

MBI Al Jaber ● Foundation

# review

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## In this Issue

*The Launch of the MBI Al Jaber Media Institute, Yemen*

*Message from the Chairman*

*Euro Arab Dialogue: Agreement on Common Goals*

*MBI Lecture at Oxford University*

*Scholarships for Yemenis at Aydin University, Istanbul*

*New Home for the LMEI: The MBI Al Jaber Building, SOAS*

*Parliamentary Briefing on Arab Media*

## Launch of the MBI Al Jaber Media Institute, Yemen



A launch event to mark the opening of the MBI training institute to promote free and non-partisan press reporting in Yemen was held in Whitehall. The event was hosted by our Chairman Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber, who was joined by leading politicians to welcome the opening of the centre alongside Foundation Trustees, several of the Institute's board of advisers, representatives of our Alumni, journalists, members of the Yemeni diaspora and others.

The Institute opened earlier last year in recognition of the need to support independent training to encourage high standards of reporting in the run up to the adoption of the new constitution and this year's elections in Yemen.

The MBI Al Jaber Media Institute is not dependent on project or governmental agency funding, and promotes free and non-partisan press reporting in the region. It offers a range of short courses at a variety of levels and covers aspects of journalism ranging from sourcing and verifying news, through to legal training to avoid violations of press laws. All courses are free to participants.

"The MBI Al Jaber Media Institute is an important step in developing Yemen's media sector," said the Director of the Institute, BBC Arabic Correspondent, Abdullah Ghorab. "Not only will the institute aim to equip journalists with the necessary tools to ensure that their reporting and production is of the highest professional and ethical value, it will also open their eyes to alternative methods that they might not necessarily have known before, by giving them access to international trainers and experts.

Students of the Institute had made a film to show at the launch, which can be seen on our YouTube channel along with footage from the launch:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/MBIAlJaberFoundation>

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## Message from the Chairman

When I started the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, it was to give talented scholars from the Arab world freedom of opportunity to shape their own futures, and that of their communities, countries and the region. SOAS was then the obvious choice to support as it is an extraordinary academic environment where East and West learn about each other through transformational cultural dialogue. Education is the catalyst for improved mutual understanding and I am proud to be the Founding Patron and Donor of the London Middle East Institute (LMEI), which has unrivalled intellectual capital and expertise on the Middle East region.

As you can see in this edition of our Newsletter, we have now built on our support for SOAS through a new gift, which increases the capacity of the LMEI. Our donation has provided the institute with a new home, and we hope that it will be welcoming many more students, researchers, government organisations, media and business people from around the world to engage in its activities and increase their understanding of the Middle East and North Africa.

In the last Newsletter, we announced that our Media Institute in Yemen was up and running, and I am pleased to say we celebrated that with a formal launch at the end of last year. A free press is an essential element of a free society. Since the Arab Spring, many of those green shoots have withered, but in countries such as Yemen there is real hope for progress. The opening of the MBI Al Jaber Media Institute will help citizens both locally and globally act as witnesses to the situation on the ground, and guide crucial elections to a fair and positive outcome.

Since this is such a critical time in the history and development of Yemeni society we are pleased to be able to support a new scholarship programme for Yemeni students in Turkey. These students are the future and it is thanks to the dedication and commitment of young people like these, and the rest of our Alumni, that we can look forward to a future filled with well educated, internationally experienced citizens.

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

## Agreement on Common Goals for Educational Toolkit reached at UNESCO/MBI Al Jaber Foundation Euro Arab Dialogue meeting in Penina Hotel & Golf Resort, Portugal

Representatives of the UNESCO National Commissions, joined by a group of technical experts from educational institutions and NGOs met in the Algarve, Portugal, in November 2014 to agree on a roadmap for the production of an educational toolkit aimed at counteracting stereotyping and promoting tolerance and understanding across Europe and the Arab world.

The initiative, jointly led by UNESCO and the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, was the result of the Declaration reached at The International Conference of National Commissions for UNESCO 'Euro-Arab Dialogue: Contribution to a New Humanism' held in Vienna, Austria, in June 2012, which was sponsored by Sheikh Mohamed.

