

Monthly Newsletter



October 2021 Egyptian Gabr Fellows meeting at ARTOC offices

## DANCE OF THE PEACOCKS

Sitting with a friend from high school, we were people-watching in Rome at a very nice café. I was sipping a cold coffee while my friend was drinking hot tea in a hot (34 °C) and humid environment.

Suddenly he turned to me and asked: “Where do you think the next conflict will be?” I smiled and told him that in today’s world, with the significant lack of leadership, there are many areas of tension, stress, fragility and potential for serious conflict.

He retorted in his usual, aggressive but polite manner: “Shafik, be specific.”

I said there are too many to count but here goes: “Burma-Bangladesh, the Rohingya crisis, Pakistan and India, the Kashmir crisis, Iran and Israel, the nuclear crisis; Israel’s occupation of the Palestinian people for over six decades, Armenia-Turkey, Armenia-Azerbaijan, Egypt and Sudan with Ethiopia regarding the GERD crisis, the failed state of Afghanistan, Ukraine-Russia, China-US and many more.”

My friend looked at me with a puzzled look and sly smile. He said: “Shafik, you mentioned China-US at the end... don’t you see the beginning of World War 3?”

I calmly responded to my school friend that there will be no WWII... not at least until technology is so advanced that one country can use it to destroy another with no casualties of its own, and we are not there yet.

Immediately he responded pointing to the increased tension between China and the US. How sanctions are being imposed, the significant fear-mongering, the Chinese threats towards Taiwan, the American troops in Taiwan, the South China Sea naval shadow fighting, the Chinese encouragement of North Korea’s flexing of its muscles, America’s non-stop criticism of China and its clamping down on Chinese companies and technology, China’s clamp-down of its own companies, and much more.

I smiled slowly as I finished my cold coffee and asked for a toasted croissant with cheese. “My dear friend,” I said, “do you remember when you and your family joined us on a week’s trip of discovery in Kenya?”

He looked confused and said “Yes – why?”

I took a bite of the warm toasted croissant and munched slowly watching my friend start to get agitated and observe my croissant with eager eyes. I ordered him one despite him saying he wanted nothing earlier, and his attitude relaxed.

I reminded him. It was a hot summer week in Kenya in the mid-90’s. We visited a beautiful resort (at that time – but sadly no longer) - Mount Kenya Safari Club. It was a place of wonders. Serene, beautiful architecture, greenery everywhere, immaculate service, you had to dress up for dinner. Moreover, all around you animals, birds, and unique plants and trees.

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As you approached Nanyuki where Mount Kenya Safari Club unfolded within acres upon acres of landscape, you were greeted with birds, animals and more than 100 acres of landscaped gardens. Parrots, ibises, marabou storks, crowned cranes, ducks, geese, peacocks welcome you and stroll beside you.

I reminded my friend of our visit to Mount Kenya and he acknowledged and had a serene look as he ate his croissant. He was hungry.

As he finished his tea, he said: "But what does all this have to do with the rising US-Chinese conflict?" I responded by asking him if he remembered the shrieking and most piercing noise we heard the second afternoon we were at the club. When we searched, we discovered it was two beautiful peacocks with full open plumage, screaming at each other.

He nodded and said, "So what?" I pointed out that these peacocks jumped, hopped, screamed, flaunted their colours, moved their heads sideways, straining their necks, their feathers rattling.

I said that this was precisely what China and America were doing. They at times play chess such as China's Road and Belt Initiative and America's NATO and alliance with the UK and Australia with bases in Japan and South Korea, and at other times they do the Peacock Dance with the added benefit of multiple platforms to dance on.

"No World War Three", I added, asking for the bill, "but a lot of posing and peacock dancing, wasting resources and opportunities. The days of Kissinger - Zhou Enlai are no longer here, and nor is there any prospect given the present status quo. There is no single wave length. China plans for decades ahead and America struggles in Congress to keep its financial system afloat.

As I was paying, my friend looked pleased. Maybe thanks to the croissant more than my 'dance of the peacocks' theory.

**M. Shafik Gabr**

## FELLOWS NEWS & UPDATES



### NICK THOMAS

2015 Gabr Fellow Nick has been racing around Egypt for two weeks doing many man site visits for location scouting and taking meetings as he prepares to do his next film in Egypt in Feb/March of 2022! We are incredibly excited for this, of course.

