

2021-2026 Report



FIVE YEARS OF FIKER INSTITUTE



Fiker Institute is an international affairs think tank based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, working to create platforms for dialogue & thought leadership on global affairs.

The world has always had an opinion about the Middle East, and we believe that it's time for the Middle East to have an opinion about the world.





Contents

About Fiker Institute	03
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Foreword	04
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Five Years in Numbers	05
Diplomatic & Policy Engagements	07
Regional Programs	09
Thematic Programs	25
Delegations & Visits	35
Fellows & Selected Guest Contributors	43
Partnerships & Collaborations	44
Collections & Archives	45
Advisory	46
Get Involved	46

ABOUT FIKER INSTITUTE

The Middle East & North Africa is at the center of world debates but has often been an object of analysis rather than a partner in dialogue. Fiker Institute works to reclaim narratives about the region by debating constructs and advancing scholarship on international affairs.

Founded in 2021, Fiker Institute platforms regional scholars and publishes analysis that seeks to disrupt traditional frameworks of studying political affairs and policy developments across publishing and programming streams. In 2023, as part of the think tank's expansion plan, Fiker Institute opened its Library at Alserkal Avenue in Dubai with over 15,000 books on foreign policy, global politics, and international development.

Instead of region or chronology, Fiker Institute's Library is curated thematically, based on topics such as 'Inequality,' 'Hegemony,' 'Instability,' and 'Propaganda.' By rethinking categorizations, Fiker Institute aims to question established assumptions about international affairs in the modern era.



FOREWORD

Five years ago, Fiker Institute was founded around a quiet but consequential premise: that the Arab World has a distinct intellectual contribution to make to the global debates shaping our time. The challenge was never a shortage of ideas, but the need for institutions capable of developing, testing, and placing them in conversation with the world.

In the last few years, Fiker Institute has grown from an interdisciplinary proposition into a policy platform. Through our research, publications, programs, and partnerships, we have brought foreign policy in conversation with culture, connected regional perspectives to global questions, and promoted dialogue on ideas that do not fit neatly within established disciplines or geographies. The opening of our Library gave this approach a home. Our collections are designed to encourage readers to move beyond conventional classifications and consider how history, power, and identity may be understood differently when fiction sits beside policy.

This report reflects on five years of institution-building, but it also looks ahead. The world that Fiker Institute was created to study has become more fragmented, more contested, and more polarized. As a think tank, we must remain open to adjusting our frameworks and engaging with complexity without reducing it.

Our ambition remains to contribute ideas from this region to the world, while building a platform through which global debates can be approached with more depth, nuance, and courage. To our partners, readers, and wider community, thank you for shaping our first five years. We look forward to continuing to advance our mission together.



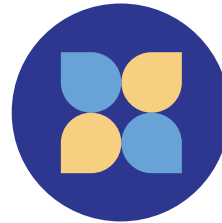
Dubai Abulhoul Alfalasi,
Founder of Fiker Institute

FIVE YEARS IN NUMBERS



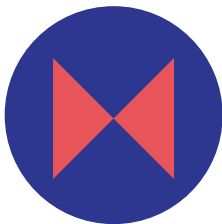
120+
RESEARCH
OUTPUTS

Fiker Institute published over 120 reports, essays, policy briefs, explainers, and expert commentaries



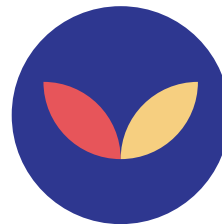
70+
GUEST WRITERS &
FELLOWS

More than 70 guest writers & fellows were platformed through Fiker Institute's publications, covering regional & thematic areas of focus & specializations



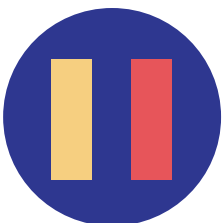
110+
SPEAKERS
& EVENTS

Fiker Institute's year-round programming featured over 110 speakers & lecturers, including academics, diplomats, and experts



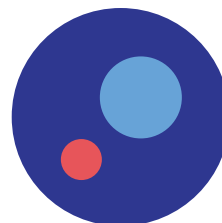
90+
DIPLOMATIC VISITS
& BRIEFINGS

Fiker Institute hosted over 90 diplomatic visits & delegations for briefings on regional and global developments, spanning over 50 different countries



