

PUBLIC POLICY IN THE DOWNTURN: CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The current global economic downturn has highlighted the critical importance of effective public policy and capable public administration. Recognizing that relevant knowledge is essential for policy makers, DSG joined with Deloitte to host an exclusive half-day seminar on June 11 for key public sector leaders from the UAE and neighboring countries.

In today's climate of uncertainty and risk, policy makers need to have the capacity and flexibility to rapidly deploy resources to address important issues and crises. "Public Policy in the Current Downturn: Constrains and Opportunities," provided dignitaries and policy makers from throughout the region with the opportunity for an open and frank discussion of the challenges and opportunities facing policy makers in the current climate.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 **Public Policy in the Downturn: Constraints and Opportunities**
- 2 **Survey Challenges Perceptions of Muslim Opinion**
- 3 **Country Reports Recommend Policy Reforms**
- 4 **Whither the Monetary Union**
- 5 **Middle East Youth Initiative Cited in The Economist**
- 5 **Gender Research Seminar: HE Amat Al Alim Alsoswa**
- 6 **Rebuilding and Reforming Public Administration in Iraq**
- 6 **The Effects of Monetary Policy on Bank Lending in the US**
- 7 **Combating Domestic Violence in the UAE**
- 7 **Centralization and Decentralization in MENA**
- 8 **The Role of Media in Shaping Societal Values**
- 8 **Tommy Weir on "The CEO Shift"**
- 9 **DSG Receives Malaysian Government Delegation**
- 10 **Without this Human Wealth, a Nation Limits Itself**
- 11 **Recent DSG Publications**
- 12 **Upcoming Events**



Speakers on Panel 1, (left to right): HE Nabil Alyousuf, HE Maher Al-Mujtahed, HE Zuhair Mudhaffar, Mr. Julian Hawkins

The conference consisted of two panel discussions. The first session, "Managing Public Policy in the Downturn," explored the implications of the downturn for the fiscal space available to policymakers, the tradeoffs between equity and efficiency in service delivery, and how governments can safeguard against reversal in reform. Speakers included Nabil Al Yousef, Vice Chair of DSG's Board of Trustees; His Excellency Dr. Maher Al-Mujtahed, Secretary-General of the Cabinet of Ministers, Syria; His Excellency Dr. Zuhair Mudhaffar, Minister of State for Administrative Development, Tunisia; and Julian Hawkins, Senior Partner of international consultants Deloitte.

The speakers at the second panel on "Leveraging the Downturn for Future Success" were His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Al-Thani, President of Qatar Connect and Dame Sue Street, Strategic Advisor to Deloitte.

Moderated by His Excellency Sheikh Khalid Bin Zayed, Chairman of the Bin Zayed Group, the session examined emerging opportunities in the post-crisis world and outlined mechanisms for leveraging existing opportunities.

Experts at the conference collectively argued that current circumstances require governments to focus even more on greater transparency and confidence-building measures for their citizens. His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani and His Excellency Dr. Al-Mujtahed also emphasized the importance of dealing with the social consequences of the crisis, such as the role of the social justice system in maintaining a sustainable economy. Other points of discussion included the importance of building public-private partnerships, and reforming institutions in order to better utilize the human capital of the region.

SURVEY CHALLENGES PERCEPTIONS OF MUSLIM OPINION

On June 9, John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed presented the findings of their groundbreaking book *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*. Published by Gallup in 2008 and based on the largest and most comprehensive poll of the Muslim world ever conducted, the book reveals Muslim views on extremism and violence, the role of women in society, democracy, and attitudes towards the West. The study was the result of a comprehensive six year study undertaken by the Gallup World Poll that represents 90 percent (or one billion) of the world's Muslims in some 35 Muslim countries, of varying demographics relating to age, occupation, gender, education and other categories.

Dalia Mogahed, Senior Analyst and Executive Director of the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, began the lecture by presenting key findings of the study. She noted the fact that both Muslims and Americans equally consider attacks on civilians morally unjustified. The study found that those Muslims who condone acts of terrorism are a small minority, and are not necessarily more religious than the rest of the population. Ms. Mogahed further argued that, according to the study, what Muslims admire most about the West is its technology and democracy – the same two top responses given by Americans when asked the same question.

