

## **Michael H. Posner**



Michael H. Posner was sworn in as Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor on September 23, 2009.

Prior to joining State Department, Mr. Posner was the Executive Director and then President of Human Rights First. As its Executive Director he helped the organization earn a reputation for leadership in the areas of refugee protection, advancing a rights-based approach to national security, challenging crimes against humanity, and combating discrimination. He has been a frequent public commentator on these and other issues, and has testified dozens of times before the U.S. Congress. In January 2006, Mr. Posner stepped down as Executive Director to become the President of Human Rights First, a position he held until his appointment as Assistant

Secretary.

Mr. Posner played a key role in proposing and campaigning for the first U.S. law providing for political asylum, which became part of the Refugee Act of 1980. In 1998, he led the Human Rights First delegation to the Rome conference at which the statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) was adopted.

Mr. Posner also has been a prominent voice in support of fair, decent, and humane working conditions in factories throughout the global supply chain. As a member of the White House Apparel Industry Partnership Task Force, he helped found the Fair Labor Association (FLA), an organization that brings together corporations, local leaders, universities, and NGOs to promote corporate accountability for working conditions in the apparel industry. He also was involved in the development of the Global Network Initiative, a multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at promoting free expression and privacy rights on the internet.

Before joining Human Rights First, Mr. Posner was a lawyer with Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal in Chicago. He lectured at Yale Law School from 1981 to 1984, and again in 2009. He was a visiting lecturer at Columbia University Law School since 1984. A member of the California Bar and the Illinois Bar, he received his J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley Law School (Boalt Hall) in 1975, and a B.A. with distinction and honors in History from the University of Michigan in 1972.

### **Mara Karlin**



Mara E. Karlin has served in a variety of policy positions in the U.S. Defense Department, including Levant Director and Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. As Levant Director, she was intimately involved in formulating U.S. policy on Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Israel-Palestinian affairs. In this position, she helped build the Lebanese Armed Forces, coordinate nascent defense relations between the U.S. and Lebanon, deepen U.S.-Jordanian defense cooperation, and expand security sector reform in the Palestinian arena. As Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Mara helped coordinate the Under Secretary's workload and facilitated his efforts on hundreds of national security-related actions. In connection with her work at the Pentagon, she received the Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award. She has met with many of the key defense and political leaders in the Middle East, has an ongoing interest in both security affairs and political development in the region, and has spent considerable time there. Her writing has been published in various international publications.

### **Louay M. Safi**



Louay M. Safi currently serves as Common Word Fellow at the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University. He also serves as an associate faculty with the Indiana University - Purdue University, Indianapolis, and a non-resident fellow with the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU).

He is a prolific author and frequent speaker on issues of human rights, Middle East, peace, leadership, and Islam and the West, and an advocate of human rights and civil liberties. He published eleven books, including *The Qur'anic Narrative* (Praeger 2008), *Tensions and Transitions in the Muslim World*, (University Press of America, 2003), *Peace and the Limits of War* (IIIT 2001), and *The Challenge of Modernity* (University Press of America, 1994).

Dr. Safi is a founding member and former board member of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (CSID) (1999-2007). He also served as communications and leadership development director (2009) and executive director of the Leadership Development Center (2004-08) of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA).

He served as the Executive Director (1995-97) and Director of Research (1999-2003) of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), Editor of the *Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* (1999-2003), and President of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (1999-2003).

Dr. Safi participated in numerous national and international forums and conferences, and contributed articles to various academic journals, including the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, *Islamic Studies*, *Intellectual Discourse*, *Middle East Affairs Journal*, and *Journal of Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies*.

He appeared on numerous radio and TV programs, including CNN, BBC, Monte Carlo, Fox News, PBS, Middle East TV (MBC), Al-Jazeera TV, Voice of America, Malaysian Television, Syrian TV, and others.

### **Andrew Tabler**



Andrew J. Tabler is a Next Generation fellow in the Program on Arab Politics at The Washington Institute, where he focuses on how the United States can engage with Syria in a way that best advances U.S. interests.