Together with a comparative study on school textbooks which was also produced under the auspices of the UNESCO Euro Arab Dialogue, the roadmap will be submitted to the representatives of European and Arab governments at an International Conference "Euro-Arab Dialogue: Common Cultural Heritage and Values" later in 2014.



Delegates at Penina Hotel & Golf Resort

## MBI Lecture at Oxford University: 'Arabia, The Central but Missing Link in World Prehistory'

An audience of academics, students and other interested parties gathered in the MBI al Jaber building in Oxford University's Corpus Christi College in March for a British Foundation of the Study of Arabia lecture on the role played by the Arabian Peninsula in the development of early civilisation in Africa and Asia.

Despite the common perception of the modern Middle East as having a predominantly desert climate, recently obtained satellite images show that the Arabian Peninsula was 'well-watered' in the past. The lecture was delivered by Professor Michael Petraglia, Co-director of the Centre for Asian Archaeology, Art, and Culture at the University of Oxford and a Senior Research Fellow of Linacre College, Oxford, who examined this new information and explained its significance along with that of other recent archaeological discoveries.

For more information on the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia visit [www.thebfsa.org](http://www.thebfsa.org) – For more information on Professor Petraglia's project visit [www.palaeodeserts.com](http://www.palaeodeserts.com)



Sieving for artefacts in the desert



Rock art

## The MBI Al Jaber Foundation joins forces with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Tawakkol Karman to support Yemeni students in Turkey

The MBI Al Jaber Foundation has announced it will donate almost \$200k to ten Yemeni students studying at Istanbul Aydin University in Turkey. The students are in Turkey as part of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Tawakkol Karman's Foundation scholarship program and the MBI Al Jaber Foundation will be funding their living costs for the duration of their studies.

Of the ten students being supported through their studies at Istanbul Aydin University in Turkey, six are undergraduates in a range of disciplines from Public Administration to Industrial Engineering. The remaining four are studying for post graduate Masters Degrees in the areas of Business Administration and Electronic Media. In all cases the first year of tuition will focus on Turkish language skills, with the undergraduates then completing a further four years of academic study, while the postgraduates will conduct two further years of learning.



# The London Middle East Institute finds a new home in the MBI Al Jaber Building, SOAS



*The historic edifice of the MBI Al Jaber Building on Russell Square*

SOAS, University of London, has received a gift of £1 million from the MBI Al Jaber Foundation to enable the relocation of the London Middle East Institute to a prestigious and more accessible new home at 21 Russell Square, which is a distinguished historic building adjacent to the vibrant SOAS Bloomsbury precinct. Named the MBI Al Jaber Building, this new location expands the LMEI's facilities to include an integrated conference room for seminars and events. Recent research from the Institute has examined the results and prospects of the Arab Spring, and the role of media in social, cultural and political change in the Middle East. The funding will also support SOAS' Centenary Fundraising Campaign, which will celebrate the institution's first 100 years in 2016.

The Foundation's support for SOAS dates back to the 1990s and includes a significant number of Master's level scholarships, as well as supporting academic activities and an endowment. HE Sheikh Mohamed is the sole Founding Patron and Donor of the London Middle East Institute (LMEI) at SOAS, and endowed the post of the LMEI Director.

## Parliamentary Briefing on Arab Media



This event was held jointly with the Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding (CAABU), a cross-party organisation working to advance Arab-British relations. The discussion, chaired by Adam Holloway MP, focused on the challenges of covering the Arab uprisings. Panelists included Channel 4 News' International Editor Lindsey Hilsum; Heather Blake, UK Director of Reporters Without Borders; Asem Alothman, a correspondent for Al Jazeera Arabic's Saudi bureau; and Abdurrahman Elshayyal, formerly the BBC's Business Development Manager for the MENA region and West Asia. The event caused quite an amount of social media traffic, and proved so popular that a follow-up is planned for later this year.



*Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber is interviewed at the launch of the Yemen Media Institute in December 2013*