15,000+
BOOKS

Fiker Institute houses over 15,000 books, curated to encourage visitors to contest conventional classifications & geographic associations



31,000+
VISITORS

Since opening its doors in November 2023, Fiker Institute's Library welcomed over 31,000 visitors



9
FIKER
INSTITUTE

Art in
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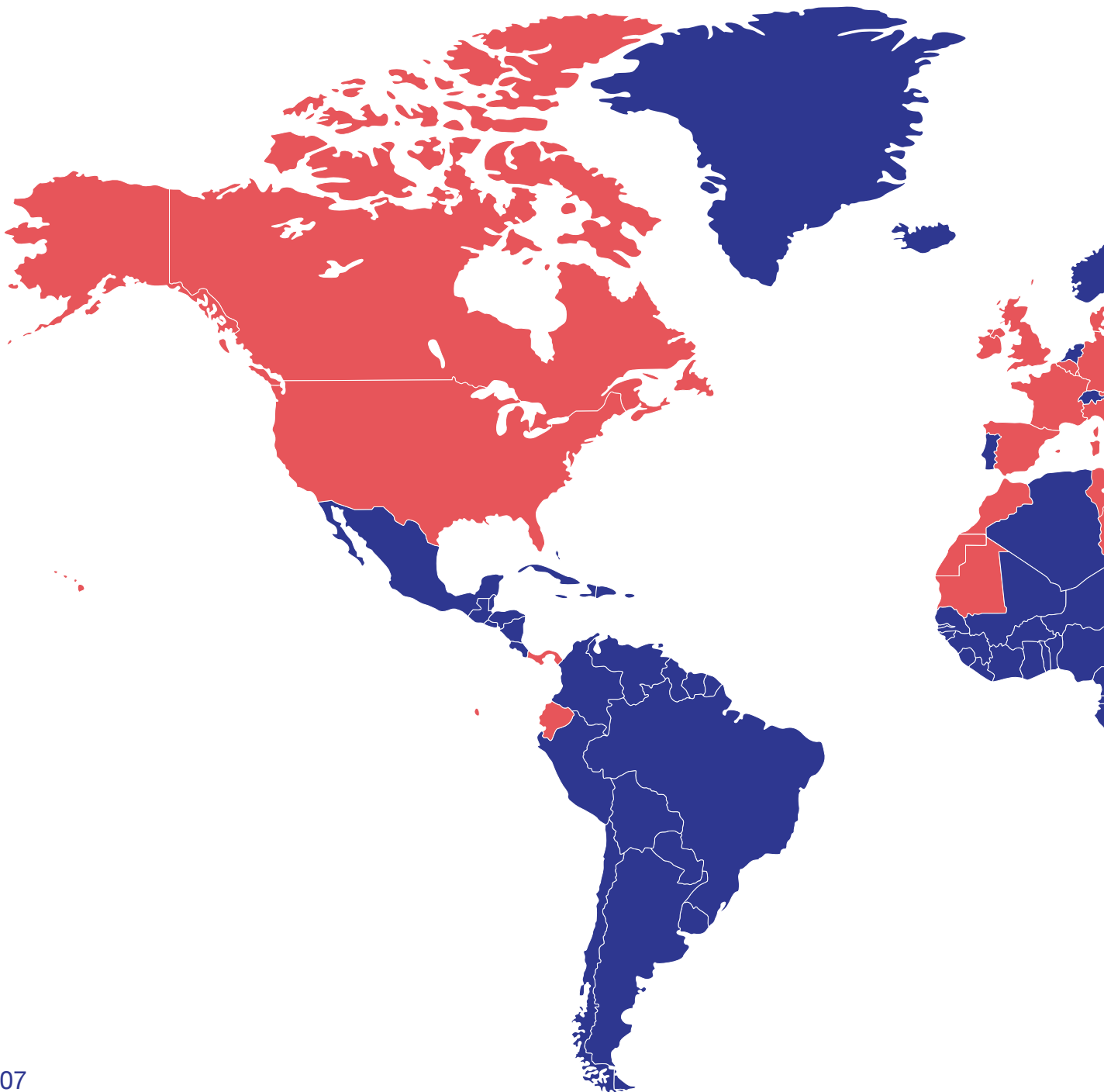
by: Syed Ali Raza B. 1942, Karachi, acrylic on canvas, 122 x 97 cm

