



منتدى دراسات  
Derasat Forum



دراسات  
DERASAT

مركز البحرين للدراسات الاستراتيجية والدولية والطاقة  
Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies

# The Role of Think Tanks: Influence on Middle East Policy

28 April 2019





## Concept Note

Since their inception during the 19th century, think tanks have been proliferating, and today, western countries feature hundreds of think tanks, producing research on a diverse range of policy-relevant issues. By assembling groups of dedicated researchers, they have come to play an important role in shaping government policy, and in mediating between the government and other key stakeholders, most importantly the general public. The role of think tanks in policy is a well-studied phenomenon, spawning a rich, interdisciplinary literature examining their history, as well as their future trajectory.

Similar to western countries, the Middle East has a large number of think tanks, including homegrown organizations and branches of global think tanks. They have been contributing to debates concerning government policy for decades. However, there are significant cultural differences in the relationship between think tanks and policy in the Middle East vis-à-vis in western countries, and these differences are understudied.

The goal of the forum is to discuss the contribution of think tanks to policy in the Middle East and explore how enhanced levels of cooperation between them can enrich their contribution to policy during the coming years.

The forum will convene current and past leaders of Middle Eastern think tanks. Key researchers will also be invited, as will the Middle Eastern policymakers who most often engage with think tanks. There will be media representation, too, as newspapers (print and digital) play an important role in linking think tanks to policymakers and to the general public. International organizations such as the UN and its sub-organizations will also be invited to participate.

## **Derasat Forum 2019**

### **'The Role of Think Tanks: Influence on Middle East Policy**

#### **9:00 - 9:30 Registration**

#### **9:30 - 9:45 Welcome Remarks**

- Introductions: Mrs. Rima Maktabi, Bureau Chief, Al Arabia, London.
- Welcome Remarks: HE Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Chairman, DERASAT

#### **9:45 - 11:00 Session 1:**

##### **Think Tank influence on policy making: differing perspectives**

- Dr. Fares Braizat, Chairman, NAMA Strategic Intelligence Solutions, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- Dr. Ebtisem Ktebi, President, Emirates Policy Center (EPC), United Arab Emirates
- Mr. Adam Sieminski, President, King Abdullah Center for Petroleum Studies and Research (KAPSARC), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- HE Mr. Amin El Sharkawi, Resident Coordinator, United Nations, Kingdom of Bahrain

#### **11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break**

#### **11:30 - 12:45 Session 2:**

##### **Enhancing policy decisions through cooperation: between Think Tanks and the Media**

- Dr. Mohammed Benhammou, President, Moroccan Center for Strategic Studies, The Kingdom of Morocco
- Mr. Anwar Abdulrahman, Editor in Chief, Akhbar Al Khaleej, Kingdom of Bahrain
- Dr. Fahad Al-Orabi Al-Harhi, President, Asbar Center for Studies, Research and Communications, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Mr. Nejib Friji, Director, International Peace Institute, Middle East & North Africa (IPI-MENA), Kingdom of Bahrain



**12:45 - 14:00 Lunch Break**

**14:00 -15:15 Session 3:**

**A Think Tank role in combatting radicalism and extremism**

- Brigadier General Dr. Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, Assistant Chief of Public Security for Operations and Training Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Kingdom of Bahrain
- Dr. Mohammed Bin Saqr Alsulami, RASANA (International Institute for Iranian Studies), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib, Executive Director, Al Istishari Strategy Center for Economic and Future Studies, United Arab Emirates
- Mr. Moez Ghribi, Director of the Geopolitical Department, Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies (ITES), Republic of Tunisia

**15:15 - 16:30 Session 4:**

**The underlying importance of research to national economic visions**

- Mr. Stefano Pettinato, Resident Representative, UNDP, Kingdom of Bahrain
- Dr. Mane Al-Sadairawi, Executive Director, Kuwait Institute for Science & Research (KISR), State of Kuwait
- Dr. Ronald D. Ripple, Mervin Bovaird Professor of Energy Business & Finance, School of Energy, USA Economics, Policy, and Commerce, Collins College of Business, United States of America
- Dr. Noora Y. Mansouri, Senior Research Associate, King Abdullah Center for Petroleum Studies and Research (KAPSARC), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**16:30 Closing Remarks**