Moreover, when critiquing the West, Muslims and Americans were



John L. Esposito

also in agreement stating that the least admirable feature of the West is its perceived moral decay and breakdown of traditional values. Finally, the polls showed that perceptions of the West within the Muslim world would be aided by more tempered and moderate views, as well as a higher level of perceived respect, from the West toward Islam and the Muslim world.

John L. Esposito, Professor of Religion and International Affairs at Georgetown University, concluded the lecture by analyzing the relevance of the poll findings to the challenges facing the Obama administration,

the Arab and Muslim worlds and Muslim-West Relations.

Who Speaks for Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think has recently been translated and released in Arabic by Dar El Shorouk in Cairo.

DSG Podcasts
www.dsg.ae/podcast.xml

“There is a commonality across the world of the basic building blocks of what makes a good government. It has to do with transparency, accountability and the rule of law.”

Dalia Mogahed

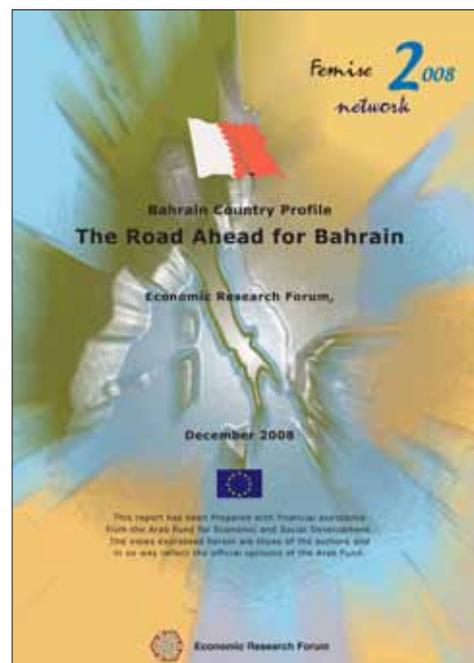
COUNTRY REPORTS RECOMMEND POLICY REFORMS

On August 19, DSG announced the release of the latest Oman and the Bahrain Country Profiles, published by the Cairo-based Economic Research Forum (ERF). The ERF is a regional network dedicated to promoting high quality economic research to contribute to sustainable development in the Arab countries, Iran and Turkey. The reports throw fresh light on the two countries' macroeconomic policies, financial systems, trade and investment dynamics, labor markets and governance.

DSG Dean Tarik Yousef served as the Project Director responsible for managing and steering the development and production process of both reports. Paul Dyer, Research Associate at DSG, assisted in the compilation of the reports, which include contributions from key regional economists. Mr. Dyer also authored a chapter on Bahrain's labor market and human capital development.

The Bahrain Country Profile indicates that the island nation is one of the fastest growing economies in the Arab region by virtue of its low inflation and sensible fiscal policies that complement its sound financial sector. In addition, a multitude of trade agreements with partners across the globe have opened new doors for development. The report also suggests that reforms to the country's political system and labor market regulations have contributed to a restructuring of the Bahraini economy. However, internal labor pressures and rigid market regulations continue to inhibit economic expansion.

The report recommends further diversification of trade goods and partners in order to stabilize the external sector. Continued efforts at reforming Bahrain's labor market regulatory structure should help alleviate pressures on the labor market. Moreover, synergies between political and economic governance will greatly contribute to national wealth and future growth.



"We are proud to have participated in this regional initiative that is based on sound research and analysis. The findings of these reports vividly highlight the potential that is present in Oman and Bahrain, and this potential can be leveraged for the benefit of both countries. We are confident that our findings will generate long-term value for both the citizens of both countries."

