

Remembering Abdel Shakour Shaalan

It is with much sadness that we note the passing away of Mr. Abdel Shakour Shaalan in the evening on June 4, 2021.

Abdel Shakour Shaalan's career at the IMF spanned nearly 54 years from January 1961, to November 1, 2014, and continued to 2019 in a special capacity. On January 3, 2011 Shakour Shaalan marked his 50th year of service to the IMF, and this event was celebrated with some recollections from his fifty-year career. He continued to work at the Fund for several years after that as a Special Advisor to the Managing Director until 2019. He was an incredible ambassador of the Fund to its members, an advocate of the staff, and a very cooperative partner to management. He remains an IMF icon, a legend who is highly respected and admired.

He worked at the IMF during ten IMF Managing Directors (Johannes Witteveen, Jacques de Larosi re, Michel Camdessus, Horst Kohler, Anne Krueger as Acting MD, Rodrigo de Rato, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, John Lipsky as Acting MD, Christine Lagarde, and David Lipton as Acting MD) – actually all but two Managing Directors in the life of the IMF— so he knows the institution better than most.

In 1961, he joined the Fund as an economist in the Research Department. It was the year the London gold pool was established to maintain the Bretton Woods system of fixed-rate convertible currency and defend the gold price. In 1969, he became Division Chief in the Middle Eastern Department and spent almost 30 years there in various roles until 1977, when he became the Director of the Middle Eastern Department and remained there for the next 15 years. He managed the department with very strong leadership. In his first visit back to his home country Egypt in 1977, when he received a hero's welcome.

Egypt has been proud that he served as Executive Director for the constituency, and how dedicated he was to this job representing in addition to Egypt, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Syria, the Republic of Yemen, and the Maldives. His dedication and contributions set a high bar for his staff of Advisors and many Alternate Executive Directors over the years.

In his role as an Executive Director, he made very important contributions, especially in the realm of surveillance, quota and voice and notably, in calling for evenhanded treatment of members. He also had a very much-appreciated role as an advocate for preserving staff morale and benefits. In 2007, he became the Dean of the Board. He used his distinctive experience to facilitate productive relations between the Board and management, as well as among other Directors.

A funeral was held at 1 pm on June 6, 2021 at National Memorial Park, 7482 Lee Highway, in Falls Church, VA 22042. A memorial reception open to staff and friends of Mr. Shaalan will be held on Thursday, June 10 at 1:00 p.m. at National Memorial Park, 7482 Lee Highway in Falls Church VA 22042. You can also leave a remembrance or condolence note to his family [here](#).