

# Mohamed Al Barwani

## Chairman, MB Holding



**DOB:** October 30, 1951

**Marital status:** Married to Sharifa Al Harthy

**Education:**  
1975 - Bachelor of Science, Microbiology,  
Miami University of Ohio, USA  
1980 - Master's Petroleum Engineering,  
Herriot Watt University, UK  
2010 - Honorary PHD, Petroleum Engineering,  
Heriot Watt University, UK  
2013 - Honorary PHD, Science,  
Miami University, USA

**Spoken Languages:** English, Arabic & Swahili

**Interests & Hobbies:** Boats, Yachts, Fishing,  
Diving

**Sector:** Oil & gas

**Ownership:** Private

**Established in:** 1982

Dr. Mohammed Al Barwani is a towering figure in the Omani business world, having presided over one of the country's most successful companies over the last 30-plus years. Founded in 1986, MB Holding currently owns businesses in 21 countries, employing more than 5,000 people from 54 nationalities. As its chairman, Dr. Al Barwani is not involved in the daily management of the group anymore, but he remains on top of everything that happens in the business and makes the key decisions regarding the company's direction.

MB Holding's operations include exploration and production of oil and gas, marine and defense engineering, mining and exploration, manufacturing and trading, and investments. With its expansion into so many industries, the company hasn't always had the talent it required to carry out its plans inhouse. Key to its success, in large part due to Mohammed Al Barwani's own particular leadership strengths, has been in hiring the very best people to run each subsidiary. But despite its diversification through acquisition and investment, the group still tends to gravitate towards the sectors it knows best, according to its Chairman. *"Usually we invest in sectors that are related in some way or another to our existing business. Over the years, we have expanded into things like hotels, but our real core business is engineering, oil fields, geology that's our strength,"* says Dr. Al Barwani.

Still, as the global trend is moving towards a more diversified economy, Dr. Mohammed Al Barwani recognizes the importance of focusing on and contributing to the development of new sectors, other than oil and gas. In light of that, he established a real estate development company called Musstir, which builds property, hotels, and resorts in Oman. Its most successful project was the Al Baleed Resort Salalah by Anantara, built in partnership with a company named Omran, that was awarded the 2017 Hotel Project of the Year in the GCC. According to Dr. Al Barwani, tourism is a promising sector in Oman, and its

development will be a major contributor to the country's economy in the future. Although not exactly in the tourism industry, Dr. Al Barwani's acquisition several years ago of Oceanco, a Dutch shipyard company, does fit into the broad sector of engineering, travel and leisure. It also fits into his personal interests. Growing up near the ocean, Dr. Al Barwani's passion for yachts started at a very young age, and he is now loves working with the engineers and designers that build them. As the yacht owner himself, it's no surprise he sees it as a very nice business to be in.

Established in 1990, Oceanco is one of the world's leading builders of luxury super yachts, and Dr. Al Barwani is dedicated to making sure the company will continue to grow and innovate under his leadership. In 2012, he received the World of Yachts recognition award at the prestigious gala dinner held at the One & Only Mirage Hotel in Dubai, and in 2015 he acquired another shipyard company called Turquoise Yachts, located in Turkey, which builds smaller yachts.

Even though MB Holding has expanded into so many different industries in recent years, Dr. Al Barwani believes that there are still plenty of opportunities in energy at the moment, and that there will be more in the future. He has noted that in Europe, for example, the major players in the sector are moving into other industries, leaving more room for the middle level companies like Petrogas. For the long term, Dr. Al Barwani's goal for MB Holding is to move away from operations and become an investment company. *"The next generation of shareholders coming into the business may be more investors than managers,"* he believes. *"That's their key interest."*

Mohammed Al Barwani says that at its core, MB Holding is a family business, even if it has some subsidiaries that are traded on the stock market. He believes firmly that family businesses in Oman and the Gulf region are going to continue to be passed down to the next generations, even if the way they run their operations will probably change due to the advancement of technology. As a matter of fact, his wife and all of his five children are actively involved in running the company.

The chairman notes that the company is one of the largest private employers in Oman, and he takes pride in giving so many local people an opportunity to grow their career inside and outside the country. *"We're*

### My message to youth:

Today there are a lot of opportunities for the young generation to go into business. The market is not limited to one country, they should think about addressing the global market.

### My message about Oman:

Entrepreneurial ambition, free enterprise, and the need to trade and find new markets for services and goods has united the world better than any political system. Progress in technology, medicine, engineering and sciences has lifted the social wellbeing of human beings, people and societies. For human progress it is necessary to have global peace.

*employing more professionals, engineers, people with PhDs; we employ a higher class of expertise than most,"* he adds. In order to attract and retain the best, the company provides its employees with relevant training and development programs in order to prepare them for successfully dealing with their responsibilities in leadership roles.

Apart from overseeing the operations of MB Holding, Dr. Mohammed Al Barwani also sits on the boards of a series of organizations and charities.

Dr. Al Barwani likes a good challenge, especially because it involves solving a problem and working with others to find solutions. His ambition and perseverance have allowed him to accomplish his original vision for MB Holding, which was to become an important global player in the oil and gas sector. But his ultimate goal is to contribute to the development of Oman and to promote the country internationally. Based on how far MB Holding has come and where it is positioned today, it's safe to say that Mohammed Al Barwani has already realized that goal many times over.

### Affiliations, Awards & Honors

2006 to 2018 - Honorary Consul, Republic of Poland

2012 - Commandeur, Order of Orange-Nassau

2012 - Global Entrepreneur representing Oman, Ernst & Young

2014 - Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland