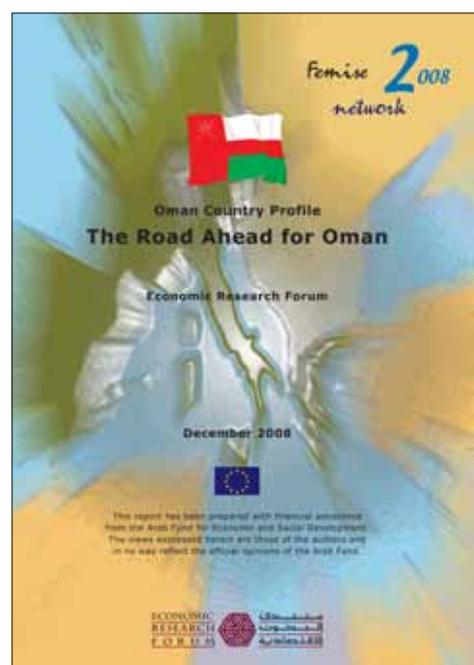
Dean Tarik Yousef

Key regional economists authoring sections of the Bahrain report include Dr. Mohammad Selim from Cairo University (governance); Dr. Adel Abdelazim and Dr. Belkacem Laabas from the Arab Planning Institute (macroeconomic policy and performance); Dr. Hassan Aly of Ohio State University in the United States (financial sector); Dr. Nathalie Grand, a consultant, and Dr. Sulaf Zakariya, Bahrain Economic Development Board (trade and investment). Dr. Hassan Aly served as the country team coordinator.

The Oman report indicates that the country is facing significant long-term challenges with regard to the sustainability of growth, volatility, employment creation and governance. Oman's dependence on oil production is now threatened due to declining reserves and escalating production costs. However, the report notes that high oil prices have increased the fiscal space for Omani policy makers, and the government is taking advantage of this window of opportunity.

Authors of chapters in the Oman report included Dr. Khalfan Al-Barwani, a consultant (macroeconomic performance); Dr. Fahim Al-Marhubi from Sultan Qaboos University (governance); Dr. Khamis Al-Yahyaee from Sultan Qaboos University (financial sector); Dr. Belkacem Laabas from the Arab Planning Institute (trade and investment); and, Dr. Sulayman Al-Qudsi from the Canadian Energy Research Institute (labor market). Dr. Al-Qudsi also served as Country Coordinator for the Oman Country Profile.

Researchers have already shared the findings of the Oman Country Profile with Omani policymakers and other stakeholders, with a view to building consensus about the most desirable course of action for the country.



WHITHER THE MONETARY UNION

by Tarek Coury

What are the consequences of the UAE pulling out of the planned common currency? Many proponents of the monetary union have been dismayed by the decision of the UAE government to opt out.

Yet, it is not clear that there should be much cause for dismay. The first argument that has been advanced has to do with the threat a GCC currency would pose to the domestic currency. Since Saudi Arabia is in favor for a common currency being initially pegged to the dollar, the risk of a currency attack on the dirham (once the common currency is formed) is rather muted.

The second argument has to do with the viability of the common currency now that the UAE has stepped out. Making sense of this argument is rather more complicated. First, one should consider the criteria for the creation of a successful monetary union and whether the economies comprising the Gulf fulfill these criteria.

Since a common currency involves a unique monetary authority, any decision made regarding interest rate changes will affect the economies of all countries involved. For example, a decrease in the interest rate by the common central bank would stimulate all of the economies involved in the common currency. Of course, if the business cycles of these economies are not synchronized, this policy instrument will benefit some but hurt others. As it turns out, the economies of the Gulf States do not display much in the way of synchronized business cycles (as measured by correlations of output gaps and CPI-induced inflation).

Therefore, the costs of joining this currency area for any given country are rather high.

One of the benefits of forming a common currency is that intra-GCC trade will be stimulated, and as a result all constituent economies will benefit from this increased trade. By not joining the monetary union, the argument goes; the UAE will be missing out on these increased trade opportunities.

It is worth noting here that Gulf States have had pegged currencies since the creation of the Gulf Co-operation Council.



Tarek Coury

This means that there has been little to no fluctuation between any two Gulf currencies for the past 30 years. Yet the amount of trade between Gulf States is rather low, when compared to trade patterns within other currency areas (such as the states comprising the US, or the Eurozone). Any gains to trade have already been realized—as a result, the opportunity cost of not joining is rather small.

Any remaining gains to trade can accrue to the UAE economy after the common currency is formed. Consider for example the case of the Eurozone: despite the UK not joining the European Economic and Monetary Union, it has benefited from increased trade among Euro-partners and its economy has outperformed the economies of many other European countries following its withdrawal from the Exchange Rate Mechanism. Its currency is stronger than the euro, relative to the dollar and it has maintained its monetary autonomy.

