

# Opening Remarks

**DR. Simon Engelkes**

YE Minister Dr. Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousuf, YE Member of the Council of State Hatem bin Hamad Al-Tai, YE Deputy Ambassador of GER to Oman Amelie Tittel, dear Dr. Yousuf Hamed Al Balushi, ladies and gentlemen, dear friends and colleagues

Also on behalf of KAS: welcome to Salalah

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung is a GER non-profit civic education foundation and a think tank affiliated with the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of former Chancellor Angela Merkel, who also still serves as one of the Foundation's board members.

The origins of the foundation go back to the 1950s when the founders embarked on a civic education project to change the people's attitudes after WWII and since the 60s, we bear the name of the first Federal Chancellor of post-WW2 Western Germany and co-founder of the CDU, Konrad Adenauer.

We feel bound to Adenauer's way of thinking, memory and legacy; - his principles in civic education and political orientation serve as our guidelines, mission and commitment.

He united Christian-social, conservative and liberal traditions; - and his name stands for the democratic reconstruction of Germany, the vision of a unified Europe and the orientation towards a social market economy.

Konrad believed in freedom, justice and solidarity and they are the basic principles underlying our work.

Today, we operate in 120 countries worldwide, implementing over 200 programmes, where we aim to make a contribution helping Germany to meet its growing responsibilities throughout the world.

We are proud to be the only GER not-for-profit foundation working on and in the Arab Gulf States through our own Regional Gulf Program which has been active since 2009 and today operates out of Amman in Jordan

Our work in the GCC countries particularly focuses on accompanying the socioeconomic transformation and modernization processes that have taken off in the region - including the efforts on economic diversification.

And we also aim at creating multinational dialogue platforms for discussion and knowledge transfer between stakeholders in the region as well as with Germany and Europe in order to strengthen mutual trust and understanding

We believe that by working together, we can jointly overcome common challenges while we are building strong and sustainable partnerships for the future.

as KAS, bringing people together is our core business - so the pandemic and its restrictions have hit us quite heavily. This is why I am particularly happy to see so many of you here today, eager to discuss and exchange.

We as a foundation naturally only operate in countries where we are invited - and in our work, we strictly cooperate with local partners

So allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to your government, YE Minister Al Yousuf, and to our partners Al Roya Newspaper and Smart Investment Gateway for welcoming us here in Oman

It is our first activity in the Sultanate since 2016 and we are happy to be back!

Lastly, allow me to add a few words on the topic at hand

The issue of economic diversification is steadily gaining urgency; in this region as much as in Europe and Germany. The global economic slowdown triggered by the Corona pandemic and the consequences of the Russian war in Ukraine have once more highlighted the ramifications of a dependency on oil and gas, both for exporters like you and importers like us, - and the closure of borders worldwide has led to a rethinking regarding global supply chains

The economies of the future will be largely decarbonised; bringing with it challenges for all of us but also vast opportunities for sustainability, innovation, and prosperity

Konrad Adenauer once said, „experiences are the seed from which knowledge and wisdom grows“ - so let us try exactly that

Thank you again to our partners and thank you all for joining this conference today and tomorrow — I wish us all insightful debates