

Welcome and Introduction of Dr. Alaa Murabit by Elizabeth A. Clark, Associate Director of ICLRS. Given on June 17, 2020 at the Religious Freedom Annual Review sponsored by the International Center for Law and Religion Studies at the Brigham Young University Law School.

Thank you, Brett.

I'm delighted to welcome you to the Religious Freedom Annual Review at Brigham Young University in Utah, USA. As Prof. Scharffs mentioned, this event brings together policy makers, academics, representatives of the media, and religious and political leaders from a wide variety of perspectives to discuss the state of religious freedom, with a particular focus on the United States.

We're excited for this year's lineup of stellar speakers. Today we're delighted to hear from Dr. Alaa Murabit of the United Nations, and Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Tomorrow, we will have a moderated discussion between two U.S. Senators, Senator Michael Lee, Republican of Utah, and Senator Kyrsten Sinema, Democrat of Arizona. They will discuss religion's roles in uniting America and addressing the coronavirus crisis.

On Friday, we will hear from former US Secretary of Health and Human Services (also former governor of the state of Utah), Michael Leavitt, who will address the implications of Covid-19 for religious groups, individuals, and society. Following him, Professor Brett Scharffs and I will each share some concluding reflections.

We hope you will join us for each of these three outstanding sessions.

Now I'd like to introduce Dr. Alaa Murabit. Following her comments, my colleague Cole Durham, Founding Director of our Center, will provide a short introduction for Elder Bednar.

Dr. Alaa Murabit has an impressive list of achievements. She is a medical doctor, Canadian Meritorious Service Cross recipient, one of 17 Global Sustainable Development Goal Advocates appointed by the UN Secretary General, a UN High-Level Commissioner on Health Employment & Economic Growth, and the CEO of IMPACT2030.

She has been a leader in global civil society, particularly on issues of security, health policy, and sustainable development. She has founded non-profits that mentor and empower emerging global leaders and provide thought leadership in conflict resolution and inclusive security.

Her personal story is quite compelling. At age 21, Dr. Murabit founded and spearheaded The Voice of Libyan Women, a nonprofit that promoted women's rights in Libya that worked together with religious and community organizations and leaders. Dr. Murabit describes some of this in her TED Talk, "What My Religion Really Says About Women," which has been viewed over five million times.

Dr. Murabit serves as a board member for The Malala Fund and Women's March Global and has been recognized as the New York Times TrustWomen Hero, Forbes 30 Under 30, and one of the Top 20 Most Influential People in Gender Equality Policy in the world.

We are grateful she can join us for this event. Dr. Murabit.