Also to note, his recent movie, filmed a year ago in the Amazon and which premiered two weeks ago at the Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, officially launched on streaming platforms worldwide today. A link for it on Amazon is below for those who wish to watch!

Look out for our interview with Nick next month on his full experience in Egypt!

[https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B09GGDQK3M/ref=atv\\_dp\\_share\\_cu\\_r](https://www.amazon.com/gp/video/detail/B09GGDQK3M/ref=atv_dp_share_cu_r)



## OLA ALI

2015 Gabr Fellow Ola, started her Masters in Sustainable Development at the American University in Cairo.

## CHASE BOWMAN

2014 Gabr Fellow Chase, is writing a book of Appalachian fairy tales and ghost stories that he will be illustrating.



## HANI ELZOU MOR

2016 Gabr Fellow Hani, is currently living in Sweden to pursue his doctoral studies in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management of Intellectual Assets at the University of Gothenburg.

## CHARLES TRUXAL

2018 Gabr Fellow Charles, has recently joined the office of Congressman Scott Franklin (R-FL) as 'Legislative Director'.





# 2015 Gabr Fellow Basma El Baz shares her story on Alzheimers

## ALZHEIMER'S & THE FEAR OF BEING JUDGED

My mother suffered from Alzheimer's for 5 long years, and this meant our whole life as a family was severely impacted in every aspect possible, emotionally, mentally, financially; you name it. But the career part of things remained intact for a very wrong reason.

Every day after work, I would return home to find my mom insisting on going out to visit her mother, who passed away many years ago, and so me and my sister, or me and my brother would roam the streets till 2 am pretending to be searching for grandma's presumed house till mom gets too tired and sleepy. Sometimes things would escalate to violence and screams, other times it was a matter of repeating things over and over, and lying every day to the question of "why do I have a scar on my chest?" by saying "Don't worry mom, it will be fine tomorrow" because we couldn't tell her she had a mastectomy.

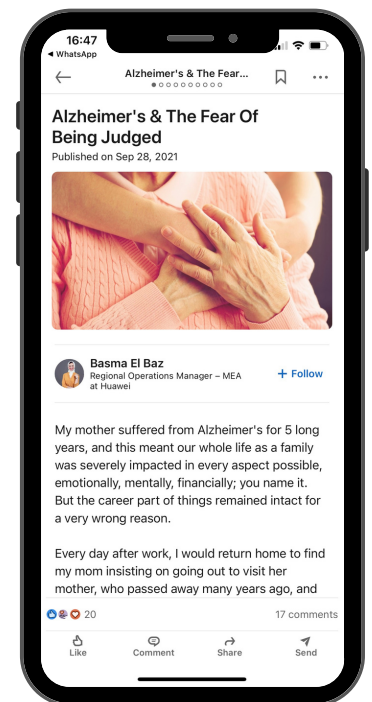
The idea of a nursing home for her was not an option because I couldn't bear the idea that someone could hurt her and she would not

be able to tell me. So, after every rough night, and though my mother's illness was not a secret, I had to show up at work composed, focused, productive, and able to handle all sorts of usual work pressures, be it challenging goals or office politics. I was leading a team and managing important projects, so I wanted to make sure that I was not showing any shred of fatigue or weakness that could undermine my position, for fear of being judged. Many times, I felt emotionally and physically drained, unable to deal with any office politics, but then I handled things as if nothing was going on. Looking back at things now, 2 years after my mom passed away, I think this had a hard hit on my emotional well-being.

I wish more companies would be able to find ways of supporting employees who are going through challenging times, because let's face it, most companies do stigmatize you for letting your personal life impact your job; if you started showing any signs of distress, or the need to take some time off for your mental and emotional health. Companies see employees as assets - since everything is measured in

terms of the ROI - but these assets happen to be human beings who yes could work under pressure, but at what price?

Companies could succeed in providing options or privileges that would help in achieving the balance between employees' productivity and their well-being while having regulatory rules to prevent misuse.



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Disclaimer: The views presented in this article are the author's alone and do not represent the opinion of the Foundation.