A journalist and researcher, Mr. Tabler has achieved unparalleled qualitative and long-term access to Bashar al-Asad's Syria. He is the cofounder and former editor-in-chief of *Syria Today*, Syria's first private-sector English-language magazine, and has been a media consultant for Syrian nongovernmental organizations (2003-2004) under the patronage of Syrian first lady Asma al-Asad.

In fourteen years of resident consultancy, research, and journalism in the Middle East, Mr. Tabler served, most recently, as a consultant on U.S.-Syria relations for the International Crisis Group (2008) and as a fellow of the Institute of Current World Affairs (2005-2007), writing on Syrian, Lebanese, and Middle Eastern affairs. His long-term residence in the region began in 1994 with graduate studies in comparative politics and Arabic at the American University in Cairo. After editorships with the *Middle East Times* and *Cairo Times*, Mr. Tabler became senior editor and director of editorial for the Oxford Business Group (OBG) in 2000. The following year, he personally oversaw with OBG the first comprehensive report on Syria in more than thirty years.

Mr. Tabler has interviewed Syrian first lady Asma al-Asad, Israeli president Shimon Peres, the late Palestinian president Yasser Arafat, slain Lebanese prime minister Rafiq Hariri, former Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora, and current Lebanese prime minister Saad Hariri. His articles and opinion pieces on Syrian and Lebanese affairs and U.S. foreign policy have appeared in the *New York Times*, the *New York Times Magazine*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Newsweek*, and *Foreign Policy*. He has also appeared in interviews with CNN, NBC, PBS, NPR, and the BBC.

Mr. Tabler is author of the forthcoming book, *In the Lion's Den: An Eyewitness Account of Washington's Battle with Syria* (Lawrence Hill Books, 2011), and the 2007 Stanley Foundation report *The High Road to Damascus: Engage Syria's Private Sector*.

### **Mona Yacoubian**



Mona Yacoubian is a special adviser to the Institute's Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention, where she provides analysis and policy advice on the Middle East and North Africa. She currently directs the Institute's Lebanon Working Group and also contributes to the Institute's ongoing work on Syria. She has worked on a broad range of issues in the region, including democratization and civil society promotion, as well as counterterrorism strategy. Yacoubian has consulted for a number of organizations, including the World Bank, the Department of State, RAND Corporation, and Freedom House.

From 1990 to 1997, Yacoubian served as the North Africa analyst in the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research, where she focused on the crisis in Algeria. A member of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), she is a frequent commentator on leading U.S. and international news outlets. She was a Fulbright scholar in Syria and an international affairs fellow at CFR, where she published a monograph titled "Algeria's Struggle for Democracy."

Yacoubian earned a B.A. in public policy from Duke University and a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

### **Radwan Ziadeh**



Radwan Ziadeh is a visiting scholar at Carr Center for Human Rights at Harvard University and Visiting Fellow at Chatham House (The Royal Institute of International Affairs) in London .

He was a Senior Fellow at United States Institute of Peace (USIP) –in Washington, D.C., and he is the founder of the Damascus Center for Human Rights Studies in Syria. In 2008, Ziadeh also co-founded and served as the executive director of the Syrian Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Washington, D.C. Before that, Ziadeh was chief in-editor of Tyarat magazine in 2001-2002 and secretary of the Syrian Organization for Transparency. He was a researcher with the UNDP project "Syria 2025" and was named best researcher in the Arab world in political science by Jordan's Abdulhameed Shoman

Foundation in 2004.

Ziadeh has been one of the major players in "Damascus Spring," a period of intense debate about politics and social issues and calls for reform in Syria after the death of President Hafez al-Assad in 2000.

He is a member in the Advisory Group of IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance Stockholm, Sweden, Advisory Board of Islamic World Initiative at USIP (U.S. Institute of Peace )Washington, D.C. for " Reform and Security in the Muslim World." He is also a member in the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), The American Political Science Association ( APSA ), The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS ) – London , International Political Science Association (IPSA) and International Studies Association (ISA).

Ziadeh has written ten books and published studies, research projects and Policy papers for many

International institutions like U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) , IDEA ( Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance ) Stockholm – Sweden, German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA), and The Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD). He is a frequent political commentator to several U.S , European , and Middle East Media like Aljazeera , Alarabiya, B.B.C and Alhura . He is also writes a bimonthly op-ed for the leading Arab daily Al-Hayat .