



presents



المجلس العالمي للمرأة
WOMEN'S WORLD MAJLIS

in collaboration with

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
MINISTRY OF TOLERANCE & COEXISTENCE



الإمارات العربية المتحدة
وزارة التسامح والتعايش

TOLERANCE AND INCLUSIVITY WEEK

Women's Pavilion Programming | Women's World Majlis:

Tolerance and Inclusivity for Women's Rights and Empowerment



Co-curationUnited Arab Emirates Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence

DateWednesday, 17th November 2021

Time

- Arrival time at 10:30 AM at the Women's Pavilion Majlis
 - Discussion on stage 11:00 - 12:30 PM Dubai Time
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VenueWomen's Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai

Overview

Tolerance is a value at the heart of strong societies. It is the glue that prevents communities from breaking apart, as it encourages inclusivity and peaceful co-existence.

Tolerance is a complex and fragile value. It demands abilities such as empathy, compassion, dialogue and conflict resolution and is in need of constant nurturing with tangible and intangible actions – from investing time and efforts in knowing one another, to collaborating and working together, to implementing robust support and awareness frameworks at all levels of society and instilling strong and inclusive social norms.

Tolerance allows humans to make right all wrongs. This unique human ability can be strengthened in various aspects of life, from teachings of faith and religion, to social norms transmitted across generations, from legal frameworks, to inclusive education systems and to shared public spaces.

Women and girls constitute half of humanity, and their needs and potentials cannot and must not be ignored or made inferior to those of men and boys. It is only when we adopt values of tolerance and inclusivity can we truly recognize women as equal partners on humankind's path to progress. Gender equality is most certainly guaranteed by instilling behavioral tolerance in all segments of society.

However, tolerance can be easily compromised when stress is added to life, whether caused by climate change, economic crises, social conflict or political instability. When faced with such situations where the values of tolerance and co-existence are under threat, women and children often carry most of the burden.

Please join us in this Women's World Majlis to explore tolerance and inclusivity as a catalytic force behind gender equality and women's empowerment and as the main ingredient to overcome challenges in fragile contexts.

Keynote Address

HE Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan

Cabinet Member and Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence



His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan occupies the position of Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence since October 2017.

His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan joined the Federal Government in 1990 and held a number of portfolios including Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Minister of Education, and Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development.

His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan was also the Chancellor of United Arab Emirates University from 1983 to 2013; Chancellor of Higher Colleges of Technology from 1988 to 2013; and President of Zayed University from 1998 to 2013.

Video Contribution

Dr Azza Karam

Secretary General of Religions for Peace

Prof. Dr. Azza Karam serves as the Secretary General of Religions for Peace – the largest multi-religious leadership platform with 92 national and 6 regional Interreligious Councils. She also holds a Professorship of Religion and Development at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, in The Netherlands – of which she is a citizen.



She served as a Senior Advisor on Culture, at the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); and as Coordinator/Chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Religion and Development (UN IATF-R&D); and founder of the Multi Faith Advisory Council of the UN IATF-R&D. In those capacities, she coordinated engagement with members of a Global Interfaith Network for Population and Development with over 600 faith-based organizations from all regions of the world, representing all religions and interreligious affiliations. She was the Lead Facilitator for the United Nations' Strategic Learning Exchanges on Religion, Development and Diplomacy, building on a legacy of serving as a trainer cum facilitator of inter-cultural leadership and management in the Arab region as well as Europe and Central Asia.

Professor Karam has served in different positions in the United Nations since 2004, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations since the early 1990s, such as International IDEA, OSCE, and Religions for Peace. Simultaneously, she lectured in various academic institutions in Europe, in North America (including the United States Military Academy/West Point), Africa and the Middle East.

Her Ph.D. in 1996, focused on Political Islam, and became her first book in Arabic (her mother tongue) and in English. She has since published widely, and in several languages, on international political dynamics, including democratization, human rights, peace and security, gender, religious engagement and sustainable development. She was born in Egypt, and now lives in the United States.

