

## TOPICS:

International Relations, Security

## BIG IDEAS:

- **Understanding the Arabs:** The noise level about the Arab nations has been climbing steadily in recent years and will continue to do so. While firmly planted at the epicenter of the world's geopolitical stage, the Middle East—and the Arabs in particular—remain an enigma. As a trusted advisor to business and government leaders, Sir Mark dissolves the mysteries surrounding the Arab people. He offers a holistic view of the Arabs, beginning by recognizing their diversity, and delivers rich insights about Arab faith, culture, and attitudes toward power. These Arab-centric values help explain the contradictions, restlessness, and tension in the region. Sir Mark provides audiences with a deep understanding of Arabs at a *personal* level, so they can better prepare for the region's future political and economic challenges and opportunities.
- **The Edge of Vision: Extracting Meaningful Information for Business Leaders:** As the availability of information has exploded, so has the difficulty of interpretation. News, analysis, and spin are ever more abundant—but less and less reliable. Sir Mark Allen made a career of seeing patterns in the chaotic world while in the service of Her Majesty's government. He now provides strategic advisory and advocacy services to global companies. One vital skill he imparts in speeches and in workshops is to extract meaning from a noisy world by finding the right information, assessing it, and putting the whole story in context.



## Sir Mark Allen

*Arabist, Foreign Affairs  
Expert and Advisor*

## BIOGRAPHY

[www.monitortalent.com](http://www.monitortalent.com)

Mark Allen is one of the world's preeminent Arabists. Sir Mark draws on a 30 year career with the British Foreign Service and many years living in the Middle East, during which he developed a keen appreciation of unique nuances of each of the rich cultures of the region. Upon his recent retirement from public service, Sir Mark became a Special Advisor to BP and a Senior Advisor to the Monitor Group Company, a global consulting and private equity firm.

The Middle East has become the epicenter of international political and military attention, and the effectiveness of relations between the West and the Arab world will in large part set the terms for the hydrocarbon-dependent 21st Century economy. Yet Allen contends that there has been an appalling amount of ignorance of Arab people everywhere. By delving into the individual psychology and world view of Arabs, Sir Mark succeeds in bridging racial, political and religious gaps. In his recent book, *Arabs: A New Perspective*, Sir Mark draws out four themes that have given the Arabs a sense of being a single people. The first three—Family,

Religion and Arabism—set values for which the Arabs have shown they are ready to fight. The fourth, their common experience of Political Power, explains much about the need for reform in the Middle East and why it is so elusive.

Sir Mark contends that success in the relations between the West and the Arab world will depend on the effort to understand what is important there. His forthcoming book will delve more into the particular forms of tribalism that guide political and social cohesion in many parts of the world.

Sir Mark studied Arabic at Oxford and worked in the diplomatic service from 1973 to 2004. He served in the UAE, Egypt and Jordan, and his work took him all over the Middle East. In addition to his corporate advisory work, he is a senior associate member of St Antony's College, Oxford. He was made Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George (CMG) in 2002 and knighted in 2005.

For more information contact:

Mel Blake: (617) 252-2472 [ [mel\\_blake@monitor.com](mailto:mel_blake@monitor.com) ]

Jacqueline Lewis: (617) 252-2022 [ [jacqueline\\_lewis@monitor.com](mailto:jacqueline_lewis@monitor.com) ]

Erica Colonero: (617) 252-2922 [ [erica\\_colonero@monitor.com](mailto:erica_colonero@monitor.com) ]

[www.monitortalent.com](http://www.monitortalent.com)



monitor talent

A SERVICE OF MONITOR NETWORKS

© 2007 Monitor Talent, a service of Monitor Networks. All Rights Reserved. Rev. 1/07