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Middle
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Directions

THE
GRADUATE
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CENTRE ON
CONFLICT,
DEVELOPMENT
AND
PEACEBUILDING

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PLATFORM

Reform or Restoration?

Post-conflict Reconstruction, Private Investment and International Assistance in the MENA Region

International Conference, 16-18 March 2020, Geneva, Switzerland

- Call for Contributions-

This conference is organized jointly by the Middle East Directions Programme, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS) at the European University Institute (EUI), the Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP), Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform

Post-conflict reconstruction in the MENA region takes place in a context characterized by the resilience of authoritarian governments, which rely on a combination of state coercion, predation and the selective distribution of economic resources to exercise authority and control. At the same time, most of these governments lack the resources to rebuild their countries and are dependent on international sources of private investment and international aid. Therefore, the international aid community and business actors need to better understand the implications of current dynamics and attempts by autocratic regimes aim to control or manipulate post-conflict realities. What are the implications of these dynamics for international efforts to invest in the reconstruction and future development of those countries?

The conference aims to contribute to the academic and policy debates over new approaches to peacebuilding and reconstruction as well as on the specific role of aid providers and the private sector in these endeavors. Its objectives are to 1) analyze the strategies and mechanisms through which autocratic regimes manipulate private investment in the context of post-conflict reconstruction processes, 2) to better understand the obstacles encountered by private investors and international aid providers when participating in reconstruction efforts, and potential responses and solutions to them, and to 3) to study the implications for private investors and international aid providers in these environments, with a specific focus on the tensions between pragmatic and value-based forms of engagement.

We invite contributions that help to address any of these three objectives. All participants will commit to producing a conference paper (approximately 5,000 words) and will be invited to submit a longer, revised version as part of an edited volume (approximately 8,000 words), to be published after the conference.

If you would like to participate, please send a short title and abstract for your contribution (250 words max) by 15 January 2019 to andreas.hirblinger@graduateinstitute.ch and christopher.frattina@eui.eu. The conference will be held at the Graduate Institute, Geneva.