Section 1:
The Role of Social Norms in the Gender Gap:
How to instill values of tolerance and co-existence (30 min)

For too long, societies have inherited and kept alive ideas that relegated women to lesser positions, and unfortunately, these ideas have shaped the development of communities in many parts of the world. In some cases, this form of inequality has been deliberate, in other cases they are so ingrained in cultures and society that they have become invisible. In order to truly make a dent in the efforts of advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, it is imperative to look at the norms, practices and traditions that bind us and understand how cultural, religious, and sociological beliefs can help, but also impede, the advancement of women.

Recent research has shown that some of the strongest forces behind persistent gender gaps are harmful social norms and stereotypes that limit expectations of what women can or should do, both in public as well as in private settings. Such outdated norms discriminating against women are all around us - and they are often deeply ingrained¹. We all have a role to play in challenging these adverse social norms and reshaping and eliminating stereotypes. The UAE has taken a lead on this issue through the establishment of its Ministry of Tolerance and Co-Existence, as well as in its firm belief in the equal role that women and men must play in all aspects of life.

List of possible questions:

- How can we make the issue of harmful social gender norms more explicit, given that often these norms are so ingrained in society we overlook them?
 - What positive role can faith-based and other social institutions, including schools, play in instilling the values of tolerance and gender equality?
 - What are the most harmful social norms with regard to gender equality and what type of positive change would emerge from changing them?
 - What are the historical roots of gender-biased social norms? Given the time it took for those to develop, how likely is it that they can be changed in our lifetime?
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¹ See for example World Economic Forum (WEF), <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/11/why-is-gender-equality-in-decline-and-how-can-we-reverse-it/>

Section 1 participants

Baroness Floella Benjamin, DBE DL

Trinidadian-British actress, author, businesswoman, politician, presenter and singer



Floella left school at 16 with the aim of becoming Britain's first ever black woman bank manager but changed direction and became an actress, presenter, writer, award winning business woman and independent television producer, politician and active advocate for the wellbeing, care and education of children throughout the world.

This year, she celebrates 51 years in the entertainment industry and has appeared on stage, radio, film and television, working with some Britain's top drama directors. She has written over 30 books including 'Coming to England' - which tells the Windrush story. The latest picture book edition of 'Coming to England' is now a number one best seller. The BBC film adaptation of the book won an RTS Award in 2004.

Her creative work has been recognised with numerous awards including, a BAFTA Lifetime Award, the JM Barrie Award, for her lasting legacy to children's creative arts and The Women Film & Television Lifetime Achievement Award.

From 2006 to 2016 she was Chancellor of the University of Exeter. A statue was erected at Exeter at the end of her term to celebrate her contribution to Higher Education. In 2010, she entered the UK House of Lords, where she speaks on children's, diversity, equality and women's issues. She was made an Honorary Freeman of the City of London in 2018. In 2020, she was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire. This year she made history by becoming the first Honorary Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Educators.

Benita Diop

Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security



Ms. Bineta Diop, is since 2014, the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security. She is the Founder and Chair of the Board of *Femmes Africa Solidarité* (FAS), an international NGO created in 1996, that seeks to foster, strengthen and promote the leadership role of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Africa.

Ms. Diop has led numerous programmes to enhance women's participation and leadership in peace processes. She played an instrumental role in achieving gender parity within the African Union Commission, the adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003) and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004). She led the setting up of the Gender is My Agenda Campaign Network (GIMAC).

Ms. Diop has received numerous honours and awards. In 2011, *Time Magazine* declared her one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World.

Ms. Diop studied Management in France and Public Relations and Communication in Switzerland. She received an Honorary Doctorate from the United Nations-mandated University for Peace in 2012 and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Middlesex in London, UK, in 2014.

