



## SUMMER SCHOOL

# *CONFLICTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: FORMULATING NEW RESPONSES TO CRISES*

Scientific Organiser: **Luigi Narbone** | Director of the Middle East Directions Programme | Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute

Scientific Coordinator: **Georges Fahmi** | Research Fellow at the Middle East Directions Programme | Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute

Theatre

Badia Fiesolana, Via dei Roccettini, 9 - San Domenico di Fiesole

 @MEDirections

**5 - 8 JULY 2017**

## ■ INTRODUCTION

The summer school will address some of the main factors constituting the crises facing the MENA region and will provide a critical analysis of current policy responses. The audience will be composed of government, EU institutions and international-organisation officials, as well as of practitioners from the private sector and NGOs from both Europe and the MENA region. The training sessions will be based on fresh fieldwork findings, led by academics and researchers together with local actors and practitioners, as well as on practical modules in which the participants will be pro-actively involved.

The Summer School is funded by the School of Transnational Governance at the European University Institute.

## ■ PROGRAMME

### 5 JULY

16.00 - 17.00

#### **Welcome and orientation**

Seminar Room 2

17.00 - 17.20

#### **Opening Session: Welcome and introduction**

**Renaud Dehousse** | President of the European University Institute

**Luigi Narbone** | Director of the Middle East Directions Programme, European University Institute

**Miguel Maduro** | Director of the School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute

17.20 - 18.30

#### **Crises in the MENA region: A critical analysis of current policy responses**

Speakers: **Luigi Narbone** | Former EU Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, and Director of MEDirections, European University Institute

**Olivier Roy** | Scientific Advisor to MEDirections, European University Institute

**Tarek Mitri** | Former Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of the UN Support Mission in Libya from 2012 to 2014, and Director of the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs

18.30 - 19.30

Welcome drink

Lower Loggia

### 6 JULY

#### **UNDERSTANDING AND PREVENTING VIOLENT RADICALISATION**

Over the past few years, many Arab countries have been witnessing a wave of violent radicalisation among the youth, as it is the case in Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Tunisia. This phenomenon does not concern only Sunni communities but it also affects other religious and ethnic communities such as Shia, Kurdish and Christian communities. Formulating policies to prevent violent radicalisation requires an understanding of its roots causes and dynamics, as well as its local paths in different countries of the region and the factors that shape them. Violent radicalisation poses very concrete problems to policy-makers such as the design of prevention policies or the possibility of dialogue with radical groups; establishing effective governance of areas that have been controlled by radical groups; tackling demobilisation of armed groups and building legitimate and inclusive armies and security forces in divided and fragmented countries.

09.00 - 10.30

#### **Session 1: Analytical presentation**

This session aims to understand the root causes of radicalism from a comparative perspective. It also aims to understand the role of sectarian conflicts in fueling radicalisation, as well as how these have impact on conflict resolution and stabilisation.

Speakers: **Hamza Meddeb** | Research Fellow, MEDirections, European University Institute

**Tine Gade** | Max Weber Fellow, European University Institute

10.30 - 11.00

Coffee break

- 11.00 - 12.30 **Session 2: Experience from the field**
- This session will be dedicated specifically to Preventing Violent Extremism in Tunisia (one of the major countries exporting foreign fighters) and Lebanon (a religiously divided country experiencing high sectarian tensions).
- Speakers: **Giordano Segneri** | UN Peace and Development Advisor (Tunisia)  
**Dalhia EL-Battat** | Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- 12.30 - 14.00 Lunch break  
Badia canteen
- 14.00 - 16.00 **Session 3: Practical session**
- This session will be dedicated to the case study “Jihadi returnees: a policy challenge”.
- Reading material:**
- Georges Fahmi and Hamza Meddeb, “Market for Jihad. Radicalization in Tunisia”, Carnegie MEC, October 2015, available at <http://carnegie-mec.org/2015/10/15/market-for-jihad-radicalization-in-tunisia-pub-61629>
- Hamza Meddeb, “Precarious Resilience. Tunisia’s Libya predicament”, MENARA Future Note, April 2017, available at : <http://www.iai.it/en/pubblicazioni/precarious-resilience-tunisias-libyan-predicament>
- Tine Gade, “Limiting violent spill-over in civil wars. The paradoxes of Lebanese Sunni jihadism’, Contemporary Arab Affairs, 10:2, April 2017:1-17. <http://tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17550912.2017.1311601>
- The UN SG Plan of Action on preventing violent extremism (attached). A reading suggested by Giordano Segneri.
- 7 JULY**
- ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS SECTARIANISM: UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES AND ASSESSING THE RESPONSES**
- The sectarian tensions between Christian and Muslim communities - as is the case in Egypt and Syria - or between Sunnis and Shi’as - as is the case in Iraq and Lebanon, for instance - will have a deep impact on the future of the region. Addressing this challenge requires an analysis of the local and regional causes of religious and sectarian tensions, the geopolitical dynamics between regional actors, namely Iran and Saudi Arabia, and how they impact local religious and political actors. In addition, it will require analysis of the role that diplomacy, religious actors and civil society actors can play to address this challenge.
- 09.00 - 10.30 **Session 1: Understanding the causes of religious sectarianism in the region**
- This session aims to understand the causes of religious sectarianism by focusing on Christian-Muslim tensions in Egypt, and the Shia-Sunni divide in Iraq. Who are the main actors adopting sectarian discourse? Are they political? Or

religious actors? And what are their mobilisation strategies? Is it about religious values and practices? Or political interests or both? What is the role of regional powers in supporting or fostering religious sectarianism?

