



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

THE MIDDLE EAST DIRECTIONS PROGRAMME (MEDIRECTIONS)

BEYOND BORDERS AND STATES: THE NEW ACTORS OF THE GLOBALISED MIDDLE EAST

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

Theatre & Refectory

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

 @MEDirections

3 - 5 JULY 2017

■ INTRODUCTION

The Middle East Directions Programme (MEDirections) of the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) at the European University Institute (EUI) is an international reference point for research on the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA). It is based on fieldwork research and mid- to long-term analysis on the under-investigated topics that are having a profound impact on societies and on the regional order, and consequences at the international level. MEDirections promotes an integrated and multidisciplinary approach, that can be of valuable use to policy makers.

The conference will provide academic analysis and fieldwork research findings on the main dynamics and actors that are transforming the region, as well as on the links between the local dynamics and broader trans-national trends. The conference will be structured in three thematic panels, dedicated respectively to:

- the social roots of radicalisation and violence, the transformations in the religious field and sectarianism;
- the new forms of governance that took place in the post Arab-Spring movements at the local level, including their social, political and economical relevance;
- the conventional and unconventional diplomatic processes and initiatives, the role played by non-state actors, the faith-based diplomacy, the interplay between different levels and actors of mediation.

To conclude the conference, a roundtable of a selected group of international experts from the worlds of academics, practitioners and mass media will flesh out the main points highlighted during the three panels. The objective of this debate is to encourage connections, comparisons and further perspectives.

■ PROGRAMME

3 JULY

09.00 - 09.30

Welcome and introduction

Brigid Laffan | Director of the Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute

Luigi Narbone | Director of the MEDirections Programme | Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute

PANEL I - EXAMINING THE SOCIAL ROOTS OF RADICALISATION IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

What feeds religious and sectarian tensions? What are the roots of violent radicalisation? What does that entail in terms of prevention of violent extremism?

The panel will advance this debate by taking a comparative and grounded approach, presenting case studies from Western Europe and United States, including mass killings committed by non-Muslims. It will also study comparatively the foreign fighters phenomenon in the Balkans, Tunisia, Egypt and Russia. A special focus will be dedicated to Jihadisation of existing local struggles and cleavages in the Islamic world, with perspectives from South and South-East Asia, Mali, Iraq and the Caucasus.

Chair: **Olivier Roy** | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute

Discussants: **Tine Gade & Sophie Lemièr** | MEDirections, Max Weber Programme, European University Institute

09.30 - 10.30

Focus on ASIA

A tale of three groups: understanding the social roots of Islamist radicalisation in South Asia

Speaker: **Aida Mihaela Arosoaie** | NUS-National University of Singapore

Social roots of radicalisation in the bastions of moderate Islam

Speaker: **Mohammed Nawab Bin Mohamed Osman** | NUS-National University of Singapore

10.30 - 11.00

Coffee break

11.00 - 13.30

Roundtable

Introduction: **Olivier Roy** | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute

Speakers:

Nagwan Abdelmaboud | European University Institute | Topic: Syria

Asiem El Difraoui | Institut für Medien und Kommunikationspolitik | Topic: Jihadism and digital recruitment

Shpend Kursani | European University Institute | Topic: Balkans

Hamza Meddeb | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute | Topic: Tunisia

Lamis Muhtaseb | Centre for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan | Topic: Jordan

Nicolas Pouillard | French Institute for Near East (IFPO) and Wafaw Programme (European Research Council) | Topic: Lebanon

Francesco Strazzari | S.S.Sant'Anna, Pisa | Topic: Sahel

Julie Wilhelmsen | Norwegian Institute of International Affairs | Topic: Chechnya

Hosham Dawod | Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme | Topic: Sunnism in Iraq; tribes and Jihad

13.30 - 14.30

Lunch

Lower Loggia

14.30 - 17.00

Roundtable continued

17.00 - 17.30

Coffee break

17.30 - 18.30

Roundtable wrap-up

18.30 - 19.30

Welcome drink

Lower Loggia

4 JULY

PANEL 2 - WHO REALLY GOVERNS IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

Which actors have gained prominence in the crisis areas? Which models of governance have they put in place? What does that mean for conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction? What new patterns of interaction between political and economic actors have emerged locally and at the regional level? How will the new political economy of the region impact stabilisation and reconstruction policies?

