



ARAB GEOPOLITICS 2021

How and with whom? Challenges and opportunities

High-Level Conference

Organised by the NATO Defense College Foundation

In co-operation with the NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division,

Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, the Policy Center for the New South, and the NATO Defense College

Rome, Thursday 21st of October 2021

Venue: *Parco dei Principi Grand Hotel, Via Gerolamo Frescobaldi, 5, 00198 Roma*

13,30 – 14,30 Participants Registration

14,30 – 14,45 WELCOME REMARKS

- **Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo**, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome *
- **Olivier Rittimann**, Commandant, NATO Defense College, Rome *
- **Nicolò Russo Perez**, Head, International Affairs, Compagnia di San Paolo, Turin

14,45 – 14,55 OPENING REMARKS

Giovanni Romani, Head, Middle East and North Africa Section, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division, NATO HQ, Brussels *

14,55 – 16,15

SESSION I CHANGING TRENDS IN THE REGION

A fresh look at the region is necessary. Fragmentations is ongoing, while traditional governments persist as well as low regional cooperation. At the same time the wave of normalisation accords and the recomposition of the Gulf Cooperation Council, together with a new Israeli government are signs of change. Also, great powers show different alignments with the USA reducing direct engagement and trying to avail itself more of NATO, while Beijing continues its economic expansion and Russia plays a more disruptive role. Is a positive trend in the offing? How could Allies' policies be in tune with the trend and better support the countries concerned?

Chair: **Claire Spencer**, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, King's College, London *

- **Ian Lesser**, Acting President, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Brussels *
- **Ahmad Masa'deh**, Former Secretary General, the Union for the Mediterranean, Amman *

- **Mahmoud Karem**, Professor, British University; former Ambassador to the EU and NATO; Commissioner, Human Rights Council, Cairo *
- **Oded Eran**, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for National Security Studies; former Ambassador to the EU and NATO, Tel Aviv *
- **Khalid Youssef Al-Sada**, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to Italy, Rome

Q&A Session

16,15 – 16,45

INTERVIEW
THE ENERGY DILEMMA. TRADITIONAL SOURCES VERSUS RENEWABLES

Local producers and consumers are engaged into a race against time towards diversified economies, sustainable energy mixes and sensible water management.

Moderator: **Maysoun Azzam**, News Presenter, Al Arabiya, Dubai *

- **Jamal Mohamed Fakhro**, Managing Partner, KPMG, Manama *
- **Marco Piredda**, Head, Political Scenarios and Institutional Support for Business Development, Eni, Rome *

16,45 – 17,15 *Coffee/Tea Break*

17,15 – 18,35

SESSION II
THE BATTLE IN THE DEEP MAGHREB

The Deep Maghreb is the geopolitical space linking the Mediterranean to the whole of the Sabel. Illegal trafficking and organised crime are fuelling, often behind terrorist labels, this major regional dislocation. The increasing fragmentation, unrest and disorder, together with climate-driven humanitarian catastrophes, represent a clear threat for the peace and well-being of this area, as shown by the dangerous connections between Libya and its wider African Hinterland. What strategies, resources and forces should be employed to avoid a major regional collapse? Is the Sabel an Afghanistan in the making?

Chair: **Robert Watkins**, Research Fellow, Centre on Conflict, Development, and Peacebuilding, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva *

- **Bakary Sambe**, Director, Timbuktu Institute - African Center for Peace Studies, Dakar *
- **Claudia Gazzini**, Senior Libya Analyst, International Crisis Group, Tripoli *
- **Chloe Berger**, Faculty Adviser and Researcher, NATO Defense College, Rome *
- **Jihane Ben Yahia**, Programs Officer, Global Centre on Cooperative Security, Paris *

Q&A Session

18,35 – 19,00 CONCLUDING REMARKS

- **Sidiki Kaba**, Minister of Armed Forces, Republic of Senegal, Dakar
- **Piero Fassino**, President, Foreign Affairs Committee, Chamber of Deputies, Rome

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