effectiveness of development efforts and ensure equitable resource allocation.

Group 2: Environmental Governance

Moderator/Spokesperson: **Mona Al-Kuwari** and **Sylvie Maalouf** (Earthna); *Participants:* **Maja Groff, Justin Mundy, and Richard Ponzio**

Overview:

Even with the growing pressures on countries and their citizens posed by the “Triple Planetary Crisis” of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste, the environment continues to take a back seat and made less of a priority than other global governance challenges. This is most recently manifested in the environment lacking a chapter of its own in the recently adopted (by the United Nations’ 193 Member States) Pact for the Future at the September 2024 UN Summit of the Future in New York.

Moreover, on environmental governance concerns, the Middle East and North Africa region appears to operate in isolation from the rest of the world. In the MENA region, already one of the hottest regions on earth, temperatures have risen twice as fast as the global average. Characterized by arid environments, countries in this region have their own set of challenges and needs (*see below*), necessitating a distinct framework for advancing sustainability policy and solutions.

After considering a range of challenges and threats within the MENA context, the environmental governance breakout group considered four sets of recommendations in response, including the creation of an Emergency Platform for tackling the Planetary Emergency, increasing the volume and quality of climate finance, establishing an Arid Cities Network, and standing-up Sub-Regional Water and Agricultural Committees across the MENA region.

Major Challenges and Threats:

- **Unstable Geopolitics and Vast Regional Wealth Gaps:** Geopolitics is a chief cause of conflict and instability across the region, which is sometimes exacerbated by environmental factors. Poor water management and scarcity, for instance, can increase internal (national) and regional tensions, and both violent conflict and extreme weather events can push people to become migrants. Moreover, the vast wealth of hydrocarbon exporting nations contrasts with many countries elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa suffering from climate risks, conflict, and underdevelopment.
- **Record-Setting Heat worldwide and in the MENA region:** 2023 and 2024 were the hottest years on record, shattering records dating back to the mid-1850s, and driving a heightened sense of urgency around climate action. They have resulted in more frequent and longer lasting extreme heat waves across the world, with their effects felt in particularly acute ways across the Middle East and North Africa.

- **Water and Agriculture Challenges require Sub-Regional/Regional Approaches:** Urgent need for a transboundary approach to sustainable development across the MENA region, including in the Levant, Gulf, North African sub-region, and between Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Shared bodies of water call for effective water and marine diplomacy.
- **Lack of Effective National Governance and Harnessing of Human Capital in the MENA region:** The MENA region lacks effective institutions, and building effective institutions is typically measured in years and decades rather than days and months. Moreover, the region suffers from the poor harnessing of abundant human capital, including through targeted investments in research and development. Consequently, only seven countries in the region are realizing two-thirds of the Sustainable Development Goals, while the other fourteen countries fall further behind. of goals. For instance, even when a country has sufficient arable land (e.g., Sudan), when basic governance and the rule of law have broken down, total chaos and violence can ensue. Sustainable growth and development also require effective data collection and monitoring, which the MENA region is also lacking.
- **Lack of Effective Regional Governance:** The Arab League, Gulf Cooperation Council, and other sub-regional bodies in the Middle East and North Africa are not cooperating effectively on environmental issues, which further undermine the generation of sufficient political will for effective implementation at the national level. With support from global multilateral institutions and approaches, the MENA region should draw lessons on effective watershed management from, for instance, the Mekong Delta in South-East Asia and the Amu Daria river watershed in Central Asia.

Select Recommendations:

Create an Emergency Platform for Tackling the Planetary Emergency

- Fully develop Action 54 of the Pact for the Future (“We will strengthen the international response to complex global shocks”) to empower the UN Secretary-General to both declare a Planetary Emergency and, in response, to uphold his or her role “... to, inter alia, convene Member States, promote the coordination of the whole multilateral system and engage with relevant stakeholders in response to crises.” In the case of a Planetary Emergency Declaration, this would entail the Secretary-General detailing a set of catalytic measures for various state and non-state actors to take action, within a time-bound period, in response to one or more major environmental crises that threaten large numbers of countries and their citizens.
- In the event that the Secretary-General is constrained from issuing a Planetary Emergency Declaration (and taking subsequent multistakeholder actions in connection with the declaration), consideration could be given to instilling this authority within the manageably-sized “Climate Change Council” at the United Nations, as proposed by Brazilian President Lula at the November 2024 G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro. By pulling together the capacities of businesses, scholars, and civil society organizations, the multistakeholder Climate Change Council could be charged with expediting environmental crisis decision-making. Its intergovernmental component could

issue either non-binding resolutions (similar to the General Assembly) or binding, enforceable international law (similar to the UN Charter-based functions of the Security Council).

