

Doha 12 Opening Remarks

Prof. Steven Spiegel

- Ladies and gentleman, it is my great honor to open the 12. annual gathering of the Enriching the Middle East Economic Future conference series jointly sponsored by the Permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences of the Foreign Ministry of the State of Qatar and the UCLA Center for Middle East Development. We are deeply grateful to the Foreign Ministry of Qatar for making this series of meetings possible. Without their commitment and generosity this project would never have existed.
- This year, those of you attending include 235 participants from 74 countries, the highest number we've ever achieved. And this number does not include any of our distinguished ambassadors who are gathered here for the opening session.
- The purpose of these meetings has been to work together to design programs, projects and mechanisms that can enhance the future of the Middle East economies. We have also sought to introduce this region's economic potential to the world at large and at the same time, to introduce the global environment to leading figures throughout the Middle East in the business, academic, journalistic and governmental arenas.
- This year, we feel particularly fortunate to have all of you with us. Reading through all of your bios, I was astonished to see the vast and impressive backgrounds and capabilities which you represent.
- In the past, we have frequently sought to organize our sessions around particular themes. This time all of you were such a treasure that we organized the panels around your talents. We are indeed blessed with having specialists covering such a wide group of areas – from political analysts, to high-level Hollywood professionals who work behind the scenes to produce films and television shows many of you watch in your homes; to the crème de la crème of America's legal experts as you will learn in a few minutes.
- And we are so pleased to have specialists who deal with energy, extremism in the region (which obviously impacts the Mideast economy), and with cybersecurity, and the emergence of Asia, the role of women and youth in the

economic arena; and the potential of innovation for social and economic growth.

- We obviously will not solve all of the economic problems faced by this region and the globe in two days. I can guarantee however that many of you will meet future partners. You will be exposed to information that you didn't know existed. All of us will come away with our visions expanded and our horizons broader.
- In my experiences in producing these meetings, the most satisfying facet has been the remarkable ability of the UCLA and Qatari teams to transcend the eight thousand mile distance between us to collaborate on this remarkable event.
- Indicative of this cooperation, it is my pleasure to introduce **H.E. Ali Shareef Al Emadi**, the Minister of Finance, State of Qatar. His Excellency is also a member and Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Economic Affairs and Investment, Chairman of Qatar National Bank, Chairman of Qatar Airways, a Board Member of the Qatar Foundation, Governor at the Islamic Development Bank, and Governor at OPEC Fund for International Development.
- He has extensive experience in the financial sector spanning over 20 years, with progressively higher posts culminating in his position as CEO of Qatar National Bank from 2005 to 2013. Under his leadership, the Qatar National Bank Group became the largest and most profitable bank in the Middle East and North Africa. He has a bachelor of science in finance from the University of Arizona. Which I mention because of Arizona's seeming dominance in this program. You'll see.
- Without further ado, it is my pleasure to invite H.E. Ali Shareef Al Emadi to the podium to present the opening address of the conference.
- [Al Emadi remarks]
- Thank you, your Excellency for those inspiring words. How likely is it that a University of Arizona alum would be followed by **Mr. Mark Brnovich**, who was inaugurated as Arizona's Attorney General in 2015. He previously served as Director of the Arizona Department of Gaming, as an Assistant US Attorney for the District of Arizona, and as the state's Assistant Attorney General. Brnovich

is known for restoring public confidence in the office of “Arizona's Top Cop” and for assembling some of the nation's most talented public servants for his administration.

- [Brnovich remarks]
- **H.E. Professor [Kan-DA-Tee Supa-Mong-Khon]**, was the 39th Foreign Minister of Thailand. His Excellency also taught international law, diplomacy, and international trade at UCLA. He is currently Chairman of Kanta Enterprise International Company Limited, a real estate development company in Thailand. He served two terms as a Member of Parliament in Thailand and was Thailand's Trade Representative, as well as an advisor to several Thai Prime Ministers on Foreign Affairs. Prior to entering politics, Minister Suphamongkhon was a career diplomat and was Thailand's representative at the UN. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the RAND Center for Asia Pacific Policy.
- [Suphamongkhon remarks]
- Thank you so much, **Professor Supa-Mong-Kon**. And now, let’s talk about our meeting.
- First, as you see from your programs, we will begin the first of 23 workshops in a few short minutes. All of us will have difficulty in choosing which sessions to attend and you are free to move from one to the other. As we have announced in our conference memo, all meals through tomorrow night will be served in the Al Mouktaser room that has been committed to our meetings. However, dinner tonight will be held outside in the Fountain Courtyard, near the pool – a wonderful spot that will surprise you by its beauty and its inspirational view of the surrounding area.
- If you received your agenda yesterday, it has been revised in some places, most notably session times for Monday.
- I want to particularly recommend the Networking Reception that will be held late tomorrow afternoon. Bring your business cards because this will be the occasion, the event, the opportunity to meet and talk with your conference colleagues, who you may not have had a chance to connect with. Immediately

following the Networking Reception, we will reconvene in this room for the closing session.

- And now ladies and gentleman our sessions begin. Please take a few moments for coffee and refreshments and we will begin promptly at 10:00. The revised agendas have been passed out at the security entrance. But if you did not receive it yet, more copies will be available during the break that follows the first session.