

On the ground achiever and development leader



Moushira Khattab is *-in no respective order-* an Arab, African, Mediterranean, and a Woman born and bred in a 7000 year-old civilization, and developing country; Egypt. Every part of this unique mix blessed her with wide-ranging opportunities to work very closely with those most in need of an organization like UNESCO. Her education and decades long work experience spanned between Africa, USA, Europe and Australia which -along with her diverse roots- helped shape a character of a truly inclusive Global Citizen.

As a Ph.D in human rights law, and within her ministerial mandate as Secretary General of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood [NCCM] - and later on Minister of State for Family and Population, Khattab initiated and led one of the most comprehensive human-rights-based legal reforms in Egypt. And as a firm believer that women, youth, and children are the catalysts for change, she spearheaded the amendment of the Egyptian penal system against human trafficking, the sale of children, sexual abuse and exploitation in pornography, as well as prohibiting and criminalizing Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which she continues to support in African countries affected by the practice to date. She also orchestrated legal reforms to increase the minimum marriage age to 18 years.

Khattab's credibility and expertise on international diplomacy, both in multilateral and bilateral forums led to her appointment in serving her country through several events of historical significance. She became Egypt's first Ambassador to post-apartheid South Africa, during Nelson Mandela's presidency. And in recognition to her efforts in this crucial era, the President of South Africa decorated her with the Order of Good Hope.

She also represented Egypt as the Ambassador to the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic during its historic dissolution, yet another extraordinary moment in history requiring special mastery. Ambassador Khattab culminated her diplomatic career as Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cultural Relations.

Furthermore, her 8-year experience as an independent Rapporteur and Vice Chair of the UN Committee on Rights of the Child gained her an international reputation as being a children's rights expert.

Khattab firmly believes that the right to quality education is the single most effective strategy for the realization of all other rights. Therefore -leveraging her track record of adopting a participatory approach in vision formulation, planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation- she mobilized society for girls' education through a five-year national action plan where over 2200 girl-friendly schools were established providing quality active learning for the most marginalized girls in governorates with the highest gender gaps. This program was implemented within the framework of UNESCO's Education for All Initiative. She also orchestrated legal reform, which put the state under legal obligation to guarantee the right to education for everyone, making the deprivation of such a right a punishable offense. Khattab prioritized education for refugee children as a pivot to ensure their human rights, and pioneered a program that provides educational, cultural and recreational activities to refugee children, in cooperation with the high commissioner for refugees. Khattab's rich impact on education is undeniable.

Ambassador Khattab has established a lifelong record working in partnerships, building consensus with diverse stakeholders including governments, UN, the civil society, the private sector, grass roots and the donors community, all to deliver real impact on the ground for those who need it the most. Her success as a social development leader has enabled her to raise considerable funds for the implementation of her game-changing initiatives.

The local and international communities have acknowledged her work with many reputable awards such as being decorated twice by the president of Italy for her work, with the "Knight of the Grand Cross" Award and Order of Merit of the Italian Republic (*Commendatore Della Repubblica*). She was also honored with the Award of Courage by the US Secretary of State for her efforts on Women and Children's rights.

As the official candidate of Africa, Khattab pledges to a more focused, transparent and effective UNESCO that delivers by remaining closer to the people and closer to the mission.

Moushira khattab Biography

Moushira Khattab, Ph. D

Moushira Khattab is the former Minister of State for Family and Population of Egypt and a career diplomat. Born in Cairo in 1944, she is a seasoned expert in various UN disciplines and a social development orchestrator with a proven track record of success. Ambassador Khattab culminated her diplomatic career as Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cultural Relations.

She started her ministerial mandate in 1999, as Secretary General of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood [NCCM]. Moreover, in 2009 she became the Minister of State for Family and Population. She has established a reputation for her ability to build consensus on critical, often culturally sensitive issues as well as her expertise in diplomacy, negotiation, leadership, managerial skills, transparency, and fundraising abilities. In addition to that she is a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization and a board member of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs where she founded and currently chairs the Women in Foreign Policy Group. She chairs ENACTUS; Egypt's Advisory Board and is a jury member of the Global Inclusion Awards of Child & Youth Finance International and a member of the Advisory Committee of Defense for Children International. Dr. Khattab received international acclaim as an expert on children's rights and she holds a Ph. D in international Human Rights law.

