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CV BOOKLET

BIOGRAPHIES



Vaqar AHMED

Date of Birth: 9th January

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Vaqar is currently Deputy Executive Director at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). He has published in areas such as quantitative analysis of growth, trade and taxation policies, remittances, free trade agreements, trade in services and border-related trade infrastructure. In 2012 Vaqar was Chief Coordinator for 5th South Asia Economic Summit which hosted over 2500 delegates in Islamabad from across South Asia and deliberations were submitted to national governments and SAARC Secretariat. In 2013 the Finance Minister of Pakistan appointed him Distinguished Member on the Steering Committee of the Inclusive Growth Centre. He is also a member of the Planning Commission's Vision 2025 working group, Research Advisory Council in the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and Health Services Academy in Pakistan.

Vaqar Ahmed has worked as an Economic Adviser with the UNDP, Asian Development Bank, World Intellectual Property Organisation and Ministries of Finance, Planning and Commerce in Pakistan. He is a visiting faculty member at the National University of Ireland, IMT Institute of Advanced Studies in Italy and Pakistan Institute of Trade and Development.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I feel that I am an amalgamation of Punjab and Sindh. I wanted to take up physics but ended up studying economics. I joined government service and found it too slow for my taste. I am currently having fun with civil society organisations. I am interested in three development triggers: social capital, social innovation and social accountability.



Majed BAMYA

Date of Birth: 9th July

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Majed Bamyia is a diplomat, in charge of the prisoners' portfolio at the Palestinian Foreign Ministry. He served previously at the General Delegation of Palestine to the EU, where he was in charge of EU-Palestinian bilateral relations and of the Euro-Mediterranean file. He was previously an adviser on Middle East and Euromed to a political group in the European Parliament. He was Fatah's international relations representative in Brussels. Majed Bamyia holds a Masters degree in International law from Sorbonne University, and is a regular writer and speaker on the Israeli occupation, the Arab uprisings, the EU's relations with the Middle East, as well as on democracy and human rights.

Majed has been active in several youth movements. He presided over the General Union of Palestine Students in France, and was one of the founders of a youth solidarity network on Palestine in France, Belgium and Switzerland. He recently founded a network of young Palestinian professionals, called NEWPa, aimed at elaborating a vision for a future Palestine in all fields, and contributing towards achieving it.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Jaffa. After the Nakba (the partition of Palestine), the members of my family became refugees in Lebanon. My family and I traveled from country to country, depending on political circumstances. I returned to Palestine at the age of 12. I grew up there before joining university in France, and the Palestinian diplomatic corps in Brussels. After 11 years abroad, I decided to return home to work on Palestinian prisoners' rights, a subject I have been involved with for over a decade now. I have loved writing for as long as I can remember, especially poetry. I am a workaholic but I am working hard to heal myself. I love discovering new countries but hate traveling.



Burcu BARAN

Date of Birth: 28th February

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Burcu is the Program Director at Global Relation Forum (GRF) in Turkey. GRF is the premiere membership organisation in Turkey focusing on the global agenda. It is an independent non - profit organisation bringing together leaders in Turkish business, academia, government, law, arts and sciences. She is the Project Director of the International Trade Task Force Study and is also directing two of GRF's community programmes, namely; the GRF Young Academics Program and the GRF Young Professionals Program. While working for GRF, she is also serving as a project assistant of the Global Civics Project led by the Brookings Institution since 2010. The project is concerned with raising consciousness and a sense of responsibility & cooperation in global governance. Before joining GRF, she was working for ExxonMobil, an international oil & gas company, where she had commenced her professional career.

Burcu's background prior to her professional life is in engineering. She graduated from Istanbul Technical University doing a double major in (B.Sc) Petroleum & Natural Gas Engineering and in (B.Sc) Management Engineering and holds an M.Sc degree in Metals & Energy Finance from Imperial College London. In her M.Sc thesis, she developed a methodology to evaluate the underlying technical as well as financial risks of a tar sand project using real option valuation techniques.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Turkey. At the age of 12, I moved with my parents to Germany because of my father's job and studied 4 years of my secondary education in Nürnberg, and completed the rest of high school and university in Istanbul, which was followed by one year in London for my post graduate studies.

Probably like many of the participants, I also like travelling. But I am not a big fan of suitcase vacations when I am away, so I usually prefer backpacking. So far, my favourite destination was Bhutan, where I had the opportunity to discover Buddhist culture and the gorgeous Himalayas. In Istanbul, when I am not at work in the city, I am somewhere off in nature. I go hiking and camping very often.

It is not a prediction but my hope for the world in 2020 would be a global order of shared influence and accountability.



Elena BEGANU

Date of Birth: 1st December

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Elena Beganu joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation in 2008. She is a staff officer in the Emerging Security Challenges Division, working on counter terrorism. She is closely associated with NATO's defence against terrorism programme, primarily dedicated to short term capability development in response to operational needs and alliance priority shortfall areas.

Prior to her current role, Elena was deployed in Afghanistan for 16 months as part of the ISAF mission and worked as an advisor to the Afghan Government helping to shape the new Afghan communication strategy on socio-economic development and contributing to women's empowerment. She holds a Master's degree in Advanced European and International Relations.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Romania, Buzau, in the region where the Carpathian Mountains take a turn west. As I was educated in a music school, I could be a piano teacher, but only by name, since I have only practiced for a short period of time. I count myself very fortunate to have studied in Paris, Nice, Berlin and Rome, as I really enjoy travelling.



David BEHAR

Date of Birth: 26th July

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David Behar is a Policy Advisor at the Policy Planning Department (PPS) of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in charge of “Rising Global Powers”, Turkey and “religion & politics” issues. He joined the Policy Planning Dpt in 2009 to help launch the “Religions Team”, a unit devoted to analysing broad religious trends in the contemporary world, providing specifically religious expertise on current international issues. Within the PPS, he is also an advisor on Turkey and is in charge of rethinking the French and European relationship with Rising Global Actors.

Before joining the Policy Planning Department, David worked for seven years in Turkey for the Foreign Ministry’s cultural and research institutes and two years in Italy, teaching at the European University Institute. David holds a BA in Political Science from Sciences Po Strasbourg, a MA and a PhD in Social Sciences from EHESS Paris.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

As a policy planner, I owe a little forecast of the world’s affairs in 2030. I’ll spare you the doomsday scenarios to focus on a possible way out: a world where all permanent members of an enlarged UN Security Council (including India and Germany) have renounced to their right to veto in case of mass crimes.



Phillipa BRANT

Date of Birth: 19th July

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Phillipa Brant is a Research Associate working to the Executive Director and Research Director at the Lowy Institute. She wrote her Ph.D. at The University of Melbourne investigating China's foreign aid program and its implications for the global development system, including a focus on the South Pacific region. As an inaugural Prime Minister's Australia Asia Endeavour Award holder (2010-2011), Philippa worked in Beijing as a Visiting Scholar at the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC) and an intern in the Health and Nutrition Division at UNICEF China.

Phillipa also holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Asian Studies and International Relations and a Diploma of Modern Languages (Chinese) from The University of Melbourne.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Wellington, New Zealand but grew up in Melbourne, Australia from age five. I love travelling and have spent time in the Middle East, Europe, America, China and the South Pacific. I am a big cricket fan and as a Kiwi-Aussie enjoy watching most sports. I also sing in choirs and have taught piano and singing to primary-school children. My other interests include cycling, reading, eating, and drinking red wine.



Maria Belina BRZOZOWSKA

Date of Birth: 14th February

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Maria is a member of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Poland. For the last three years she's been working as an assistant to the Chief of the Chancellery of the President but also was responsible for organising many of the President's meetings, local and foreign visits. During the last few months she has also been working with the First Lady as an aide who helps to fulfil her obligations as the President's wife, engaged in Polish social, cultural, charitable affairs. Maria has always been strongly active in the NGO sector through her 15 years of voluntary work for an old Polish association called the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia.

Maria had the opportunity to work in Paris in the International Secretariat of JECI-MIEC (International Young Catholic Students – International Movement of Catholic Students) which was an experience she drew on while writing her master's thesis titled 'Functioning of Global Nongovernmental Organisations'. With this work she finished her studies at the Management and Marketing faculty at Warsaw University.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I have lived in Warsaw since I was born and I really love it. I have observed the development of the city and Poland for almost 25 years – since its transformation in 1989 when all changes in Central and Eastern Europe started – and its completion. Since I was seven years old I was bound with the Club of Catholic Intelligentsia – which is a national association that has been in existence since 1956. It had a very strong influence on my personal as well as professional life.

