

The Rule of Law Initiative

The Arab Center for the Development of the Rule of Law and Integrity (ACRLI) has launched a Rule of Law Annual Award. The award is to honour an Arab "Person of the Year", based on his or her actions toward, and commitment to the principles of, the Rule of Law and Good Governance, both in public and private sectors.

In addition, ACRLI¹ has been a pioneer in tackling the "Rule of Law" and "Good Governance" concepts in Arab countries. Reflecting international best practices, ACRLI has developed principles of Good Governance focusing on indicators such as judicial integrity, parliamentary integrity and media integrity, and has developed a set of principles for measuring the performance of public governmental and semi-governmental institutions in the Arab world.

Le Centre arabe pour le développement de l'état de droit et de l'intégrité (ACRLI) a lancé un Prix annuel de l'Etat de droit. Le prix vise à rendre hommage à une "personne de l'année" arabe, en fonction de ses actions et de son attachement aux principes de la primauté du droit et de la bonne gouvernance, dans les secteurs public et privé.

En outre, l'ACRLI a été un pionnier dans la sensibilisation aux concepts de "l'état de droit" et de "bonne gouvernance" dans les pays arabes. Reflétant les meilleures pratiques internationales, ACRLI a élaboré des principes de bonne gouvernance, axés sur des indicateurs tels que l'intégrité judiciaire, l'intégrité parlementaire et l'intégrité des médias, et a mis au point un ensemble de principes permettant de mesurer la performance des autorités publiques et des institutions semi-gouvernementales dans le monde arabe.



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Rule of Law and Integrity

Rule of Law Award

The Rule of Law Award aims at disseminating awareness of the importance of the Rule of Law and Good Governance in Arab countries, especially in light of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights and the provision of the highest standards of justice, which are key for sustainable development.

This initiative was created and developed by Professor Wassim Harb, Founder and General Supervisor of ACRLI, who has always believed in the Rule of Law as the cornerstone of building the State of Right, where social and human justice govern.

The Rule of Law Award provides financial support awarded by a donor to a qualified applicant from an Arab country, focusing on one aspect of the Rule of Law and Good Governance, and enabling the awarded applicant to study at a European or American university specialised in the two fields mentioned above.

1. ACRLI a non-profit organisation established in 2003 in Lebanon, at the initiative of Dr. Wassim Harb and the participation of a number of Arab personalities from all over the Arab Countries. To learn more about ACRLI and its activities, visit www.arabruloflaw.org

The chosen Person of the Year for 2018 was the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, H.E. Dr. Salim Al-Hoss,² in recognition of his enduring commitment to the best interests of Lebanon and his persistence in promoting the values of equality, freedom, integrity, the Rule of Law, and respect for the constitution and application of laws. The selection process was based on the principles of Good Governance and Rule of Law drafted by ACRLI in 2007 and in line with the international standards.

ACRLI has brought together the two concepts Rule of Law and Good Governance because of their intersection and large common space.

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Good Governance includes the role of public authorities in establishing an environment in which economic actors can work, determining how benefits are distributed in society, and drawing up the relationship between the ruler and the ruled.⁴

This honouring ceremony for the Rule of Law Award is an annual event⁵ that ACRLI organises alongside partners from across the Arab region, who in addition to their valuable presence, share ideas and provide scholarships. A Supervisory Authority, managed by ACRLI, undertakes the nomination selection process, including the assessment criteria for the selection of the Person of the Year from the Arab Region. These combined efforts ensure the success of the initiative and the event.

This Rule of Law Award contributes to raising awareness of the importance of respect for the principles and criteria within these two concepts—especially human rights—and consequently the dignity of the individual and the community. All of this is a key to sustainable development, providing good and dignified living standards for individuals and groups.

The international arena is witnessing more and more attention given to these two concepts and their role as the main pillars of progress and development. For this reason, ACRLI has launched the Rule of Law Award in cooperation with its international and national partners, allied institutions and key personalities. This initiative is another milestone that ACRLI has been developing since the

beginning of this millennium,⁶ and it is useful to briefly review the most important achievements in this regard.

Rule of Law and Good Governance Index

In 2004, ACRLI developed a list of principles and indicators of the Rule of Law and Good Governance of two basic State institutions:

- 1) the legislative institution (e.g., the parliament), and
- 2) the judicial institution.

ACRLI has since then produced comparative national and regional reports—based on these indicators and principles—for four Arab countries (Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon). The study—considered the first of its kind in the Arab region—aimed to analyse the differences between international principles of the Rule of Law and Good Governance and national laws and practices.

The final report presented the methodology used to develop a set of principles and indicators of Rule of Law and Good Governance within each State, based on which the performance of legislative and judicial institutions was measured. The results of the report on the above-mentioned four countries were presented at an Arab Conference held in Cairo in 2007 for Arab judges, lawyers, experts and State officials. The conference analysed the application of Rule of Law and Good Governance principles in the four countries, and adopted the set of principles and indicators and the application methodologies that were in creating this index.

This achievement led to the convening of the Arab Ministers of Justice Conference in 2009 in Beirut, where this index on Rule of Law and Good Governance was approved and adopted by the attendees. Accordingly, a committee was created consisting of the President of the Supreme Judicial Councils in the four countries, and headed by the President of the Lebanese Supreme Judicial Council. This committee presented a report of the final version of the principles and indicators of the Rule of Law and Good Governance to be adopted in the measurement and development of the Rule of Law in Arab judicial institutions.⁷

As for legislative institutions, a set of principles and indicators, as well as field survey methodologies were adopted at a pan-Arab Conference held in Morocco in 2008 under the auspices of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Media Integrity Index (the title is the Status of the Media Integrity...)