As a daughter of Egypt's ancient civilization and the candidate of Africa, Moushira Khattab is a firm believer that prioritizing women, youth, and children as catalysts for change is the key to the successful implementation of UNESCO's mandate. Her vision for UNESCO reform is driven by her extensive experience as a career diplomat and a human development orchestrator shuttling between the UN and grassroots, who harbor big aspirations. Khattab's management style has always been inspired by closely working with people, even if it took her to the remotest villages, where she had closely listened to the concerns of people who were unable to send their kids to schools knowing, with a heavy heart, that they are ill-equipped generation. She strived to give those voiceless millions the platform to enable them to become vehicles for change and to allow their voices to be heard all the way to the top of Egyptian legal system.

This led to a much-needed legal reform, which has since been enshrined in Egypt's rights-based legal reform. A third world life experience coupled with a diplomatic one, is what Moushira Khattab will bring to UNESCO.

Experience in Conduct of Bilateral International Relations & UN

As a result of her diplomatic career, Moushira Khattab has built strength in international experience. This includes multilateral and bilateral experience with various UN organizations as well as serving her country during several events of historical significance. At the bilateral level, Khattab has lived two processes of profound transformation: as Ambassador to Czech and Slovak Federative Republic during its historic dissolution (1992-1994) and as Egypt's first Ambassador to South Africa during its transformation to democracy under Nelson Mandela (1994-1999).

At the multilateral level, Moushira started her diplomatic career at the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations in New York where she sat on the General Assembly's Third Committee on Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues. She later joined the Egyptian Embassy in Vienna (1973 - 1977) where she oversaw bilateral relations as well as serving at the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) during Egypt's membership of its Executive Council.

She bolstered her multilateral experience upon joining the Department of International Organizations and Conferences at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cairo. At that time, she participated in various conferences and meetings at UN bodies and chaired Egypt's delegation to such meetings on many occasions. Khattab delivered a keynote addresses at the "UNESCO Future Forum Gender Equality: The Missing Link?" Rethinking the Internationally Agreed Development Goals beyond 2015 (Athens 2010) and at the at the High level segment of ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review (2010).

As Expert, Rapporteur and Vice Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child:

- Linked UNICEF with the committee and Forged closer cooperation between UN national and regional activities on the ground
- Represented the Committee at various meetings including those on the Reform of UN Treaty Bodies
- Member, Advisory Group on Children Without Parental Care CWPC, drafted UN guidelines on the protection of CWPC
- Led Egypt's delegation to the consideration on Egypt's second periodic report. Led and coordinated a participatory process of reporting to the Committee on Egypt's combined third and fourth periodical reports

UNSG study on Violence against children

Played a proactive role within the framework of the Study:

- Chaired MENA Regional Steering Committee and Egypt's National Committee on Violence Against Children (until 2011)
- Organized three MENA Regional Conferences (2005), follow-up (2006, 2007)
- Chaired roundtable discussion following presentation to GA of the UN Study on VAC (New York – 2006)
- Mobilized the MENA & League of Arab States around the issue of Violence against children

Leadership and Managerial Skills

Moushira Khattab has a proven track record of adopting a participatory approach in the formulation of the vision, planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation.

She has an established record of working in partnership, building consensus with diverse stakeholders including governments, UN, civil society, private sector, grassroots and donor community.

Commitment to UNESCO Purposes and Objectives

- Prioritized education and culture as pre-requisites and pivots for sustainable development.
- Pioneered several key programs with the aim of reforming Egypt's education and improving its quality
- Spearheaded legal reform that put the State under legal obligation to guarantee the right to education and making the deprivation of such a right a punishable offense
- Led efforts to harmonize pre-university education with the Convention on Child Rights to include human dignity, human rights, tolerance, culture, solidarity, equality, realization of peace, respect for human rights and freedoms, respect for others, non-discrimination based on gender, religion, race, origin, social status, disability or any other grounds

- Sponsored a law which criminalized the abuse of scientific research, computers, the Internet or cartoons to commit or instigate exploitation of children in prostitution or pornography and protects the rights of children of imprisoned mothers
- Within the framework of the UNESCO “Education for all initiative”, Khattab engineered Egypt’s “Girls Education Initiative” (GEI), which aims to eliminate gender bias and other kinds of discrimination within the education system and cultural bias that impedes girls’ education. UNICEF dedicated one of its publications to the case of Egypt and GEI
- Led the formulation of a five-year national action plan in a participatory manner. She mobilized resources and established of over 2200 girl-friendly schools providing quality active learning for thousands of girls
- Prioritized combating adult illiteracy. Special programs were organized for women with the aim of combating all forms of gender based discrimination and violence such as FGM, human trafficking and child marriage. The program emphasized life skills and principles of religious and cultural tolerance, gender parity, environment protection and sustainable development. A hundred thousand men and women benefited from the illiteracy programs. (1999-2011)
- Launched regular programs in cooperation with (UNFPA), on adolescent health in secondary schools. The program succeeded in raising awareness and mitigating cultural resistance and continues to be mainstreamed in public schools
- Launched a program in cooperation with NGOs on early childhood development to increase enrollment in pre-school education
- Initiated a study on school violence in Upper Egypt as part of an effort to tackle school violence and bullying
- Led and coordinated national efforts to combat school dropouts feeding into child labor and street children in cooperation with the Ministry of Telecommunication, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and the Population Council
- Led the implementation of a program to make ICT accessible to marginalized children in rural and impoverished areas. This program also aimed to protect children from trafficking and sexual exploitation via the internet
- Prioritized education for refugee children as a pivot to ensure their human rights. She pioneered a program that provides educational, cultural and recreational activities for refugee children, in cooperation with the High Commissioner for Refugees