I love dancing – I once wanted to be a ballet dancer – singing, skiing, horse riding, travelling, cooking. I like listening to very different kind of music but my favourites are Michael Buble, Chris Botti, Stacy Kent, Jason Mraz and music from the movie Amelie. I like watching musicals (Singing in the rain) and costume dramas (Becoming Jane). I believe that predicting the future even for seven years is impossible – the situation nowadays is very dynamic. Perhaps I can say that by 2020 women all over the world will become an even more important target group for different kinds of actions and activities as well as a very important decision making group which will influence policies and economies of countries.



Terence CHIA

Date of Birth: 6th December

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Terence is currently the Director of Singapore's Public Service Commission Secretariat (PSC Secretariat for short). The PSC was set up in 1951 to oversee the recruitment, promotion and terms of service of colonial civil servants. The PSC's structure and roles have evolved over the last 60 years in order to stay relevant and effective. Today, the PSC continues to be responsible for awarding PSC scholarships, appointing and promoting senior public servants, as well as deciding on disciplinary matters and appeals for promotion.

Prior to joining the PSC Secretariat, Terence worked at various places, including Singapore's Ministries of Manpower and Home Affairs, as well as the National Trades Union Congress, a national confederation of trade unions in the industrial, service and public sectors in Singapore. Outside of work, Terence has volunteered with several groups, including the National Youth Achievement Award and National Youth Councils. Terence was presented the Singapore Youth Award in 2011.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born and raised in Singapore, trained as an engineer and am now working as a civil servant. At one point in time, I used to be an avid roller blader (great way to resolve "gridlock" - just skate through it!) though I've since become quite rusty (have a couple of scars to prove it). My occasional activities to manage my new clothing budget now centre mainly around jogging, swimming, and trying (unsuccessfully) to avoid fast food.



Alistair COE

Date of Birth: 9th January

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In 2008, Alistair was elected to the Legislative Assembly of the Australian Capital Territory. He was re-elected in 2012 and currently serves as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Minister for Transport, Planning and Infrastructure, Urban Services, Heritage, Environment and Housing.

Prior to being elected, Alistair worked as an adviser at the national headquarters of the Returned and Services League of Australia – an organisation dedicated towards the welfare and representation of serving and ex-service military personnel. Alistair has been active in the Liberal Party since 2000 and served on the Federal Executive of the Party in 2007.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I have lived my whole life in Canberra and I have a Bachelor of Commerce from the Australian National University. I am married to Yasmin and we're proud owners of a whippet called Johan. In our spare time, we enjoy renovating our home.



Luke COFFEY

Date of Birth: 1st December

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Luke Coffey studies and writes on U.S.-UK relations as the Margaret Thatcher Fellow at The Heritage Foundation. He focuses in particular on defence and security matters, including the role of NATO and the European Union in transatlantic security. He has testified before Congress on NATO and trans-Atlantic security issues. Before joining Heritage's Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom in 2012, Coffey served at the UK Ministry of Defence as senior special adviser to then-British Defence Secretary Liam Fox. He was the only non-UK citizen appointed by Prime Minister David Cameron to provide advice to senior British ministers.

Coffey's work in British politics followed his service to the United States as a commissioned officer in the Army. He spent his entire time on active duty overseas and was stationed in Italy with the Army's Southern European Task Force. In 2005, Coffey deployed to Afghanistan for a year. Coffey received a Master of Science degree in the politics and government of the European Union from the London School of Economics. He also holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from the University of Missouri-St. Louis and an associate of arts degree in military science from Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Mo.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from rural Missouri and was the first person in my immediate family to fly in an airplane or leave the U.S. (Although living overseas for so long forced my family to change their ways in order to see me!). I currently live outside Washington DC but I have just returned to the U.S. after living almost a decade overseas in Italy and the UK. I enjoy hiking, fishing, shooting and most outdoor sports. I am an amateur collector of antique maps and British Victorian era military medals.



Amelie COYET

Date of Birth: 24th December

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Amelie is a Swedish diplomat who recently assumed the position as a second secretary at the Swedish Embassy in Beijing, China. For the next two years, she will be working with human rights issues and Chinese domestic politics. Swedish relations with Asia have been the main focus for Amelie's work for the past years. Prior to her current position, she worked at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, notably at the Asia and Pacific Department responsible for bilateral relations with China and India. Last year she was admitted to the Diplomatic Training Program in steep competition and has recently completed the one-year training program with 24 other young diplomats.

In parallel, Amelie served as the desk officer for Afghanistan, attending numerous international conferences on Afghanistan in the region. She also has experience from the Swedish Armed Forces Headquarters in analysing Asian security developments. Amelie has a MSc in Political Science from Lund University, Sweden's oldest university located in the south of Sweden.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

From the Swedish west coast originally, I have been travelling to different parts of the world since before I could walk. During my childhood, I spent four years in Hanoi, Vietnam, which had a big impact on me. Since then, my interest in Asia has been substantial. Therefore I am pleased that my first posting as a diplomat is in Beijing, China. I will spend the next few years learning more about Chinese politics, culture and history.

I am a big fan of the ocean; sailing, swimming and snorkelling whenever I get the chance. I hope that I will find the time to get a diver's certificate soon.



Nicole DIEKMANN

Date of Birth: 17th March

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Nicole has been working for ZDF, a German TV Station, for eight years. ZDF is one of two public TV stations in Germany. The first six years she was a reporter and anchor at the morning show, and since 2011 she has been working as one of three members at the so called “Reporterpool”. The three of them are kind of parachute journalists: They are sent to crises, emergencies and political upheavals around the world. This year for example, she covered the Marathon bombing in Boston and the train accident in Santiago de Compostela (Spain). Furthermore she travels frequently to Israel and the Palestinian territories, where she replaces and supports the correspondent. Her job is both making pieces and being live in the field.

Before she started working with ZDF, she was an online reporter for tagesschau.de, the website of Germany’s most popular news show – run by the other public station ARD. She worked in the capital bureau in Berlin and was responsible for domestic politics.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Gütersloh, a small town with about 100.000 inhabitants, and left it when I was 19. There would have been no chance for me to do the job I am doing right now and which I love very much. Gütersloh has no university; so many friends moved too fortunately most of them to Berlin. So I can see and invite them to dinner when I am in Germany, because meeting friends and cooking for them belong to my favourite things. When I am working anywhere in the world, I love watching TV series to relax: I am addicted to “Homeland” and “Girls”. Nobody will ever know how many hours I can spend with just watching. I can be unbelievably lazy. I also love reading, running and dancing. But what I love most, beside my two cats Leopold and Sammy, is travelling – of course; otherwise I would have been leading a painful life since 2011! What I like about the most is meeting new people, learning about their lives, listening to their opinions and what they think the world will look like one day.



Amina DOHERTY

Date of Birth: 30th May

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Amina is a women's rights activist whose work focuses on feminist philanthropy and creative arts for advocacy. Amina actively supports several community-led media platforms across Africa and the Caribbean and has facilitated several learning initiatives on women's rights, youth development, resource mobilization and economic justice. Prior to her role as founding member and general coordinator of FRIDA (a fund dedicated to providing financial and capacity building support to young feminists around the world), Amina worked on the women's rights grant-making program at the Sigrid Rausing Trust one the largest private human rights funders in Europe. She has also worked as a researcher for the government of Antigua and Barbuda in the Directorate of Gender Affairs. Amina currently sits on the boards of the Global Fund for Woman and the international feminist organisation - Just Associates (JASS).

In 2012, Amina was recognised by singer Annie Lennox as a women's rights champion for change. She holds a BA in Political Science & Women's Studies from McGill University (Distinction) and an MSc in Gender, Development and Globalisation from the London School of Economics (LSE).

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in London, but grew up in Kaduna, Nigeria. When I was 12, I moved to the small Caribbean island of Antigua where I went to High School. In 2000, I moved to Toronto, Canada for two years and then Montreal where I studied for four years. After living and working in the UK for six years I moved to Kingston, Jamaica last year.