**Derasat Forum 2019**

**The Role of Think Tanks: Influence on Middle East Policy**

**Speakers**





**H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Chairman, Bahrain  
Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (DERASAT)  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

On 31 January 2017, H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa was appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies, in addition to serving as Undersecretary for International Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain, a post he has held since August 2015. Previously, Shaikh Abdulla held the post of Director General for External Communications (2014) at the Information Affairs Authority, during which he played a pivotal role in drawing up and implementing a strategy for strengthening the country's national communications and public engagement. Prior to this, Shaikh Abdulla served as a political advisor to the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Defense (2011) and as a Legal Specialist at the Bahrain Economic Development Board from 2007-2009. He also served as a Research Assistant with the Dean of Law Faculty at Queen Mary College, University of London from 2008-2009. In 2015, Shaikh Abdulla was awarded a PhD in International Relations and Diplomacy from the École des Hautes Études Internationales, France. In 2008, he earned a Master of Law (LLM) from Queen Mary College, University of London, UK, focusing on negotiation and mediation. He also holds a Diploma in Political Development (Honors) from the Bahrain Institute for Political Development, Bahrain 2007 and a Bachelor of Law (LLB) (Honours) from the Applied Science University, Jordan 2006. Shaikh Abdulla is an international expert in mediation, accredited by the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) in London where he participated in their training initiatives for international agencies and experts. He is also accredited as a Master Practitioner in Neuro Linguistic Programming by the United States' National Federation of Neuro Linguistic Programming. Shaikh Abdulla has a passion for the arts and is proficient in Arabic, English and French. He has been Vice President of the Paris based, 'French Bahraini Friendship Society' since 2011 and a member of the Jordan-based 'Arab Thought Forum' since 2013. He is an advocate of cross-cultural public diplomacy and publishes papers in various fields on a regular basis. He enjoys scuba diving, chess and collecting antiques.



**Mrs. Rima Maktabi**  
**Bureau Chief - London**  
**Al Arabiya News Channel**  
**United Kingdom**

Mrs. Maktabi is a communication professional with over 20 years' experience in television. Rima rejoined Al Arabiya News Channel in October 2012 as a senior anchor and senior roving reporter. She has done extensive media coverage from Syria focusing on the political, military as well as the humanitarian aspect from Aleppo, Idlib and Daraa provinces. She also did thorough coverage from the frontlines of Mosul in Iraq focusing on stories about the battle with ISIS. Rima has interviewed top leaders and decision makers in the Arab world throughout her career in journalism and was nominated by the World Economic Forum as a Young Global Leader in 2010, winning awards for her work in journalism. Formerly, Mrs. Maktabi worked with CNN as anchor/reporter covering major news stories across the Middle East. She was also the host of CNN's renowned show 'Inside the Middle East'. Between 2005 and 2010, Mrs. Maktabi hosted a daily prime time news show at Al Arabiya news channel. She covered major events in the Middle East yet the most significant was her field work in the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon and the Lebanese army war in North Lebanon. Maktabi started her career in media in her home country Lebanon. In 1996, just as she joined LAU as a communication arts student, Mrs. Maktabi started working with Lebanese Future TV where she established her career in media. She has an MA in international affairs and BA in communication arts, Lebanese American University in Beirut (LAU).



**Dr. Fares A. Braizat**  
**Chairman**  
**NAMA Strategic Intelligence Solutions**  
**Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

Dr. Braizat combines academic research with public policy and is the founder and Chairman of NAMA Strategic Intelligence Solutions since 2016. Previously, he served as Senior Adviser / Director of Strategic Studies and Evaluation at the Office of His Majesty, Royal Hashemite Court, Jordan between Jan 2012 – Feb 2016. Dr. Braizat serves on the International Scientific Advisory Board of the World Values Survey and the Principle Investigator for Jordan and leads the project in Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt. He also currently leads Transparency International surveys in Jordan and other countries in the region. In September 2017, Dr. Braizat was selected as a member of the External Advisory Board (EAB) of TRIVALENT Project as an expert representing the Middle East at a High-Level Evaluation Panel, evaluating the findings of the TRIVALENT project on countering radicalization and terrorism in Europe. Dr. Braizat founded and coordinated the Arab Barometer, World Values Survey, Global Barometer, and the Public Opinion Program at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies 2010-2011, and was Senior Polling Adviser for the International Republican Institute – USAID on Lebanese elections of 2009, He also served on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs at the United States Congress and taught at the University of Jordan, where he was Deputy Director of the Center for Strategic Studies. He holds a PhD in Political Science and an MA in Political Sociology from the University of Kent at Canterbury in the UK.



**Dr. Ebtisam Al Ketbi**  
**President**  
**Emirates Policy Center**  
**United Arab Emirates**

Dr. Al Ketbi is the President of the Emirates Policy Center, which was established in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in September 2013, and which examines regional and international geopolitical projects and their impact on the Gulf region from the region's own vision of its concerns and interests. The Center also focuses on exploring current and future issues affecting the security of the UAE and the region as a whole, and provides strategic analysis and policy papers for the governments of the UAE and the Gulf countries; Dr. Ebtisam Al Ketbi was appointed as a member of the consultative body of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council. In July 2018, Arabian Business magazine selected her among the 50 most influential women in the Arab world as the first woman to lead a think tank in the Arab world. Prior to establishing the center, she worked as a Professor of Political Science at the UAE University and has held several previous positions, such as the General Coordinator of the Gulf Development Forum, and a member of the Executive Unit at the Arab Society for Political Science, a board member of the Center for Arab Unity Studies, the Arab Thought Foundation and Arab Anti-Corruption Organization. She has published a number of papers on Gulf security, Gulf-American relations and the war on terror. She has also participated in many conferences related to regional and international affairs. In addition, she has been hosted in a number of Arab news channels, as an expert on the Gulf region and Iran. She received her PhD from the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University.





**Mr. Adam Sieminski**  
**President**

**King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center (KAPSARC)**  
**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Mr. Sieminski was appointed as the President of the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center (KAPSARC) in April 2018. Before coming to Riyadh, he held the Schlesinger Chair for Energy & Geopolitics at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, DC in the United States. He served as the head of the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) for almost five years (2012-2017) after a short assignment as Senior Director for Energy & Environment on the National Security Council staff at the White House. He was previously Deutsche Bank's chief energy economist and an integrated oil company analyst. He is a senior fellow and former president of the U.S. Association for Energy Economics. He holds the chartered financial analyst (CFA) designation and was President of the National Association of Petroleum Investment Analysts. Adam received both an undergraduate degree in civil engineering and a master's degree in public administration from Cornell University.



**H.E. Mr. Amin El Sharkawi**  
**Resident Coordinator**  
**United Nations**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

Mr. El Sharkawi is the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations. He is also the representative of the UN Secretary General to the Kingdom of Bahrain. Mr. El Sharkawi brings over 25 years of professional working experience within the UN system on institutional capacity building and reform, strategic planning, project management, results-based management, economic planning and energy issues and Sustainable Development Goals. He worked with UN missions in different countries. HE El Sharkawi has served as the Sustainable Development Adviser at the UNDP office in Cairo, followed by Head of the Programme division in Damascus, Syria and subsequently Senior Programme Adviser in UNDP New York. He then occupied the role of Deputy Country Director in Sudan, followed by Deputy Resident Representative and Acting Country Director in Libya. Mr. El Sharkawi brings with him a wealth of experience and a unique skillset cultivated throughout his extensive career in the areas of negotiation, mediation and management in addition to consensus, motivation and trust building. Mr. El Sharkawi has worked with several governments, private sector entities, development banks and donors as well as civil society organizations. Mr. El Sharkawi holds two master's degrees; a Master of Business Administration degree from the Maastricht School of Management in Maastricht, the Netherlands and a Master of Science degree in Engineering from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts, U.S.A.





**Mr. Mohammed Benhammou**  
**President, Moroccan Center for Strategic Studies and**  
**African Federation for Strategic Studies**  
**Kingdom of Morocco**

Mr. Benhammou is the elected President of the African Federation for Strategic Studies, and an international expert on security and strategic questions. He is also the president of the Moroccan Center for Strategic Studies. He is a former professor of political sciences at the University Mohammed V-Souissi and École Nationale d'Administration Publique in Rabat, Morocco. He is a former vice-dean of the Faculty of Law of Salé in Morocco, and former vice-president of the International Organization "Trainer without Borders", in charge of the international network of experts and consultants. He was the CEO and founder of the Moroccan Association of Alumni of the E.N.A of Paris, the founder member of the Mediterranean Network for Democracy headquartered in Cairo, and a founding member of the Arabic Democrats Network. He is a holder of a PhD of Law and has received numerous awards for his works.



