Report from Visiting Scholar, Ahmad Azem Hamad

As a mid-career researcher and editor based in United Arab Emirates and working on various aspects of Middle Eastern politics, I wanted to focus on research and writing on the topic of "Conflict Management in the Arab World". My research included surveying think-tanks, academic units, journals, and articles that analyse conflict management approaches within the region.

I needed to access literature published on conflict theories and conflict management, resolution, prevention, and transformation. It was important to connect with a vivid academic community where I could explain and discuss my ideas and receive feedback and comments from fellow researchers.

From October 2011 to June 2012, I was privileged to be part of the larger academic community of Cambridge University through my research at The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies. I had access to the unmatched library and resources of the University, and I was able to participate in many programs and events taking place within the University. The Centre’s lecture series "Beyond the Arab Spring" was timely and well-planned, fostering a broader understanding of the historical moment in the region.

The Centre’s Research Day in November, gave me an excellent opportunity to discuss my project in detail, hear about other fellow scholars and researchers and their fields of study, and exchange views and experience.

In April 2012, I was especially fortunate to be included in the programme “Cambridge in Morocco”. During our tour of the country, I gave talks about my research, specifically on conflict management within the Moroccan context. It was an excellent opportunity to present my ideas and findings to researchers and students in Morocco and to receive their feedback, while also benefiting from daily interaction and discussions with the distinguished researchers who formed the Cambridge delegation.

One of my papers has been already published in al Majallah al-‘Arabiyya li-’l-‘Ulum As-Siyasiyya (The Arab Journal for Political Science), another paper is already accepted for publication in other journal, and I am optimistic that the significant progress that I have made in my research will be realised in additional publications, especially in English, in the near future.

The team at the Centre deserves my very special thanks. I will always appreciate and admire Professor Yasir Suleiman, Founding Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies. I am so grateful for his hospitality, support and
advice. Both Dr. Paul Anderson and Dr. Saeko Yazaki were very welcoming and generous in their support. I enjoyed our discussions, and the intellectually rich and friendly times we shared.