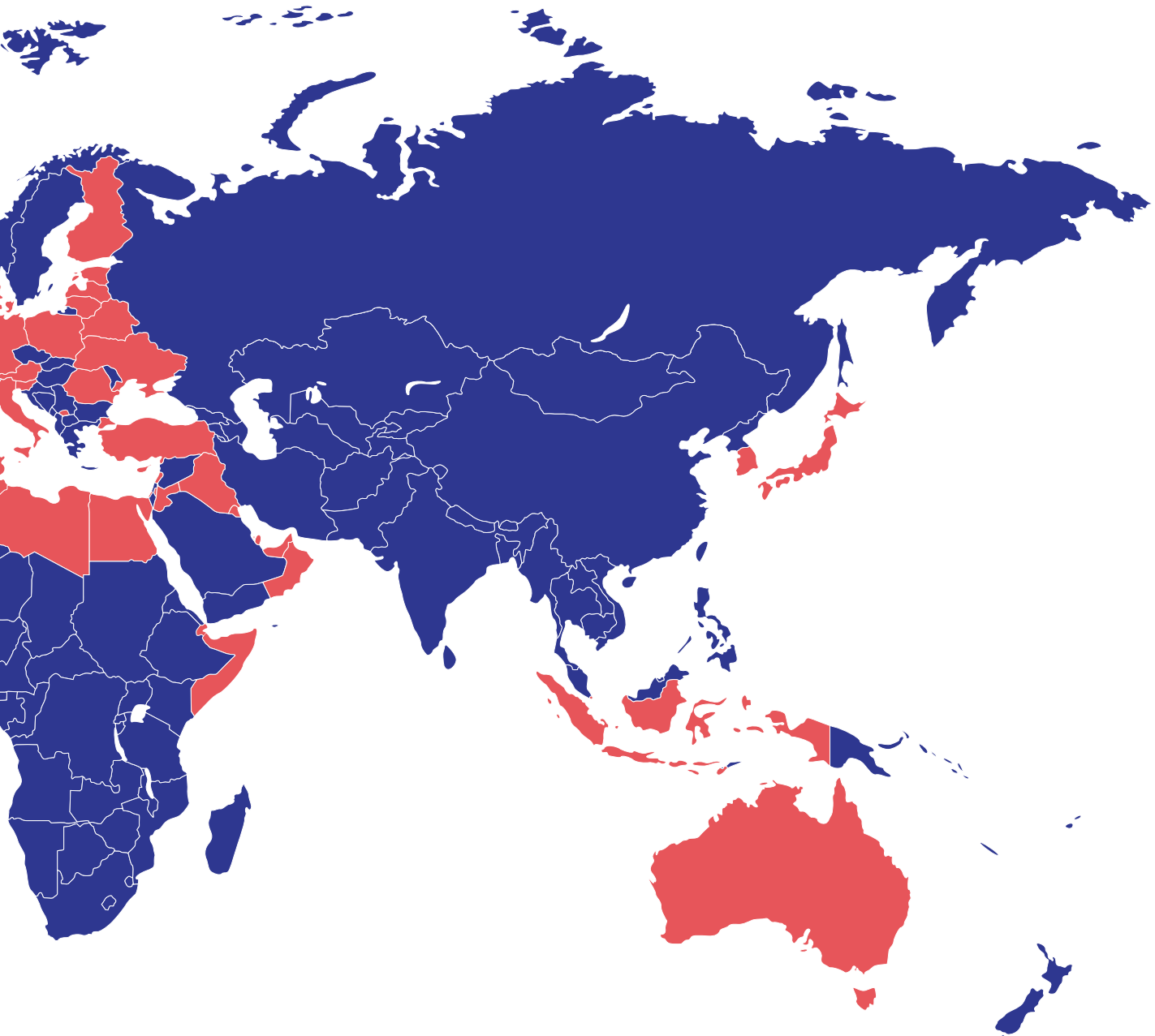
SOUD AL-QASSEMI

10.05.25

DIPLOMATIC & POLICY ENGAGEMENTS

Fiker Institute has convened diplomatic & high-level delegations from over 50 countries, including South Korea, Singapore, Malta, France, the UK, Slovenia, Estonia, Ukraine, the US, and Kosovo.