Through all the various initiatives I have been involved in, I bring to my activism a passion for music, art, travel, photography, African fashion and poetry. If I had more time on my hands I would take courses in film making and DJ-ing. I currently run a radio program called 'young women speak out' for the Sylvia Global Media Group. My favourite writers are Edwidge Danticat, Audre Lorde, and Arundhati Roy.



Maria Saifuddin EFFENDI

Date of Birth: 25th October

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Maria Saifuddin Effendi is serving as Assistant Professor Peace and Conflict Studies at National Defence University, Islamabad (Pakistan) since February 2009. In 2012-13, she worked with Near East South Asia (NESAS) Center for Strategic Studies, National Defence University, Washington DC (USA). NDU (Islamabad) nominated her as “Pakistan International Fellow”, the first to serve at the NESAS Centre. Under this fellowship, she took up a project to write a book on “Developing Indigenous Conflict Resolution Model for Pashtoon Society: A Case Study of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa in Pakistan”. Earlier, Maria served as Research Scholar at the Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad from 2003 – 2006, Kodikara Fellow 2005 – 06 at Regional Center for Strategic Studies (RCSS, Sri Lanka) and Visiting Scholar at Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI, Sweden) in summer 2007.

In Pakistan, Effendi is among few subject specialists on Conflict Resolution. She obtained a M.Sc in Conflict Management from University of Bradford (UK) as Rotary World Peace Fellow 2006 – 08 and completed her first degree in International Relations from University of Karachi (Pakistan) in 2002. Maria has 22 research publications including a book and is in the process of writing her second book.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born and raised in Karachi and then moved to Islamabad for career development and professional growth. I have cultural roots from both Sindh and Punjab but I relate more to my Punjabi side for the reason that I spent my late and post teen years in Islamabad and have gone through experiences of practical life here. I am a big foodie and love travelling, exploring the country side and diverse cultures. I am friendly and easy/open to talk to but strong headed when it comes to principles.



Camille EISS

Date of Birth: 17th March

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Camille Eiss currently serves in the Obama Administration as Strategic Communications Advisor to the Assistant Administrator for Democracy, Conflict, & Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) at the U.S. Agency for International Development. In this capacity, she drives strategic communications on DCHA policy priorities from the Syria crisis response to Yemen to the Resilience Agenda, an overhaul of international development approaches in areas of recurrent crisis. Camille's prior background includes experience at the intersection of international security policy, democracy building, and international development. She last served as Policy Director for the Truman National Security Project, where she focused primarily on U.S. policy toward Iran and Egypt and developed two key initiatives: an award-winning campaign on development and national security and a Democracy & Human Rights Initiative to help foster non-traditional relationships in Arab Spring countries.

Camille previously worked as a Research Analyst at Freedom House focused on Southeast Asia, Turkey, and Iran and as Assistant Editor of Freedom in the World, the definitive global survey of political rights and civil liberties. Camille has also worked to advance entrepreneurship in emerging market economies as a Senior Associate with Endeavour Global and has served as Associate Managing Editor of The Washington Quarterly at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, where she co-edited a book on pre-emption, regime change, and U.S. policy toward Iran, Iraq, and North Korea.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I grew up in a New Jersey suburb, just outside New York City, where my parents instilled a deep respect and affection for history, politics, family, and theatre. It seems they've all stuck. Once certain I would pursue an academic career in 20th-century American history, I've accepted my fate in foreign affairs as a democracy/human rights junkie with a strong appetite for strategy and analysis. Since leaving home, I have lived in Prague, DC, NYC, and London and enjoy taking a break from world turmoil by trying a new recipe with friends or riding my bike in crisp weather.



Chris FITZGERALD

Date of Birth: 3rd April

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Chris has been based at the British Embassy in Kabul since March 2013 after having spent a thoroughly enjoyable three years at the British High Commission in New Delhi. Before coming to South Asia he worked at the UK Foreign Office on the Middle East Process, Counter Terrorism and Iran.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy was not the career I thought I would go into when I left school. English literature was my first love, and also the subject of my undergraduate degree. A rugby tour to Lebanon while at university opened my eyes to a world beyond British shores. I then undertook a Master's in Diplomacy and Statecraft, which I finished while at a university in Morocco where I also taught a class in comparative politics. I am still most happy either relaxing with a real ale, a good book and some beautiful countryside or exerting myself (with variable effect) on the tennis court or football pitch.



Graham Charles GENRICH

Date of Birth: 31st March

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Graham is currently a Captain in the United States Army serving as the Aide de Camp to the Commanding General of US Army Japan (USARJ). Previously he was the aide to the Deputy Commander of US Army Europe (USAREUR) in Heidelberg, Germany and commanded an artillery battery for 16 months prior to that. His current job entails logistics, bilateral coordinations, providing for and ensuring travel, liaison to uniformed and civilian personnel across the Pacific and East Asia, and much more. Other jobs in the Army took Graham from assignments all around the continental United States to deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Prior to joining the Army, Graham was able to intern at an office of a United States Senator, Office of the First Lady, and selected aboard the Institute for Shipboard Education through Semester at Sea.

Graham studied Political Science and Anthropology at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York (2000-2004) and focused on comparative politics especially within the European Union context. His most recent travels will be to the Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference in New Zealand where many nations gather to discuss 21st century peace operations in a United Nations context.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I thought I had seen the world when I was only 17 and boy was I wrong. I was born in Buffalo, New York and have immediate family on both coasts of the United States. During a summer in college I had the privilege of studying abroad and since then, I have not really felt like I have unpacked. I love travelling, playing and watching most sports, and learning about new cultures and customs. I am looking forward to this privilege and experience at AFGG.



Tom GEORGE

Date of Birth: 20th August

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Tom is Second Secretary Energy and Resource Security at the British High Commission in New Delhi. The role involves providing analysis to inform UK policy with respect to India on energy and resource (particularly water) security, and developing policy, research and commercial collaboration between the UK and India on energy and resources issues. Before being posted to the British High Commission in New Delhi, Tom spent two years at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in London, covering Saudi Arabia and subsequently NATO issues.

Prior to joining the FCO Tom spent 6 years as a management consultant, where he specialised in providing market analysis and risk management services to metals and mining companies. Tom studied physics at the University of Bristol, UK (1999-2002).

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

As the child of a military family, I was brought up believing that to live in one place for longer than two years is unusual. I spent most of my childhood in the South West of the UK (Devon and Somerset), with extended periods in Scotland and the USA (Quantico, Virginia). I studied physics at University because it offered better employment prospects than history. While I found it fascinating, I didn't continue. After University I drifted into management consultancy because it provided interesting and varied work and paid reasonably well. I enjoyed being a consultant, particularly because of the extensive travel, but after six years of mostly working in the metals and mining sector, I realised that I knew as much as I wanted to know about the mining industry. I also started to find the travel unsatisfying. So I decided to apply for the diplomatic service, something that had always appealed to me for the interesting and varied work and the opportunity to spend significant time living overseas. So far the change is working out well.



Dala GHANDOUR

Date of Birth: 28th January

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Dala is a Lebanese Family lawyer who works mainly on Sharia issues, with a specific focus on women’s right. She holds a degree in Public & Private Law and a Master in Management, from Lebanon & France. At present, Dala is the coordinator of the Lebanese Mediation Center at the Chamber of Commerce of Beirut. She is a certified CPM & CEDR mediator and believes in mediation power to resolve conflicts & restore relationships. She has been offering her mediation services to unprivileged populations in North Lebanon, as an instructor in Lebanese jails & as a family mediator for divorced couples.

Interested in empowering youth and women to be engaged in the public field, she ran as the youngest independent candidate for Beirut municipality elections in 2010. She believes that politics should not be only left to politicians. She is the editor and one of the writers of “Revolution by Love: Emerging Arab Youth Voices.” She was chosen as a Draper Hills Summer Fellow at Stanford University for 2013, a MEPI Leader for Democracy Fellow for 2012 and as a United Nations Alliance of Civilizations MENA Fellow for 2011.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am from vibrant Beirut city; I grew up between different cultures with a special love for traveling that started when I was seven months old and has not left me since! I am particularly fond of War and Peace by Tolstoy, Phèdre de Racine, Tchaikovsky and Italian films (Cinema Paradiso). I acted in Russian plays, wrote a book and produced three documentaries!

I do believe that the Arab world in 2020 will be in better shape than now but unfortunately at the price of many victims and unpleasant historical events that will get us there.