**Mr. Anwar Abdulrahman**  
**Editor in Chief**  
**Akhbar Al Khaleej**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

Mr. Abdulrahman began his business career at the age of 19 as a young salesman in Bahrain with M. A. Almoayyed, a leading Bahraini company. He was seconded to Al Hilal Bookshop, a subsidiary of M. A. Almoayyed and in 1970, together with the late Mr. Ebrahim Almoayed, took over the bookshop. In 1973 he established with two other directors, Al Hilal Corporation, a company specialising in the distribution of imported newspapers and magazines. In 1976, under the tutelage of the late Mahmoud Al Mardi, Anwar spearheaded the launch of Bahrain's first Arabic daily newspaper, Akhbar Al Khaleej and two years later, the same group launched the Gulf Daily News. In 1977 Anwar established Al Hilal Publishing Group, an Anglo/Bahraini company, where he was elected Chairman of the Board. Al Hilal Group is a leading Publishing House in the Middle East, publishing a range of newspapers and magazines including Gulf Construction, Gulf Industry, Travel & Tourism News, Oil & Gas News, Arabian Knight, Gulf Weekly, The Gulf magazine. Al Hilal also owns and operates TradeArabia.com the leading business information portal in the Middle East. The company has offices in London, Dubai, Al Khobar and Riyadh. Mr. Abdulrahman was born in 1942 and educated in Bahrain. He is fluent in Arabic, Persian and English. He was a member of the board of Bahrain University's School of Literature from 1988 until March 2000 and writes regular columns for both Akhbar Al Khaleej and the Gulf Daily News. He took over as Editor-in-Chief of Akhbar Al Khaleej towards the end of 2000.



**Dr. Fahad Al-Orabi Al-Harthi**

**President**

**Asbar Center for Studies, Research and Communications**

**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Dr. Al Harthi is the President and the founder and owner of Asbar Centre for Studies, Research and Communications since 1994. The center aims to contribute to the development of society and to enhance its institutions' efficiency and effectiveness by emphasizing the importance of research as the best means for decision-making. He is the Chairman of Asbar World Forum, the purpose of which is to provide a high level of understanding of issues associated with transitioning the Kingdom's oil-based economy to a knowledge-based economy, focusing on the relationship between the knowledge society and sustainable development, Dr. Al Harthi is also the Chairman of the Asbar Convention (think tank) which includes 100 intellectuals from different political and social backgrounds, its purpose is to deepen knowledge of the latest events and society issues, promoting the values of dialogue, and exchanging opinions between intellectual and cultural elites. He is also a member of the Saudi Shura (Legislative Council) since its first session held in 1993, and a member in other prestigious organizations and committees. He holds a PhD in Human Sciences and Literature, from the Université de La Sorbonne, Paris, France, with First Honours, and has published a number of research papers, studies and essays published in different scientific newspapers and journals (academic and non-academic).



**Mr. Nejib Friji**

**Director**

**The International Peace Institute, Middle East and North Africa (IPI, MENA)  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Mr. Friji has been the Director of the International Peace Institute (IPI) The Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) since January 2015. Before joining IPI, Mr. Nejib Friji was the Director of UN Information Centre (UNIC), Manama, serving Gulf countries since 16 March 2006. In the course of his UN Career, Mr. Friji has also served as a Spokesman and media advisor on several occasions such as Spokesperson and media advisor to the UN Special Envoy for Western Sahara, Peter Von Walsum during his first visit to Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Polisario Headquarters, Spain and France before reporting to the Security Council (2005-2006); Spokesman and media adviser of the UN Envoy for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559, Terje Rod-Larsen who supervised the withdrawal of the Syrian armed forces from Lebanon (2005); and Spokesman for the United Nations during the war in Iraq, heading the UN daily briefing in Amman, Jordan (2003) to name a few. In 1989, Mr Friji started his career with the United Nations as the UN Information Officer at the UN Headquarters, New York, USA where he worked in the Media Coverage Section of the UN Department of Public Information (DPI). Mr. Friji was responsible for issuing press releases in French on the general debate of General Assembly and the deliberations of its subsidiary committees (political, social, decolonization, legal, peace and security, cooperation and development, disarmament) in addition to the Security Council meetings. Mr. Friji holds a degree in Master Studies in English Political and Social Studies of the English speaking countries from Newcastle University in the UK and a BA in Political Science in English from the University of Paris.