- Led the implementation of a national program “Children at risk” (20 million Euro) in cooperation with the European Union which improved the lives of many children and their families and is considered by the EU as one of its most successful projects in Egypt
- Khattab initiated and led over a period of five years (2003-2008) the most comprehensive rights based legal reform process in the region. The process included diligent negotiations, communication, consensus building, lobbying and alliance building at various levels. It was crowned by the adoption of Law 126/2008, which amends three laws bringing them into closer harmony with international human rights standards. The revised laws prohibit Female Genital Mutilation FGM and the sale of children, the exploitation of children in pornography, sexual abuse and trafficking. In addition, the Civil Status Law that raised the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years with provisions for penalizing offenders. This process spanned over 5 years of work at the grass roots to raise awareness of the need for reform. It was followed by awareness raising among decision makers, parliamentarians, media professionals and opinion leaders.

In her capacity as Minister of State for Family and Population, Khattab established and chaired a committee on ethics and moral values. The committee was diverse and included representatives from the Church, Al-Azhar, media professionals, universities, representatives of civil society as well as the Ministries of Education, culture and other line ministries. The committee focused on dealing with gender and religion discrimination, harmful traditional practices and disseminating a culture that respects human rights and the rule of law.

Introducing a Cultural Legacy

- Moushira Khattab organized various programs, popular gatherings and interviews to raise awareness of certain cultural challenges. She regularly met with hundreds of university students within their summer camps to discuss issues of public concern
- As the chair of Family Committee within the Egyptian Radio and Television Union, she contributed to the dissemination of constructive cultural values, and raising awareness with various aspects of human sustainable developments
- Khattab is credited with garnering the support of both state-owned and private media to tackle education and culture issues in a constructive manner that would improve Egypt’s rating on the global human development index

- Chaired for 10 consecutive years an annual workshop during Cairo's international Child Film festival with topics usually focusing on cultural issues of concern to the family
- Planned and supervised the implementation of a social marketing project "Think Twice" which encouraged positive change on cultural issues. The project was implemented in cooperation with UNDP and the Italian cooperation
- Khattab succeeded and resisted in dealing with sensitive topics and resistance to what was perceived as invading family privacy. She led the establishment of 3 national toll free helplines as monitoring mechanisms supported by remedy and rehabilitation services
- She initiated and led the first national rights based budget tracking (2006), which monitored the size of public spending on implementing and advancing the rights of children
- Worked with the Cairo University to conduct a study mapping child poverty

Communication Skills

Moushira Khattab's credibility and communication skills have enabled her to excel as a diplomat and she is the recipient of multiple decorations and honors including the Order of Good Hope by the President of South Africa. Her perseverance and warm rapport with the grass roots promoted a change in societal perception of FGM from a socially accepted habit to a crime punishable by law and backed by an amendment to Egypt's penal code to criminalize the practice. She championed the creation of an international network against the practice, working in cooperation with UNDP, UNICEF, and Italian and African NGOs. Till this day she also continues to support to African countries afflicted by the practice which has seen the prevalence of FGM in steady decline not only in Africa but globally. Ambassador Khattab was also recently invited to participate as an advisor at a childhood and motherhood conference in the Arabian Gulf. She has been decorated twice by the president of Italy for her work by the "Knight of the Grand Cross" of the Republic of Italy and Commendatore della Repubblica. She also achieved success in the sectors of child marriage and girls education. Finally, she has also been the recipient of the Award of Courage by the US Secretary of State for her efforts in women and children's rights.