Peter Maurer

President, International Committee of the Red Cross



Peter Maurer entered the Swiss diplomatic service in 1987, where he held various positions in Bern and Pretoria before being transferred to New York in 1996 as deputy permanent observer at the Swiss mission to the United Nations. In 2000 he was appointed ambassador and head of the human security division in the political directorate of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs in Bern.

In 2004 Mr Maurer was appointed ambassador and permanent representative of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York. In this position, he worked to integrate Switzerland, which had only recently joined the United Nations, into multilateral networks. In June 2009, the UN General Assembly elected Mr Maurer chairman of the Fifth Committee, in charge of administrative and budgetary affairs. In addition, he was elected chairman of the Burundi configuration of the UN Peacebuilding Commission. In January 2010 Mr Maurer was appointed secretary of State for foreign affairs in Bern and took over the reins of the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, with its five directorates and some 150 Swiss diplomatic missions around the world. He succeeded Jakob Kellenberger as ICRC president on 1 July 2012.

Under his leadership, the ICRC carries out humanitarian work in over 80 countries. Mr Maurer's priorities for his presidency include strengthening humanitarian diplomacy, engaging States and other actors for the respect of international humanitarian law, and improving the humanitarian response through innovation and new partnerships.

Since taking over the presidency of the ICRC, Mr Maurer has led the organization through a historic budget increase, from 1.1bn CHF in 2011 to over 1.8bn CHF in 2016.

Section 2:

The Importance of Tolerance, Co-existence and Inclusivity in Fragile Contexts:

How to (Re)create a Stable Social Fabric? (30 min)

Crises whether man-made or natural are often regarded as inherently gendered. Not only do women experience intensified gender-based discrimination, oppression and violence during these situations, they are also often ignored in post-crisis resolution, recovery and development.

Women are often portrayed as victims of crises, and in large part they are: in crises and fragile settings, women lose opportunities larger and faster than men, such as access to land, assets, education, employment, health, finance, and political decision-making power, making them more vulnerable. Due to a deterioration of law and order, women are also prey to violence. As a consequence, women and girls often experience double harm and trauma from crises.

After crises, women are often de-prioritized in policy-making and practical trainings. Yet women are frontline agents driving the rebuilding of societies and in reconstruction. They are engines of recovery. Women have displayed resilience and resourcefulness in extreme conditions, self-reliance and willingness for proactive community work and are typically society's last safety net. Therefore, to heal and thrive, we must not neglect women. Instead, women and girls should be regarded as key economic and sociopolitical assets, and need to be at the core of recovery and development structures. Empowering women as part of recovery assistance, increases the chances for peace and prosperity for all.

Crises can be a window of opportunity to break down gender barriers. During conflicts and crises, with the men away fighting, females tend to take on "traditional" men's roles and jobs and more often lead the households. This breaking of societal norms ultimately results in more economic benefits, as well as in more investments in family and community health and safety. Long-term recovery plans must thus encourage, capture and retain such positive changes to allow both women's and men's advancement, and reduce vulnerability to crises of both.

List of possible questions:

- What needs to be done to protect women in crises and fragile settings and what *can realistically* be done?
 - How do we ensure that women's roles and positive contributions during and after crises are valued and can continue? How can, in conflict resolution efforts, the elevation of women's voices, expertise, rights, and leadership be accelerated?
 - What are important ways to ensure women are at the core of post-crisis resolution, recovery and development? How can resistance from vested (male) interests be overcome?
 - How much does progress rely on bringing in new allies – be it men and boys, or public and private sectors – to support for women's inclusion and leadership in post-crisis resolution, recovery and development?
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Section 2 participants

HE Maqsoud Kruse

Strategic Communications Advisor at the Ministry of Presidential Affairs (MOPA), UAE

Maqsoud Kruse grew up in a multicultural and multiethnic family environment to a German father and an Emirati mother, which enabled him to have a deep understanding of cultural and social influences on oneself and on others as well as appreciating the values of tolerance, coexistence and diversity.