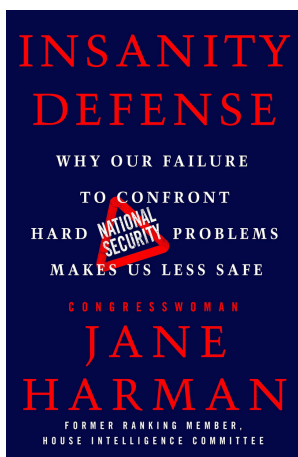
# SPONSOR A 2022 GABR FELLOW



Support the  
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Sponsoring a Gabr Fellow for the 2022 Fellowship Program helps build bridges of cross-cultural understanding between the East and the West.

The sponsorship package costs \$35,000 which includes the sponsoring of a Fellow who can carry the name of the individual, organisation or corporation making the contribution. Sponsors will be recognised in all Foundation publications, marketing materials and events. Contributions of any amount, big or small, are encouraged and welcomed with sincere gratitude. More information can be found [here](#).

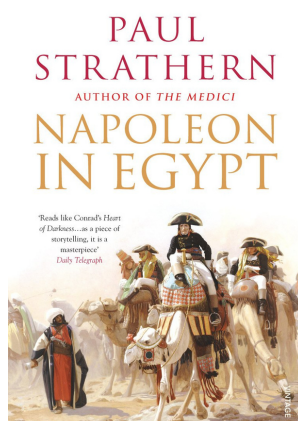


## Gabr Foundation Reading Corner

The Foundation Reading Corner encourages Fellows to critique the books that have been recommended to them in each issue. For this issue, Mr. Gabr recommends *Insanity Defense* by Jane Harman and *Napoleon in Egypt* by Paul Strathern.

In *Insanity Defense*, Congresswoman Jane Harman chronicles how four administrations have failed to confront some of the toughest national security policy issues and suggests achievable fixes that can move us toward a safer future.

Napoleon's invasion of Egypt was the first Western attack in modern times on a Middle Eastern country. In this remarkably rich and eminently readable historical account, acclaimed author Paul Strathern reconstructs a mission of conquest inspired by glory, executed in haste, and bound for disaster.



# Can Enemies Become Allies in the Fight Against Climate Change?

By Limor Simhony  
28 July 2021



[Listen online](#)

Two of the main themes discussed during the G-7 meeting in June were collective security and climate change action. But an opportunity was missed by separating the issues.

Recently, the U.S. and U.K. governments started to consider climate change as a security threat and a driver of instability, even referencing it in their defense strategies. One of the main concerns for both U.S. and British defense officials is that climate change can create conditions that will increase hostilities between or within nations.

These conditions include droughts, floods, wildfires, storms, and other natural disasters that may lead to food and water shortages, mass migration, and outbreaks of disease—potentially leading to violent conflicts over land or resources or civil outrage that could destabilize governments. Climate change also brings an emerging need for military forces to assist in relief efforts or fight under increasingly extreme weather conditions. The latter requires new ways of training as well as new equipment adaptable to extreme environmental conditions, such as prolonged heat waves and storms.

However, climate change should not only be considered a threat. It can also be an opportunity for cross-border collaboration. Indeed, transnational regional military and civilian collaborations may be able to do what trade once did for promoting peaceful relations between nations. Since climate change affects everyone and natural disasters strike indiscriminately, nations can look beyond ideological, ethnic, religious, and other differences—and even prior conflicts—to forge ties in a collective battle against something that threatens them all.