**Brigadier General Dr. Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Khalifa,  
Assistant Chief of Public Security for Operations and Training  
Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Kingdom of Bahrain**

Brigadier General Sheikh Hamad has a Ph.D. in Public Administration from Egypt, and has participated in many Military and Policing courses in different countries. He is a member of a number of local and international committees, such as INTERPOL Scientific Committee for the Development of Police Training in the Arab States (France), the committee to develop a comprehensive strategy for security systems, the committee to prepare the comprehensive guide of the work of the police officer, and other committees in Bahrain, as well as the committee to establish the Gulf Academy for Strategic and Security Studies (United Arab Emirates). He has attended many conferences, meetings and seminars in different countries. He has various medals and decorations, such as: Kuwait Freedom Medal, Hawar Decoration, Appreciation of Military Service Decorations, Military Efficiency Medal, Magnanimity Medal, Security, Medal for Long Service, and First class Medal for Excellent Service and Gulf Security Exercise Medal.





**Dr. Mohammed Alsulami**

**President**

**Rasanah: International Institute for Iranian Studies**

**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Dr. Alsulami is an expert in Iranian affairs. He received his Ph.D. from Leiden University in 2014. His Ph.D. investigated the notions of the other in modern Iranian thought. Also, he is interested in Iranian-Arab political, cultural and social relationships in the modern time. He has taught Iranian Studies at Umm Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia, since 2004. He speaks Arabic, English, and Persian, along with a familiarity of Kurdish and Dutch. Dr. Alsulami has presented at numerous regional and international conferences, as well as publishing widely in many peer-reviewed journals and edited books such as "Iranian Journals in Berlin during the Interwar Period", in Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe; Muslim Activists and Thinkers and "The Arab Omar Khayyam", in The Great Umar Khayyam: A Global Reception of the Rubaiyat. He has also single and co-authored several books such as Iran Supreme Leadership: Usurped Power: Shiite political controversy between Arab and Iranian religious authorities and The Arab Other in Modern Iranian Mentality. At present, Dr. Alsulami is the founder and president of Rasanah: International Institute for Iranian Studies, as well as, the Editor-in- Chief of the quarterly peer reviewed Journal for Iranian Studies. He has acted as an advisor to many governmental and non-governmental organizations in Saudi Arabia. Since 2010 he has been a columnist in a number of Arab and International newspapers such as The Majala, Alsharq Al-Awsat, Makkah, Alwatan, Washington Times, the Hill and Arab News newspapers. He has been a political analyst and commentator appearing on various TV stations such as Al-Arabiya, Al-Ekhabaryya, Sky news Arabic, BBC international service, BBC Persian, Alhurra, and many others.



**Dr. Dania Khatib**

**Executive Director**

**Al Istishari Al Strategy Center for Economic and Future Studies**

**United Arab Emirates**

Dr. Khatib is the executive director of Al Istishari Al Strategy Center for economic and future studies, an independent UAE- based think tank. Her specialty is US-Arab relations with a special focus on lobbying. Dr. Khatib research also spans media biases, sectarianism, extremism and governance. She authored a book on the Arab lobby and the factors for success and for failure. Her book is published by Routledge UK. She is a regular publisher on US relations with the Arab Gulf in several outlets and a weekly columnist in the Bahraini newspaper Al Watan. Dr.Khatib has presented papers and spoken in numerous workshops and conferences. Dania holds a PhD in Politics from the University of Exeter. She is an affiliated scholar with the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut.



**Mr. Moez Ghribi**  
**Director**  
**Geopolitical Department**  
**Tunisian Institute for Strategic Studies (ITES)**  
**Republic of Tunisia**

Mr. Ghribi is the Director of the Geopolitical Department at the Tunisian Institute of Strategic Studies. Prior to this position, he has worked as head of the regional specialized sector in Tunisia, Carthage and Manouba from 2014-2017. He attended the National Training School for National Security Officers of Salaambo (Police Commissioner); from which he published his research paper "Al Qaeda Organization in the Islamic Maghreb". He has experience in general administration of national security services, and has attended many courses related to security, terrorism and strategy.





