

**A new Mediterranean political landscape?
The Arab Spring and Euro-Mediterranean relations**

EuroMeSCo Annual Conference 2011

6 – 7 October 2011

Palau de Pedralbes, Barcelona

DRAFT PROGRAMME

Thursday 6 October

15.00 – 15.30 Opening Session

Juan González-Barba, Director of Foreign Policy for the Mediterranean, the Maghreb and the Middle East, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain

Senén Florensa, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Generalitat de Catalunya, and Coordinator of the EuroMeSCo Secretariat, IEMed, Spain

Andreu Bassols, Director General, IEMed

15.30 – 16.00 Opening Speech

Youssef Amrani, Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean

16.00 – 18.00 Panel 1. The Crisis of the Authoritarian System in the Mediterranean Arab World: Political, Social and Economic Roots of the Arab Spring

Relevant stocktaking analyses are needed to fully grasp the historic moment that the Arab uprisings represent. Secular demands regarding political openness, freedom, democracy and socio-economic dignity have provoked the demise of some authoritarian regimes in the region. This panel will look at the political, social and economic roots of popular unrest in the Mediterranean Arab world. It will also analyse what lessons can be learned from the diverse scenarios so far and what does the Arab Spring represent in terms of a new historical and theoretical approach to the politics of the region.

Chair: **Juan José Escobar**, Ambassador for Mediterranean Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Spain

Paper presenters

Bichara Khader, Director, Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le Monde Arabe Contemporain, Belgium

Nadine Sika, Associate Professor, Future University of Cairo, Egypt

Timo Behr, Researcher, Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Finland

Discussants

Hanaa Ebeid, Researcher, Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, Egypt

Mansouria Mokhefi, Head of the Middle East and Maghreb Programme, Institut Français des Relations Internationales, France

Musa Shteivi, Director, Centre for Strategic Studies, Jordan

Debate

18.00-18.30 Coffee Break**18.30 – 20.30 Panel 2. Revolutions, Reforms and Repression: The Diverging Paths of the Arab Spring**

This panel will review some particular experiences of the Arab Spring so far. The uprisings have followed three diverging paths, revolutions, reforms and repression, leading to a fragmented region regarding the democratisation processes. This panel will focus on the Egyptian, Moroccan and Syrian scenarios as examples of situations where citizens' revolutions are leading to democratic transitions, regimes are trying to lead reform to avoid revolution and countries where citizens' movements are confronted to repressive regimes. The panel will attempt to draw the bigger picture of the Arab spring from these and other case studies.

Chair: **Andreu Bassols**, Director General, IEMed, Spain

Paper presenters

Amr El Shobaki, Chairman, Arab Forum for Alternatives, Egypt

Salam Kawakibi, Research Fellow, Arab Reform Initiative, France

Bernabé López García, Professor, Department of Arab and Islamic Studies, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Spain

Discussants

Lluís Bassets, Deputy Chief Editor, Spanish daily El País, Spain

Christian Koch, Director, Gulf Research Centre Foundation, Switzerland

Ahmed Driss, Director, Centre d'Etudes Méditerranéennes Internationales, Tunisia

Debate

20.30 Dinner

Keynote Speech: **Salman Shaikh**, Director, Brookings Doha Centre, Qatar

[Friday 7 October](#)

09.00 – 11.00 Panel 3. Democratic Transitions: The Road Ahead

Southern and Eastern European countries have experienced democratic transitions that can provide useful indications about the road that lies ahead for South Mediterranean partners. The success of the European experiences depended on a virtuous set of agreements and policies which included the transformation of the political, administrative and judicial systems, socio-economic policies promoting inclusive growth and development, and the participation of civil society. Today, Southern Mediterranean countries must implement pro-democracy political initiatives that integrate diverse political actors –including religious parties- and avoid dangers and spoilers of democratic change. This panel will review lessons learned of Southern and Eastern European transitions to democracy and will analyse current challenges faced by Southern Mediterranean countries, including the role of youth, women and civil society.

Chair: **Alberto Aza**, Ambassador, Spain

Paper presenters

Sihem Bensedrine, Spokesperson, Conseil National pour les Libertés, Tunisia

Antoni Segura, Professor, Universitat de Barcelona, Spain

Patrycja Sasnal, Analyst, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Poland

Discussants

Erzsébet N. Rozsa, Executive Director, Hungarian Institute of International Affairs, Hungary

Kristina Kausch, Researcher, Fundación para el Diálogo y las Relaciones Exteriores (FRIDE), Spain

Mensur Akgün, Director, Global Political Trends, Turkey

Debate

11.00-11.30 Coffee Break

11.30 – 13.30 Panel 4. Geopolitical Implications of the Arab Spring

The Southern Mediterranean region has witnessed the spill-over effect of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions and their alteration of the regional and international geopolitical landscape. What are the prospects for further contagion throughout the region, and particularly in the Mashreq and the Gulf? What do the current transformations in the Arab world reflect in terms of a new geopolitical picture in the Mediterranean region? External actors are also a decisive factor of the democratisation processes of Arab countries. What are the prospects for external involvement, in particular that of the US, the EU, Turkey, Israel, the Gulf, Iran and China?

Chair: **Senén Florensa**, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Generalitat de Catalunya, and Coordinator of the EuroMeSCo Secretariat, IEMed, Spain

Paper presenters

Philip Golub, Professor, American University of Paris, France

Gallia Lindenstrauss, Research Fellow, Institute for National Security Studies, Israel

Rym Ayadi, Research Director, Centre for European Policy Studies, Belgium

Discussants

Lluís Foix, Former Editor-in-Chief, La Vanguardia, Spain

Eduard Soler, Research Fellow on Mediterranean and Middle East, CIDOB Foundation, Spain

Isabel Schäfer, Researcher, Humboldt University, Germany

Debate

13.30-15.30 **Lunch**15.30 – 17.30 **Closing Session. The Arab Spring and Euro-Mediterranean Relations: What Agenda for the Future?**

The EU has published a review of the European Neighbourhood Policy which unveils a new set of policy proposals to promote democracy in the Southern Mediterranean region. Since its launch, new questions have arisen regarding how to respond to individual experiences while promoting a regional approach, how to enhance consistency and effectiveness on the basis of past experiences or how to balance partnership and conditionality. The multilateral framework of the Union for the Mediterranean has also been called into question as a consequence of the Arab spring. How functional could such a technocratic, project-based framework be in supporting both domestic transformations and regional cooperation? Should the UfM launch new projects to promote democratic reform in the region? Should a new multilateral framework be centred on security cooperation as much as big economic projects?

Chair: **Nabil Adghoghi**, Director General for Bilateral Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Morocco

Paper presenters

Rosa Balfour, Senior Policy Analyst, European Policy Centre, Belgium

Ibrahim Saif, Senior Associate Expert, Carnegie Middle East Centre, Lebanon

Erwan Lannon, Professor, Ghent University and College of Europe, Belgium and Senior Associate Researcher, European Union Institute for Security Studies, France

Discussants

Samir Radwan, Former Minister of Finance, Egypt

Hassan Abouyoub, Ambassador to Italy, Morocco *

Roberto Aliboni, Senior Research Advisor, IEMed, Spain