Finally, another benefit of monetary integration has to do with financial markets: greater deepening, more trade, and greater diversification opportunities.

While monetary integration would certainly help with financial diversification, the latter rests almost exclusively on real economic diversification.

This in turn means that the importance of monetary integration is window-dressing, when compared for the urgent need to create genuinely diversified Gulf economies.

On a slightly different note, one underlying reason for the monetary union has to do with alternative monetary arrangements.

Since the 1980s, inflation and inflation volatility have had a negative impact on growth in the Gulf and this is in part due to the currency pegs.

While the common currency would initially be pegged, it would eventually be allowed to float and this would allow the Gulf States to mitigate the negative impact of inflation. The economics literature has pointed to the importance of operational independence of the central bank from short-term political interference, transparency and accountability in controlling inflation and inflation volatility. It is not clear however the extent to which the new monetary authority will have operational independence, the same way that the Federal Reserve System or the European Central Bank have. This in turn puts into question the credibility of this new common currency, especially if the monetary regime chosen is to allow the currency to float. The UAE Central Bank, on the other hand, is a known quantity to currency traders and private investors. The latter has kept the dirham pegged to the dollar and earned its credibility over many decades. It may be quite some time before the GCC central bank earns its credibility. By not joining, the UAE is ensuring that its economy will not suffer excess volatility due to the creation of the new currency and its association with the common currency.

Tarek Coury is an Assistant Professor at the Dubai School of Government. This article was originally published in the May 25, 2009 issue of *The Khaleej Times*.

MIDDLE EAST YOUTH INITIATIVE CITED IN THE ECONOMIST

A July 23 special report of *The Economist* on the Arab world employs the concept of “waithood,” noting that it was “identified in research by the Middle East Youth Initiative (a project of the Brookings Institution and the Dubai School of Government).”

The reference comes as part of “The Fever Under the Surface,” a section within the report which describes a variety of factors contributing to an environment of stagnant formal politics combined with dynamic social and economic change.

The report’s references list cites the “Why Shabab? Youth, Demographics, and Economic Growth” section of the Middle East Youth Initiative Web site, as well as “Inclusion: Meeting the 100 Million Youth Challenge,” by Navtej Dhillon and DSG Dean Tarik Yousef.

GENDER RESEARCH SEMINAR: HE AMAT AL ALIM ALSOSWA

On June 11, Her Excellency Amat Al Alim Alsoswa, Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau of Arab States of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), spoke at a Gender and Public Policy Research Seminar entitled “The Effect of the Economic Crisis on Gender Equality in the Arab World.” She was introduced by May Al-Dabbagh, who opened the lecture speaking on “Solving the Crisis by Closing the Gap: Rewriting the Rules of the Game on Gender Inequality in Organizations in the Arab World.”

HE Amat Al Alim began the seminar by announcing the completion of the United Nations’ latest *Arab Human Development Report*, which focuses on the vital theme of “human security.” Based on the research conducted for the report, she discussed some of the inequalities that exist between men and women in the region. Illiteracy, for example, is the largest problem that women currently face in the Arab world, with some countries having illiteracy rates of up to 80 percent among women. Other issues of concern are maternal mortality rates, unhealthy social practices, and generally lower levels of education among women.



HE Amat Al Alim Al Soswa

In the remainder of the lecture, she discussed the implications of the economic crisis on these trends and the resultant effects on various categories of women. Research illustrates that in times of crisis, governments tend to cut spending on health and education first, affecting women more negatively than men. Moreover, there is a likelihood that rates of domestic abuse in the region also may rise as

a consequence of the crisis. Finally, Ms. Al Alim concluded that although there is no reason to believe that policy responses to the economic crisis in the region will incorporate gender perspectives, the position of women has significantly improved in recent years with increased women’s participation in the Arab political and economic spheres.

REBUILDING AND REFORMING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN IRAQ

Larry Cooley, Founder and President of Management Systems International (MSI), discussed efforts to promote government effectiveness and reform in Iraq's public sector in a June 17 lecture.

In "Back to the Future: Rebuilding and Reforming Public Management in Iraq," he described the current state of public administration in Iraq against the backdrop of its recent history, stating that Middle Eastern countries have consistently scored very poorly according to government effectiveness indicators.

