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## **Second annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey challenges stereotypes about Arab youth**

- Seven out of ten share sense of common identity beyond ethnicity, religion or national background and embrace global citizenship
- Burson-Marsteller Global Vice Chair Karen Hughes, former US Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, to present study findings in Dubai on March 7
- Prestigious panel of Arab opinion-leaders, drawn from government, business, media, law and arts, will debate implications of survey results

**Dubai, UAE, March 2, 2010** – Contrary to the widespread perception of the Middle East as a region defined by conflict and a growing East/West cultural and political divide, the vast majority of Arab youth prioritise harmonious relations with the international community and wholeheartedly regard themselves as global citizens.

These are among the key findings of the Second Annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, a groundbreaking study of 2,000 Arab national and expatriate youth between the ages of 18 and 24 across nine Middle East countries – the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.

ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, the Middle East's leading Public Relations Consultancy and part of the MENACOM Group, will invite Karen Hughes, Global Vice Chair of Burson-Marsteller and a former US Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, to share highlights of the research at a VIP reception in Dubai on Sunday, March 7, 2010.

Following her presentation, a prestigious panel of Arab opinion leaders, drawn from government, business, media, law and the arts, will debate the implications of the Survey results.

Among a variety of topics, the Survey asked Arab youth to rate the importance of global citizenship – the shared feeling of identity regardless of ethnic, religious or national background

– with seven out of ten respondents interviewed describing the concept as either 'somewhat' or 'very important'.

Arab national and expatriate youth in the UAE went even further, with 79 per cent describing it as 'somewhat' or 'very important'. A plurality of youth in every country surveyed concurred with the exception of Oman, where 41 per cent said the notion of global citizenship was either 'somewhat or 'very important'.

Sunil John, Chief Executive Officer of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, said: "As with the 2008 survey, our second in-depth attitudinal study of Arab youth challenges a number of inaccurate assumptions about the beliefs and behaviour of the Middle East's largest and most important demographic.

"Far from rejecting globalisation, Arab youth appear to be actively seeking to participate in the trends shaping the international community. Politicians, business leaders, educators, marketers and the media would do well to take note."

John said: "Arab youth are talented, media aware and eager to make their mark in the world as fully engaged global citizens. The Second Annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey zeros in on critical points in the discussion with young people, maximising the effectiveness of communications and bringing decision-makers closer to an increasingly influential and vocal community."

The second edition of the ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey, which was conducted in October 2009 by leading international polling firm Penn Schoen & Berland Associates (PSB), polled more people and covered more countries than the inaugural study in 2008.

Whereas the first survey involved online interviews with 1,500 youth in six Arab countries, the second study carried out a total of 2,000 face-to-face interviews among Arab youth in nine Middle East nations.

Robert Kellman, Middle East Business Director of PSB, said: "The second survey has greater reach, more depth and is even more representative of the divergent views of young men and women across the major Arab nations than the 2008 study. The interview sample is weighted to reflect the socio-economic make-up of the participating countries, the geographical distribution of population within them, and the opinions of women as well as men."

The main themes of the survey include:

- Attitudes to the financial crisis

- Access to technology
- Media consumption
- Social media networking trends
- Attitudes to travel and foreign relations
- Use of leisure time
- Spending habits
- Perceptions of leading brands
- Attitudes towards education
- Perceptions of the private and public sector

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### **About ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller:**

Established in 2000, ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller is the region's leading public relations consultancy, with over 130 communications professionals in 11 fully-owned offices across the Middle East and North Africa. The firm has an additional eight affiliates covering a total of 17 countries in the Middle East region.

The agency provides consultancy services to governments, multinational businesses and regional corporate clients through its six practices in the sectors of Technology, Corporate, Finance, Healthcare, Consumer Marketing and Public Affairs. Its services include reputation management, media training, crisis & issues management, digital communications, media relations, media monitoring and analysis and event management. For more information, please visit: [www.asdaa.com/www.burson-marsteller.eu](http://www.asdaa.com/www.burson-marsteller.eu).

### **About MENACOM:**

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With over 1,200 employees in its network of over 50 offices, MENACOM provides marketing communications services in 17 countries across the Middle East, Levant and North Africa.