Expand both the Volume and Quality of Climate Finance Worldwide

- Maximize the ambition of Action 52 of the Pact for the Future (“We will accelerate the reform of the international financial architecture so that it can meet the urgent challenge of climate change”). This entails learning from the recent Climate Conference of the Parties (in Doha in 2012 and Dubai in 2023) to lever financial power within both public and private sectors for tackling critical climate mitigation and adaptation priorities worldwide.
- Adapt global green energy initiatives, such as the Bridgetown Initiative, to the Middle East and North Africa context to generate additional public and private financial resources for effective climate action in hot and arid environments. This entails both creative new uses of the International Monetary Fund’s Special Drawing Rights (Action 51 of the Pact) and ensuring that MENA countries are able to borrow sustainably, and have access to credit on affordable terms, while ensuring full transparency (Action 50 of the Pact).

Establish an Arid Cities Network (ACN)

- Bring together a network of experts from cities with hot and arid environments to share best practices and develop practical policy-based solutions to tackle the impact of climate change in hot and arid regions.
- In draw lessons from how cities networks, such as the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, have engaged the UN Framework on Climate Change and its annual Conference of the Parties, the ACN could, initially, engage important cities based in hot and arid regions, such as Doha, Lima, Jaipur, Marrakech, and either Granada or Seville.

Stand-up Sub-Regional Water and Agriculture Committees across the MENA Region

- A chief aim of the Sub-Regional Water and Agriculture Committees would be to reduce tensions across the MENA region by pursuing a transboundary approach to sustainable development, including, for instance, in the Levant, Gulf, North African sub-region, and between Turkey, Iran, and Iraq.
- The UN’s Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) examines environmental and economic issues through a regional lens, but sub-regional committees, focused on sensitive issues around water and agriculture management, would complement ESCWA’s work and contribute to greater MENA regional unity (reinforcing the common vision, language, political systems, and culture that already brings a level of cohesion to much of the region).

Group 3: Sustainable Development

Moderator: Nesreen Barakat (Jordan Strategy Forum); *Spokesperson: Hassan Aly*; *Participants: Abdullah Saleh Baabood, Mustafa Osman I. Elamin, Ammar Kahf, Alaa Qasem, Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas, and Nudhara Yusuf*

Overview:

Participants began by underscoring that the MENA region has a lot of complexity and region-specific context to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Asymmetry exists both across progress on different SDGs, and across countries within the region, especially those in conflict such as Syria and Yemen compared to those who heavily invest in development such as Qatar, UAE and Jordan. This unbalanced and asymmetric approach often leads to vicious development deficit cycles, especially with weak human capital in the region. Participants pointed out that MENA, more than any other region in the world, has a strong and complex interconnection across socio-political, economic, and cultural aspects of development. This is both an opportunity and a challenge, with for example strong ties in trade but increasing complexities with conflict and structures of hierarchy. For the region, due to its rapid and asymmetric development, SDGs are actually shorter-term goals, with long-term implications. Therefore, there is a real need to move quickly on gathering data and investing in sustainable practice, this involves unlocking SDG finance. Finally, participants overwhelmingly emphasized that especially concerning the MENA region, a one-size fits all global, and largely Western-democracy focused, solution would simply not work in accelerating the SDGs. International organizations must work with local actors to properly understand region-specific context and accelerators that may help unlock and implement the SDGs as the region builds and rebuilds in the 21st century.

Major Challenges and Threats:

- **Regional asymmetry and complex cultural hierarchies:** Participants noted that the region was showing significant promise in certain SDGs such as health, water, and sustainable cities, but cultural complexity and uncertainty within the region has posed a barrier to SDGs associated with gender, climate, and inequalities. Moreover, the region itself, while culturally similar, is extremely heterogeneous across political regimes, stability, economics, and civic and social space. This makes scaling-up blanket solutions largely ineffective.
- **Political instability:** Discussion highlighted that you cannot have long-term thinking if you do not have long-term governance. This not only weakens the investment environment because of uncertain rules of the game, but also has governance consequences for climate, trade, education, human rights, and infrastructure.
- **Financing gap:** The region suffers in accessing international credit due to the political instability of many countries, whether through foreign direct investment or the harsher conditionality from the IMF. This leads to serious funding gaps for the SDGs, and coupled with inequality across the region, induces a multiplier effect that widens the gap between developing and underdeveloped countries in the region.
- **Data scarcity:** Participants pointed out a serious data deficit across the region that prevents proper monitoring and accountability, especially a lack of data on minority groups or disaggregated

accounts to show a truer picture of sustainable development across the Middle East and North Africa.