Maqsoud Kruse is the Strategic Communications Advisor at the Ministry of Presidential Affairs (MOPA) in addition to his role as a member of the National Media Team that has been commissioned by the UAE Cabinet. Prior to that, he served as the Executive Director of Hedayah, The International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, since its establishment in 2012 as an independent international “Think & Do Tank” focused on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) in all of its forms and manifestations by conducting dialogue, capacity building, and research. In addition to his leadership and advisory roles, Kruse served as a Steering Board Member of the Policy, Think and Do Tanks Constituency for the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF) since its establishment in 2014 as a multi-stakeholder global fund that works with local partners to strengthen community resilience to violent extremism. Prior to that, he served as the Head of Planning Section and later as the Psychological Affairs Advisor at the Global Aerospace Logistics (GAL), a subsidiary of the Emirates Advanced Investments Group (EAIG). Prior to joining GAL, he served in the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces as an Organizational Psychologist working in a variety of settings related to Applied Psychology, Strategic Planning and Leadership Development.

In addition to his twenty years of service in International, Governmental and Private sectors; he is an international writer, public speaker and a regular guest on a variety of media outlets and publications including but not limited to CNN, Sky News Arabia, Phoenix TV, Abu Dhabi TV, Al Hurra TV, SBS Radio, Sharjah Radio, New York Times, Washington Post, and The National.

Aya Burweila

Founder and Head of Operations, “Code on the Road”, Greece



Aya Burweila is the Founder and Director of Code on the Road and a BBC Expert Woman in Terrorism and Radicalization. She is also the Ambassador and Special Envoy of the European Public Law Organization to Libya and North Africa. Prior to establishing Code on the Road, she was the head of Research & Public Policy at Solidarity Now, an Athens-based NGO active nation-wide in the field of human rights. Born in Benghazi, Libya, she holds a certificate in Building Capacities on Arms Control in the MENA Region from the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, certificates in Conflict Analysis and Interfaith Conflict Resolution from the United States Institute of Peace, a certificate in Terrorism Studies from the University of St. Andrews, an MA in International Relations and Affairs from the University of Indianapolis, and a BA in Political Science from the University of La Verne. She has participated in projects and field visits in camps in Germany, Italy, Lebanon and in Greece, where she also worked at the Leros island hotspot.

Aya is also a Senior Adviser at the Research Institute for European and American Studies where for ten years, she was an analyst specializing in extremism and conflict in North Africa, Europe, and the Balkans. She is also a visiting lecturer at the Hellenic National Defense Academy (SETHA). Aya’s work on integration, conflict and extremism has been published in a wide range of journals and platforms such as the International Journal of Intelligence and Counter Intelligence, European Eye on Radicalization, the Oxford Law Society Journal, the China U.S. Focus Journal, The Jerusalem Journal of Near East Affairs and the

Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, as well as mainstream publications like the Huffington Post and Al Arabiya.

Aya is also the author of the EU commissioned “Greece National Report 2018: Migrant and Youth Social Inclusion Through Entrepreneurship (MY-SITE)” for the People for Change Foundation. She has been quoted by Time Magazine, Jane’s Military Intelligence Review, Voice of America, Infobae, The Washington Times, The Guardian, Jeune Afrique, The National, Protothema, Ahval, the Athens News and regularly appears on major broadcast networks to provide insights and commentary.



Rada Akbar – Virtual participation

Artist and Freelance Photographer, Afghanistan

Born and raised in Afghanistan, Rada Akbar has always used art as a medium to express herself and explain the realities around her. She started her career in visual arts as a painter. Her work had been displayed in numerous exhibitions both nationally and internationally. She gradually replaced the paintbrushes and palettes with camera lenses. She slowly gained interest in documenting everyday life of the Afghan people with a camera, and photography became her professional medium.