In addition, ACRLI has developed a Media Integrity index, consisting of a set of principles and indicators related to media professionals and media organisations, as the fourth branch.⁸ This undertaking took the same path as the previous studies and concluded with a report adopted at a conference held in Jordan in 2007, in which it

2. Honoring ceremony of the Rule of Law Person of the Year 2018, HE Dr. Salim El Hoss (12 December 2018), visit www.arabruloflaw.org

3. Review of Prof. Wassim Harb study on the development of the performance of the public sector in the Arab region from the perspective of the rule of law and good governance (Iraqi experience) – 2013, <http://www.arabruloflaw.org/Files/pdf2014/DevelopmentPublicSector-Iraq.pdf>, And the review of the book on the Rule of Law by Judge Ghaleb Ghanem, Former President of the Supreme Judicial Council <http://www.arabruloflaw.org/Files/pdf2008/CompleteBook.pdf>

4. Review of the study of Prof. Wassim Harb on the development of the performance of the public sector in the Arab region from the perspective of the rule of law and good governance (the Iraqi experience) – 2013, <http://www.arabruloflaw.org/Files/pdf2014/DevelopmentPublicSector-Iraq.pdf>

5. The event will be attended by: the sponsor of the event, regional and international organizations (Arab and non-Arab), civil society organisations, representatives of Arab and non-Arab universities (faculties of law and social and political sciences); Members of the Council of Trustees of the Arab Center for the Development of the Rule of Law and Integrity, Arab personalities, and the media.

6. For details of these approaches and the various achievements of the Center to ensure the rule of law and good governance, please visit <http://www.arabruloflaw.org/>

7. Principles of Good Judiciary, Parliament and Media "Project on Strengthening the Rule of Law in the Arab States" http://www.arabruloflaw.org/activitiesListing_ar.aspx?postingID=306&categoryID=1&id=133

8. In general, the State is composed of three main branches: executive, legislative and judicial. The media is informally considered as the fourth branch.

was emphasised that these principles would improve the work of media organisations and media professionals from the perspective of Rule of Law and Good Governance.

Public Institutions Index

In 2013, ACRLI completed a new set of principles for measuring the performance of public governmental and semi-governmental institutions (independent public institutions). This set of principles was completed through a study developed to reform the system of "Inspectors General Offices" in Iraq in 2003. The study covered principles, indicators and methodologies for measuring the Rule of Law and Good Governance in ministries and public institutions.⁹

Conclusion

Interest in the Rule of Law and Good Governance has become increasingly global, and the number of institutions involved in this field has

significantly increased. Developed countries have paid particular attention to such principles and indicators as practical and efficient tools to re-engineer and restructure their public institutions, and to measure and improve the performances of institutions. The results have shown a clear and important success in these approaches in greater adherence to the rules and norms that ensure the Rule of Law and Good Governance.¹⁰

The scope of interest has expanded to include higher education institutions. Dozens of university institutions have added the teaching of the Rule of Law or Good Governance to their curriculum, especially at the level of postgraduate studies. A few years ago, we also noticed that various international institutions had launched initiatives to award recognition to those who have demonstrated outstanding performance in the areas of Rule of Law and Good Governance.

Yet Arab countries are not properly engaged in this process and do not experience the benefits of developing the performance of their public institutions. Improving performance of public institutions will support further progress in the protection of human rights and recognition of justice and equality. It also contributes to sustainable development that provides improved economic viability for all people, as well as in providing support for justice that can be used as a key element in the process of maintaining sustainable peace.

9. Review of the study of Prof. Wasim Harb on the development of the performance of the public sector in the Arab region from the perspective of the rule of law and good governance (the Iraqi experience) – 2013, <http://www.arabruloflaw.org/Files/pdf2014/DevelopmentPublicSector-Iraq.pdf>

10. A guide to leading organisations promoting the rule of law worldwide from the Global Justice Project website: <https://worldjusticeproject.org/resource-hub>

أطلق المركز العربي لتطوير حكم القانون والنزاهة (ACRLI) الجائزة السنوية لحكم القانون. تهدف الجائزة إلى تكريم شخصية عربية "شخصية العام"، بالاستناد إلى مواقفه/مواقفها تجاه مبادئ حكم القانون والحكم الرشيد ومدى الالتزام بهما، في القطاعين العام والخاص. إضافة إلى ما تقدم، كان مركز ACRLI رائداً في معالجة المسائل ذات الصلة بمفاهيم "حكم القانون" و "الحكم الرشيد" في البلدان العربية. لقد وضع مركز ACRLI مبادئ حكم رشيد بما يعكس أفضل الممارسات الدولية، تسلط الضوء على مؤشرات مثل النزاهة القضائية، والنزاهة البرلمانية، والنزاهة الإعلامية، كما وضع مجموعة من المبادئ لقياس أداء السلطات الحكومية العامة والمؤسسات شبه الحكومية في العالم العربي.

BIOGRAPHY

ROULA ZAYAT is the Head of the Development and Research Department at the Arab Center for the Development of the Rule of Law and Integrity (ACRLI). She received her law degree from the Lebanese University and followed her DES in private law at the Lebanese University. Mrs. Zayat has more than 12 years' experience in the field of Rule of Law. She has gained extensive experience in legal research and analysis, and has elaborated various background papers and concept notes related to human rights and rule of law. As a legal informatics expert, she has occupied the position of project manager for more than five years, developing legal databanks at UNDP-POGAR. She has also worked as legal consultant with several international organisations (ESCAW, OHCHR, UNDP) and has contributed at the World Justice Project Rule of Law Indexes.