The panel will focus on the new map of formal and informal actors and powers on the ground, that emerged as consequence of the withering away or collapse of central states. It will take into consideration the local, national and transnational mechanisms and networks. It aims to analyse the new forms of governance from above and from below, as well as their interactions in the new regional order. The objective of the panel is to provide inputs for rethinking inclusive and functioning polities, stabilisation and conflict resolution, reconstruction and development within the context of a new regional order.

Panel organisers: **Virginie Collombier** | MEDirections | Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute, **Amr Adly** | Carnegie Middle East Center & **Hamza Meddeb** | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute

09.00 - 09.15

Introduction

Virginie Collombier | MEDirections | Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute

Amr Adly | Carnegie Middle East Center

Hamza Meddeb | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute

- 09.15 - 10.45 **Session 1**
The unprecedented progression of the PYD in Syria: challenges and risks of destabilisation
 Speaker: **Patrick Haenni** | Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
- Who governs the Lebanese border areas?**
 Speaker: **Agnès Favier** | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute (with **Jamil Moawad**)
- 10.45 - 11.15 Coffee break
- 11.15 - 13.00 **Session 2**
Tunisia's new ruling elites and the Challenges of exercising power in post 2011 context
 Speaker: **Nejmeddine Hamrouni** | Former Secretary of State of Tunisia
- The Moroccan monarchy's reconfiguration of power after 2011**
 Speaker: **Mohamed Masbah** | Chatham House & Crown Center for Middle East
- 13.00 - 14.00 **Lunch**
 Lower Loggia
- 14.00 - 15.45 **Session 3**
Power networks in Egypt
 Speaker: **Mohammad Shaaban** (by Skype)
- The role of bilateral investment treaties in empowering foreign investors: the case of Egypt after 2011**
 Speaker: **Mohammed Mossallam** | SOAS
- The impact of fiscal and monetary policies and practices on Libya's armed conflict**
 Speaker: **Amr Farkash** | European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
- 15.45 - 16.15 Coffee break
- 16.15 - 17.30 **General discussion and panel wrap-up**

5 JULY **PANEL 3 - MANY PLAYERS FOR A HIGH STAKE GAME: ASSESSING MULTI-TRACK DIPLOMACY AND ITS ROLE IN ADDRESSING CRISES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA**

Which initiatives have achieved positive results, which have failed, and why? What kind of interplay and complementarity can we observe between state and non-state diplomatic action, and more specifically between conventional and non-conventional diplomatic processes? More generally, what type of tools are needed to achieve stabilisation and sustainable long-term resolution of crises and conflicts in the region?

The panel will examine the advantages and limits of both conventional and non-conventional diplomatic processes and mediation tools in the Middle East and North Africa, post-2011. It will cast a critical look on successful but also foiled or

failed initiatives and assess the innovative role played by non-conventional actors in the diplomatic sphere.

Chair: **Luigi Narbone** | MEDirections | Robert Schuman Centre | European University Institute

Discussants: **Agnès Favier** | Institution & **Cynthia Salloum** | MEDirections | Max Weber Programme | European University Institute

09.00 - 10.45

From popular revolt to miniaturised World War: how the Syrian revolution was kidnapped and lost

Speaker: **Joseph Bahout** | Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

Iraq: Diplomacy of a fragile truce is not a sustainable solution

Speaker: **Yahya Alkubaisi** | Iraqi Centre for Strategic Studies

The role played by local actors in Southern Libya

Speaker: **Virginie Collombier** | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute (with **Mohammed Abu Sueidr**)

The paradoxes of Saudi 'religious diplomacy'

Speaker: **Stéphane Lacroix** | Sciences Po

Iran after the nuclear deal: the role of economic, religious and political actors and the potential normalisation of relations with its regional neighbourhood