Cooley has been heavily involved in Tatweer, an ambitious MSI project to reform public administration in Iraq that has been running since August 2006. Tatweer aims to improve government effectiveness by implementing comprehensive public management reforms across the country. This is the largest US-funded public administration program since Vietnam, employing approximately 300 professionals, and is expected to run until December 2010. The goals of this project are to improve the basic public management skills of 80,000 civil servants, who account for 15 percent of the civil service in Iraq; develop

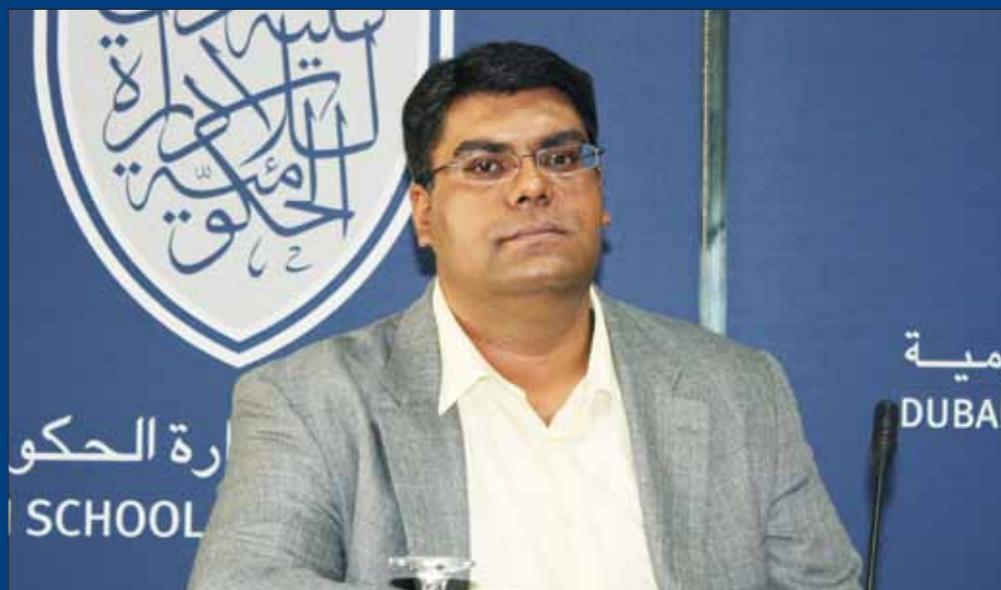


Larry Cooley

the internal capacity of the managers for skills development; and modernize the public administration system to ensure that the ministries and government institutions involved in the program will be capable of effectively conducting four main activities: regulation, policy making, enforcement and service delivery.

Although it is difficult to assess the success of the program at such an early stage in the implementation process, Cooley argued that these public management reforms, which aim to bring about government effectiveness, are closely linked to government legitimacy and are crucial in achieving political stability and reconciliation.

THE EFFECTS OF MONETARY POLICY ON BANK LENDING IN THE US



Dr. Chetan Dave of the University of Texas at Dallas presented the findings of "The Bank Lending Channel: a FAVAR Analysis," co-authored with Scott J. Dressler and Lei Zhang, in a DSG Research Seminar on July 20.

COMBATING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE UAE

Ohood Al Suwaidi, Marketing and Communications Director of the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC), delivered a June 3 lecture on “Ways of Combating Domestic Violence in the UAE,” as part of the Gender and Public Policy Research Seminar Series. In this lecture, Mrs. Al Suwaidi provided an overview of the services that have been provided by the shelter since its establishment in 2007. As the first licensed not-for-profit shelter for women and children in Dubai, DFWAC serves three categories of victims: domestic abuse, child abuse and human trafficking victims. While the foundation provides a safe shelter for over 200 women, it also offers free counseling and other services to victims residing in Dubai.



Ohood Al Suwaidi

Mrs. Al Suwaidi stressed that the organization also aims to contribute to legislation in combating violence against women and children, and is working

closely with the government on policies related to the first Child Protection Law. The lecture was attended by students from UAE University and the

Dubai Aviation College, in addition to representatives from the Emirates Foundation and several research institutions in the UAE.

