

MBI Al Jaber ● Foundation

# review

Summer 2024

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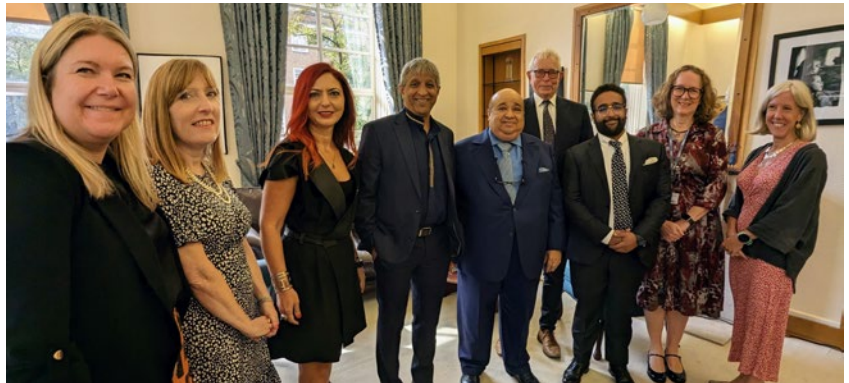
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## The MBI Al Jaber Foundation visits SOAS



Sheikh Mohamed made a visit to SOAS to meet VC Adam Habib and to discuss future plans for the London Middle East Institute with the new Institute Director and holder of the MBI Al Jaber Chair of Middle East Studies, Dr Lina Khatib.

The SOAS Middle East Institute, formerly the London Middle East Institute, was founded in 2002 as a dynamic, interdisciplinary academic hub, and is a world leader in promoting innovative engagement on the Middle East through research and outreach, shaping the future of scholarship, policy, and practice in the region. Originally a charity based at SOAS, the Middle East Institute has now become part of the University itself.

Sheikh Mohamed said, "We believe in the power of education, research, and informed dialogue to drive positive growth and development in the Middle East. The MBI Al Jaber Foundation is proud to continue its support for the SOAS Middle East Institute, and we are excited about the Institute's goals to foster dialogue, promote cultural understanding, and facilitate innovative solutions for the MENA region."

Professor Lina Khatib, known internationally for her expertise in Middle East studies, directs the Institute as the MBI Al Jaber Chair in Middle East Studies. She expressed her enthusiasm for this new phase in the Institute's story, stating, "Our commitment to rigorous research, open dialogue, and collaborative solutions will pave the way for a brighter and more inclusive future for the region."

The Institute's workstreams encompass a wide array of subjects critical to the region, including culture, history, environment, economics, policy, and politics. By merging these areas of focus, the Institute aims to address key global challenges pertinent to the Middle East and North Africa in a comprehensive manner.

The delegation from the Foundation was made up of Chairman Sheikh Mohamed, Trustees Sir Tim Lankester and Mohsen Al Jaber, and Director Carolyn Perry.

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## Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber to visit New World-Class Epidemiology Research Centre in London



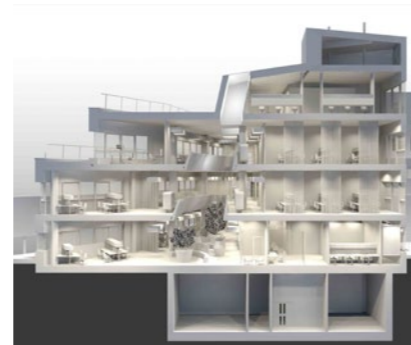
### Message from the Chairman

I am very pleased to be introducing the latest Foundation Review. The Covid-19 pandemic, and the various crises not only in the Middle East but also the wider world, meant a pause in some of our programmes, but I am delighted to share with you our recent activities and to let you know that we are working on other projects and programmes to be announced soon.

This issue of the Review is very much focussed on some of our UK partners. We welcomed the new MBI Al Jaber Chair at SOAS and met with the Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib to discuss future support. We have been following the progress of the new facilities at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and will report from the new MBI Lab soon.

We have also caught up with Corpus Christi Oxford and heard about the impact of the MBI Auditorium there. Finally, it is always good to share some of the achievements of our impressive Alumni. I hope you will enjoy reading our news.

**Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber**  
*Patron and Chairman*



During April 2020, the MBI Al Jaber Foundation announced a significant donation towards the construction of a state-of-the-art research facility at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) but, in part due to the outbreak of COVID 19, the Chair and sole patron of the Foundation delayed his visit to this new building until now.

The research facility, located at Tavistock Place in the heart of London, contributes to LSHTM's mission to respond to emerging public health needs both in the UK and internationally. The site of this facility had previously been home to an under-utilised shed and bike store – whereas now it holds a modern building, supports multi-disciplinary research and is home to computational laboratory spaces.