Speaker: **Clément Therme** | International Institute for Strategic Studies

'Faith-based' and 'conventional' actors in international conflict mediation: between competition, co-optation and cooperation

Speaker: **Jenny Holmsen** | European University Institute

10.45 - 11.15

Coffee break

11.15 - 13.00

State and non-state diplomacy: Discussion

Animated by **Luigi Narbone, Agnès Favier & Cynthia Salloum** | MEDirections, Robert Schuman Centre, European University Institute

13.00 - 14.00

Lunch

Lower Loggia

14.00 - 16.00

Roundtable | Crises and conflicts in the Middle East: what policy responses ?

Refectory

Speakers:

Ersel Aydınli | Professor of International Relations, Bilkent University, Ankara

Andrey Kortunov | Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council

Kareem Shaheen | Middle East Reporter, The Guardian

Michael Koehler | Director Neighbourhood South (DG-NEAR), European Commission

16.00 - 17.00

Break

Coffee and refreshments available on the Lower Loggia

17.00 - 17.20

**Launch of the MEDirections-School of Transnational Governance
Summer School 'Conflicts in the Middle East: Formulating New
Responses to Crises'**

Refectory

Renaud Dehousse | President of the European University Institute

Luigi Narbone | Director of the MEDirections Programme | Robert Schuman
Centre | European University Institute

17.20 - 18.30

Opening session of the Summer School

Luigi Narbone | Director of the MEDirections Programme, Robert Schuman
Centre, European University Institute

Olivier Roy | Scientific Advisor of the MEDirections Programme, Robert
Schuman Centre, European University Institute

Tarek Mitri | American University of Beirut, Former Head of UNSMIL, Former
Member of the Lebanese Government

18.30 - 19.00

Aperitif

Lower Loggia

19.00 - 21.00

Dinner (by invitation only)

Upper Loggia

■ SPEAKERS

Nagwan Abdelmaboud	Department of Political and Social Sciences European University Institute
Amr Adly	Carnegie Middle East Center
Yahya Alkubaisi	Iraqi Centre for Strategic Studies
Aida Mihaela Arosoaie	NUS-National University of Singapore
Ersel Aydinli	Department of International Relations Bilkent University
Joseph Bahout	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Virginie Collombier	MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre European University Institute
Hosham Dawod	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique & Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme
Renaud Dehousse	President European University Institute
Asiem El Difraoui	Institut für Medien und Kommunikationspolitik
Amr Farkash	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Agnès Favier	MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre European University Institute
Tine Gade	MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre & Max Weber Programme European University Institute
Patrick Haenni	Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue
Nejmeddine Hamrouni	Former Secretary of State of Tunisia
Jenny Holmson	Department of Political and Social Sciences European University Institute
Michael Koehler	DG-NEAR European Commission
Andrey Kortunov	Russian International Affairs Council
Shpend Kursani	Department of Political and Social Sciences European University Institute
Stéphane Lacroix	Sciences-Po
Brigid Laffan	Director Robert Schuman Centre European University Institute
Sophie Lemièr	MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre & Max Weber Programme European University Institute
Mohamed Masbah	Chatham House & Crown Center for Middle East
Tarek Mitri	American University of Beirut
Hamza Meddeb	MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre European University Institute
Mohammed Mossallam	SOAS
Lamis Muhtaseb	Centre for Strategic Studies University of Jordan
Luigi Narbone	Director MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre European University Institute
Mohammed Nawab Bin Mohamed Osman	NUS-National University of Singapore
Nicolas Pouillard	French Institute for Near East & Wafaw Programme (European Research Council)
Olivier Roy	MEDirections Robert Schuman Centre European University Institute

Cynthia Salloum

Mohamed Shabaan

Kareem Shaheen

Francesco Strazzari

Clément Terme

Julie Wilhemsen

Institute

MEDirections | Robert Schuman Centre & Max Weber
Programme | European University Institute

Independent Scholar

The Guardian

S. S. Sant'Anna

International Institute for Strategic Studies

Norwegian Institute of International Affairs