CENTRALIZATION AND DECENTRALIZATION IN MENA



Mehmet Serkan Tosun

On June 2, Mehmet Serkan Tosun, Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Nevada, Reno presented the findings of “Centralization, Decentralization, and Conflict in the Middle East and North Africa,” a World Bank Policy Research Working Paper coauthored with Serdar Yilmaz. The paper examines intergovernmental structures in the Middle East and North Africa region, which has some of the most centralized government structures in the world.

Tosun began by discussing the costs, benefits and determinants of decentralization. He next addressed the reasons behind centralized structures in the region, looking first at the history behind the tax systems of the region. He reviewed the Ottoman taxation system, which has been influential as a model, and discussed its impact on current government structures. Tosun then examined the type and degree of decentralization in five countries representative of the region: Egypt, Iran, West Bank/Gaza, Tunisia and Yemen.

Finally, he emphasized the importance of gathering more data on this topic in the MENA countries, stressing that cross-country regression analysis using panel data for a broader set of countries could lead to a better understanding of the factors behind heavy centralization in the region. He concluded by arguing that the research so far shows that external conflicts constitute a major roadblock to decentralization in the MENA region.

THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN SHAPING SOCIETAL VALUES

As part of the School's Research Seminar Series, on August 19 Dr. Sadig A. Malki of King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) presented findings of a case study comparison of *The Sound of Music* and *Hub Ahla min Hub* ("A Love More Beautiful than Love") and instances of untruthfulness in each. *Hub Ahla min Hub* was chosen as a comparison study as it is considered an Arabic "remake" of *The Sound of Music*.

According to Dr. Malki, "Closer inspection of the influences which weaken truthfulness in society, including the messages conveyed by mass media, may be central to the study of social development and how the process varies among different societies."

Asserting that mass media is an influence which can serve to either strengthen or weaken the prevalence of truthfulness in society, Dr. Malki compared the relatively small number of untruths uttered by characters in *The Sound of Music* with the much larger number in *Hub Ahla min Hub*. Seven



Sadig Al Malki

clips representing comparable scenes were chosen from each film. The analysis also compared whether each act of lying was portrayed positively or negatively in both films.

TOMMY WEIR ON "THE CEO SHIFT"

On June 23, Dr. Tommy Weir, Managing Director of Leadership Solutions at Kenexa, described ways in which organizations and governments are affected by the current economic crisis, and addressed the challenges that CEOs and leaders must overcome to ensure that their organizations successfully recover from the global meltdown.

In "The CEO Shift: Recovery, the Changing Dynamics of the Future, and Success," Dr. Weir argued that the recovery from the crisis will be directly impacted by leaders' abilities to understand and respond to the new society. Although government and economic development recovery is determined by how organizations respond, governments need to encourage organizations to allow society to play a part in their recovery strategy. By doing so, they will need to rethink their models of business by shifting focus to the location of the market, size of growth and rate of speed, all of which are crucial factors to consider when recovering from the crisis.

Weir noted that, coming out of the financial crisis, organizations are going through a crucial transition and their success will depend largely on them making shifts in five key areas: market, growth, speed, talent and leaders.

Finally, Dr. Weir cautioned that given the current circumstances, CEOs and

organizational leaders must avoid making reactionary decisions on behalf of their governments and institutions. Instead, they should reassess their strategies for facing the crisis to ensure that they address the changing dynamic of the future, and are therefore successful in their recovery.



Tommy Weir

DSG RECEIVES MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT DELEGATION



The Malaysian delegation with DSG representatives

A delegation of Malaysian diplomats in the UAE visited the Dubai School of Government on Wednesday, August 5, where they met with faculty members and administrators. The Malaysian delegation included HE Datuk Yahya Abdul Jabar, Ambassador of Malaysia to the UAE, HE Syed Mohammed Hasrin Aidid, Consul General of Malaysia in Dubai, Mr. Shushilil Azam Shuib, Consul – Education, Mr. Haikal Hanib, Vice Consul (Trade), and Mr. Dzulkifli Mahmud, Senior Trade Commissioner in Dubai. Discussions focused on possible opportunities for future cooperation, and the development experiences of Malaysia and the UAE.

