



***in conversation***

London, United Kingdom

**Opening Remarks**

**Dr. Haifa Reda Jamal Al-Lail**

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء والمرسلين سيدنا محمد عليه أفضل

السلام وأزكى التسليم،،

Your Royal Highnesses,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،

It gives me great pleasure to extend to you all a very warm welcome on behalf of Effat University's Board of Trustees to this year's Effat University-QS in Conversation seminar 2018. I am very happy to see you all here and to welcome you to another joint seminar, this year's theme "University Rankings and International Migrant Scholars" explores different aspects of higher education in the context of internationalization and university rankings.

I would like to start by thanking our speakers for accepting our invitation to share their views. I acknowledge that you have taken time and made the extra effort to prepare your speeches and presentations and for this I wish to commend them.

I think that the best way for me to start is by noting that we as higher education institutions must strongly attempt to answer Queen Raniya's, of Jordan, question regarding the education of refugees: **“How will we keep up with changing educational models and strengthen our educational system, when 13 million Arab children are currently deprived of schooling, and the majority of the rest are offered an outdated education?”** (Misk Global Forum 2017). I believe that it is the time for international scholars to take advantage of their mobility and their exposure to diversified resources to help us close the gap on the issues arising from the refugee crisis and find sustainable solutions!

The importance of Migrating scholars dates back to the Golden Age of Muslims between the seventh and sixteenth centuries. During the reign of Harūn al-Rashīd (786-809) the House of Wisdom Library بيت الحكمة was established in Baghdad, after a few decades of its establishment it became an international hub for scholars. With the continuous flow in of scholars over several decades, the library was able to manage and gather numerous international scholars, scientists, researchers and translators – from different cultural

backgrounds and denominations – to translate and extend the scientific works in Sanskrit, Persian, and Greek, in different fields including mathematics, astronomy, chemistry and geography. The House of Wisdom Library serves as an excellent example on the effectiveness and importance of scholar migration to the perpetual upsurge in knowledge and technology. Although many, if not most, innovative scientific theories and practices of that age were neglected and overlooked, their foundations remained. To quote professor Salim AlHassani, (President of the UK Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilization) “Isaak Newton said “If I have seen further than others, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants” who are those giants?! The problem is that the present books do not tell us who those giants are!”, Dr. Salim raised a very logical question, when did the world lose touch with those giants? With the fall of the Muslim’s civilizations, in the Renaissance, credit due to the Muslims’ scientists vanished.

Effat University in collaboration with the UK-based Foundation for Science, Technology, and Civilization (FSTC) the Lecturers’ Pack was established in an attempt to bridge the 1000-year-knowledge-gap by integrating that forgotten heritage into Effat’s courses and

projects. The lecturers' Pack paves the way to a world of new opportunities to our students to draw from their Islamic heritage, utilize that knowledge and connect it to the new age of science and technology in a way that will not only enrich their learning experience but motivate them to further seek knowledge globally. And though many may oppose the progressive and inspiring impact of migration of scholars, history of the Golden Age is clearly consistent with that impact.

Taking in all of these aspects in consideration, and reflecting deeply on the situation of refugees, the logical recommendation would be to call for the integration of the study of modern sciences and civilization along with a deeply rooted study of their Heritage. In that way, we ensure that these future migrant scholars would have a holistic view of the world that both respects and cherishes both their past and future at the same time. It is our aim to create a platform in which you would exchange ideas and views, propose innovative methods to motivate internationalization in higher education further, and/or simply engage in enriching debates on the topics. An environment that facilitates professional networking with

educational experts, and key stakeholders and reflecting on how we can capitalize on the different perspectives which will be discussed.

With that I would like to conclude my remarks by saying that I hope this Seminar will bring new insights to our work, and wish you exciting yet informative and inspirational two days! I leave you with a short video on the Lecturers' Pack.

Thank you very much!

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته،،،،