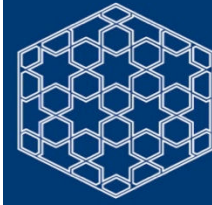




2017 GABR FELLOWS AT THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK CITY



The
SHAFIK GABR
Foundation

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

March 2018, Issue 8

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The Future:

As the Foundation gears up for the 2018 Gabr Fellowship, which emerged from the East-West: The Art of Dialogue Initiative, the Foundation is pleased to announce that applicants from France, the United Kingdom, Jordan, and Lebanon shall be considered for participation, alongside Egyptian and American Fellows.

The Foundation shall be very selective in its choice of applicants in 2018 and shall focus on eligible applicants (see the details on www.eastwestdialogue.org) who have a strong view of the future. The Foundation believes that with advances in artificial intelligence, robotics, cyber, and bioscience, and the lack of private and public privacy, the future shall be the domain of those who innovate.

So, the Foundation shall focus on applicants who are innovators, creators, and problem solvers who have a need for a greater global understanding of the geopolitical world we live in, and wish to build bridges of common interest and understanding between the East and West.

M. Shafik Gabr

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In Focus...

Reham Salem Begins PhD Program



Reham Salem (2017 Gabr Fellow) began her PhD at the Faculty of Mass Communication and became a member of the prestigious Presidential Leadership Program. Congratulations Reham!

Egyptian Fellow Reunion



Gabr Fellows from Egypt met with Chairman and Founder Mr. M. Shafik Gabr. They discussed their achievements and the upcoming presidential election, and debated the successes and challenges facing the Egyptian education system. **Moataz Hussein (2013 Gabr Fellow)** highlighted that his company, IT Works, will be partnering with the Ministry of Education to digitalize the education system through software portals the company designed.

Ahmed Radwan Concludes his Theater Tour



Ahmed Radwan (2015 Gabr Fellow) concluded his February 2018 theater tour in Cairo, Alexandria, and Luxor. He played the lead role in "The Honeymoon," which was performed at the AUC Falaki Theater, Je Suit Alexandria Culture Center, and Luxor's Cultural Palace. Great work Ahmed!

Afnan Elwy Welcomes Daughter



Afnan Elwy (2015 Gabr Fellow) welcomed a daughter named Zad. We are so excited to welcome the newest member of the Gabr Fellow community and send best wishes to the family at this exciting time. Congratulations Afnan on this most welcome news!

Aly Salem and Youssef El Toukhy Join New Firms



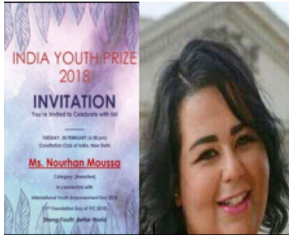
Aly Salem (2017 Gabr Fellow) recently joined the Sarie- Eldin & Partners Legal Advisors firm. Aly previously worked with the International Organization on Migration. **Youssef El Toukhy (2016 Gabr Fellow)** started a new position as a Design Engineer at Silicon Vision, an Egyptian group that is part of Synopsys, an American tech company. Congratulations Aly and Youssef!

Nick Thomas Meets Congressional Representatives in DC



Nick Thomas (2015 Gabr Fellow) met with **Congressman Steve King** and **Hunter King (2017 Gabr Fellow)** in Washington, DC. Nick is currently an Independent Candidate for Congress in Colorado and has been meeting with leaders across the country.

Nourhan Moussa Recognized in New Delhi



Nourhan Moussa (2014 Gabr Fellow) received the 2018 India Youth Prize. She attended the celebration ceremony in New Delhi at the Constitutional Club on International Youth Employment Day. Congratulations Nourhan!

2017 Gabr Fellows Accepted to Drew Institute on Religion and Conflict Transformation



Dalia Ihab Younis, Ibrahim Hamouda, Amr Seda, and Abdelrahman Amr (2017 Gabr Fellows) were accepted to the Drew University Institute on Religion and Conflict Transformation. This program trains leaders from different faith groups around the world in inter-religious understanding, dialogue, and conflict transformation. Participants will study for three weeks on Drew University's campus in New Jersey.

Applications are Open for the 2018 Fellowship



Applications for the 2018 Gabr Fellowship have officially launched. If you know someone who is passionate about creating lasting relationships, wants to participate in an immersive cross-cultural experience, and is interested in building a stronger, more inclusive, world, then they should apply. This program is open to emerging young leaders between the ages of 24 and 35. More information can be found on <https://eastwestdialogue.org>.

Magdalena Kura Joins New Firm and Undertakes 500-Mile Bike Ride



Magdalena Kura (2015 Gabr Fellow) recently completed a 500-mile bike trip, starting from Wilmington, North Carolina and ending in Jacksonville, Florida. More details on her journey can be found at www.zigzagging.world. She is also starting a new job as a Product Manager at Empatico, an organization connecting students from around the world to empower the next generation of global citizens. The company uses video conferencing and accompanying activities to not only build skills, but cross-cultural bridges and empathy as well. Congratulations Magda!

2017 Gabr Fellows Engage with the Next Generation



Sherif Soliman and Dalia Ihab Younis (2017 Gabr Fellows) teleconferenced with **Jack Gordon's (2017 Gabr Fellow)** daughter's elementary school class in Washington, DC. The class is currently learning about the continent of Africa, and Dalia and Sherif discussed Egypt's history and cultural traditions. We look forward to welcoming these students as future Gabr Fellows in a few years!

