

Editor's Commentary

GIVEN THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), arguably set off in 2010 by an ongoing wave of demonstrations and protests across the region, *AIB Insights* is publishing a special issue on MENA. The region has experienced tremendous political, institutional, and cultural changes with significant implications for international business research, teaching, and practice.

The articles in this issue address some of these implications. Geert Hofstede's article continues the discussion of methodology issues in cross-cultural research from issue 4 of 2012. He specifically addresses the failure to employ matched samples in comparative, cross-cultural studies, based on a Middle Eastern context, and so illustrates how to properly examine cultural differences in the region. Next, Dina Abdelzaher and Amanda Bullough present personal reflections on perceptions of gender issues in the MENA region. In the third article, Tim Rogmans provides valuable advice on risk management in the region.

The editors' comments are short to provide space for a commentary on the relevance and importance of this special issue by Melodena Stephens Balakrishnan of the University of Wollongong in Dubai, UAE, the president and founder of the AIB MENA Chapter. We thank our authors for their valuable contributions to this special issue and invite our readers to comment on these articles and submit additional contributions about the MENA region for a potential follow-up issue on the topic.



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Cover Art: An ornate Hamsa, a universal symbol of protection, regarded as a sacred symbol in many religions. In Islam, it represents the hand of Prophet Muhammad's daughter Fatima, and is a symbol of patience, loyalty, faith and resistance against difficulties, see http://www.hamsameaning.com/hamsa_islam.html. A wide ranging discussion of the symbol is available at Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamsa>