

## Wolfensohn Center for Development and Dubai School of Government Announce Partnership

*Organizations Co-host First Youth Forum in Dubai 23-24 February*

Dubai—The Brookings Institution’s Wolfensohn Center for Development and the Dubai School of Government announced that they will form a partnership to launch a two-year policy research initiative to better understand and address the socio-economic challenges facing tens of millions of young people in the Middle East region.

The partnership was endorsed on February 7 at a meeting between His Excellency Mohamed K. Khirbash, Minister of State for Finance and Industry, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the Dubai School of Government, and James Wolfensohn, former president of the World Bank and Chairman of the Advisory Group for the Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings.

In a statement of support for the partnership, HE Minister Khirbash said, “The problem of youth unemployment and economic exclusion is perhaps one of the greatest challenges current facing the Middle East. Finding solutions to this issue and expanding the opportunities available to our young people tops the agenda for government leaders, both in the United Arab Emirates and across the region. Through our partnership with the Wolfensohn Center, we hope to find substantive and successful solutions to the economic challenges facing our youth.”

James Wolfensohn said: “There are more young people in the Middle East than anytime before. Providing opportunities to the young generation is vital for the prosperity and stability of the region. By working closely with the Dubai School of government and HE Minister Khirbash, we are ready to push this agenda.”

The partnership begins in earnest tomorrow when a two-day forum entitled “Youth Exclusion in the Middle East: Towards New Knowledge and Solutions” convenes at the Dubai School of Government. The workshop will bring together international experts and policymakers to develop a framework for empirical research and analysis on why young people are excluded from economic and social development in the Middle East. Forum discussion and research will focus on Egypt, Iran, Syria Morocco and Gulf countries.

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*The Middle East Youth Research Project was founded at the Wolfensohn Center for Development at the Brookings Institution, with critical support from Mr. James Wolfensohn. The Dubai School of Government is a research and training institution focusing on public policy in the Arab world established in 2004 under the patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai. The project also includes a team of scholars and researchers from Egypt, Iran, Morocco, Syria and the Gulf countries.*