

**Palestinian Delegation**  
**on the Bethlehem Development Initiative**  
**to Brussels 2013**

**Dr. Hanan Ashrawi** is an acclaimed Palestinian leader, legislator, activist and scholar. Making history as the first woman to be elected to the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization in 2009, she currently holds a seat in this organization, the highest executive body in Palestine. She has been a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council since 1996 and was also appointed as the Palestinian Authority Minister of Higher Education and Research in the same year. Dr. Ashrawi also served as a member of the Leadership Committee and as an official spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace process, beginning with the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991. As a civil society activist, she founded MIFTAH, the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, in 1999 and continues to serve as head of its Board of Directors. In the same year, Dr. Ashrawi founded the National Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN). Moreover, she is the founder of the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) and has served as its Commissioner since 1994. As an academic, she founded and chaired the Department of English at Birzeit University and became Dean of the Faculty of Arts. For all her work, she is the recipient of a number of honorary degrees as well as distinguished awards from various international and local organizations.

**Vera Baboun** was elected in October 2012 as the first female mayor of the city of Bethlehem, becoming a symbol of the process to shake up a society where men are still used to make the laws and do the deals. As a Mayor, her commitment is also to improve services and promote the tourism potential of the town where the Bible says Christ was born. Prior to her election, she was headmistress of the Roman Catholic High School in Beit Sahour and was an English literature lecturer at Bethlehem University, where she was also the Dean of student affairs. She is the chairperson of the Board of Directors for Guidance and Training Centre for Family and Children and she is highly active in advocating gender awareness where she lectures, and gives training on gender issues for a considerable number of social NGOs. "Though women should always be the primary defenders of their rights," Baboun says, "change will only be realized when men join in too."

**Samer Said Khoury** was born in Beirut, Lebanon on 23rd August 1960 to a Palestinian family that came to Lebanon during the 1948 Israeli-Arab war.

Samer spent his childhood between Kuwait and Lebanon, where he received his high school diploma in 1977 from the American High School in Kuwait.

He studied at California State University from 1978 to 1981 when he received his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering and went on to obtain an MBA in 1984 from the University of Southern California.

Following this, Samer returned to the Arabian Gulf and worked his way up the ranks of his father's engineering and construction company - Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC) - which is one of the largest Arab international construction companies operating throughout the Middle East, Africa, CIS, Europe and America. ([www.ccc.gr](http://www.ccc.gr))

From 1987 through 1990, Samer was responsible for the total operations of CCC in Kuwait, with an average turnover of 50\$M/year and more than 1,000 permanent staff.

In 1990, Samer moved to the Head Office of CCC in Athens, Greece. He worked in various departments gaining a wide range of experience in the Engineering & Construction field. In 1997, he took over the position of Executive Vice President Operations of the Group being responsible for the marketing and execution of the Group's worldwide activities. As of January 2011 he became President for the Engineering & Construction Division.

CCC today is a large conglomerate with a broad range of activities ranging from its traditional engineering & construction role to the more extensive (innovative) role of an oil & gas and power developer. More than 120,000 individuals are employed worldwide and, according to the ENR listing, CCC ranks 17th amongst the largest international contractors. CCC's revenue in 2012 was in excess of 8 Billion U.S. Dollars.

**Nafez Hussein** is the VP of ICT & Digital Business of the Greece based Consolidated Contractors Company ([www.ccc.gr](http://www.ccc.gr)), a multi-billion engineering group and the largest construction company in the Middle East.

Nafez is very active in promoting Youth and Knowledge-Based economies and has been a key founding member of the Palestine Education Initiative. He is a strong advocate of the leading role of the Palestinian Private Sector in transforming and building capacity of the local economy and in the resiliency and contribution of SMEs to economic development in conflict situations.

A native of Jerusalem, Nafez holds a Bachelor's degree from the American University of Beirut and a Masters from California State University - Sacramento specializing in Management & Information Technology.

#### Community Services and Board Memberships

Middle East Investment Initiative - Board of Directors (Member)

Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) – Board of Trustees (Member)

Partners for Sustainable Development – Board of Directors (Member)

Education For Employment – Palestine Chapter (Advisor Member)

ArabAmeriCare Foundation - Advisory Board (Member)

The Bethlehem Development Foundation - Board of Directors (Secretary)