Faris HADROVIC

Date of Birth: 14th June

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Faris is the Assistant Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By using population data, Faris helps to guide the office to help the government devise policies and programmes to reduce poverty and ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect. Prior to joining the UNFPA, Faris managed a large portfolio of capacity building programmes for the BiH governments at the Delegation of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The portfolio included economic policy, fiscal policy, statistics, and population issues including the Census, national development strategy/plan and institutional and administrative development in the economic sector. Faris also worked for the Office of the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as Business Reform Officer advising on issues related to business development and potential investor interest.

He holds a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations and Economics from the American University in Cairo as well as a Master's Degree from the University of Bologna in Governance and Politics of European Integrations.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Libya, educated in Egypt and Italy, and lived for periods of time in Iran and Hungary. Even though I lived abroad most of my life, when I was 14 I witnessed the horrific war back home in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the ensuing 44-month siege of Sarajevo, the longest in modern history. This was a major life experience that taught me to value life and the little things that make it up. I enjoy travelling very much and generally spend much time traveling both internationally and across Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region. I am an avid biker, both bicycle and motorcycle, and use every opportunity and good weather to get some adrenaline fun. I also have great interest in Asia, have visited it widely, and enjoy spending holidays there.



Michelle HARDING

Date of Birth: 27th October

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Michelle Harding is an economist at the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD). In her role, she is responsible for providing policy advice to the OECD's member countries and partner economies, particularly in the areas of environmental taxation and the taxation of capital income. Prior to joining the OECD, Michelle spent four years working at the New Zealand Treasury, where she worked on public sector governance issues (particularly fiscal management and machinery of government), financial sector regulation, indigenous law and tax policy; and was seconded to act as an economic advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand.

While completing her qualifications, Michelle worked as a law clerk to a barrister specialising in indigenous law, arbitration and employment law. She completed a Bachelor of Management Studies, majoring in Economics, at the University of Waikato and a Bachelor of Laws (with Honours) at the University of Waikato and Victoria University of Wellington (2000-2006) and was admitted to the New Zealand bar as a barrister and solicitor in 2007.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

New Zealand is a long way from most places, and I grew up on a farm far from anywhere else in New Zealand until 2004 when I moved to the capital to finish my studies and start work. Perhaps because of this background, I love to travel and learn more about other languages and cultures. Music is important to me: I like to listen to and share music and love playing the piano. Moving to Paris in early 2011 has been a great experience, allowing me to explore more of the world; to live and work in a multicultural environment; to learn French; and to engage with a diverse range of ideas and people.



Ahmad Sulieman HEDAYAT

Date of Birth: 4th May

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Ahmad Sulieman Hedayat is a senior institutional development advisor at the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) in Afghanistan. He is closely working on developing policies as well as programs and plans in coordination with the Planning and Program Coordination Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure the required policies and programs are in place to help the ministry function as an institution delivering agricultural related services to its stakeholders. Prior to working with MAIL, Sulieman has worked with Ministry of Education in different capacities helping its Human Resource Development Directorate develop policies, guidelines and tools for performance appraisal of its staff.

Prior to his work with the government sector, he has worked with the UN supporting gender issues in Afghanistan and has taken part in development of the 10 year National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan which sets out policies for mainstreaming women's issues in various sectors of the government. He has also worked with the civil society and as volunteer in charitable organisations, and as a teacher and English language tutor. He has done a Master of Education Degree in Leadership and Management from the University of Sydney focusing on organisational development and capacity building. He graduated cum laude from the American University of Afghanistan with a bachelor's degree in management.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I come from the capital city of Afghanistan - Kabul. I have experienced 4 different governments. I was born during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, in a communist government. When I was 8, I witnessed the start of the civil war and the horrific clashes that ensued, followed by the establishment of an Islamic government. When I was 13, the Taliban had taken over the country and a brutal regime emerged that ruled through fear and suppression. We fled to Pakistan and only returned in 2002 once the new government was established. As a person I am very friendly, and enjoy travelling and experiencing new places, as well as new food. Photography and calligraphy are two of my hobbies. I have also been a national level chess player and have represented Afghanistan in the 2006 Turin Chess Olympiad.



Mohd Sani ISMAIL (SANI)

Date of Birth: 7th April

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Sani works as a Financial Sector Economist in the Asian Development Bank (ADB) on the side. In this capacity, Sani tries to persuade with 'facts and figures', countries in Southeast Asia to borrow from the ADB through its program loan modality. He also provides technical assistance funding free of charge. His areas of responsibility are small and medium enterprise (SMEs) development, regional capital market integration and Islamic finance. Since joining ADB in 2009, he has been ADB's mission leader for SME development in Lao PDR and regional capital market integration for ASEAN countries.

Sani has also been involved in teams that have worked with financial sector development in Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam. One of his latest projects is the ASEAN Corporate Governance Scorecard which ranks public listed companies in the region by their corporate governance standards. Prior to joining ADB, Sani worked in the Product and Market Development department of Securities Commission Malaysia for 7 years.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Penang, Malaysia (where we have the best food in the world). I graduated with a law degree from the International Islamic University of Malaysia and then was awarded the British Chevening scholarship for my LLM degree in Durham University, UK. I specialised in international trade law including WTO law and graduated with distinction. I was actively involved in international debating in both universities. I believe strongly in market oriented economics and favor libertarian view points, though I am open to socialist views and the state playing a limited role in our daily lives.



Insook KIM

Date of Birth: 14th July

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Insook Kim is a coordination officer in the Director General's Office of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In her role, she is responsible for providing policy coordination guidance in the various areas of the IAEA's work to ensure a one-house approach. Prior to joining the IAEA, she worked in the Public Information Section of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) and also at the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

Insook studied Political Science and Diplomacy in Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea and received her Master's in International Policy Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies where she specialised in non-proliferation studies.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Seoul, Korea but spent over half of my life overseas. I have lived in places such as Taiwan, Sierra Leone, Netherlands, South Africa, USA, China and Austria. I have been residing in Vienna, Austria for the past three years. I am accustomed to interacting in a multi-cultural environment and enjoy learning about different cultures.



Shweta Rajpal KOHLI

Date of Birth: 5th April

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Shweta is an award-winning business journalist and well-known TV news anchor. As the Economic Affairs Editor of NDTV, she is responsible for all business and economic coverage for the most respected English news TV channel in the country - NDTV 24x7. She anchors a daily show Rebooting India on NDTV 24x7 that talks about bringing India back on the high growth path. As the Head – Special Programming (Education) for NDTV Profit, she is working on generating new programming content in the education arena for the channel. Shweta has been in the media industry for over 15 years. Before joining NDTV in 2005, she worked with leading print media organisations including Hindustan Times, The Times of India, Business Standard and The Indian Express.

Shweta has received several awards including two of the country's most prestigious journalism awards given by Presidents of India - the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Broadcast Journalism by President Pratibha Patil in June 2010 and the Business Standard - Seema Nazareth Award for Young Print Journalists under 25 by the then President KR Narayanan in February 2001. Her shows like Rebooting India, We Mean Business, Road to Recovery, Ride the Recession and The Game Changers have featured the who's who of India Inc including KV Kamath, Azim Premji, NR Narayana Murthy, Anand Mahindra, Sunil Bharti Mittal, Kumar Manglam Birla, Chanda Kochhar, Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Adi Godrej as well as policymakers and ministers like P Chidambaram, Pranab Mukherjee, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Kamal Nath, Anand Sharma and C Rangarajan.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I've been a Delhi girl throughout my life - born, brought up studied and worked in Delhi! I had set out to be a doctor but after failing to clear my pre-medical exam, I ended up doing my Bachelors in Journalism at Lady Shri Ram College. And no regrets! My 16 years in journalism - both print and broadcast - have been a hugely enriching and rewarding experience. I've had the opportunity to interact with some of the brightest minds in India and around the world. I love my job and the excitement it brings with it. I also love travelling (my bags are always packed!) - be it for work or pleasure! I live in Delhi with my husband and 3-year-old daughter. Like all working mothers, I'm forever guilty for not spending enough quality time with my daughter. But I guess, it's never enough!



