

NEW-MED CONFERENCE



**YOUTH POTENTIAL  
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN  
UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES,  
OVERCOMING CHALLENGES**

**7 MAY 2018 | 09:30—17:00**

**ITALIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION  
– SALA ALDO MORO / GROUND FLOOR –  
PIAZZALE DELLA FARNESINA, 1  
ROME, ITALY**

*In cooperation with*



**G | M | F** The German Marshall Fund  
of the United States  
**STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION**



*Ministero degli Affari Esteri  
e della Cooperazione Internazionale*

## AGENDA

**9:00-9:30** *Registration of participants*

**9:30-10:00** **Introductory Remarks**

**VINICIO MATI** Coordinator for Italy's 2018 OSCE Chairmanship, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome

**LORENZO KAMEL** Senior Fellow, IAI & Senior Lecturer, University of Bologna

**NICOLÒ RUSSO PEREZ** Head of International Affairs Programme, Compagnia di San Paolo of Turin

**10:00-11:15** **Session I – Conflict Dynamics**

*Threat perceptions have risen as a result of the many conflicts and civil wars taking place across the MENA. In this scenario, there is a growing risk of losing sight of the underlining causes of the 2010-2011 Arab uprisings, moving back to old paradigms that prioritize stability and economic gain over the goal of sustainable development, inclusive growth and political representation. Speakers in the first session will analyze the implications of these and a number of other related aspects, devoting a particular attention to the marginalization of youth initiatives in the Syrian context, and the professionalization of security apparatus in the Gaza strip.*

*Chair and Discussant:*

**MARK LE VINE** Director of Global Middle East Studies, School of Humanities, University of California, Irvine

*Panelists:* **AHMED G. S. SUKKER** Palestine  
**BILAL SUKKAR** Syria

*Open debate*

**11:15-11:30** Coffee Break

**11:30-13:00** **Session II – Energy, Environment, Water**

*Environmental degradation, water scarcity and an overreliance on hydrocarbons represent considerable challenges to sustainable development across the MENA. Lukewarm economic growth, demographic pressures and declining state capacity are further weakening the ability of MENA states to respond to these challenges and plan for climate change and the post-oil future. This session will address the contrasting trends of resource abundance and scarcity in the MENA, assessing their impact on the developmental and governance models in the region. Recommendations for a gradual transition to more sustainable forms of development and energy production, through solar, wind and other forms of renewable energy, will be addressed in light of their feasibility in providing new solutions to old challenges in the region.*

*Chair and Discussant:*

**HOUDA BEN JANNET ALLAL** General Director, Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Energie (OME), Paris

*Panelists:* **MANAR SARIE** Israel  
**ABED AL KAREEM YEHYA** Lebanon

*Discussant:*

**LUBICA BINDOVA** First Secretary-Human Dimension, Permanent Mission of the Slovak Republic to the OSCE, Vienna

Open debate

**13:00-13:45** Lunch

**13:45-15:00** **Session III – Civic Activism in the MENA**

*In the face of the political and socio-economic challenges, youth in the MENA are actively demanding increased freedoms and opportunities, engaging in innovative forms of civic activism often at great personal risk. Women's movements rallying for equal rights, opportunities and inclusion are becoming increasingly visible. The third session will focus on these issues, paying specific attention to the use of social media by women's movements in the Arab Gulf States, and youth-led initiatives aimed at promoting youth participation in local governance in Tunisia.*

*Chair and Discussant:*

**DIEGO BRASIOLI** Director for the Mediterranean and Middle East, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome

*Panelists:* **HUDA MOHSIN ALSAHI** Bahrain  
**TASNIM ABDERRAHIM** Tunisia

Open debate

**15:00-16:15** **Session IV – Economic Implications and Challenges**

*Young people between the ages of 15 and 29 are the single largest and fastest expanding demographic group in the MENA. High unemployment rates, lack of affordable housing, a mismatch between educational attainment and job prospects and unequal opportunities for migration and mobility are among the most pressing challenges hampering the self-development of youth in the Mediterranean and broader MENA region. Session 4 will problematize each of these aspects, paying special attention to the economic and political reasons behind the current status of the labor market in Egypt, and the current policy approaches towards the displaced Syrians in the Mediterranean countries and their socioeconomic integration.*

*Chair and Discussant:*

**TAREQ BACONI** Policy Fellow, Middle East and North Africa, UK Programme, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR), London

*Panelists:* **SEMUHI SINANOĞLU** Turkey  
**FATMA ELDESOUKY KHATTAB** Egypt

Open debate

**16:15-16:45** **Concluding Remarks**

**ARMANDO BARUCCO** Director of the Policy Planning Unit, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Rome

**CHARLOTTE BRANDSMA** Mediterranean Policy Program Officer, The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), Brussels

**RICCARDO POZZI** Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson- in-Office on Youth and Security, Vienna

**ETTORE GRECO** Executive Vice-President, IAI, Rome

**17:00** **End of the Conference**