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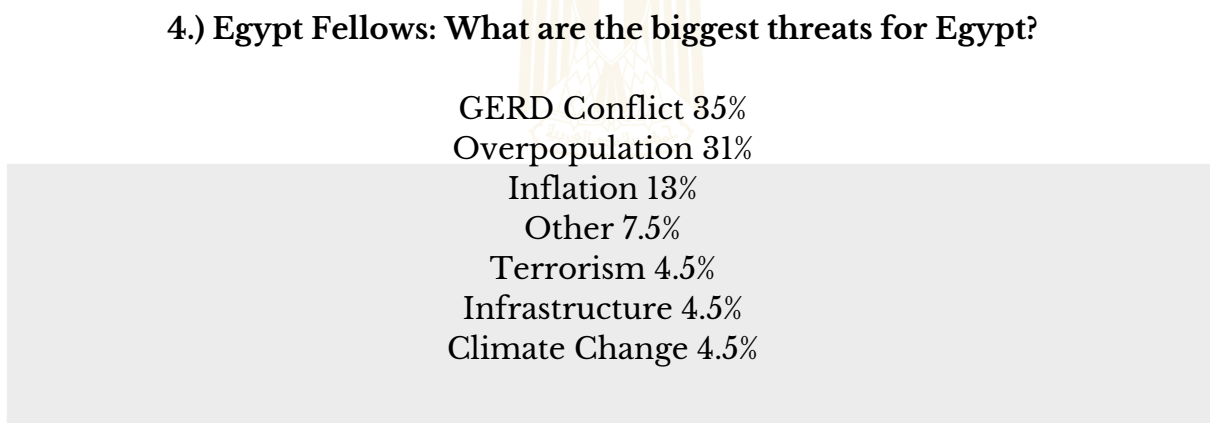
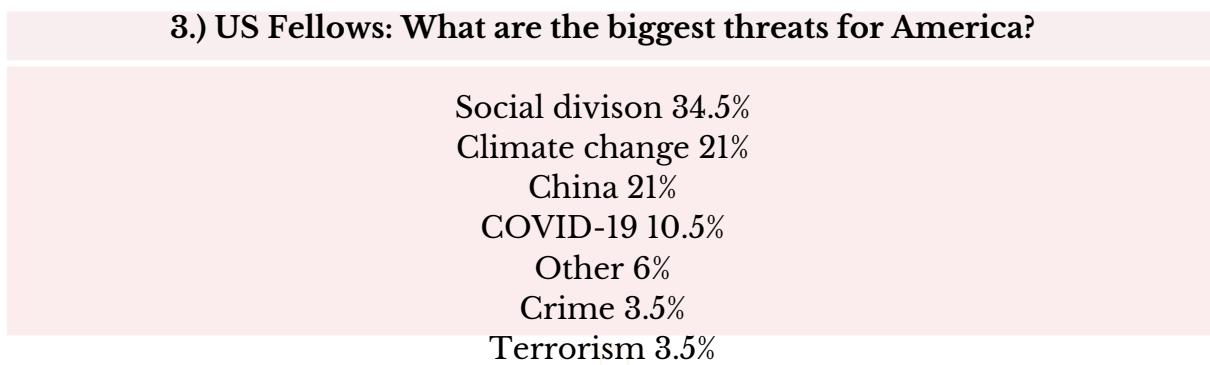
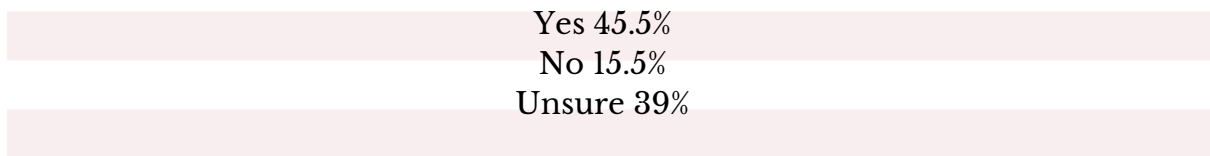
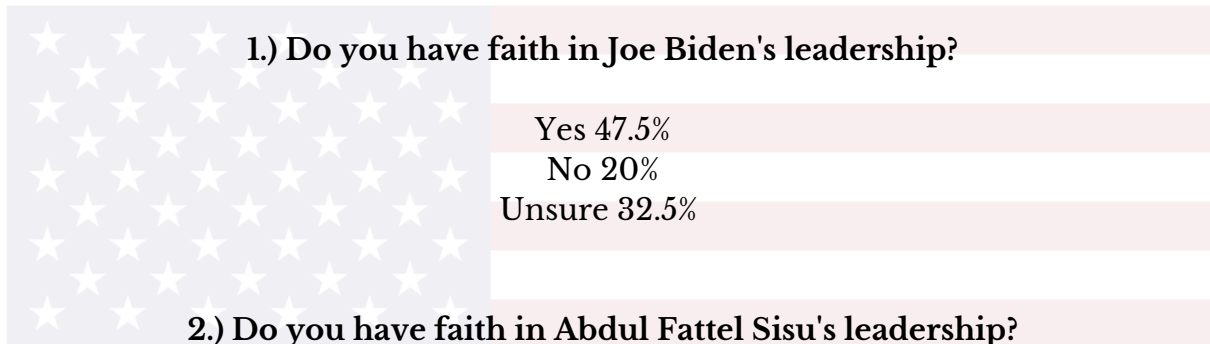
*Nations can look beyond their differences to forge ties in a collective battle against something that threatens them all.*

