

Speak with one voice in the global economy. Rather than 22 separate markets, each with their own rules and barriers, imagine if they could find a way to create an open & inclusive society, one that is focused on transparency & accountability & trust; in short, all the things necessary for sustained business investment, but also good for society and for politics. There is simply **no good reason** why all Arab nations combined have a **smaller GDP** than Spain.

We see this region as a potentially powerful trading bloc of over 200 million customers, which has one quality in particular that makes it an investor's dream: half the population is under the age of 18, which means they could potentially be customers for life. If we can overcome the very complex rules that hinder the movement of goods, services, people, and investments, the Middle East could be the economic story of the next decade.

The same goes for education. Right now, 10 million Arab children between 6 and 15 years of age are currently **out of school**. We're told that if current trends persist, that number will increase by 40 percent over the next decade. That will make it even more difficult to attract new business.

But just imagine the story that could be told by **2010**, if instead every child in the Middle East had the ability to live up to their full potential; if primary and secondary education were the norm, not the exception; if computers and computer literacy were made part of their lives. The average Muslim in the U.S. gets better grades, earns a higher degree, and earns more money than the average citizen. It's happening here, and it can happen there.

I have not in my life heard a more eloquent speaker, or met a more committed person than Queen Rania of Jordan. When I think that the Queen began her life in a refugee family, moving from place to place to escape conflict, it makes me think **how easy it would have been to overlook the talent of this remarkable woman**. How many other young girls are out there who have just as much potential, who are just waiting for the chance to show what they can do. I believe **women** are a large part of the power and potential and possibility for the Middle East going forward. **If they become full partners in society, there's no telling how grand that story could be.**

For every single one of these challenges, information technology must play a role. We have seen in developed nations how the **right use** of IT can

empower people and business in new ways, to take productivity and growth to levels they have never been before. We talk about IT being a competitive asset or a competitive disadvantage. Just think about the ways it is changing all of our lives here. But for all that technology means in countries like the U.S., its potential is even greater for regions like the Middle East. Our newest technology applied to solutions like telemedicine, teleagriculture & distance learning has a unique ability to help countries **leapfrog** years of development, to close the gap between technology-empowered communities & technology-excluded communities.

Progress is not made by cynics and doubters. Progress is made by those who focus on the possible.

I began by painting you a picture of the past. But just think of the picture we could see in the Middle East within a generation. We really do believe that if we focus on the possibilities and not just the problems; if we focus on the economics, and not just the politics of the Arab world – within a generation, we really will see education for everyone, with schools that are totally networked, and students and parents who interact over the Internet. We really will see a Middle Eastern trade block that is a significant trading partner for America, Europe and Asia, with people moving and working freely within that block. We really will see trade amongst Middle Eastern nations that constitute a significant part of the Middle Eastern economy, creating jobs and opportunity; we really will see a region that reclaims its rightful place as some of the leading thinkers, doers, and dreamers in the world.

As we **work together**, let us remember the example of Muhammad (p). When the Prophet Muhammad (p) was still a young man, a stone fell from the Kaaba. In response, the tribes of Mecca quarreled over which one would have the honour of returning it to its place. Rather than choosing one tribe over another, the young Muhammad (p) solved the problem by placing the stone on a cloth so each tribe could hold a corner of the cloth, and all the tribes could lift it **together**.

May the wisdom of the Prophet (p) inspire us, and may his wisdom guide the Arab world as it **works together** to write a new story of the ages for our time."

Carly has the valuable characteristic of Moral Courage. Bravo for such honesty. Have we fulfilled the vision for 2010? Let's work together for 2020. Let's weave an educational fabric onto which an illiterate humanity can be lifted to a sacralized knowledge. Let's hope this new decade brings inspiration, for the last had too much blood & perspiration. The New Story begins right NOW.



Now, now, dear brave Muslim Men...

One little known aspect of Carly Fiorina (former CEO HP) is that she studied medieval history at Stanford University. She was also courageous enough to stand up and **praise** the Islamic Civilization, on 26th September 2001, just two weeks after the 9/11 attacks (**currently under intense scrutiny as to WHO really did it**).

"This civilization was driven more than anything, by invention. Its architects designed buildings that defied gravity. Its mathematicians created the algebra and algorithms that would enable the building of computers, and the creation of encryption. Its doctors examined the human body, and found new cures for disease. Its astronomers looked into the heavens, named the stars, and paved the way for space travel and exploration. Its writers created thousands of stories. Stories of courage, romance and magic. Its poets wrote of love, when others before them were too steeped in fear to think of such things. When other nations were afraid of ideas, this civilization thrived on them, and kept them alive. When censors threatened to wipe out knowledge from past civilizations, this civilization kept the knowledge alive, and passed it on to others."

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Courageous Carly: There was once a civilization that was the greatest in the world. It was able to create a continental super-state that stretched from ocean to ocean, and from northern climes to tropics and deserts. Within its dominion lived hundreds of millions of people, of different creeds and ethnic origins.