REGIONAL PROGRAMS



WEST ASIA & NORTH AFRICA

Fiker Institute's West Asia & North Africa Program focuses on the security, political, and economic shifts reshaping the region amid conflict, strategic competition, and institutional strain. Its work examines the consequences of successive wars on regional orders, deterrence, state resilience, and post-conflict reconstruction. The program also considers how states can rebuild institutions and economies, manage security and investment vacuums, navigate changing external partnerships, and strengthen regional mechanisms for crisis management. A central focus is developing durable, regionally-led approaches to security, recovery, and multilateral cooperation.





Fiker Institute held its Research Conference titled 'Order(s) in the Middle East: Pivots & Realignments,' convening regional & international academics & experts for a full day of research-led discussion.



Fiker Institute hosted a symposium titled 'Deconstructing Modern Orientalism,' featuring scholars from Kuwait, Morocco, Egypt, and Türkiye.



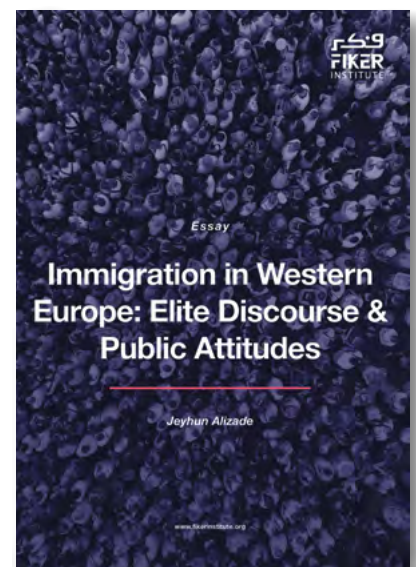
Fiker Institute hosted a dialogue session with 30 Arab policymakers from 20 Arab countries as part of the Emerging Government Leaders Program, co-launched by the UAE & the Arab League.



In partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Fiker Institute hosted Su'ad Jarbawi, Regional Vice President, MENA Region, for a lecture titled 'A World Out of Balance: Humanitarian Challenges in the Middle East.'

EUROPE

Europe stands at a strategic & socio-economic crossroads. Russia's protracted assault on Ukraine has put the post-Cold War security order into question and sparked important debates about national defense, nuclear deterrence, and the transatlantic alliance. The rise of far-right movements is testing the stability of liberal democracies, and within the European Union, rule-of-law disputes collide with calls for treaty reform ahead of any possible enlargement. Fiker Institute's Europe Program examines Europe's position in the shifting global order, and how its states are navigating domestic economic and political pressures.







Ambassadors' Roundtable co-hosted with the Embassy of France, featuring the Ambassadors of Germany, France, Lithuania, Italy, and the EU.



Roundtable with former foreign minister of Ukraine, HE Pavlo Klimkin, co-hosted with CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation.



Fiker Institute hosted a defense delegation from the United Kingdom's Royal College of Defence Studies (RCDS).



Visit by HRH Princess Beatrice of York for the launch of the Institute's partnership with OPUS.

NORTH & SOUTH AMERICA

Fiker Institute's North & South America Program focuses on changing configurations of political, economic, and security arrangements across the Americas. Its work considers the direction of US foreign policy under President Trump, including the consequences of the White House's transactional approach to alliances, trade, migration, and global leadership. The program also addresses domestic polarization, institutional pressures, the political role of tech companies, organized crime, and gun violence.







A US Congress delegation visiting the UAE as part of the Mutual Education and Cultural Exchange Act (MECEA), from various offices in the House of Representatives.



Paul Salem, former President of the Middle East Institute, gave a lecture titled 'On the US Elections & Global Implications.'



Fiker Institute hosted Dr Annette Idler, Associate Professor in Global Security at Oxford's Blavatnik School of Government, for a lecture on 'Re-Evaluating Ceasefires in Armed Conflicts: Cases from Latin America.'



In partnership with the BRICS Policy Center in Brazil, Fiker Institute hosted Dr Marta Fernández for a lecture titled 'BRICS in the Age of Trump.'