Gabr Foundation Book Corner



Each month, Foundation Chairman Mr. M. Shafik Gabr provides reading recommendations for Gabr Fellows. This month, he suggested *Radical Technologies* by Adam Greenfield and *A Mosque in Munich* by Ian Johnson. Two books that Fellows were advised to avoid are *Fire and Fury* by Michael Wolff and *Misunderstanding Terrorism* by Marc Sageman. Happy reading and stay tuned for more reading suggestions next month!

East-West Chitchat: Is US Aid to Egypt Really Under Threat?

By **Abdelrahman Amr** and **Michael Matthiesen**, 2017 Gabr Fellows

Abdelrahman and Michael explore the relationship between Egypt and the United States, with a focus on the military aid cut amid human rights concerns.

View full article at

<https://egyptianstreets.com/2018/02/08/is-us-aid-to-egypt-really-under-threat-2/>

Pragmatism is a genuinely American social philosophy and since the formation of the libertarian ideological charged Tea Party in 2009, many Americans have been questioning the effectiveness of foreign aid and its role in serving American interests. This pragmatic libertarian form of questioning has given rise to the political careers of politicians like Senator Rand Paul and President Donald Trump, who call for a cut to foreign aid especially when Americans, at home, are suffering.

Those who are supporters of foreign aid argue that views like the Senator's and President's are misinformed. Foreign aid has had a tremendous impact on perpetuating and enforcing American interests abroad, by empowering America's allies, and in the case of Egypt, making allies. Nonetheless, those who make an argument that doesn't appeal to the common American voters' pragmatic reflex will only find their argument falling flat. With that said, this article will take a pragmatic perspective while discussing the arguments of the American voter.

In August 2017, the US Senate proposed cutting \$195 million USD from US aid to Egypt, citing human rights violations in accordance with Leahy Laws, named after current US Senator Leahy. Human Rights Watch has been very critical of al-Sisi's government, accusing him of returning to Mubarak-era styles of torture, something that the 2011 Revolution fought to end.

Human rights violations in Egypt range from arbitrary arrests and detentions, excessive use of force, enforced disappearances to unfair trials among many others.

It is no wonder then that Senator John McCain, a former prisoner of war and the strongest voice against torture in the US Senate, recently joined the chorus of US Senators speaking out on Egypt and criticized Sisi for lurching Egypt "dangerously

backward" through his use of torture and repression of political activism.

Since the Camp David Accords, the US has been giving an aid package to Egypt that Egypt has used for national development since President Sadat. The decision to cut a portion of both economic and military aid came as a shock to Egypt given that bilateral relations between the two countries significantly improved as President Donald Trump entered office. Even during the Obama administration, Secretary of State John Kerry defended the US position of waiving the human rights conditions on foreign aid by pointing to Egypt's deteriorating security situation.

The retained aid, which amounts to \$290 million USD, at this point is merely symbolic since it does not have a huge impact on the Egyptian economy. Consequently, the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement in which described the US cut in aid as "poor judgement of the strategic relations that have bound the two countries for decades." This statement was made realizing the political responsibility Egypt has and that major responses will affect the region in a way that goes beyond the decision to cut the aid.

Despite all their Fire and Fury, Egypt's politicians have failed to address the American voters' most pragmatic question: how does giving money to Egypt serve American interests? History shows the aid to Egypt has protected American interests immensely. Egypt was the first country to strike a peace deal with Israel due to the aid, and the resulting economic benefit to the Egyptian economy has made Egyptian consumers a reliable purchaser of American goods. The Egyptian military is a force to be reckoned with in the Middle East, which has made Egypt an excellent ally to have in fighting terrorism and promoting American interests in the region. According to Tim Rieser, senior foreign policy aide to Senator Patrick Leahy, it is in the US interest to continue providing aid to Egypt because any country of Egypt's size in an unstable region like the Middle East is one that the US wants to have "the best possible relationship with" for strategic reasons, both militarily and economically.

However, according to Rieser, the proposed cuts were made because Egypt's government hasn't addressed US human rights concerns, especially as the Egyptian government has adopted increasing autocratic policies. "The response [from the Egyptian government] has been very disappointing, and the situation has gotten progressively worse." Rieser argues that the aid is not a blank check and that the US is trying to show through the proposed cuts that it wants a serious partner in Egypt, which requires addressing fundamental issues that the US is rightly concerned about.

In order to resolve the situation, Rieser argues that the US government expects Egypt to address issues such as the NGO laws, criminal cases against American NGO workers, the conduct of military activities in Sinai, more tolerance of political parties, and the cases of Egyptian-Americans who are believed to be unjustly imprisoned, as well as other human rights cases.

Earlier in May last year, President Sisi announced the new NGO law that was heavily criticized as it constrains civil society in Egypt and threatens to limit and criminalize the activities of different rights groups, which can result in suspending groups in the future. The new law aims to prevent NGOs from taking part in any actions that have to do with the country's national security, something that rights groups considered to be unclear and can be used against them in different ways.

"There are many issues, and Senator Leahy is looking for serious responses by the Egyptian government to these concerns, not excuses or blanket denials," he added.

To read more, visit <https://egyptianstreets.com/2018/02/08/is-us-aid-to-egypt-really-under-threat-2/> and stay tuned for more articles and thoughts from Gabr Fellows in the next newsletter.

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

For more information on the Shafik Gabr Foundation and its *East-West: The Art of Dialogue* Initiative, please visit the website <https://eastwestdialogue.org/>.

For earlier itineraries of the US program, please see the previous years' reports at <https://eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/brochures/>



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