These new facilities have radically improved LSHTM's ability to address a wide range of global health challenges, from COVID-19 to gender violence. Their flexibility also provides LSHTM's research teams with much needed additional capacity, which greatly improves their ability to work with colleagues around the world as they respond to urgent global health challenges.

Plans to go and see the laboratory in action are underway and we will report on the back on our visit in the next edition of the Newsletter.

## 15 years of the MBI Al Jaber Auditorium at Corpus Christi College, Oxford



A message from Corpus Christi College: We remain immensely grateful to the MBI Foundation for the transformational gift of £1,000,000, which enabled the building of the MBI Al Jaber Auditorium at Corpus. Over the fifteen years since the completion of the building in July 2009, 'MBI' has affectionately become common parlance amongst students, staff and visitors alike in reference to this remarkable building. Corpus is amongst the small number of Oxford Colleges that has an auditorium of this size and scale, and the College remains incredibly grateful to the Foundation for this flexible space. The auditorium has a sprung floor for dance, acoustics designed for musical performances, as well as a 120-capacity retractable seating system, which when neatly stored away, provided the much-needed space for students to study together during the pandemic, whilst meeting social distancing requirements. It even played host to our annual Tortoise Race this year, as the rain prevented it from taking place in our garden. It continues to enable our students to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities – and for our academic programme of events to flourish. It remains a very well used and much-loved space.



## New MBI Al Jaber Chair in Middle East Studies

Dr Lina Khatib, an international expert on policy, politics, security, and culture in relation to the Middle East, has been appointed as the MBI Al Jaber Chair in Middle East Studies and Director of the SOAS Middle East Institute.

Dr Khatib has directed policy research programmes at some of the world's leading policy institutes. She served as director of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at Chatham House and was director of the Carnegie Middle East Center at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Prior to that she co-founded and led the Program on Arab Reform and Democracy at Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law.

Our Chairman Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber, who endowed the chair more than 20 years ago, and who founded the Middle East Institute at SOAS said, "We are delighted with the appointment of Dr Khatib. Her experience at Chatham House and other institutions will enrich the work of the Middle East Institute, and will also benefit the students of the Department of Politics and International Studies. We look forward to working with Dr Khatib on exciting new programmes at SMEI, and to enriching knowledge of the region."



## The MBI Al Jaber Conference Suite at SOAS

While at SOAS, the delegation also paid a visit to the MBI Al Jaber Conference Suite to see the facilities in use. The Conference suite is in the Paul Webley Wing of Senate House on the SOAS campus. The Paul Webley Wing was opened as part of SOAS's Centenary Campaign, to which the Foundation also contributed in 2016.

# Alumni News

*We are very proud of the achievements of our Alumni. Our scholarship programmes have helped young people across the region reach their full potential and to make a real difference to their communities and beyond.*

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## Fahmia Al-Fotih (Yemen)

Fahmia Al-Fotih, who graduated from the University of Westminster in 2009 with an MA in International Relations, has recently let us know about her current role as a Communication and Knowledge Management Specialist for the United Nations agencies UNFPA and UNICEF. Fahmia previously worked on UNFPA programmes in Yemen concerned with reproductive health, reproductive rights, gender and population issues. She is now based in Addis Ababa as the joint programme operates in

17 countries across Africa and the Middle East and provides technical support globally. For the past 4 years, Fahmia has been responsible for leading the development and implementation of communication and knowledge management strategies to raise awareness and understanding of FGM and the programme's efforts to eliminate it. This includes developing engaging content for various platforms, managing social media channels, organizing events, and building partnerships with key stakeholders.

Obviously Fahmia has had an extremely busy time but she says that it has also been very fulfilling and rewarding!

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## Professor Ahmed Radwan (Egypt)

Professor Ahmed Radwan, who is now the proud father of two children, is a founding partner and CEO of the Integrated Design & Consulting Centre, a private consultancy company for architecture and urban planning in the MENA region. The company, which has a branch in Sudan, specialises in residential and commercial architectural design, and has extended its business to educational, public and mixed-use buildings, as well as urban planning and tourist developments in both Egypt and the Middle East. The company has been involved in the architectural design of many projects in Egypt, Sudan, Syria, KSA, Jordan, Iran and Ethiopia.

Ahmed, one of the earlier recipients of an MBI Al Jaber Foundation scholarship, graduated in 2003 from LEAD with a Diploma in Development and has since been awarded a PhD in Architecture. He has had a distinguished career as an Architectural Consultant spanning over 27 years and is currently the Vice Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Research in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Helwan University. He is also an Adjunct Associate Professor of Architecture in the Department of Construction, Architecture and Engineering at the American University of Cairo.

Although located in Cairo where his work is based, Ahmed says that he is lucky enough to travel both regionally and internationally to conferences, workshops - and as a tourist, of course!