**Mr. Stefano Pettinato**  
**Resident Representative**  
**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

Mr. Pettinato is currently the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Before that, he served as UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Bahrain in 2017 and 2018. His career at UNDP included assignments as Deputy Resident Representative for El Salvador and Belize, Policy Adviser on Human Development at UNDP's Regional Centre in Panama and Regional Bureau for LAC in New York, and Policy Adviser in UNDP's Human Development Report Office. He co-authored the 2003 and 2004 editions of the global Human Development Report. Before joining UNDP, Mr. Pettinato worked at the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank. He was also Senior Research Advisor at the Brookings Institution and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He started his career as research consultant at SWIFT. He is co-author of the book "Happiness and Hardship: Opportunity and Insecurity in New Market Economies" with Carol Graham (Brookings Press, 2002) and has published several articles and book chapters on poverty, inequality, subjective well-being and social security reform. Mr. Pettinato graduated summa cum laude in Development and Public Economics from the University of Florence and obtained a second Master's Degree in International Economics from the Johns Hopkins University.



**Dr. Mane Al-Sadairawi**  
**Executive Director**  
**Kuwait Institute for Science & Research (KISR)**  
**State of Kuwait**

Dr. Al-Sadairawi is the Executive Director of Science and Technology Sector at Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research. His expertise is in the field of Fluid Mechanics and Aeolian Sand Movement along with air pollution studies. He has more than 28 years of experience in Scientific Research. He has many scientific publications to his credit in national and international referred journals, proceedings and conferences. Dr. Mane Al-Sadairawi had successfully completed many contractual client funded research projects. He holds a Ph.D. in Civil Engineering, with an emphasis on Fluid Mechanics and Aeolian Sand Movement from Aberdeen State University, Aberdeen, UK, 1991.



**Dr. Ronald D. Ripple**  
**Professor of Energy Business**  
**The University of Tulsa**  
**The United States of America**

Dr. Ripple is the Mervin Bovaird Professor of Energy Business and Finance at the School of Energy Economics, Policy, and Commerce in the Collins College of Business, University of Tulsa. Ron took up his current position lecturing in the TU Master of Energy Business Program in 2013 after spending over fourteen years in Australia, with another year in Hong Kong. Dr. Ripple has studied oil and natural gas markets since 1981, getting his start in the Office of the Governor of Alaska, followed by a stint of consulting with Economic Insight, Inc. and research at the East-West Center. He wrote his PhD dissertation on Alaska North Slope natural gas and authored a chapter on the Geopolitics of Australia Natural Gas Development for the joint Harvard-Rice Geopolitics of Natural Gas Study. Ron has published numerous peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, trade press articles, and reports, typically focusing on oil and natural gas markets and the financial derivatives markets that support them. Ron was awarded the Mayo Research Excellence Award, from the Collins College of Business, 2015-2016. Ron is the International Association for Energy Economics (IAEE) VP for Conferences and is also currently a Visiting Researcher at KAPSARC.



**Dr. Noura Mansouri**

**Senior Research Associate**

**King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Centre (KAPSARC)**

**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Dr. Mansouri is currently a senior research associate at King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Centre (KAPSARC), a visiting scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and an observer/expert at the World Energy Council (WEC). Previously, Dr. Mansouri has served as the manager of strategy and marketing at AREVA, the then global nuclear energy leader. She earned her BSc in management information systems from Dar Al Hekma University and her MBA and PhD in clean energy transition from Queen Mary, University of London. She published her first book based on her PhD entitled 'Greening the Black Gold: Saudi Arabia's Quest for Clean Energy'. Dr. Mansouri completed a post-doctoral research fellowship at MIT, and she is a recipient of the Ibn Khaldun Fellowship from the Center for Clean Water and Clean Energy at King Fahad University for Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM) and MIT. Dr. Mansouri was selected as a young scientist to attend the Lindau Nobel Laureate 2017 Meeting in Economic Sciences, she was also selected as a member of the Review Committee in 2017 and the Selection Committee in 2018 for the Zayed Sustainability Prize, received the 2015 Women Excellence Leadership Award under the category "Rising Stars", and she is also a board member at Women in Clean Energy under the Clean Energy Business Council for the Middle East and North Africa.