Partnerships for a Better Future

Throughout her work, Khattab spearheaded the implementation of a wide range of large scale national projects with many UN agencies such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, ODC, WFP, WHO and UNFPA. Major programs were also implemented with the European Union, World Bank, USAID, Italian Cooperation, Dutch, Swedish and Swiss funds for development. Child observatory was established, in cooperation with UNICEF and the Italian cooperation, as a monitoring mechanism. It functioned in cooperation with universities, researchers and schools.

In addition, she successfully forged strong partnerships with the private sector, within a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework including with multinationals in areas such as: improving environment in marginalized areas, building schools for poor girls, supporting victims of trafficking, and street children with disabilities, among other programs.

She established within NCCM the first Egyptian Unit to combat child trafficking, established a shelter for victims in cooperation with IOM and formulated a national database-powered action plan to train professionals, receive complaints about violations and monitor intervention.

Personal Details

Name: Moushira Mahmoud Khattab

Place of Birth: Cairo, Egypt - July 16th, 1944

Nationality: Egyptian

Family: Married with two children

Languages: Arabic (Mother Tongue), English and French

Professional Positions

2009 – 2011 | Minister of State for Family & Population

1999 – 2009 | Secretary General - National Council for Childhood & Motherhood
(Ministerial Mandate)

1999 | Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cultural Relations

1994 – 1999 | Ambassador of Egypt to South Africa

1994 – 1999 | Ambassador of Egypt to Botswana & Lesotho (non-resident)

1992 – 1994 | Ambassador of Egypt to Czech Republic & Slovakia

1992 | Ambassador of Egypt to the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic

1989 – 1992 | Director of Department of Maghreb Countries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

1985 – 1989 | Consul of Egypt – Melbourne, Australia

1982 – 1985 | Counselor - Department of Economic Affairs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

1979 – 1981 | Embassy of Egypt in Budapest, Hungary

1977 – 1979 | Advisor at the Cabinet of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

1973 – 1977 | Embassy of Egypt in Vienna and Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

1971 – 1973 | Advisor at the Cabinet of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

1968 – 1970 | Permanent Mission of Egypt to United Nations, New York. (General Assembly 3rd Committee on Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Issues)

1968 | Diplomatic Attaché - Department of International Organizations & Multilateral Affairs

1967 – 1968 | Diplomatic Attaché - Institute for Diplomatic and Consular Studies

1966 | Joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Current & Recent Activities

2011 to 2017:

- Senior Public Policy Scholar Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
- Visiting Professor, Human Rights & Gender Issues, University of Perugia for Foreigners – Italy
- Visiting lecturer – Egyptian Foreign Policy, International Relations, Human Rights and Gender Issues, Misr University for Science and Technology
- Vice President of Aflatoun International for Child Social and Financial Education – Amsterdam
- Board Member of “Women in Diplomacy”, Italian Foreign Ministry
- Vice-President of the International Bureau for Children’s Rights – Montreal
- Member, Board of Trustees of the National Museum of Egyptian Civilization
- Board Member, Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs
- Chair of Egypt’s Advisory Board of ENACTUS
- Mentor and faculty member of the Women in Public Service Project (established by the US State Department)
- Member of the Advisory Committee of Defense for Children International
- Advisor, Africa Child Policy Forum AFCPF
- Member, Association of “Friends of the Egyptian Opera”
- Member, Association of “Friends of Manial Palace Museum”
- Board Member, Association of Former International Civil Servants, Egypt

Other Activities

2002 – 2010 | Expert, Rapporteur & Vice Chair, UN Committee on Rights of the Child

2003 – 2009 | Board member of Child Help International – Amsterdam

2002 – 2009 | Board Member & Consumer Representative, Egyptian Electricity Regulatory Board

2002 – 2009 | Board Member, Vodafone Foundation for Social Development

2000 – 2009 | Board of Trustees of the Egyptian Radio & Television Union & Chair, Sub-committee on Family and children

2000 – 2009 | Board Member of the Egyptian Federation of NGOs

2008 | Women Leadership Council to Combat Trafficking in Persons (UNGIFT/UNODC Vienna)

2004 – 2005 | Chair, Intergovernmental Expert Group mandated to prepare UN Guidelines on Justice Matters for Children Witnesses and Victims of Crimes

2004 | Board Member, Higher Council for Pre-University Education, Egypt

Education

Ph.D in International Human Rights Law – Cairo University, Egypt

M.A. in Political Science – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA

B.Sc. in Political Science – Cairo University, Egypt

Honors

- Knight of the Grand Cross of the Italian Republic
- Commendatore della Repubblica by the President of Italian Republic
- Order of Good Hope by the President of South Africa
- International Women of Courage Award by the US Secretary of State

Please refer to <http://www.moushirakhattab.com> for a list of publications and other information