AL-KHALEEJ



Fiker Institute's Al-Khaleej Program explores how the Gulf is responding to a period of heightened conflict, strategic uncertainty, and regional reordering. The program covers Gulf foreign policy, defense and security partnerships, mediation, economic diversification, and the consequences of geopolitical shocks for national and regional resilience. Particular attention is given to the impact of the Iran War, water security, critical infrastructure, and relations with regional and international powers. The program also addresses intra-Gulf relations, maritime security, and critical trade routes.





Fiker Institute hosted a Dialogue Session with HE Noura Al Kaabi, Minister of State at the UAE's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the UAE's response to the Iran War.



As part of the Al-Khaleej Program, Fiker Institute hosted Dr Bader Al-Saif for a lecture on 'The Day After: The Remaking of Gulf Security?'

WORKING GROUP ON GULF FOREIGN POLICY

Fiker Institute, as part of its Al-Khaleej Program, launched the Working Group on Gulf Foreign Policy in March 2026 in response to the Iran War. The Group works to establish a coordination mechanism that convenes expert voices from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries to exchange views on the current developments and the future policy trajectories of the Gulf. The Group serves an archival purpose, documenting the events of the war from the perspectives of the Arab Gulf states themselves. Below are the members of the Working Group:



**Dubai Abulhoul
Alfalasi,**
Fiker Institute



Dr Bader Al-Saif,
Kuwait University



Faisal Abbas,
Arab News



**Dr Khalid Ali
Al-Jufairi,**
Georgetown
University Qatar



**Dr Hasan
Alhasan,** IISS



**Dr Alanoud
Alsharekh,**
Chatham House



Ahmed Buhejji,
Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of Bahrain



**Dr Haya
Al-Noaimi,**
Northwestern
University Qatar



**Mohammed
Baharoon,** Dubai
Public Policy
Research Center



Aisha Al-Sarihi,
Middle East Council
on Global Affairs



**Mahdi Jasim
Ghuloom,** ORF
Middle East



**Dr Nourah
Shuaibi,** Kuwait
University



**Dr Naser
Alsayed,** Chatham
House



Nayef Al-Nabet,
Middle East
Council on Global
Affairs



**Rumaitha
Al Busaidi,**
Environment
Society of Oman



**Abdulla
Mohamed Al
Ahmed,** Derasat



**Sultan Sooud Al
Qassemi,** Barjeel
Art Foundation

THEMATIC PROGRAMS

DIPLOMACY & GLOBAL GOVERNANCE



Fiker Institute's Diplomacy & Global Governance Program addresses the pressures confronting the international system at a time of geopolitical fragmentation, institutional deadlock, and declining confidence in existing multilateral structures. The program covers multilateral reform, changing power distributions, the growing influence of middle powers, BRICS+, and minilateral frameworks. It also considers how emerging domains such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), space, and tech companies are challenging established conventions. A central priority is advancing more representative, credible, and effective models of international cooperation and global decision-making.





HE Alar Karis, President of Estonia, speaking at Fiker Institute on AI, education & culture.



In collaboration with the Global Governance Forum, Fiker Institute co-hosted a symposium under the theme of 'Reforming the UN Charter,' bringing together regional and global experts.



As part of the Dubai Future Forum, Fiker Institute hosted 'The Future of Diplomacy' Roundtable, with HE Omran Sharaf, Assistant Foreign Minister of Advanced Science and Technology.



Signing of a research partnership between Fiker Institute and the University of Oxford's Global Security Programme.

CLIMATE SECURITY

Fiker Institute's Climate Security Program addresses the growing intersection between climate change, resource scarcity, conflict, and resilience. The program covers water and food security, climate finance, adaptation, and the geopolitical consequences of competition over critical resources. It also considers the security implications of rising energy demand, technological development, maritime disruptions, and the use of natural resources as instruments and casualties of war.