Nadine Labaki

Filmmaker, Lebanon

Lebanese director, screenwriter, and actor Nadine Labaki is known for tearing down stereotypes and touching on fundamental issues that have become taboo in the Arab world.

Religion, war, women’s role in society, and the different challenges that the Lebanese person undergoes in daily life are topics Nadine orchestrates with color and music and in humorous and poetic ways in her movies including the global successes “Caramel” and “Where Do We Go Now?” (Halla La Wen). She is known for achieving authenticity by casting non-professional actors based on their actual human characteristics.

Film screening “Women in Wonder” (20 min)

Lebanese Director Nadine Labaki, has been commissioned by Expo2020 and Cartier to create a short documentary especially for the Women’s Pavilion. The idea behind this short movie is to share the vision of children from all over the world who have made a distinctive initiative, not necessarily extraordinary which have had a significant impact on their community, a real change for those around them, bringing new solutions and new angles for a better world. The focus is on their alternative way of thinking about things and how they helped others with as little as they have available with an emphasis on gender equality and women’s empowerment. The purpose is to show the support and role of women, such as their mother, teacher, friend, etc... in their lives, how they helped them face their challenges and get their inspiration.

Appendix

EXPO 2020 DUBAI

Since the first Great Exhibition held in London in 1851, Expos have connected people and provided special spaces to spark dialogue amongst those who are curious about the future.

Running from 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, Expo 2020 Dubai will bring the world together to imagine, design and build a more sustainable, dignified and prosperous world. One that is cleaner, safer and healthier. One inspired by collective action around shared challenges, and in which future generations will flourish. Under the theme of “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future” and our three sub-themes of Sustainability, Mobility and Opportunity, Expo will be a platform for positive, collaborative change.

THE WOMEN’S PAVILION AT EXPO 2020 DUBAI

Our Women’s Pavilion, under the exhibition title ‘New Perspectives’, is a critical component of this vision and will be curated by Expo 2020 Dubai in collaboration with Cartier. In highlighting the positive contributions of women, we will demonstrate that when women thrive, so too does all of humanity.

The UAE has dedicated itself to ensuring that issues related to gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) are centrally addressed in everything we do at Expo 2020 Dubai. By shining a light on women past and present, known and unknown, the Women’s Pavilion challenges the misconceptions that women still frequently face, seeks out new perspectives on the impact women bring to our world, explores new approaches to creating a more equal world, and identifies ways in which we, together, can create new perspectives, change deep-rooted perceptions, and adjust mindsets.

Through different modes of convening, our goal is to highlight that the only way to peace, prosperity, and sustainability is through the full and equal participation of women.

WORLD MAJLIS PROGRAMME

Deeply rooted in the traditions of the UAE, the Majlis is one of the cornerstones of Emirati civilisation. In Arabic, “majlis” means ‘place of sitting’ and refers to both a social gathering space and a formal legislative assembly for government. A place where people meet to hear informed opinions and shape decisions on subjects that matter to the community. The host of the majlis and his guests sit facing one another and engage in respectful but vibrant conversation, with the view of better understanding issues and exploring solutions.

The majlis has been inscribed in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It defines majlis as a “sitting place’ where community members gather to discuss local events and issues, exchange news, receive guests, socialise and be entertained.”

The World Majlis aims to be one of the most engaging and thought-provoking dialogues ever held at an Expo. It is a space for ideas and conversations to make important and complex topics relatable to the general public. It brings together diverse points of views across geographies and generations. It invites open and informed exchanges between its participants with the objective to generate new insights and start meaningful connections between people and new ideas.

WOMEN’S WORLD MAJLIS

The Women’s World Majlis is a key programming series at the Women’s Pavilion in partnership with the World Majlis. In ten sessions, we will look into ten Expo Thematic Weeks’ topics through a gender lens by recognizing and celebrating women’s role and positive contributions in advancing sustainable development adapting a free-flowing conversation format.
