

Abdalhadi Aljila

Watching Out for Gaza

Dr. Abdalhadi Aljila is a social and political scientist and science advocate. During the recent Israeli assault on Gaza that displaced his family from their home, he received the news that he had won the Global South Award of the International Political Science Association (IPSA).



Abdalhadi was born in Gaza into a modest family, the ninth child of parents who worked hard to raise him and his siblings. Growing up, he witnessed the political engagement of his family and neighborhood, particularly during the first Intifada. This opened his eyes to Gaza's conditions under occupation and inspired his own political engagement, leaving him "without a childhood," to use his own words. He studied in Gaza's schools, starting to work and contribute to the family income at the age of 14, and working as a garbage collector when he was 17 years old.

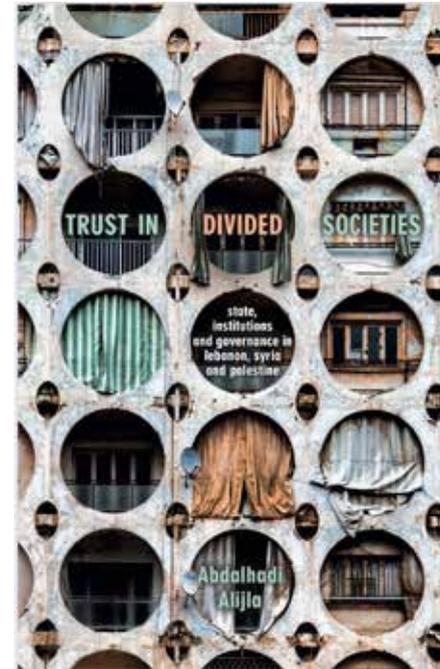
To oblige his parents, Abdalhadi obtained a bachelor of engineering degree because Arabic society traditionally requires that whoever receives high marks in school has to become an engineer or a physician.

His love of politics and the social sciences prompted him to follow his passion for reading and engagement in politics and with NGOs in the Gaza Strip. After graduating from the engineering faculty, Abdalhadi decided to study politics and completed studies in Italy, Germany, and Sweden, eventually earning a PhD in political science.

Abdalhadi is currently the co-leader of Global Migration and Human Rights at Global Young Academy; he co-founded the Palestine Young Academy in 2020. He is also an associate researcher and the regional manager of the University of Gothenburg's Varieties of Democracy Institute for Gulf Countries. Since April 2018, he has been an associate fellow at the Post-Conflict Research Center in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Among the numerous institutions that have granted him awards and scholarships are the German Academic Exchange Service DAAD (2009), University of Milan UNIMI (2012), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property ICCROM (2010), and Saud Al-Babtain (2002); and Right Livelihood College awarded him the title Junior Scientist (2010), among others. In 2016, he was a fellow of the Royal Society of Art and Science, United Kingdom. In 2018, Abdalhadi was selected to be a member of the Global Young Academy, an international society of young scientists that aims to give them a voice across the globe; it has only 200 members worldwide.

Abdalhadi has worked for many NGOs and INGOs in the Middle East and Europe, such as Transparency International, the German Center for International Cooperation GIZ, the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian crisis – Madad Fund, and United Nations Volunteers, among others. He is a member of the scientific and consultative committee of the Centre for Arab Unity Studies in Beirut.



His writings appear on *OpenDemocracy*, *Mondoweiss*, *Huffpost*, *Qantara*, *Your Middle East*, *Jadaliyya*, and other media outlets. In 2020, his first book, titled *Trust in Divided Societies*, was published by Bloomsbury Academics and I.B.Tauris, UK.