Select Recommendations:

Innovate and Reform the International Financial Architecture

- International Financial Institutions must rebuild trust with the region, including through investing political will in debt restructuring across conflict zones.
- Metrics for going beyond GDP, green bonds, and public-private impact investment networks could provide creative solutions for leveraging finance across the region, with a focus on resource pooling within MENA, rather than depending on international foreign aid.

Build Civic Networks to support more Inclusive Governing Institutions

- Creating strong networks of experts, academics, and civil society across the region could support politicians in the elite bargaining that needs to take place to rebuild from conflict in sustainable ways.
- Well-informed regional networks would also help calibrate long-term goals into short-term region-specific actions, pooling resources to fill data gaps and better connect across the heterogeneity of the region.

De-colonize Development

- Development strategies and models at the level of international organisations continue to be understood in the context of western democracies. Global expertise must be invested in rethinking development outside of this context and in the interconnected cultural, social, economic, and political realities of many global majority countries.
- Within the region, a proper investigation of how development policies harm minorities and future generations, and how these harms evolve over time, must take place to mitigate rising inequalities and the opportunities of the region's youth.

Invest in tools to support bottom-up development approaches

- SDG financing must be put toward better data collection in the region, to first and foremost allow for stronger diagnostics of specific challenges and opportunities.
- Investment in digital public infrastructure, education, human capital, and broadly, better interconnection for information sharing, will allow bottom up-approaches to development from the region, which will necessarily be more region specific and help build stronger and more sustainable development models.

Group 4: Bridging the Digital Divide and the Future of Artificial Intelligence Governance

Moderator/Spokesperson: Aisha Al-Ammari (Qatar University); *Participants:* Dr. Maryam Al-Khater, Dr. Kuniko Ashizawa, Muznah Siddiqui, Professor Joris Larik, Dr. Kim Moloney, Nafissa Aboukassim, and Fatima Al-Subaiey

Overview:

The session highlighted the dynamic and interdisciplinary nature of regulating artificial intelligence, as well as bridging the digital divide, including within the Middle East and North Africa context. An approach that does not center human rights and development, and lacks a technocratic understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing the rapid pace of technological development, may pose serious negative impacts on populations, especially affecting the most vulnerable and least visible demographics. Consequently, participants overwhelmingly underscored the need for a clear establishment of international norms, standards, and capacities at the national and regional level, especially to overcome regional asymmetries in data, innovation, and accountability.

Moreover, participants concluded that security risks from mis- and dis- information pose a serious threat across the region, specifically in terms of threats to political stability and national security, as well as a growing concern for the rise of deep fakes, especially toward women and girls. Participants discussed the potential power and utility of not just political, but legally binding norm creation around technology governance, especially regarding AI, within the region. In this vein, there may be joint utility in developing a region-specific set of norms and regulations toward AI and other emerging technologies, leveraging the expertise of innovators, technocrats, and networks within the region.

Major Challenges and Threats:

- **Lack of knowledge of utilizing AI tools for personal use:** All participants agreed that underage persons, such as teenagers and children, face a problem concerning the ethical use of AI. Moreover, elderly persons are not familiar with the knowledge of the secure use of AI.
- **Shortage of integrated strategies among Middle Eastern and African Countries:** This shortage can result from a technological, informative and developmental gap. Furthermore, the lack of necessary digital skills leads to less cooperative strategies which cause digital divisions among countries in the region.
- **Absence of international model of AI regulations and laws at the global level:** While the UN (through Objective 5 of the Global Digital Compact and two new UN General Assembly Resolutions, led by the United States and China, respectively) is now building-up basic norms and standard for Artificial Intelligence Governance, fully developed, let alone enforceable, regulations and laws for Artificial Intelligence governance at the global level have yet to be formally negotiated or adopted.
- **Misinformation and Human rights violations:** Participants noted that some data might be collected falsely and that such information is then wrongly manipulated against the interests of

individuals and corporations. This represents a dangerous violation of basic human rights, including privacy.