Lee MOAKES

Date of Birth: 20th August

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Lee Moakes works for TRUMPF India Pvt Ltd as the General Manger of TruServices. He transferred to India in 2011 to expand the technical support structure within India for TRUMPF products and develop the Services after sales business, predominantly the service agreements, consumables and tooling sales. Processes have been a key area of focus applying lean manufacture concepts to the office environment. Prior to transferring to India he worked at TRUMPF Great Britain as the Service Manager controlling the technical support department throughout the recession period.

Having a long career within the TRUMPF group since the year 2000, Lee has worked across multiple business units, including the Laser division where he acted as project manager for the Aerospace market. The Aerospace market demanded high levels of focus on technological advances and delivering projects on time and under budget, projects such a turbine blade repair using the principles of laser metal deposition are now being used commercially.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Nottingham, England and studied electronic engineering. Throughout my career, I have consistently sought new experiences and learning opportunities, such as taking Open University courses in Psychology. In many ways, I consider London to be my home, even though I lived there for only 4 years before transferring to India. Travel and experiencing new cultures has always been a strong passion. I have had the opportunity to visit many continents and during my excursions to Asia, I found India to be one of the most interesting and unique, so I jumped at the chance to transfer to India to experience working life and business culture.

I have not had the opportunity, so far, in India for my second passion which is snowboarding. I one day hope to visit Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir.



Chetan NARAKE

Date of Birth: 11th September

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Chetan is the Strategy and Finance Manager for Mars - Asia Pac. Mars is a privately owned company worth USD 33b with 4 major segments namely Pet food, Chocolate, Food and Drink. The well-known brands under its umbrella are : Snickers, M&M, Mars, Uncle Bens', Pedigree, Whiskas and Royal Canin. With its recent acquisition of Wrigley it has become the biggest confectionary company in the world. Chetan is part of the Asia Pac leadership team which handles a business worth 2.5b USD. His key areas of expertise are strategic revenue management, micro market strategy for developing and emerging markets, pricing strategy, changed business modeling including evolving economy structures (bottom of pyramid to mid of the diamond) and channel/customer/product mix growth investments.

Previously, he has worked across many industries from co-operatives like Gokul milk in Maharashtra, manufacturing construction equipment in Universal Pune to Corporate Banking with Morgan Stanley in USA and Asia Pacific. He holds an MS in Computer Science from Chicago and an MBA in Finance & Strategy from The Simon School of Business, New York.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I come from a line of leaders where my grandfather, D.C. Narake, was responsible for reviving the sugarcane industry in Maharashtra in the 60's and started the Kumbhi Kasari Co-operative Sugar Factory and Co-operative Bank. My father, Arun Narake is a well-known name in Indian co-operative politics and currently chairs the Indian Dairy Association. It was very difficult for me to break away from such a background since there was no such precedent in my family, but today I love my work and I am thankful for the opportunity. In my free time, I am an active board member in my grandfather's foundation, I like volunteering, outdoor activities such hiking, tennis, swimming and soccer. I am a true bean counter who believes early to bed and early to rise keeps you healthy, wealthy and wise!



Goranij NONEJUIE

Date of Birth: 5th October

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Goranij has been at the Ministry of Commerce, the Royal Thai Government, since March 2003 and is responsible for business development and internal trade. He has been in Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's delegation team, "TEAM THAILAND", serving mainly on foreign affairs and international delegations related to bilateral and multilateral trade, APEC, and ASEAN engagement. Currently, he is working for the Bureau of Rice and Agricultural Products overseeing the rice pledging scheme aimed at enhancing livelihood of the rural poor farmers and monitoring and forecasting the global rice situation and trends in terms of stock, trade, price and policy.

Goranij is also involved with a number of socio-environmental and natural resources initiatives. These include serving with the Centre of Drought Mitigation as part of His Majesty, the King's initiative (2012-present), in setting up "rice paddy study centres"- encouraging the upper-middle income holders and expatriates in Bangkok to learn how to grow, cultivate, and harvest rice in rice paddy fields in remote areas of Thailand and preserving the traditional way of life and culture of the local Thais. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy from the Oxford University Centre for Environment, University of Oxford, and his dissertation focused on the roles of new technology in enhancing social learning of stakeholders at the lowest levels of governance.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Despite most of my time being spent at the commerce ministry in Bangkok and missions abroad, I enjoy spending free time in my rice paddy school (teaching the upper-middle class Bangkokians to grow and harvest rice) in remote areas of Thailand. I enjoy every step on sticky mud and the strong scent of mud and rice sprouts in the middle of the rice paddy fields. I am lucky enough to have joined the PM and Team-Thailand's official visits to many interesting places. The places where I really want to go back again are Ulan Bator, Port Moresby, Kandy, Manama, Kuwait City, Dhaka, Male, Kaya, Siem Reap, Lumbini and of course Delhi. My favourite books and films are communism or dictatorship related such as - The Lives of the Others, On the Front Line: The Collected Journalism of Marie Colvin, Escape from Camp 14.



Joana PASCUAL

Date of Birth: 14th August

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Joana is an Investment Officer in the Infrastructure Division of the Inter-American Development Bank (“IDB”), the leading source of development financing for Latin America and the Caribbean. She is responsible for managing private sector deals in renewable energy (primarily wind and hydro) and transportation, with a focus on ports and toll-roads. She has also been instrumental in promoting the Bank’s partnership with Harvard University to boost recognition of sustainable practices in infrastructure projects across Latin America with the “360 Sustainable Infrastructure Awards”. She also co-lead the development of the IDB Private Sector Road Safety Program which seeks to mainstream road safety measures into road operations, thus saving lives and also impacting the bottom line of road operators by drastically reducing the economic and social impact of accidents. Prior to joining the IDB, Joana was a Junior Professional Associate at the World Bank Group.

Joana has worked at the United Nations Human Settlement Program tracking urban infrastructure reforms within the UN-Habitat agenda while getting her Master’s in Economic and Financial Development at Columbia University in New York. She also holds a Master’s in Economic Development from Sciences Po Paris and an undergraduate in Economics and Management from the London School of Economics.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Barcelona in Spain and hence, I will always have love for summer, the sun and the sea. I have a passion for languages, culture and art and have a job that allows me to explore many of these facets. An avid swimmer and squash player, I have also taken on more of pilates and yoga. My favourite books include Kafka on the Shore, Before Night Falls, 100 Years of Solitude, The Grapes of Wrath, La vie devant soi, The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao and Le Petit Prince. Movies include TodosobreMi Madre, Indochine, Los Amantes del Circulo Polar, Breakfast at Tiffany’s, Cinema Paradiso and About de Souffle to name a few. My prediction for 2020 is that everybody – and not only politicians, academics and businessmen – will know that India and China represent over a third of the world population, and thus, represent the future.



Taimar PETERKOP

Date of Birth: 20th January

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Taimar is Undersecretary for Legal and Administrative Affairs at the Estonian Ministry of Defence. He manages and coordinates the work of Legal Department, Finance Department, Administration Department and IT Department. In that capacity he is in charge of the main legislative drafting projects and ICT sector of the Estonian Defence establishment. Taimar Peterkop has graduated from the University of Tartu Faculty of Law and he has completed many in-service trainings, including the Higher Command Studies Course in Baltic Defence College. Taimar holds a Master`s degree in Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College. He is also a reserve officer.

During 2000–2001 Taimar Peterkop worked as a lawyer in the Government Office. During 2001–2005 he worked in the Ministry of Defence as the Director of International Law Office and during 2005–2008 as the Director of Operations and Crisis Management Department. From 2008 until July 2010 he worked as a Defence Counsellor in the Estonian Embassy in Washington. Taimar Peterkop has also worked as a national defence teacher in several high schools and as an international law lecturer at the Estonian Business School.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born on 20th January 1977 in Tallinn, where I grew up and went to school. I spent my university years in Tartu and I've also lived two and a half years in Washington DC, US. Currently I live in Tallinn with my girlfriend Pille. I enjoy the outdoors (jogging, hiking, cycling, hunting, cross-country skiing) reading something not related to work and good food in good company.



Li QIANYU

Date of Birth: 26th July

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Li Qianyu is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Diplomacy, China Foreign Affairs University, the sole institute of higher learning affiliated to China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He teaches China's contemporary diplomatic history, China's modern diplomatic history (1840-1949) and the history of China-U.S. relations. In today's China, history oriented studies are not the mainstream of international studies. A distinguished Chinese scholar said that there are only two kinds of people who want to study history - rich people and silly people. It is no doubt that Li Qianyu is the latter.

