



Business & Human Rights Resource Centre appoints Sa'eda Al-Kilani as Middle East Researcher & Representative

March 2012



Business & Human Rights Resource Centre is pleased to announce the appointment of Sa'eda Al-Kilani as its new Middle East Researcher & Representative, based in Amman, Jordan.

Sa'eda began working with the Resource Centre on 5 March. She will draw attention to the human rights impacts (positive & negative) of companies in the region; highlight under-reported cases and concerns raised by civil society; seek company responses to alleged abuses; undertake research missions; and build contacts with NGOs, companies, investors, journalists and government representatives. Sa'eda commented: *"I look forward to contributing to enhanced respect for human rights by the private sector in the Middle East – it is very much needed."*

More than 180 candidates applied for the position and six were interviewed in Amman and Beirut; the applicants were of a very high calibre. A second Middle East Researcher will start work in April, at which point her appointment will be announced.

The Resource Centre's Middle East work is supported by grants from Open Society Foundations and from Network for Social Change, and by donations from individuals.

About Sa'eda Al-Kilani

Sa'eda Al-Kilani, a Jordanian national, is founder and director of Arab Archives Institute for Human Rights Research, a research and documentation centre based in Amman that collects and carries out studies and research on human rights in the Arab countries.

From 2009-10 Sa'eda was Middle East & North Africa Director of Article 19, the international organization working to defend freedom of expression and information.

In the past she served as a representative for Transparency International in Jordan. She also worked from Jordan as a correspondent for Reporters Sans Frontières, the international organization that works on behalf of journalists imprisoned or persecuted for doing their job, and fights against censorship and laws that undermine press freedom.

Working as an independent expert Sa'eda initiated and carried out a campaign that succeeded in changing the Jordanian Press Law of 1988. She also led a five-year campaign to introduce legislation to fight Wasta (using one's connections and/or influence to get things done, including government transactions) in Jordan – in 2006 the Jordanian parliament adopted a law explicitly banning the use of Wasta in state-business relations.

Previously Sa'eda worked as a journalist at *Jordan Times*, where her articles covered subjects including freedom of expression, women's issues, governance, transparency, democracy, poverty, and refugees. Sa'eda was also a correspondent/freelance reporter for the French daily *La Croix* and for *L'Express* magazine.

Her publications include:

- *Against Corruption: The Role of Arab Civil Society in Fighting Corruption*
- *Jordan Press Association: The Unwritten History*
- *Wasta – The Declared Secret: A study on nepotism and favouritism in Jordan*

Sa'eda was educated at University of Jordan, and also took courses at Université de Bourgogne in France. Her mother tongue is Arabic; she is also fluent in English and French.