DSG Dean Tarik Yousef said: “The Malaysian delegation’s visit proved highly informative. We identified several areas of interest for collaboration between educational institutions in both countries. Toward our mission of supporting good governance in the Arab world, the Dubai School of Government is constantly building alliances with countries and organizations that lead to tangible outcomes of mutual benefit.”

Audio and video of most DSG events is available at www.dsg.ae/multimedia



WITHOUT THIS HUMAN WEALTH, A NATION LIMITS ITSELF

by Victor Pineda

“The development of man is the foundation on which a nation is built. This building cannot be considered complete without first developing the citizens, who are regarded as human wealth, constantly giving.”

These words from Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, illustrate well the connections between the people of the UAE, the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the UAE’s Federal Law 29. As of today, 139 nations, including the UAE, have signed the Convention. Now is the time for the UAE to lead nations in implementing these articles, for the benefit of this nation, its people and the world.

According to the UN, “the Convention... takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as ‘objects’ of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as ‘subjects’ with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives”.

For its part, the UAE’s Federal Law No 29 of 2006, created opportunities to integrate disabled persons into the mainstream of society. The law mandates meaningful partnerships across sectors and regulates the construction of accessible infrastructure. It also provides people with disabilities in the UAE access to education and employment opportunities.

For the past decade I have been working on developing the Convention for all



Victor Pineda

people around the world who, like me, live with some type of disability. I was born in Venezuela, a country rich in petroleum, but poor in opportunities for people with disabilities.

My mother sought new opportunities and moved our family to California where my life began to blossom. This experience marked my commitment to disability rights and policy change and furthered my professional development in this field.

Often considered a burden on the community, disabled persons are regularly isolated and stigmatized by

society, while the gifts these citizens could give their communities are wasted. Studies prove that progressive public policies towards those with special needs benefit all citizens.

Recently the United Nations, the World Bank and many public and private agencies have incorporated disability considerations into project planning, design, and application. Implementing the UN articles and Federal Law 29 would mirror these progressive actions, and would significantly improve access to social, educational and employment opportunities.

“A young Emirati I met, though fluent in English and Arabic, and very smart, could not obtain a job since his entire education was at a special needs school. He has no mental disabilities, only physical ones – he uses crutches. This is a huge loss for the UAE of human potential.”

Victor Pineda

As a country that is continuing to lead the world in new and innovative construction, it cannot be understated how much more cost-effective it is to “build in” accessibility rather than “bolt it on.”

Education is obviously a key element in the development of any nation, yet few disabled children in the UAE attend accredited schools that offer a certified high-school diploma; this leaves them few viable options once they outgrow their special needs centre.

The human impact of this is huge. A young Emirati I met, though fluent in English and Arabic, and very smart, could not obtain a job since his entire education was at a special needs school. He has no mental disabilities, only physical ones – he uses crutches. This is a huge loss for the UAE of human potential.

Fortunately, Dr. Hanif Hassan, the former Minister of Education, began an innovative pilot program of inclusion that will place a cohort of special needs students across 10 public schools.

Dr. Hassan understood that without enabling these children to attend public school, it would be nearly impossible for them to feel part of and fully participate in their society. Such integration only enriches this nation and its people; it is a vital step forward, but it cannot be the last. Providing work opportunities and education for people with special needs is not enough, we need their active involvement in the decisions that affect them. We need their voices and their vision and we need them to become self-sufficient and to contribute to their community.

Many countries have started this process and the UAE can too. This, according to indicators by the World Bank, brings benefits to the disabled individual, to their household and to various sectors of government.

Sheikh Mohammed’s book, *My Vision – Challenges in the Race for Excellence*, shows how Dubai has been an example of extraordinary development based on excellent management, teamwork and timely decision-making.

I am hopeful that all of these will again come together in the implementation of Federal Law No 29 and the ratification of the UN Convention Articles.

People with disabilities in the UAE are the untapped human wealth sitting on our doorstep. When their talent is tapped, this country will be much closer to Sheikh Mohammed’s wish: “I want everyone in this country to benefit and to be of benefit at the same time.”

Victor Pineda is a Visiting Scholar at the Dubai School of Government and founder of the Victor Pineda Foundation. This article was originally printed in the June 12, 2009 issue of *The National*.

