



CANADA ARAB BUSINESS COUNCIL
 CONSEIL DE COMMERCE CANADO-ARABE
 المجلس التجاري الكندي العربي



CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL
 CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DU CANADA
 National Capital Branch
 Chapitre de la Capitale nationale

Women Leading Diplomacy between Canada and the Arab World

About this Event

In honor and celebration of International Women’s Week, the Canada Arab Business Council (CABC) and the Canadian International Council (CIC) - The National Capital Branch (Ottawa) are pleased to present a webinar on Women Leading Diplomacy between Canada and the Arab World: a tribute to women who have advanced bilateral trade and economic development.

This virtual panel discussion will have the following distinguished Canadian and Arab women Ambassadors:

- Her Excellency **Souriya Otmani** – Ambassador of Morocco to Canada
- Her Excellency **Stephanie McCollum** – Ambassador of Canada to Qatar
- Her Excellency **Marcy Grossman** – Ambassador of Canada to the UAE
- Her Excellency **Reem Alkhaled** – Ambassador of Kuwait to Canada
- Her Excellency **Hala Abou-Hassira** – Ambassador of Palestine to Canada

Sandra McCardell, Assistant Deputy Minister for Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb and **Carmen Sylvain**, CABC Honorary Member and Former Canadian Ambassador to Morocco will be moderating this event.

Date: Thursday, 11th March

Time: 9 am - 10 am ET

Click here to Register: [Registration Link](#)

Program

Time	Topic	Speakers
9:00 am	- Opening Address - Setting the scene - Introduction of Moderators Carmen Sylvain and Sandra McCardell	Cathy Seguin, President, Canada Arab Business Council
	Carmen and Sandra open discussion	Carmen and Sandra
9:10 am	Ambassadors’ Opening Remarks	All speakers and moderators
9:30 am	Roundtable Discussion	All speakers and moderators
9:55 am	Close	Margaret Huber, Former Canadian Ambassador to Jordan and Iraq Cathy Seguin



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Speakers Profiles



Souriya Otmani

Ambassador of Morocco to Canada

Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Morocco Mrs. Souriya Otmani graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Muhammed V. in Rabat. She worked for the Department of School Education and for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

She was a chairwoman of the Department of Development Finance Cooperation and then she became a head of the Organization for the Integration of Women in Development. She the Vice President of African Diplomatic Women Forum and a recipient of many National Awards.



Stefanie McCollum

Ambassador of Canada to the State of Qatar

Stefanie McCollum is a career public servant with a variety of management experience working in the Department of National Defense and the Canadian Armed Forces, Secretary of State, Public Works and Government Services Canada and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency before joining the Department of Foreign Affairs Canada in 2005.

From 2005-2016 she led both the Management and Consular Services programs in Canada's offices abroad in San Francisco, Cairo, Bucharest and Sao Paulo. In 2016, she returned to Ottawa to serve as Global Affairs Canada's Director of Emergency Operations. In this role, she led the Emergency Watch and Response Centre, which operates 24/7 to provide assistance to Canadian citizens in distress broad, and to monitor and respond to international events and crises that affect Canada's interest internationally.

In 2017, she added to her portfolio the role of Director of MCO Renewal, which looks to support the Management and Consular Officer (MCO) community of Foreign Service professionals in Global Affairs Canada. In September of 2018, she was appointed Canada's Ambassador to the State of Qatar. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration and is married with two children.



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Marcy Grossman

Ambassador of Canada to United Arab Emirates

Marcy Grossman was appointed Ambassador of Canada to the United Arab Emirates in October 2019 with a three-year mandate to 2022. Prior to her arrival in Abu Dhabi, she was Canada's Consul General for Dubai and the Northern Emirates (2018-2019) and was notably responsible for the creation of Canada's foreign direct investment agency, Invest in Canada.

With a public service career spanning 27 years, Marcy joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in 2001 as a Senior Account Executive for Investment Partnerships Canada. Within this capacity, she developed a full spectrum of investment marketing campaigns including the publication of the bestselling book "Innovation Nation" (John Wiley & Sons, 2002) highlighting Canada's prowess as a business pacesetter.

Marcy is a business development expert. Prior to assuming her roles in the United Arab Emirates, she served in the United States as Consul General in both Miami (2005-2009) and Denver (2012-2016) and as the Senior Trade Commissioner in both Dallas (2002-2005) and Los Angeles (2009-2012). During her tenure in the U.S. she was responsible for representing a wide range of Canada's business, political, academic, consular, immigration and public safety interests. She also closed several large-scale foreign investment deals in cities across Canada.

Before joining Canada's Foreign Service, Marcy held management positions in numerous Federal government departments, including Industry Canada (2001); Canada's School of Public Service (1999-2001); and the Treasury Board (1998 to 1999). She launched her career in the criminal justice system, and between 1990 and 1998, served in various capacities within Correctional Services Canada.