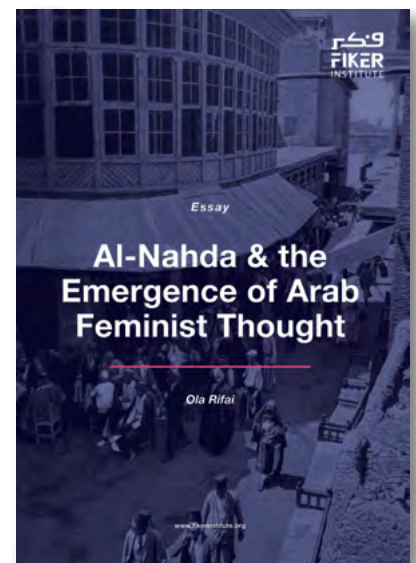
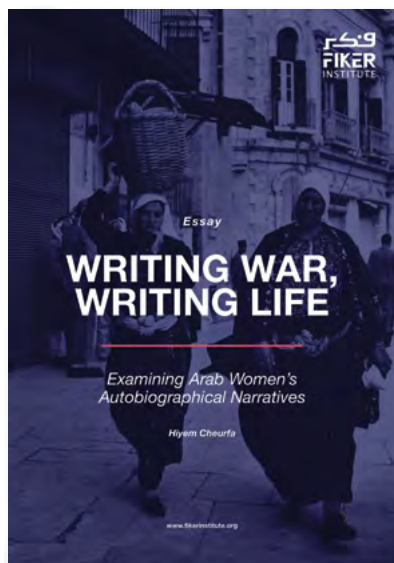
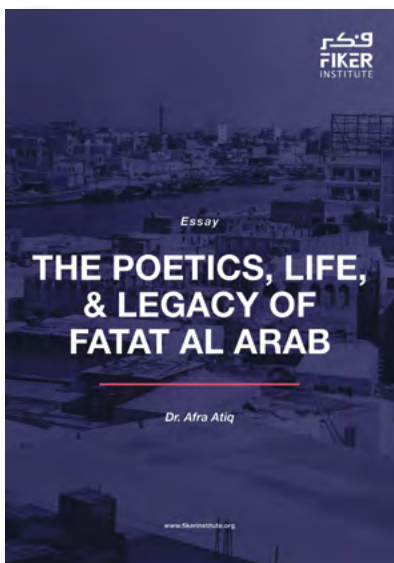


Fiker Institute, in collaboration with the Climate Governance Commission, co-hosted a public symposium titled 'Reforming Climate Global Governance: International & Regional Visions.'



GENDER EQUALITY

Despite advances in the past decades, women's rights still face significant challenges across regions. In conflict and post-conflict situations, women's roles as peacemakers, mediators, and combatants are often overlooked, hampering adequate approaches to protection, demobilization, and post-conflict reconciliation. The debate on gender equality is also often shaped by Western-centric critiques that disregard the agency and choices of women on whose behalf they claim to speak. Fiker Institute's Gender Equality Program aims to transform knowledge production by studying how gender roles are understood in different regional contexts and how they are shaped by intersectional factors, including race, class, and geography.







Fiker Institute hosted a symposium on 'Arab Women & Post-Conflict Security' to explore the multi-faceted dimensions of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda in the region.



Fiker Institute & Barjeel Art Foundation announced the launch of a research partnership titled 'Written Portraits: Arab Women, Art & History.'



Fiker Institute hosted Karma Ekmekji for a lecture titled 'Rethinking Peacekeeping & Mediation Processes.'



Fiker Institute co-hosted its inaugural Ambassadors' Roundtable in partnership with the Embassy of Slovenia, under the theme of 'Women in Diplomacy,' which included the Ambassadors of Slovenia, Australia, Cyprus, the EU, Finland, Latvia, Malta, and Panama.

DELEGATIONS & VISITS

Fiker Institute regularly convenes policymakers, diplomats, and delegations for policy discussions and briefings. High-level visits have included HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President & Prime Minister of the UAE & Ruler of Dubai, HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai & Minister of Defence, HE Sheikh Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan, Cabinet Member & Minister of Tolerance & Coexistence.







Visit of HH Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority.



Visit of HE Dr Sultan Al Jaber, UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology.



Visit of UN Humanitarian Chief, Tom Fletcher.



Visit of HE Dr Thani Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Foreign Trade.



Visit of HE Serap Güler, Minister of State at Germany's Federal Foreign Office.



Visit of the United States' Consul General, Robert Raines.