Li Qianyu has a strong passion for archival research, and he has spent a long time researching China's Foreign Ministry archives because he believes that archives contain historical truth. His limited achievements are also based on archival research. In China, archival research related to modern and contemporary history is not only difficult, but sometimes also troublesome.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born and brought up in Beijing. When I was 19, I entered the China Foreign Affairs University to conduct my undergraduate studies. Unfortunately, I found that I was not interested in legal affairs. After graduation, as a professional editor and translator, I worked for China Radio International for two and a half years. I also worked in the Malaysian Embassy in Beijing for a short period of time. In 2004, I re-entered CFAU to pursue my Master's Degree. In 2007 after succeeding in a very competitive examination, I started my Ph.D. studies at the Peking University - the academic dreamland in China. In 2011, I came back to CFAU with a Doctoral degree. I am interested in archaeology, Chinese classic literature and Peking opera - a kind of Chinese classic folk art like Sanskrit drama in ancient India.



Samy SAADI

Date of Birth: 27th August

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Samy joined the German Federal Foreign Service in 2010 and is currently working as First Secretary at the German Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan. He heads the economic section of the embassy and is also in charge of domestic and human rights issues in the political section. Prior to starting his diplomatic career in Berlin, Samy worked for UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in New York, focusing on issues related to pre- and post-conflict scenarios in the Near and Middle East. His prior professional experience includes assignments with the Directorate General for External Relations in Brussels, a German political foundation in Beirut, and the office of the Mayor of Nantes.

Alongside his studies and the first years of his career he has shown a particular interest in UN Peacekeeping and international interim administration. The latter was the topic of his final thesis for his Master's in Public Administration at the Ecole Nationale d'Administration. During his initial studies at Sciences Po Bordeaux, the University of Tübingen and UC Berkeley (2002-2007) he focused on International Peace & Conflict studies and International Human Rights Law.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born and raised in Bochum, a mid-sized city in the Ruhrgebiet, the former heart of Germany's industrial production. Thanks to my parent's travel frenzy I spent extended periods of time in Italy, France, Algeria, and Spain during my childhood. After graduating from high school, my urge to discover new places and people led me to the decision to study abroad. Having been raised in a francophone household in Germany, my combined Franco-German studies in Bordeaux and Stuttgart were a good compromise. Subsequent academic and professional stints in the USA, Lebanon, Tanzania and Euro-Brussels helped to further broaden my perspective and led to my decision to pursue an entirely international career. My mid-term objective is to continue my engagement with international institutions, this time from a national diplomat's perspective. In my free time I enjoy travelling (of course), playing and watching football, and listening to good music, mostly hip hop that is. I am increasingly interested in national politics and would like to get more involved in it upon my return to Germany.



Hanna Meirelles SANTOS

Date of Birth: 30th January

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Hanna is the Education and Talent Management manager for Vale in Latin America. Vale is the second largest mining company in the world, with a mission of transforming natural resources into prosperity and sustainable development. In her role, she is responsible for creating solutions and advising on engagement, diversity, career, learning and development practices and policies for more than 80.000 people. Prior to that she was working with human resources, strategic planning and project management for different companies in the consulting and natural resources sector in Brazil and in 14 other countries of the southern hemisphere of 4 continents.

Hanna graduated in Business Administration from the Federal University of Bahia – Brazil, where she started her studies and research on culture and diversity within companies and nations, which became one of the main themes of interest throughout her whole career. While at university, she worked for the largest student-run organisation in the world – AIESEC – with leadership development, promoting opportunities to thousands of young people around the globe.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born and raised in Salvador, which is the most musical city in Brazil. The musical influence explains my favourite hobbies, which are dancing and singing. I also love travelling, reading, writing, hiking, practicing yoga and cooking. I am interested in sports, cultural discussions and interacting with people from different countries and backgrounds.

My favourite movie is called “Senna”. The greatest books are “Long Walk to Freedom” by Nelson Mandela and “Bombay Time” by Thrity Umrigar. I believe in 2020 the world will be a place with at least 25% of women in leadership positions and we will experience greater gender equity and equality.



Raphaela Ute SCHNEIDER

Date of Birth: 12th April

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Raphaela currently works as Vice President in the Office of the Co-CEOs, Deutsche Bank AG. In her role as Executive Assistant to Jürgen Fitschen, Co-CEO, she is responsible for the preparation of internal and external meetings, speeches and presentations, for tasks in connection to her boss's external mandates, including the Association of German Banks, the German Asia-Pacific Business Association and the Indo-German Consultative Group, as well as any other day-to-day business. Prior to her current role, she worked for five years as Legal Counsel and Senior Counsel in Deutsche Bank's Legal Department where she advised the Corporate Banking & Securities division on a broad range of structured financial products and project finance transactions.

During her studies in Law at the University of Freiburg (1998-2003), she was also very active in university politics. Raphaela is an attorney admitted to the Frankfurt and the New York bar and holds a Master of Laws (LLM) degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. She is an alumna of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. and the Rotary Foundation.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am originally from Annaberg-Buchholz, a small town in Eastern Germany famous for its Christmas decorations. I admit that I still love the festive season in that region with its snow-covered hills, bright lights in every window and yummy sweets. But for most of the year I enjoy living in a multi-cultural city like Frankfurt. I have always loved travelling and some of my fondest memories are related to my studies in the U.S., the three months I spent working in India in 2006, or to various backpacking trips in Asia. However, I have just embarked on one of the greatest journeys in life when I got married this summer. On weekends, I enjoy reading, skiing, sailing and cooking for friends before an evening full of lively discussions.



Stella SEIBERT-PALASCINO

Date of Birth: 7th October

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Stella is currently working as a desk officer in the Peace and Security division of the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). She is dealing with questions of civilian crisis prevention and recovery through a “comprehensive approach”; organized crime and fragile states. When she entered the ministry in 2006, her first assignment was at the World Bank/IMF unit, where Stella was in charge of formulating German policy at the International Development Association (IDA) and questions of World Bank Reform. Between 2000-2005, Stella studied Political Science, Public and International Law and South Asian Studies at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, and at Sciences Po, Paris.

Her Master’s thesis was entitled “Islam, Modernity and the Discourse on Democracy in the Muslim World: The case of post-revolutionary Iran.” She acquired practical work experience through a couple of internships, at the German Parliament in Berlin, the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ) in Frankfurt and at the Friedrich-Ebert-Foundation (FES) in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in 1979 in an unexciting town called Darmstadt, near Frankfurt, Germany. As the daughter of two scientists, I learned at a very young age what it means to question and analyse the world around me. I started studying biology but soon found out that what interests me most is how societies (can) function, and what fairness and justice mean at a societal level. I finally came to the conclusion that Political Science is the best field of study to answer some of these questions and to make an impact on my life. During my studies and before, I was engaged with an NGO working on intercultural youth exchange and conflict management. My scientific way of thinking was challenged when I entered the public service in 2006. I had to learn that political logic is somewhat different of what I had considered logic so far. Still, I am very happy to work within the political process. I like to read novels, to take part in political discussions and watch political films. I am fond of classical music (sometimes still try the piano) and outdoor activities (hiking, biking). Since I became a mother, I like to spend as much time as I can to (re-)explore the world with my wonderful boys Elias, 4 and Leander, 1.



Pierpaolo SETTEMBRI

Date of Birth: 8th June

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Pierpaolo is an official of the European Union (EU) since 2007, currently working in the G8/G20 and external representation team at the European Commission. Prior to this post, he has been a Fulbright scholar at New York University and a researcher at the European Institute of Public Administration in Maastricht. A political scientist by training (LUISS “Guido Carli” in Rome, 2001), Pierpaolo holds a Master’s in European Politics from the College of Europe in Bruges (2002) and a PhD in Political Science from the University of Florence and Sciences Po – Paris (2006).

His publications include several articles in international journals on various topics related to the EU and three books on the farm lobby in Europe, on the impact of enlargement on the EU institutions and on simulation games as a way to teach how real EU negotiations work. Pierpaolo speaks English, French and Spanish in addition to his native Italian.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am moved by difficult causes such as bringing Italian weather to Belgium and making the European project work. In my spare time, I run, cook, read and travel to destinations I don’t hit for work. By 2020, I’d love to run a marathon and have two kids: I am half way through on both targets. I am hopelessly optimistic: my favourite book is always the one I just bought. Or at least this is what I think until I actually read it.



