

THE MIDDLE EAST IN 2025

A G E N D A

NESA-QAFSSC-IAI-MENARA

09 – 11 JANUARY 2019

PALAZZO RONDININI
VIA DEL CORSO, 518
ROME, ITALY



مركز الدراسات الاستراتيجية
STRATEGIC STUDIES CENTER



All discussions will be held off-the-record, under Chatham House rules of non-attribution. The workshop will be conducted in a roundtable format, no formal presentations. All participants are urged to contribute to the discussion in all sessions. The questions listed below are not exclusive and other topics can be added.

Day One **Wednesday, January 09, 2019**

1830-1930 **Informal Reception (Hotel Art - Via Margutta, 56)**

Day Two **Thursday, January 10, 2019**

1030-1100 **Welcome Coffee and Registration at Palazzo Rondinini**

1100-1115 **Seminar Opening and Welcome Remarks**
Commander Hammad Al-Marri, QAFSSC
Dr. Roger Kangas, NESAs
Dr. Silvia Colombo, IAI

1115-1300 **Session 1: Framing the Middle East Today: The Point of Departure**
Moderator: IAI

This session will examine the main social, economic, and strategic challenges and opportunities facing the broad Middle East, particularly the Gulf region. Some of the questions to be addressed include:

- How do we define the emerging strategic landscape?
- What are the major socio-economic and political dynamics?
- What are the main challenges?
- How do we address those challenges?

1300-1400 **Group Photo and Buffet Lunch**

1400-1530 **Session 2: Energy Outlook and Economic and Environmental Trends**
Moderator: NESAs

This session will discuss the changing global energy outlook and its impact on Middle Eastern oil and gas producers and consumers.

- What are the main changes in both the demand and supply sides?
- How successful are the efforts to encourage energy conservation and increase the share of renewables?
- Where are oil and gas prices heading?
- How are oil and gas producers adjusting to these new dynamics?
- What is the strategic impact of prolonged low prices and revenues?

1530-1600 **Coffee and Networking Break**

1600-1730 **Session 3: The Future of State-Society Relations in the Middle East and Intra-GCC Relations**
Moderator: QAFSSC

This session will address the “social revolution” in the Middle East/Gulf region, including education, unemployment, gender equality, and social media. The session will also focus on the rift between Qatar and some of its Arab/GCC neighbors. Questions to be addressed?

- How is the educational system evolving?
- How do we narrow the gap between the educational system and the labor market?
- How successful are the efforts to improve gender equality and women empowerment?
- What is the impact of social media?
- What are the roots of the Gulf/GCC crisis?
 - What are the short-term and long-term implications?
 - What are the prospects of a “breakthrough”?

2000 Dinner

Day Three Friday, January 11, 2019

1030-1100 Welcome Coffee at Palazzo Rondinini

1100-1230 Session 4: Discussing Conventional Security in the Middle East: Conflicts, Counter-Terrorism and Migration
Moderator: NESA

This session will look at the current global and regional efforts to counter extremist violent groups. Questions to be addressed:

- What are the roots of extremist ideologies and movements in the region?
- What is the broad assessment of the “war on terror” in the region?
- How are the civil wars in Syria, Yemen, and Libya and migration from these countries impacting internal and regional stability?
- How effective is the coordination between regional and global powers in fighting extremism?

1230-1300 Coffee and Networking Break

1300-1430 Session 5: A Geopolitical Perspective on the Middle East: The Role of Regional and Global Powers
Moderator: IAI

The main focus of this session will be on regional dynamics, particularly the role of non-Arab Middle Eastern states. Questions to be addressed:

- How do we define Iran’s regional role in light of the Trump Administration’s withdrawal from the nuclear deal?
- What are the “pros” and “cons” of Ankara’s growing regional role?
- Has Israel been “accepted” by its Arab neighbors? What are the strategic implications?
- How are the situations in Libya, Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Iraq likely to evolve?

1430-1530 Buffet Lunch

1530-1700

Session 6: The Way Forward: The Future of Cooperation Platforms within the Region and with the External Players

Moderator: QAFSSC

The main focus of this session will be on the role global powers play in the broad Middle East/Gulf region. Questions to be addressed:

- How is American foreign policy perceived in the region?
- What is the perception of the growing Russian and Chinese involvements?
- What is the assessment of European engagement in the region?

1700-1715

Closing Remarks and Farewell

This session will summarize the main findings of the workshop and how to move forward.



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