- **Absence of the Arabic language in AI programs is a huge obstacle since it is currently mainly engaging with the English language.** This signals a lack of linguistic and cultural inclusivity, seeing that in most associations and corporations in Middle Eastern and North African countries the Arabic language is used officially on a daily basis (and represents also one of the UN's official languages).

Select Recommendations:

Facilitate greater investments in digital and AI innovation

- Invest more in Arabic-language digital/Artificial Intelligence systems. This would make non-speaking English language learners more comfortable by dealing with more user-friendly Digital and AI Arabic applications, ensuring also the more inclusive development of AI.
- Expand funding for Arabic technology initiatives and the projects that are concerned with the AI development elements, including at the regional level (e.g. through the GCC). These Arabic-based AI programs should be implemented in the fields of energy and sustainable development, too.

Integrate strategies for AI amongst The Middle East and North African states

- Drawing upon the UN Global Digital Compact (Objective 5 on “AI Governance”), implement integrated policies of cooperation concerning AI programs amongst both the well-developed and lesser-developed Arab Countries, using also regional groupings such as the GCC. This developmental cooperation will help to sustain progress in the field of AI since it represents a new innovation worldwide.
- Promote mutual cooperation among student delegations across the region to facilitate peer-to-peer education and the mutually beneficial sharing of AI expertise.

Implement new policies and practices and norms

- Set clear regulations that relate to the ethical use of new AI technologies, which ensures the privacy of individuals who are using AI and safeguards their data, including through deliberations in regional fora such as the GCC.
- Protect the privacy of associations and boards which work with data collection in AI technologies, applications, and related innovative programs.
- When employing AI technologies, consider maximizing the benefits while consciously minimizing the risks.

Integrate AI education in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary studies

- Promote AI studies as a part of schools and universities syllabi through well-designated AI curriculums.

- Consider ethical values and the privacy of individuals when striking a balance between the use of AI technologies and protecting basic human rights.

Assimilating all societal categories (both marginalized and non-marginalized groups) when employing new AI technologies

- Assimilate all social partners as they have the same basic human rights that need to be respected by innovative new technologies, including AI. These sectors include refugees and the displaced, and there should not be any kind of discrimination among people, whether, for instance, they are male or female or citizens or refugees. AI education is a right for all that deserves to be accessed equally by all.
- Ensure a mutual participation in implementing AI programs between the public and private sectors, and both global and regional summits should seek to facilitate greater multistakeholder cooperation in this regard.

Annex I: Participants List

Nafissa Aboukassim, Graduate Student in International Relations, University of Torino

Aisha Al-Ammari, Assistant Professor and Head of Public Law, Qatar University

Dr. Maryam Al-Khater, Professor of Digital Media, Qatar University

Dr. Mona Al-Kuwari, Editor & Publication Manager, Earthna, Qatar Foundation

Dr. Esmail Alsharif, Former presidential consultant, Libyan Presidency Council, and Consultant, Libyan Government

Professor Hassan Aly, Economist, Professor Emeritus, and Chair of the Board of Trustees, Economic Research Forum

Dr. Kuniko Ashizawa, Lecturer in International Relations, American University.

Abdullah Saleh Baabood, Academic and Former Director of the Centre for Gulf Studies, Oman

Nesreen Barakat, CEO of the Jordan Strategy Forum

Dr. Sultan Barakat, Professor, College of Public Policy, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Mustafa Osman I. Elamin, Senior Advisor to the UN-DNCD partnership and Member of the Arab Crisis Team and Global Forum for Moderation

Guma El-Gamaty, Head of the Taghyeer Party, Libya

Abdiweli Mohamed Ali Gaas, Former Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia

Tassadit Gharbi, CEO of Al-Fahd Consulting & Technology, Co-Owner of Prodev Inc, Canada

Maja Groff, Convenor of the Climate Governance Commission, Co-Chair of the Coordinating Committee, and Senior Treaty Advisor for the International Anti-Corruption Court

Professor Lise Howard, Tenured Professor, Georgetown University

Dr. Ammar Kahf, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Omran for Strategic Studies