Michael SICHLER

Date of Birth: 4th August

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Michael Sichler is a professional Navy Officer of the German Federal Armed Forces, working for General Hans-Lothar Domröse, the Commander of NATO's Allied Joint Forces Command in Brunssum/ Netherlands, in the Joint Assessment Division. During his appointment at Brunssum, he was deployed to the International Security Assistance Force Mission in Afghanistan, where he was involved in the assessment of NATO's progress in Afghanistan and gained detailed knowledge in assessing governance, development, security and political transition. Serving as an officer has given him the opportunity to experience multi-faceted assignments including serving on German frigates of the "Brandenburg Class", training young officers at the Naval Operations School and being selected as the Aide de Camp to the German National Military Representative at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe/ Belgium.

He has had the chance to work in different environments, including international missions such as Operation Enduring Freedom, United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon, EU Naval Forces ATALANTA/ Somalia, Operation Active Endeavour and International Security Assistance Force/ Afghanistan. Michael Sichler studied pedagogy at the Helmut Schmidt University Hamburg/ Germany, where he focused on educational science, psychological counselling, management in organisations, sociology and e-learning.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

What do you have in mind when you think about Bavaria in Germany? Have you ever been on board a ship? Do you like working in a multi-national environment? Now you already know three things about me and I am looking forward to discussing the proposed conference topics with you and getting to know you and your opinions.

What is my prediction of the world for the next seven years? As an individual I believe that the International Community is a forum that must stay committed in order to maintain and secure global security and peace in the world. As an officer, I have dedicated myself to serve and to achieve this goal.



Dipti SINGH

Date of Birth: 1st March

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Dipti has more than 12 years of experience in various social development organisations. At present she is working with Save the Children as a Programme Coordinator. Prior to this, she has headed organisations like the Varanasi Weavers Foundation, Swaayam Kala Producer Company Limited with the support of UNDP and IKEA, and the Dr. Shambhunath Singh Research Foundation with the support of various organisations like Child Line India Foundation, Save the Children, SIFPSA, and USAID. She has managed and led projects on women's economic empowerment, health, nutrition and education. She also has in-depth experience of legal and statutory requirements for the establishment of various organisations/companies.

Currently, she is also a board member of the Samahit Foundation which works for developing a chain of community libraries for children and young students of villages in Uttar Pradesh.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I belong to a highly educated family which has added value in me achieving my goal in the field of social development and motivated me to pursue my Ph.D. in Physics which I completed in 2008. Hailing from Bihar I was born and brought up in Jharkhand (which was part of Bihar at that time) and Uttar Pradesh, where I got married and turned professional. Courage and patience were instilled in me to face challenges and handle situations to come up with solutions through networking and liaising with the government, private sector, media and other stakeholders.



Ranu SINHA

Date of Birth: 14th October

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For the last seven years, Ranu has been working in the development sector in India and South Asia, focusing on helping the poorest segments of society address pressing water and natural resource management concerns. She is currently working as a water resources consultant with the International Financial Corporation (IFC) and with the World Bank in India on projects related to water sector reform in the irrigation, agriculture, and drinking water sectors. In her role with the IFC, she is leading the design of IFC's intervention in two key areas in the Indian state of Rajasthan: drinking water and agriculture-water. She is responsible for designing a two-three year program of interventions in rural areas in Rajasthan that will enable communities in Rajasthan to access cleaner, safer and more reliable sources of drinking water as well as better agricultural practices by improving water efficiency and cropping patterns.

Prior to working as a consultant for the IFC, she was the Deputy Director of the International Growth Centre (IGC) in Patna, Bihar. IGC is a global research and policy center that aims to promote sustainable growth in developing countries by providing demand-led policy advice to national and state governments in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Her interest in global development challenges began in 2004, when she attended the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) for a Masters in Public Administration in Public & Economic Policy. Her master's thesis on Information Communication Technology: Reform of Organisational Crisis Management during Natural Disasters was published in the International Journal of Management Practice in 2008.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Patna, Bihar but took my first flight to New York at the age of 5 in the early eighties when Bihar was synonymous with backwardness and New York was at the height of hip. My parents tried to raise me brown but I resisted and embraced Americana. Since then, my identity has always been a subject of confusion – to myself and to others. I took off in 2001, just after the 9/11 attacks in the US for Italy and spent 6 months living in Florence and learning Italian. Two weeks after my graduation from college in the US, I took a flight to Gurgaon and found myself in a call centre for General Electric in the middle of sand dunes in the early 2000s trying to help Indians understand America and vice versa. I left India a few months later and spent the next three years in London. Growing up as a vagabond, these global shifts helped me to cultivate a love for languages, of cultures and of diverse places. My top favourite hobbies are reading, writing, yoga, diving, spinning to house music and dancing. I am a three time Vipassana meditator and can't get enough of sitting in silence.



Melissa L. SKORKA

Date of Birth: 18th June

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Melissa L. Skorka serves as a Political Advisor for the COMISAF Advisor and Assistance Team (CAAT) at ISAF HQ. She recently completed three tours with the U.S. Department of Defence in Afghanistan, including a 12-month embed as a Social Scientist with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, where she focused on counter-insurgency and stabilisation initiatives in the homeland of the Haqqani Network. Skorka has conducted briefings for the NSC, COMISAF, COMIJC, NATO, OSD, SOJTF, DOD, DOS, DIA, and Senior Congressional Staff.

Skorka earned a double Master's degree as a Rotary Scholar from Oxford University, where she studied U.S. foreign energy policy and security dynamics in Nigeria's Niger Delta. Next year, she will continue her work on terrorist network adaptation and effective countermeasures when she commences her doctoral research in the Changing Character of War programme at Oxford University.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

A California native, my interest in world affairs significantly changed on September 11, 2001. After surviving the collapse of the twin towers in New York City, 9/11 served as a catalyst for my professional life, eventually driving me to Afghanistan, where I have spent the past three years embedded with and advising the U.S. military on Afghanistan-Pakistan. My experience has been unforgettable. Largely because I was not a member of the U.S. military, I have not been viewed with the same wariness as many of our soldiers, and thus given incredible access to Afghan society. I have had innumerable cups of tea while working inside Taliban strongholds, interviewing local Afghan government officials, ordinary people, and Taliban commanders and fighters on the challenges and opportunities the Afghan people face every day.

At present, I am focussing on economic development and stabilisation in Afghanistan's natural resource industries. In my spare time, I love to read, travel, dance, and teach TurboKickboxing.



Prerna SURI

Date of Birth: 7th July

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Prerna Suri is an experienced political analyst, journalist, documentary filmmaker, writer and commentator, having spent over a decade in international affairs and news organisations. She is currently the Regional Information Officer for the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the flagship UN agency for emergency relief and disaster management, producing and managing their communications network in the Asia Pacific, dealing with humanitarian partners, NGO's, media and internal partners. Previously, Prerna has worked with some of the biggest names in international journalism, including- Al Jazeera English, CCTV, CNN (IBN), BBC and one of India's biggest news networks- NDTV. Her reports have taken her to the frontiers of conflict in Sudan, China, Egypt, India, Sri Lanka, the Gulf and Nepal among other countries.

In 2007, Prerna was the only Indian woman journalist to enter Darfur and report extensively on the genocide there. In 2008, she reported on the civil unrest in Tibet. She reported extensively from the restive region of Kashmir in 2010 and in 2011 interviewed the Indian Prime Minister on corruption allegations relating to one of modern India's biggest telecommunications scandals. In 2012, Prerna reported from India's restive North East region where a three decade insurgency continues, highlighting abuses by the authorities and the rebels. Prerna has been tear gassed in Kashmir, spent a night at a rebel base in Sudan, threatened with detention on numerous occasions, yet, loves that next big adventure. She's an avid writer having written for papers like 'The Times of India', 'Hindustan Times', 'The National', and 'Khaleej Times'. She holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and a Bachelor's degree from Lady Shri Ram College for Women (LSR).

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Having grown up in a household full of boys, I enjoy watching cricket matches, wrestling and soccer (not in that particular order) and can get emotional if my team misses a goal or two. I am a firm believer of mind-body-soul and enjoy meditation, yoga and exploring spirituality. In my spare time, I also enjoy writing, baking, reading Urdu poetry and deconstructing mainstream movies. 'The Godfather' tops my list of cinema favorites followed by 'Gangs of Wasseypur' and 'Gandhi'. Quentin Tarentino, Anurag Kashyap and Francis Ford Copolla are all maestros in their field. There's nothing like the blues and some jazz to lighten up any day.



Rima THADANI

Date of Birth: 7th November

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Rima is an Investment Manager at the IBB Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH, the venture capital entity of the Investitionsbank Berlin which is the subsidiary bank of the Federal Land of Berlin. It focuses on supporting innovative, small and medium-sized enterprises in Berlin through a full range of financial instruments. In her role, she is responsible for the management of an investment portfolio of innovative companies in the high-tech field as well as the creative industries. In addition to supporting and being a sparring partner to the management and entrepreneurs, she is also looking for acquisitions of investments opportunities and disposal of shareholdings ensuring a promising return on investment. Prior to joining IBB Beteiligungsgesellschaft she spent almost five years working as the Executive Assistant to the Board of Directors at the Investitionsbank Berlin. She managed and supervised the committee work as well as selected mandates of the Chairman, coordinated regulatory procedures and maintained public relations to relevant stakeholders of the bank.

Rima's background prior to joining the banking field is in economics. She accomplished a Bachelor of Arts at the Berlin School of Economics and Law (2001-2004), followed by a Master of Business and Engineering at the Steinbeis University in Berlin (Germany), Dresden (Germany), Kitakyushu (Japan) and Bloomington (USA) (2004-2005). At present Rima is in Mumbai exploring another work culture at TATA Industries.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born and brought up in the up-and-coming capital city of Germany, Berlin. Having Indian roots, I always had the privilege to pick the better of the two worlds that I have been introduced to. I love my life, my family, my friends and my city and am always seeking new challenges and inspirations. At the age of 15, I was in Canada for three months as an exchange student and I have been to many places around the globe and have been a part of a number of adventurous activities. I have worked in an old-people's home building relationships between three generations, distributed newspapers on a bicycle exploring the streets of Berlin, and I am currently a mentor at the Berlin School of Economics and Law escorting students through an interesting and meaningful phase of their lives. I think the world in 2020 is going to be even more mobile, connected and global! And I truly believe that each and every one of us has a message to deliver to this world – so make sure it's inspiring!



Feodor VOYTOLOVSKIY

Date of Birth: 13th April

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Since 2010 Feodor heads the political section, Center for North American Studies, Institute of World Economy and International Relations of Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAN). In 2001 Feodor graduated with an MA from the Department of History, Moscow State Lomonosov University (MGU). During his studies he used to work for the press as a reporter. After 3 years of post-graduate studies in 2004 he received a Ph.D. in Political Science and International Relations at IMEMO. Since 2003 he works for IMEMO as a researcher and has passed through different steps of an academic career. During this period he had published one personal monograph (2008) and about 40 articles and chapters in books. Since 2009 he has also taught students at MGIMO University. In 2010 Feodor became an Editorial Board member of “World Economy and International Relations” journal.

The main focus of Feodor’s research is concentrated on US foreign and security policy, its transatlantic and transpacific dimensions, Russian-American and Russia-NATO relations. He is also very interested in issues of theory and methodology of international and global political prognostics. He was an editorial board member and author of IMEMO’s “Strategic Global Forecast – 2030” which was published in Russian (2011-2012), English (2013), Chinese and Korean (2012).

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Moscow and have some typical psychological features of Muscovites. I am very communicative and emotional, but at the same time can be persistent, ambitious and sceptical. I always try to be ironic about myself and others. I really love science and my job which gives me the unique opportunity to think in global categories. Most of all I like to be a team-player and see how results of collective efforts can become common and individual successes at the same time. I have three hobbies – books, sports and fishing.



Yael WISSNER-LEVY

Date of Birth: 15th August

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Yael Wissner-Levy is a speechwriter and communications consultant for leading Israeli government and business leaders. She created this firm after understanding the lack of skilled speechwriters in English in the Israeli market, combined with the need to communicate in a more meaningful and inspirational way. She has written for heads of state, international NGOs, and CEOs heading multi-billion dollar corporations. Yael is also the co-founder of Radio TLV1- a new digital radio broadcasting news, culture, and music content in English from the heart of Tel Aviv and providing Israel and Middle Eastern-based content for listeners worldwide (tlv1.fm). Yael also presents the news on the new international I24 news channel based in Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Israel. Previously, she served as the UK correspondent for Israel's Channel 10 News, and prior to that reported for Channel 10's Foreign News desk and presented daily segments on the channel's morning show. Yael was a staff editor for leading Israeli newspaper website Ha'aretz and worked for a US Congressman as an advisor and speechwriter.

Today, Yael serves as the co-Ambassador for the Tel Aviv Hub of the Sandbox Network (an international network of entrepreneurs under the age of 30), a member of NATO's Young Atlanticist group, a member of the Friedrich Naumann Israeli-Palestinian Young Business Leaders, and a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Shapers Network. She holds a B.A. in Political Science from Tel Aviv University (Dean's List) and a Master of Science (M.Sc) in International Relations from the London School of Economics (Merit).

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am a media and communications entrepreneur. I founded my own speechwriting firm, and today I write and consult for senior Israeli government and business leaders. Born in New York and raised both in the States and Israel, I launched my own firm after realising the lack of skilled speechwriters in English in the Israeli market combined with my love of words. I co-founded Radio TLV1- an English language internet radio based in Tel Aviv which seeks to bring Israeli and regional news, culture, and music to listeners worldwide. I also present the news and host the morning news edition on i24 news, a new international television corporation. I graduated from Tel Aviv University with a B.A. in Political Science and received a Master of Science (M.Sc) in International Relations from the London School of Economics. I am a self-declared foodie, avid traveller, and passionate entrepreneur.



Lu ZENG

Date of Birth: 17th January

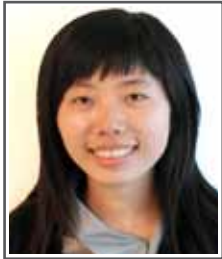
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Lu is the program officer at the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). She looks after AusAID's environment and water portfolio in China. She also leads Australia's pilot collaboration with China in Mekong region. Prior to joining AusAID, Lu worked for the World Bank Office in Beijing for five years, where she supported the management of the Sustainable Development Unit in China and Mongolia.

Lu got her Masters in International Development from the University of Bristol (2002-2003) in the UK. She spent much of her bachelors at the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade focussing on finance and management.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I am from China's Fujian province. I enjoy meeting different people and exploring different cultures. I get excited about new challenges. It's very interesting to look at China and the world from the perspective of a relatively westernised Chinese. While I am proud of China's economic achievements, I also care for social and environmental quality of the development. When I don't work, I spend my time on sports, movies, travelling and volunteer work.



Jinyan ZHOU

Date of Birth: 20th April

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Jinyan is currently a PhD researcher at the Institute of Western Asian and African Studies (IWAAS) with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). She is working on her doctoral thesis titled “Comparative study on China and EU’s Aid and Cooperation in Africa”. She has six years of work experience with Heinrich Boell Foundation (HBS) and the EU Delegation to China in Beijing. HBS is an independent political foundation affiliated with the German Green Party, aimed at promoting dialogue and social reform. In her role as a programme manager, she was responsible for the project planning, implementation as well as management of relations with government institutes, media, think tanks and civil society organisations. The topics she worked on include public participation, climate change, rule of law, gender as well as China’s overseas investment. While at the political section of the EU Delegation to China, she focused on legal reform and foreign policy.

During her studies in peace and security at the University of Hamburg (2004-2005) and Political Science and Law at Tongji University (Shanghai, 2000-2004), she focused on international development and peace studies. She worked for the Department of Safety and Security at the UN Headquarters, Duetsche Welle and Deutscher Bundestag after getting her Master’s in Peace and Security in Germany.

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

I was born in Shanghai, but grew up in a small town in Jiangsu province. I like to read, travel and play with my two-year-old daughter. My favourite book is Little King December. The United States will remain the only superpower in 2020, but its relative power is receding as the role of the Global South expands. Even as the biggest economy in the world, China’s power remains limited due to domestic dilemmas and a lack of creativity and soft power. The reform of the global governance system will reflect new economic and demographic realities and respond effectively to new global challenges of 2012.

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