RECENT DSG PUBLICATIONS

Navigating the Economic Downturn: Strategic Positioning of Public Sector ICT Initiatives, Okan Geray

Based on analysis of ICT initiative strategic positioning and the framework adopted by the Dubai eGovernment eServices Division until the end of 2008, this policy brief proposes a flexible strategic positioning tool in the form of a grid that facilitates creating trade-offs between effectiveness (customer focus) vis-à-vis efficiency (productivity) as the two main strategic dimensions.

The Hidden Gender Gap in Education in the UAE, Natasha Ridge

This policy brief examines current trends in gender and education in the UAE, outlining why a gender gap which adversely affects males should be of concern to policy makers in the UAE and the region at large

The UAE’s Economic Policy and the Current Global Meltdown: An Appraisal, Samir Pradhan

DSG Working Paper 09-04 critically assesses the economic policies of the UAE from the perspective of the ongoing financial crisis.

Closing the UAE’s Political Gender Gap: Measures for Effective Policy Change, Huda Sajwani

This policy brief focuses on the “political empowerment” sub-index of the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index in order to provide recommendations on how to achieve a more gender-balanced political environment within the United Arab Emirates.

Overseas Development Assistance from the UAE: Structuring Donor Relations in the Context of the Arab League’s Fragile States, Habiba Hamid

This working paper seeks to situate the UAE’s Foreign Policy and Overseas Development Assistance trajectory in the context of the increasingly dynamic fragile states discourse.

All DSG publications can be found online at
www.dsg.ae/publications

UPCOMING EVENTS

For updated information, see www.dsg.ae/events

How do College Students Form Expectations?

October 4

Basit Zafar, economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, will present his research on how college students form expectations about various major-specific outcomes.

Developing Transparency and Accountability Standards in International Business and Government

October 5

Lucinda Low will review the development, over the last decade, of international transparency and accountability standards for international businesses and governments.

THE 99: How the Private Sector Can Succeed in Public Diplomacy

October 11

Naif Al-Mutawa, creator of the comic series THE 99, will explore the genesis of his characters and relate how the series serves as a global ambassador for tolerant Islam, even though there is no religious content in the storylines.

The World after the Crisis

October 12

Hans de Jong, Chief Economist of ABN AMRO Bank, and Didier Duret, Chief Investment Officer of ABN AMRO Private Banking Global Strategy & Research, will explore the acceleration in financial markets experienced over the last few months.

A Necessary Engagement: Reinventing America's Relations with Muslim World

October 20

Emile Nahkhleh will focus on the rise of political Islam, examine the growing debate within the Muslim world between mainstreamers and radicals about the future of Islam, and analyze the US government's response to political Islam and Islamization.

Conference on Natural Resources and Economic Development: Risks and Policy Challenges

December 9-10

DSG and the Oxford Centre for the Analysis of Resource Rich Economies (OxCarre) are jointly organizing the OxCarre Third Annual Conference on Resource Rich Economies and the DSG First Annual Conference on Natural Resources and Economic Development.

Dubai School of Government

Level 13, Convention Tower, Dubai World Trade Center

P.O. Box 72229, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Tel: +971-4-329-3290, Fax: +971-4-329-3291

E-mail: info@dsg.ac.ae

Web: www.dsg.ae



كلية دبي للإدارة الحكومية
DUBAI SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

The Dubai School of Government (DSG) is a research and teaching institution focusing on public policy in the Arab world. Established in 2005 under the patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai, in cooperation with the Harvard Kennedy School, DSG aims to promote good governance through enhancing the region's capacity for effective public policy.

Toward this goal, the Dubai School of Government also collaborates with international institutions such as the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, the World Bank, the UNDP and the Brookings Institution in its research and training programs. In addition, the School organizes policy forums and international conferences to facilitate the exchange of ideas and promote critical debate on public policy in the Arab world.

DSG News is published quarterly by the Dubai School of Government. The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect views of the trustees, officers and staff of the Dubai School of Government.

To be added to our electronic mailing list and receive e-newsletters and announcements of events and lectures, please send your e-mail address, name and affiliation to info@dsg.ac.ae. You can also sign up on our Web site.

Editorial Staff

Editor: Stephen Brannon

Associate Editor: Selma Nagbou

Translator: Heba Shaaban

Designer: Jineesh M. Illath