Speakers: **Nagwan Al-Ashwal** | PhD researcher, European University Institute  
**Georges Fahmi** | Research Fellow, MEDirections, European University Institute  
**Luigi Narbone** | Director, MEDirections, European University Institute

10.30 - 11.00

Coffee break

11.00 - 12.30

**Session 2: Formulating responses to sectarianism in the Middle East**

This session will focus on specific local initiatives in addressing the sectarian issue in Syria and Saudi Arabia. It will question which experiences have been successful and which ones have failed, and why.

Speakers: **Bishop Elias Toume** | Resident Bishop in the region of Homs, Syria  
**Jafar Alshayeb** | Member of the Qatif Municipal Council

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch break  
Badia Canteen

14.00 - 16.00

**Session 3: Practical session**

This session will be dedicated to the simulation exercise: An emergency meeting for The National Council on Early Warning and Rapid Response to discuss the recent sectarian violence in Katu.

**Reading material:**

Fanar, Haddad, Shia-Centric State Building and Sunni Rejection in Post-2003 Iraq, Carnegie Endowment, 7 January 2016, available at:

<http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/01/07/shia-centric-state-building-and-sunni-rejection-in-post-2003-iraq-pub-62408>

Georges, Fahmi, The Coptic Church and politics in Egypt, Carnegie Middle East center, 18 December 2014, available at:

<http://carnegie-mec.org/2014/12/18/coptic-church-and-politics-in-egypt-pub-57563>

Simon Mason and Sandra Rychard, Conflict Analysis tools, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDCC Conflict Prevention and Transformation Division (COPRET)

Friederike Stolleis (Ed.), Playing the sectarian Card: Identities and Affiliations of Local Communities in Syria, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2015, available at :

<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/beirut/12320.pdf>

16.30 - 18.00

Screening of the Egyptian film **Clash (2016)**  
Seminar Room 2

18.30 - 21.00

**Barbecue**  
Villa Schifanoia

**8 JULY**

## **UNDERSTANDING NEW DYNAMICS OF GOVERNANCE: WHICH ACTORS AND MECHANISMS FOR (RE-)STABILISATION OF THE MENA REGION?**

Since 2011, violence has spread and intensified in the MENA region. This has been a result of political repression, armed conflicts, direct foreign military interventions, the rise of Jihadist movements as well as the militarisation of sectarian, regional, tribal and ethnic identities.

Increased violence has been accompanied by a significant erosion of states' legitimacy, capacity and sovereignty, and has triggered dynamics of radicalisation among various actors across the region. The security of local populations as well as the overall stability of the region and its neighborhood have been affected by these developments.

This constitutes a major source of concern for policy-makers inside and outside the region, who are interested in knowing how to restore stability, and in identifying the actors and instruments in the stabilisation process.

09.00 - 10.30

### **Session 1: What are the main challenges to stability (currently and for the future)**

- Economic exclusion of segments of the population, marginalisation of certain regions and social groups (ethnicities, sects, youth etc.), social desegregation (massive displacement of population)
- Political exclusion (and the lack of focus on transitional justice and reconciliation)
- The increasing power of warlords, military and security actors, and violent competition for power and resources  
The role of external actors and the impact of their support to specific actors/promotion of specific models of governance (including socio-economic)
- Reconstruction trends, models, and regional and international dynamics

Speakers: **Agnès Favier** | Associate Fellow, Medirections, European University Institute

**Amr Adly** | Associate Fellow, Medirections, European University Institute

**Virginie Collombier** | Research Fellow, Medirections, European University Institute

10.30 - 11.00

Coffee break

11.00 - 12.30

### **Session 2: Which actors and instruments could play a key role in stabilisation?**

Who holds power in the new MENA region? How can different stakeholders - and which actors - can be encouraged to share power and wealth/work together/build consensus or work towards the realisation of common interests?

- Mechanisms for de-escalation and stabilisation: discussing bottom-up initiatives and top-down interventions

- Models to rebuild the state (power-sharing and political representation, decentralisation/federalisation, demobilisation and reintegration of armed groups...)
- Building consensus and forging a new social contract: inclusion/representation, power sharing and wealth (re)distribution
- Conciliating security with freedom and basic human rights

Speakers: **Anis Nacrou** | Former head of the EU delegation in Syria  
**Ziad Abdel Tawab** | Deputy director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

12.30 - 14.00

Lunch break  
 Badia Canteen

14.00 - 15.00

**Session 3: Practical session**

This session will be dedicated to the exercise: Descalation and crisis management: designing response mechanisms.

**Reading material:**

Mustafa Sanalla, "How to save Libya from itself? Protect its oil from its politics", Op-Ed, The New York Times, 19 June 2017,  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/19/opinion/libya-and-another-oil-curse.html>

Frederic Wehrey, "Insecurity and Governance Challenges in Southern Libya", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 30 March 2017,  
<http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/03/30/insecurity-and-governance-challenges-in-southern-libya-pub-68451>

Amr Adly & Hamza Meddeb, "Why Painful Economic Reforms are Less Risky in Tunisia than Egypt?", Carnegie Middle East Center, 31 March 2017, available at:  
<http://carnegie-mec.org/2017/03/31/why-painful-economic-reforms-are-less-risky-in-tunisia-than-egypt-pub-68481>

Agnès Favier & Fadi Adleh "'Local Reconciliation Agreements' in Syria. A Non-Starter for Peacebuilding", MEDirections/EUI, 2017 available at:  
[http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/46864/RSCAS\\_MED\\_RR\\_2017\\_01.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/46864/RSCAS_MED_RR_2017_01.pdf?sequence=1)

Baffes, Kose, Ohnsorge & Stocker, "The Great Plunge in Oil Prices: Causes, Consequences and Policy Responses", Policy Research Note, World Bank Group, March 2015

15.00 - 16.00

**Wrap-up Session: Formulating alternative policies**

A discussion animated by **Luigi Narbone** and **Olivier Roy**.