Visit of HE Alison Milton, Ambassador of Ireland to the UAE, and HE Gerard Keown, Director General at the Irish Foreign Ministry.



Fiker Institute hosted a working lunch with the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Future Council on Geopolitics.



HE Oleksandr Balanutsa, Ambassador of Ukraine, in a joint event by Fiker Institute and the Embassy of Ukraine.



Policy Majlis, co-hosted with the German Embassy, attended by HE Thekla Walker, Minister of Climate Change, Environment, and Energy of the Federal State of Baden-Württemberg.



Visit of HE Husin Bagis, Ambassador of Indonesia.



Visit of HE Antoine Delcourt, Ambassador of Belgium.

FELLOWS & SELECTED GUEST CONTRIBUTORS



Dr Hana Attia,
University of Konstanz,
Germany



Sarah El-Abd,
Sciences Po,
France



Shurouq Jaradat,
New York University,
United States



Abdulla N. Khoory,
Harvard University,
United States



Dr Naser Albreeky,
Kuwait University,
Kuwait



Mariam Elashmawy,
Freie Universität Berlin,
Germany



Ola Rifai,
University of St.
Andrews, United
Kingdom



Munira Al Sayegh,
SOAS University
of London, United
Kingdom



Dahlia El Zein,
University of
Pennsylvania, United
States



Marwan Alblooshi,
Lancaster University,
United Kingdom



**Dr Khalid Ali Al-
Jufairi,** Georgetown
University, Qatar



Ahmed Buhejji,
Queen Mary
University of London,
United Kingdom



Rumaitha Al Busaidi,
Harvard University,
United States



Dr Ida Zilio-Grandi,
Italian Institute of
Culture Abu Dhabi,
UAE



Sophie Mayuko Arni,
Tokyo University of the
Arts, Japan



Fikayo Akeredolu,
University of Oxford,
United Kingdom



Dr Dalal Iriqat,
American University
Palestine, Palestine



**Dr Hassan
Elbahtimy,** King's
College London,
United Kingdom



HE Maria Belovas,
Embassy of Estonia in
the UAE



Dr Joe Y. Batikh,
MBZUAI, UAE

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Fiker Institute collaborates with international think tanks, embassies, public sector entities, and research and non-profit organizations, such as the University of Oxford's Global Security Programme, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), and the Fatima Bint Mohamed Bin Zayed Initiative (FBMI). It has hosted joint programming with the Dubai Future Forum, OPUS, the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), and the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Future Council on Geopolitics, in addition to the CMI - Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation and the International Rescue Committee (IRC). Fiker Institute is also a Knowledge Contributor of the annual World Governments Summit and holds regular policy roundtables and lectures, including with the American University in Cairo's School of Global Affairs and Public Policy and the BRICS Policy Center in Brazil.