Mona Ali Khalil, Director of MAK LAW INTERNATIONAL and an Affiliate of the Harvard Law School Programme on International Law and Armed Conflict

Ellen Laipson, Director of the Program in International Security, the Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University

Professor Joris Larik, Assistant Professor, Leiden University, and Senior Advisor and Non-resident Fellow for the Global Governance, Justice & Security Program at the Stimson Center

Sylvie Maalouf, Programs Manager, CEO Office of Qatar Foundation

Professor Karim Makdisi, Associate Professor, International Politics and Director of the Graduate Program in Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut

Dr. Kim Moloney, Professor, College of Public Policy, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Dr. Erin McCandless, Research Associate, University of Witwatersrand

Justin Mundi, Chairman, Earthna Centre, Qatar Foundation

Maryam Nemazee, broadcast journalist, Al Jazeera English

Professor Leslie Pal, Founding Dean, College of Public Policy, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Dr. Paul Porteous, Director, Leadership Development and International Programs, University of Canberra

Dr. Richard Ponzio, Senior Fellow and Director of the Global Governance, Justice & Security Program, Stimson Center, and Co-Director, Global Governance Innovation Network

Alaa Qasem, CEO of DeepRoot Consulting, Yemen

Muznah Siddiqui, Researcher, UN University Centre for Policy Research

Jeevan Thiagarajah, Chairman, Institute for Human Rights, Sri Lanka

Dr. Maha Yahya, Director, Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut

Nudhara Yusuf, Executive Coordinator, Global Governance Innovation Network and Research Associate, Global Governance, Justice & Security Program, Stimson Center

Annex II: Global Policy Dialogue Objectives, Methodology, and Breakout Group Questions

Objectives:

- To convene leading policy researchers, practitioners, and advocates from MENA and around the world to debate and recommend specific global and regional institutional, policy, legal, normative, and operational innovations (including by encouraging the policy and operational interface between global and regional institutions) that could inform the Summit of the Future follow-through agenda, giving special attention to MENA regional perspectives and innovation priorities.
- To establish a new platform for MENA policy researchers and advocates to critically discuss and advance policy research on “What the Middle East and North Africa Wants” and the type of relationship the region needs to have with the UN, international financial institutions, World Trade Organization, and G20.
- To strengthen collaboration between the Arab League, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Gulf Cooperation Council, the Arab Maghreb Union, and the Community of Sahel-Saharan States with global multilateral institutions, including through the Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, and Declaration on Future Generations, and New Agenda for Peace.

Methodology: Expert breakout thematic working groups will convene on the most pressing challenges facing the MENA region. Each group will identify and elaborate in the afternoon three-to-four global-regional governance reform proposals (*two of which might build on agreed actions in the Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, Declaration on Future Generations, and New Agenda for Peace*). These will be presented subsequently to, and critiqued by, a group of MENA statespersons and scholars in the concluding session, to further refine and strengthen the proposals.

Breakout Group Questions:

- 1) Is their common understanding of the problem-set within the Middle East and North African context in the global governance area of Sustainable Development? What are the chief 2-3 factors undermining or threatening progress within the Middle East and North African context in the global governance area of Sustainable Development?
- 2) Within your breakthrough group’s thematic area, *please identify and elaborate on one or two global governance reform proposals ADOPTED BY WORLD LEADERS*, in September 2028, in the Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, Declaration on Future Generations, and/or New Agenda for Peace. Why do you feel this proposal merits the attention of MENA regional government and civil society leaders? How could this proposal be designed to ensure maximum benefit (while reducing risks) for the governments and peoples of the MENA region?

- 3) Who should be consulted in both the proposal's development and eventual roll-out (e.g., MENA regional/sub-regional organizations; business, religious, and civil society leaders; parliamentarians; scholars and policy researchers; and journalists)?
- 4) Within your breakthrough group's thematic area, *please identify and elaborate on one or two global governance reform proposals* from BEYOND those agreed upon, in September 2028, in the Pact for the Future, Global Digital Compact, Declaration on Future Generations, and/or New Agenda for Peace. Why do you feel this proposal merits the attention of MENA regional government and civil society leaders? How could this proposal be designed to ensure maximum benefit (while reducing risks) for the governments and peoples of the MENA region? Who should be consulted in both the proposal's development and eventual roll-out (e.g., MENA regional/sub-regional organizations; business, religious, and civil society leaders; parliamentarians; scholars and policy researchers; and journalists)?