



*Under the auspices of the Italian
Chairmanship of the OSCE
Mediterranean Contact Group*

A NEW-MED CONFERENCE

Youth and the Mediterranean: Exploring New Approaches to Dialogue and Cooperation

Rome, 19 January 2017

The conference, organized under the auspices of the Italian Chairmanship of the OSCE Mediterranean Contact Group, sees the participation of eight outstanding young scholars from the Middle East and North Africa to discuss topics such as climate change, radicalisation, state-society relations and the migrant and refugee crisis. Scholars were selected through a rigorous application process and are paired with a number of expert discussants to encourage new ideas and approaches on dialogue and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

— Sala Aldo Moro / Ground Floor —
Piazzale della Farnesina, 1

AGENDA

9:30-10:00 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS AND WELCOME COFFEE

10:00-10:40 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Alessandro Azzoni, Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE

Armando Barucco, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Ettore Greco, Istituto Affari Internazionali, Rome

Nicolò Russo Perez, Compagnia di San Paolo, Turin

10:40-11:40 **SESSION I – ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

Climate change and environmental challenges are having adverse effects on state capacity across the MENA region, straining limited resources and contributing to insecurity and violence through food shortages and population displacement. The medium-to-long term effects of these trends are extremely worrying and yet, both regional and international actors have largely ignored their implications. This session will focus on two key themes associated with the risks of climate change and environmental degradation: water scarcity and the politics of water management and food and nutrition security in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean.

Chair/Discussant: **Nathalie Hilmi**, Centre scientifique de Monaco

Panellists: **Sibelle El Labban** (Lebanon), American University of Beirut (AUB), Beirut
Hussam Hussein (Jordan), Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, University of East Anglia, Norwich

Open debate

11:40-12:45 **SESSION II – CITIZENSHIP AND THE WEAKENING OF THE STATE SYSTEM**

The Middle East state system is in crisis. Institutions have collapsed, civil and proxy wars are ravaging both the centre and the periphery of the region and the gulf between rulers and ruled remains wider than ever. This session will address some of the root drivers for state fragility in the MENA region. A particular focus will be given to the role of gender and youth in pushing for a renegotiation of the social contract based on a new vision of inclusive citizenship and equality before the law.

Chair/Discussant: **Jean Joseph Lévy**, The GMF Marshall Memorial Fellowship, Paris

Panellists: **Abdelrahman Aldaqqah** (Palestine), Horizons International, Youth for Justice and Equality, the Hague
Marwa Wasfy (Egypt), Cairo University

Open debate

12:45-14:00 Buffet Lunch

14:00-15:00 **SESSION III – RADICALIZATION AND THE ISIS THREAT**

The Mediterranean region, broadly defined, is experiencing a number of complex and overlapping crises. Heightened threat perceptions have focussed in particular on the Syrian conflict and ongoing efforts to counter the self-proclaimed Islamic State. This session will address the ISIS phenomenon from the standpoint of the youth in the MENA, analysing the narratives accompanying the rise of ISIS and means to counter the spread and appeal of its radical ideology. The panellists will address the tribal, youth and gender dimensions of these issues, focussing in particular on Kurdish female fighters battling ISIS and the role of tribal and youth-based policies in Iraq.

Chair/Discussant: **Djallil Lounnas** (Algeria), Al-Akhawayn University, Ifrane

Panellists: **Khader Abualhayjaa** (Jordan), University of London

Hamid Ait El Caid (Morocco), Higher School of Economics, Moscow

Open debate

15:00-16:00 **SESSION IV – MIGRATION AND THE REFUGEES CRISIS**

MENA countries continue to bear the brunt of the refugee and migration crisis, placing further strain on the fragile economies and political systems. This session will address different dimensions of the refugee crisis, analysing potential policy options capable of alleviating this growing burden on host countries. Panellists will reflect on the prevailing characterization of refugees and migrants as a threat to their host countries and examine whether and to what extent innovative policy approaches may transform the issue of migration and refugees into an opportunity for MENA countries in the economic and social domain.

Chair/Discussant: **Ummuhan Bardak** (Turkey), The European Training Foundation (ETF), Turin

Panellists: **Haïfa Ben Cheikha** (Tunisia), University of Carthage, Tunis

Zied Touzani (Tunisia), Tun'Act, Tunis

Open debate

16:00-16:30 CONCLUDING REMARKS AND NEXT STEPS

Marina Calculli, "L'Orientale" University of Naples and University of Oxford
(St Antony's College)

Anna-Katharina Deininger, Special Representative on Youth and Security, OSCE

Lorenzo Kamel, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) / Universität Freiburg

16:30 END OF THE CONFERENCE



In cooperation with