

MBI Al Jaber ● Foundation

# review

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## Supporting Education Reform in Algeria



Our Patron and Chairman Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber recently held a successful meeting with Madame Nouria Benghabrit, Minister for National Education, Algeria.

The meeting in Algiers reviewed the progress made in the education sector in Algeria since the Education Reform programme financed by HE Sheikh Mohamed in collaboration with UNESCO in 2005.

In keeping with Sheikh Mohamed's support for educational reform in the MENA region, the project built on a review of the education system undertaken by UNESCO, to improve the quality of teachers and introduce evaluation techniques across the sector. The objectives of the project were threefold: to improve the quality of education by preparing a coordinated strategy for education reform involving the Ministry of Education, and foreign bilateral and international partners; the preparation of a strategic framework for teacher training; and to produce new evaluation tools for learning.

The project was implemented for two years (2007 – 2009) with impressive results. It strengthened the operational capacity of the Education Reform Coordination Unit and equipped teams of newly trained teacher trainers, heads of schools and teachers in 50 Wilayas (provinces). More than 400 trainers were equipped with new skills. In addition, new tools were produced for evaluating learning achievements: for example, reference guides, methodological guides, and a database of useful information and learning tools. These were distributed to heads of educational establishments, inspectors and teachers.

The aim of the recent meeting was to review progress made since the implementation of the project, and to cement the relationship between the Ministry of Education and the MBI Al Jaber Foundation.

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## Message from the Chairman

Events across the world, not only in the MENA region, mean that the work of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, and other like-minded organisations, are more important than ever. Unfortunately the information revolution has not yet led to a revolution in understanding, and each one of us has a part to play to ensure a future built upon mutual understanding and tolerance.

In my role as Chairman of the Foundation I am fortunate to be able to meet with other individuals who are also working towards a more peaceful, safer and more equal world and to discuss common goals. In recent months, I have had the pleasure of meeting with President F.W. de Klerk to discuss collaboration with his Global Leadership Foundation, an organisation which seeks to improve the quality of political leadership and governance by enabling today's national leaders to benefit from the experience of former leaders. and also to reconnect with Kenneth Roth, Executive Director of Human Rights Watch to discuss the projects in the area of civil society in the Arab world, with particular reference to the cause of human rights in Arab countries in transition which the Foundation is supporting.



Left: H.E. Sheikh Mohamed bin Issa al Jaber meets Kenneth Roth; Right: with President F.W. de Klerk

The three pillars of the Foundation: education, cultural dialogue and good governance are vital in building this future for the youth of today, and I am pleased to update you on our activities in these areas in this edition of our review.

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

## The MBI Al Jaber Foundation increases Yemen scholarship programme in Turkey in collaboration with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Tawakkol Karman.

The MBI Al Jaber Foundation has now increased its support for Yemeni students studying in Turkey by extending the programme to the Mus Alparslan University. The first cohort of students joined Istanbul Aydin University in 2013, and these have now been joined for 2014 by undergraduates and postgraduates in a range of disciplines from Public Administration and Business Administration to Electronic Media and Industrial Engineering at both universities.

In most 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.



## Celebrating a year of successful courses at the MBI Media Institute, Sana'a

It is just over a year since the MBI Media Institute in Sana'a was officially opened and in that time more than 700 people have attended free courses in journalism. Institute Director Abdullah Ghorab, the BBC Arabic correspondent in Yemen, has maintained activity at the Institute despite the difficult security situation in the Yemeni capital. Training courses have catered for a range of levels and types of people, be they practising journalists, media officials, students, representatives of NGOs, or interested citizens. Local and international trainers have run a variety of practical and class-based courses, mainly in Sana'a but including some outreach outside the capital.

Programmes have included training in the production of television reporting skills in the field, courses in dubbing for television and radio were held, press support for victims of violence, the observance of human rights in the media, and modern skills in professional television photography.

The reputation and success of the MBI Institute (it is a regular feature in Yemeni news outlets) has meant that the number of requests from different organisations, including those operating in the area of civil society has risen. The practical aspects of the courses on offer is one of the facets that make them so attractive, in an area which has traditionally been theory based.



Workshop at the MBI Media Institute



Graduates of the MBI Media Institute



## Investing in the Professional Development of Young Academics in Yemen

At the MBI Al Jaber Foundation, one of our aims and that of our Chairman and Founder, Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber, is to strengthen the existing education system in Yemen and its service delivery. Building on the successful workshop 'Research Tools and Methodology' at Sana'a University during October last year, we supported a second educational initiative organised and presented by Dr. Mohammed Al-Haroni.