One of its languages became the universal language of much of the world, the bridge between the peoples of a hundred lands. Its armies were made up of people of many nationalities, and its military protection allowed a degree of peace and prosperity that had never been known. The reach of this civilization's commerce extended from Latin America to China, and everywhere in between.

The civilization I'm talking about was the Islamic world from the year 800 to 1600, which included the Ottoman Empire and the courts of Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo, and enlightened rulers like Suleiman the Magnificent.

Although we are often unaware of our indebtedness to this other civilization, its gifts are very much a part of our heritage. The technology industry would **not** exist without the contributions of Arab mathematicians. Sufi poet-philosophers like Rumi challenged our notions of self and truth. Leaders like Suleiman contributed to our notions of tolerance and civic leadership. And perhaps we can learn a lesson from his example: It was leadership based on meritocracy, not inheritance. It was leadership that harnessed the full capabilities of a very diverse population – that included Christianity, Islamic, and Jewish traditions. This kind of **enlightened leadership** – leadership that nurtured culture, sustainability, diversity and courage – **led to 800 years of invention and prosperity.**

In dark and serious times like this, we must affirm our commitment to building societies and institutions that aspire to this kind of greatness. More than ever, we must focus on the importance of leadership – bold acts of leadership and decidedly personal acts of leadership. With that, I'd like to open up the conversation and see what we, collectively, believe about the role of leadership." Carly Fiorina's

speech "Technology, Business And Our Way Of Life: What's Next", delivered at Minneapolis, MN, 9/26/2001.

Speech: Vision 2010: U.S. & Arab Economic Opportunities; U.S.-Arab Economic Forum **9/29/2003:**

Question: Ask ourselves why as we have reached the year 2010 this vision has become blinded.

"As we meet to think about the civilization that exists on that same land today, I ask you to imagine for a moment what a leader like Suleiman would say if he could somehow be here today, and see what the world has become. I think he would be pleased at how much the world has learned from the example of the open, cooperative society that enlightened the world all those years ago. The Islamic example has helped create a world where democracy and transparency and rule of law are empowering people and taking them to new heights.

But I think he would also ask **why there is so little cooperation** in the land that taught the world what it knows about cooperation. Why is so much closed in a land that taught the world what it means to have an open society? Why do we have 22 separate Arab nations with their own rules and systems and barriers, when the rest of the world took its example and created prosperous trading blocs?

I think he would look at the inventions of this world & say that humanity has done much with the knowledge the Islamic world gave it – from Arab architects who designed buildings that make today's cities possible; to Arab mathematicians who created the algebra & algorithms that made the invention of computers possible.

I think he would also ask **why isn't there as much knowledge** today in the land that taught the world what it knows about knowledge? Why, at a time when literacy is the path to success in the information age, are **65 million adult Arabs still illiterate?** Why, at a time when information technology is helping create opportunity, is only one half of one percent of the Arab world online – a rate lower than sub-Saharan Africa?

I think he would be pleased at how inclusive this world has become, and say that humanity has learned much from the diversity of the Islamic world – a world that was based on meritocracy, **not inheritance.**

But I think he would also ask **why does this land that taught the world so much of what it knows about inclusion, still virtually exclude half of its population?**

Why aren't women, who make up **more than half** of the university population in the Arab world, equal to work, equal to start businesses, and equal to contribute to the peace, prosperity, and advancement of the Arab world? Why, when the Arab world has such an incredible asset in the midst, **would it choose to leave that asset on the shelf?**

I refuse to believe that the Arab world was more enlightened 500 years ago than it is today. We don't need Suleiman to ask these questions.

Last year, a group of Arab scholars asked the same questions. There is a spirit of invention and innovation and creativity in Arab nations that led the world in the past, and can lead to an even more prosperous future. Of course we must be realistic about the problems, and the barriers to the progress. But we must also be optimistic about the potential to overcome these barriers, for without optimism, no progress is possible.

I had the honour of participating in the World Economic Forum's meeting in Jordan. After one of the panel discussions, I saw a security guard. He was Egyptian, and I asked him what he thought of the proceedings. He said, "We talk a lot about politics here, and rightly so. But if we're going to bring the kind of change we need, it's not about politics, it's got to be about economics."

Surely the reason we are all here is because we know that creating new, sustainable prosperity in the Middle East isn't just a political challenge, it is also an economic challenge, an education challenge, and a diversity challenge.

First and foremost, the economic question in the Middle East is a demographic question. In half a century, the population there has quadrupled, and could increase by nearly 100 million over the next decade. While the population is expected to grow at five percent, economic growth is projected to remain at three percent. Unlike other regions of the world that trade with each other to create growth, like Europe, where two-third of all trade is amongst neighbours – in the Middle East, **less than seven percent of trade is between neighbours.**

Just imagine the story that could be told by 2010 if all 22 Arab nations worked together to

Be Conscious of God and Speak words that are Just