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Reem Alkhaled

Ambassador of Kuwait to Canada

Her Excellency Reem Alkhaled presented her credentials to Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General of Canada on November 1st, 2019, instating Her Excellency as Kuwait's first female Ambassador to Canada. Ambassador Alkhaled obtained her Master's Degree in International Studies & Diplomacy SOAS – the University of London UK in 1999.

Her Excellency Alkhaled brings extensive experience after having ministered at the highest levels in the political sector as Minister Plenipotentiary and Assistant Foreign Minister for the Americas to the State of Kuwait.

Previous to her postings, Ambassador Alkhaled joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was an Assistant to Director of International Organizations for the Establishment of the United Nations Observation Mission between Kuwait -Iraq, and Security Council Resolutions, between Kuwait- Iraq (UNIKOM) following the liberation of Kuwait 1991.

Her Excellency Alkhaled is regarded as one of the most pioneering women in the political sector in the State of Kuwait. In 2017, Her Excellency Reem Alkhaled was awarded The Arab Woman Award – Government Award, during her instatement as Assistant Foreign Minister.

While serving as Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to Chile, Her Excellency was also awarded the first-class order of merit in recognition of advancing ties between Kuwait and Chile. Ambassador Alkhaled aims to strengthen and broaden the bilateral relationship regarding the political, economic, commercial, educational, and cultural domains with Canada.



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Hala Abou-Hassira

Ambassador of the Palestinian General Delegation to Canada

Her Excellency Hala Abou-Hassira was appointed Ambassador of the Palestinian General Delegation to Canada in March 2020, designating her as the first female Ambassador of Palestine to Canada. Ambassador Abou-Hassira received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Al-Azhar University- Gaza City in 1998 and a Masters Degree in

Diplomacy from the University of Malta in 2003. She speaks Arabic, English, French and Hebrew.

Prior to joining the Embassy of Palestine to Canada, Her Excellency Abou-Hassira served as an Ambassador alternate to the European Union in Brussels.

She has served as the Mission of Palestine's First Counselor to France from 2016. Before that, she served from 2007-2016 as its Political Counsellor in France. Ambassador Abou-Hassira focused on the importance of a just, lasting peace in Palestine and the Middle East region.

Ambassador Abou-Hassira has served as the First Secretary of Palestine to Gabon from 1999 to 2005, overseeing efficient operation and consolidating vital diplomatic relations between Palestine and Gabon, along with the region of Central & West Africa.

During her tenure in France, Ambassador Abou-Hassira obtained extensive experience from the Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA) in Strasbourg, one of the most academically prestigious schools for civil service.



Sandra McCardell

Assistant Deputy Minister for Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb

Sandra McCardell Assistant Deputy Minister Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb Sandra McCardell joined External Affairs and International Trade Canada in 1992. Following an assignment in Egypt (1994), she was posted to the Embassy of Canada to Israel (1994-96).



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From 1998-2000, Ms. McCardell was an Advisor to the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina on the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accord and then Political Counsellor at the Embassy of Canada to Lebanon (2002-2003). Ms. McCardell was Ambassador to Libya (2009-2011) representing Canada both before and after the Libyan revolution. Ms. McCardell also served as Canadian Ambassador to Morocco and Mauritania (2012-2015) and as the High Commissioner to South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho and Mauritius and Ambassador to Madagascar (2015-2019.) In Ottawa, Ms. McCardell has been Deputy Director of the East Adriatic Division, Director of the Executive Assignments Unit and Director of the Partnership Division of the Invest in Canada Bureau. She was Director General of the Middle East Bureau before being selected as Acting Assistant Deputy Minister for Europe, Arctic, Middle East and Maghreb.



Carmen Sylvain

Honorary Member - Canada Arab Business Council

Carmen Sylvain is a former diplomat and currently an honorary board member of the CABC. She served as Canada's Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Mauritania. Within the federal government, she held positions with the Privy Council Office, Communications, Canadian Heritage, and Foreign Affairs and International Trade. In the latter, she served as Assistant Deputy Minister for Europe, Africa and the Middle East, as Assistant Deputy Minister Strategic Policy and Planning, and Director General for the European Union. In these capacities, she led the development of a Foreign Policy Plan for Canada as well as commercial strategies for Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Ms Sylvain served as President of the Bureau of International Exhibitions Executive Commission. In the private sector, she was strategic advisor to Borealis Infrastructure of the OMERS pension fund as well as the QG100 business network.

She is currently an independent non-executive director with PAREX Resources Inc., Orient Investment Properties, Egyptian Refining Company, and Lasalle College International.



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Margaret Huber

Margaret Huber is community leader, former ambassador of Canada in Europe, Asia and the Middle East, mentor, director (+ past president) of the Canadian International Council's National Capital Branch + Harvard Club of Ottawa. On board of Pharos Global Health Advisors.

During extensive diplomatic career, worked closely with international organizations inc. the United Nations, the European Union, the International Olympic Committee, the Asian Development Bank + the International Committee of the Red Cross. Strong believer in life-long learning (graduate McGill University, University of Ottawa, Harvard Business School's Advanced Management Program, Institute of Corporate Directors. Fellow of Harvard's Advanced Leadership Initiative).