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# QUESTION OF THE MONTH: A PULSE OF THE GABR FELLOWSHIP COMMUNITY

As the Gabr Fellows enter into leadership roles—in business, diplomacy, government, finance, and more— they will continue to grapple with significant challenges, magnified by an increased pace in technological advancement, the potential for ramped up global inequalities, and changes in governance and economic structures. To better understand the pulse of the Gabr Fellowship community and to begin to articulate substantive dialogue, the Foundation polls the Fellows each month on the key issues facing their respective countries and the global community at large.



Stay tuned for next month's question of the month and the Gabr Fellows' takes on current events, as our community of future leaders consider the most pressing challenges of today and tomorrow.

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR OCTOBER FELLOWS!



2016 Fellow - Hadeel Adel Hassan  
October 1st



2017 Fellow - Michael Matthieson  
October 4th



2016 Fellow - John Ryan  
October 5th



2018 Fellow - Allison Feikes  
October 9th



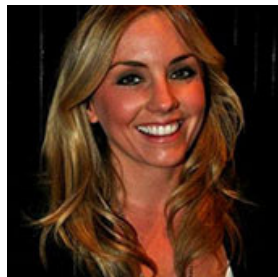
2017 Fellow - Ibrahim Hammouda  
October 14th



2015 Fellow - Magda Kura  
October 24th



2016 Fellow - Thomas Hanna  
October 25th



2014 Fellow - Stephanie Cate  
October 29th



2015 Fellow - Leah Moschella  
October 31st

October

Did you know October has seen more presidents of the United States born than any other month of the year!

Armed Forces day is celebrated on Wednesday 6th October in Egypt.



# THE GABR FELLOWSHIP

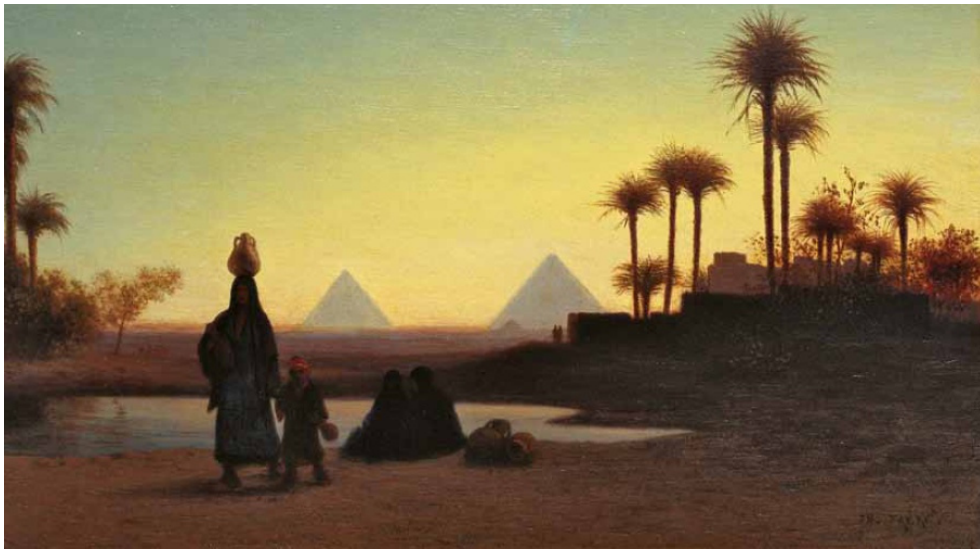
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For more information on the Shafik Gabr Foundation and its East-West: The Art of Dialogue Initiative, please visit the website <https://eastwestdialogue.org/>.

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



Charles-Théodore Frère – *Sunset by the Pyramids, Giza* - Oil On Panel  
The Shafik Gabr Collection

## Connect with us!



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