Dr. Al-Haroni, Marie Curie Research Fellow at UCL Eastman Dental Institute in London, delivered interactive workshops in Sana'a in which young Yemeni academics learnt the necessary skills for modern and effective academic teaching in Yemen's medical schools. These skills are needed to build a new and thriving generation of academic staff who would then contribute to social mobility via improvement in higher education. Dr Al-Haroni's programme provides participants not only with the necessary skills required for curriculum design in medical education, but also will enable them to set a platform for wider educational reform in their own disciplines.

## Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL) Workshop: ‘The Arab Uprising: Researching the Revolutions’



The MBI Al Jaber Foundation sponsored five academic participants selected to present papers at CBRL’s workshop, ‘The Arab Uprising: Researching the Revolutions’, held in Amman, Jordan on 22nd & 23rd September, 2014. The workshop aimed to give interested researchers the opportunity to critically engage with the evolving contemporary crises across the Middle East and North Africa. It focused in particular on the nature of popular uprisings and democratic transformation as well as the challenges surrounding the mass displacement of people.

The workshop was very successful and well-attended, with interesting and skilfully presented talks by young academics who expressed particular gratitude to Sheikh Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber for his support. Abdelilah al-Khatib, ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs and special UN envoy for Libya introduced and spoke at the workshop. The Public Lecture, ‘The Political Subject in the ‘Arab Spring’, was presented by Professor Philip Marfleet from the University of East London.

The MBI Al Jaber Foundation works hand in hand with trusted partners to create an environment which brings people together, promoting good governance and cultural dialogue. We believe improved mutual understanding, with education as the catalyst, can make a significant and positive difference to people’s lives and to society as a whole.

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## Launch of the MBI Lecture Series at the MBI Al Jaber Building, LMEI, SOAS.

The first MBI Al Jaber Lecture Series at SOAS was launched in October 2014 and continues on a monthly basis throughout the academic year. Held at the MBI Al Jaber Building, London Middle East Institute (LMEI), SOAS, the series covers a range of topics reflecting the three areas focussed upon by the Foundation – Education, Good Governance and Cultural Dialogue. The speakers include highly regarded academics, journalists, political commentators and archaeologists.

The inaugural lecture, in October 2014, was given by Abubakr Al Shamahi, previously Media Researcher at the MBI Media Institute, Sana’a and now a journalist for al-Araby al-Jadeed English. Abubakr talked about the proliferation of private media in Yemen post 2011 and the effect that this has had on the general public and political scene.

In November, Professor Michael Petraglia, discussed ‘hot off the press’ research from the exciting Green Arabia Palaeodeserts Project.

The first lecture of 2015 was by Nigel Fletcher, Founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Opposition Studies. Nigel’s talk ‘Shadows of the Middle East: Does ‘Loyal Opposition’ offer lessons for the region?’ focussed upon the role that ‘loyal opposition’ plays in achieving political stability and how this might apply to political structures in the Middle East.

For information on lectures for the remainder of the 2014 – 2015 academic year, including those by Chris Doyle from CAABU and Professor Trevor Marchand from SOAS, please check our website at: <http://www.mbfoundation.com/events.asp>. The past lectures are now live on the Foundation’s YouTube Channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/MBIALJaberFoundation>

## Coming up in 2015



*Professor Lloyd Weeks delivers the MBI Al Jaber Lecture at the British Museum, July 2014*

In addition to the MBI Al Jaber Lecture series the Foundation is proud to support other events in the UK and elsewhere that fulfil our aims of building bridges between the Middle East and the wider world.

Following on from a packed house at the MBI Al Jaber Building at Corpus Christi College, Oxford last year, we are pleased to announce that this year’s MBI Oxford lecture will be given by Professor David Khalili, KCSS, KCFO, PhD, on 18th March 2015. Professor Khalili is a world-renowned scholar, collector and philanthropist. Since 1970 he has assembled eight of the world’s finest art collections, including Islamic Art and art of the Hajj pilgrimage from 700 - 2000.

We will also be continuing our support for the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia’s Seminar for Arabian Studies which will take place 24th to 26th July 2015. The Seminar for Arabian Studies is the only annual international forum for the presentation of the latest research in the humanities on the Arabian Peninsula. The MBI Al Jaber Lecture at the British Museum will be held on Saturday 25th July, speaker and title to be announced. For information on these, and other Foundation events, please email us on [info@mbifoundation.com](mailto:info@mbifoundation.com), see our website, Facebook page or follow us on Twitter @MBIFoundation.