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD



PEMBROKE
COLLEGE OXFORD



مؤسسة دبي للمستقبل
DUBAI FUTURE FOUNDATION

منتدى دبي للمستقبل
DUBAI FUTURE FORUM



WORLD
GOVERNMENTS
SUMMIT



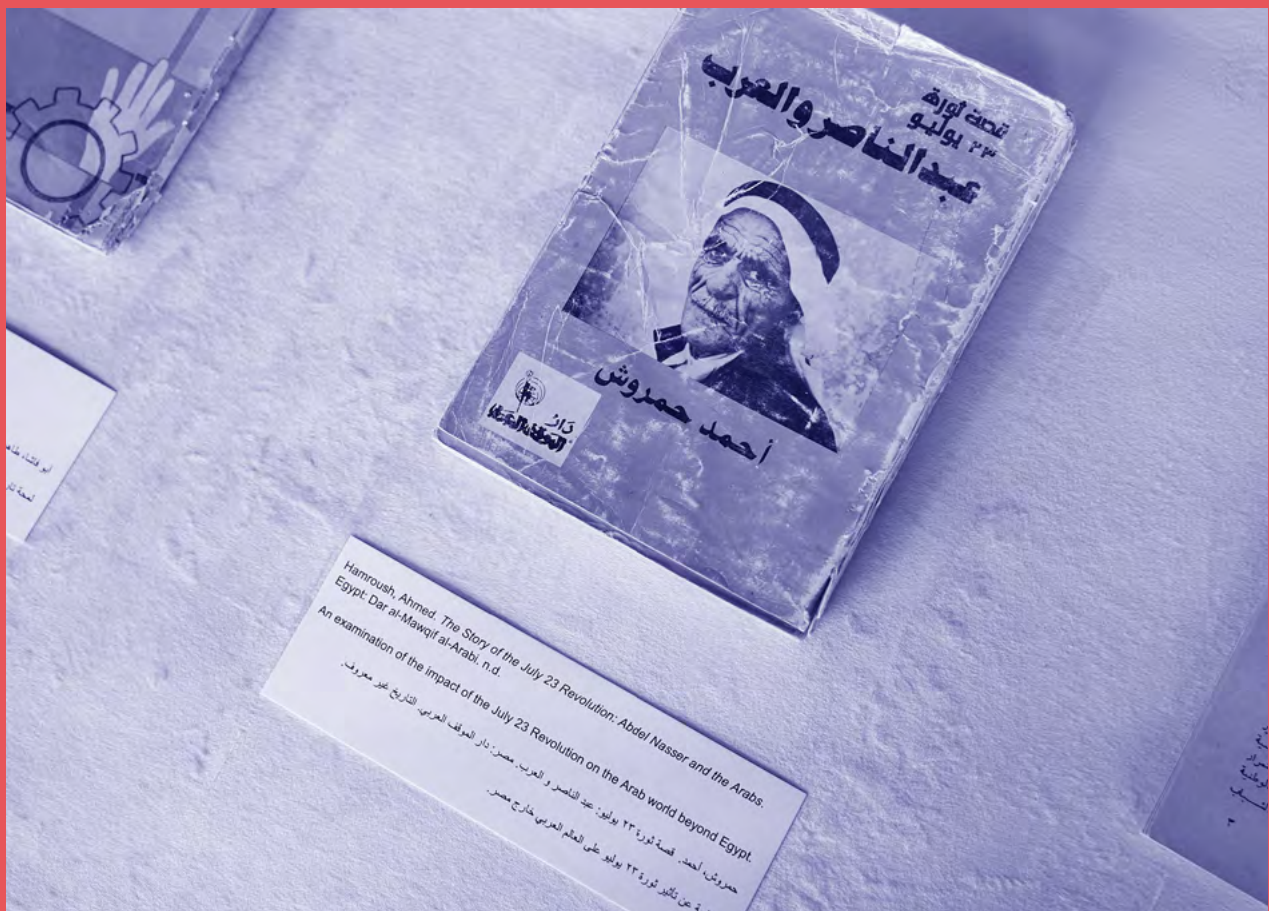
CMI

MARTTI AHTISAARI
PEACE FOUNDATION



COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

Fiker Institute's Library hosts an archive of historical books, including collections from the height of Pan-Arabism in Egypt, the United Arab Republic, and independence struggles across North Africa. The Library has put on archival displays including 'Pages of Unity: Pan-Arabism & the Nasser Era in Print,' which showcased a selection of books and printed works offering a window into the diplomatic, intellectual, and cultural forces that shaped the Arab World in the mid-20th century.



ADVISORY

Fiker Institute provides strategic advisory to public and private sector entities navigating complex global dynamics. The Institute's research team develops forward-looking assessments, thematic reports, and risk perception frameworks that help clients anticipate shifts, prioritize opportunities, and strengthen decision-making. Our advisory practice supports entities on strategy development, policy initiatives, and global convening efforts.

GET INVOLVED

Fiker Institute welcomes proposals for collaboration from partners, researchers, and practitioners. There are several ways to engage with our work:

Collaborate on Research

Institutions and experts can partner with us on joint studies, thematic papers, and projects across our research programs.

Participate in Events & Dialogues

Join our public lectures, policy roundtables, and high-level convenings that bring together diplomats, policymakers, scholars, and leaders from around the world.

Commission Advisory Work

Governments, organizations, and private-sector partners can engage the Institute for advisory services in the areas of foreign affairs, international development, and cultural diplomacy.

To learn more or explore partnership opportunities, please visit www.fikerinstitute.org or email us at partnerships@fikerinstitute.org

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Instagram: @fikerinstitute

LinkedIn: Fiker Institute

