



## ARAB GEOPOLITICS 2020

### *The Middle East: what kind of future?*

*High-Level Conference*

*Organised by the NATO Defense College Foundation, in co-operation with the Policy Center for the New South, the NATO Political Affairs and Security Policy Division and the NATO Defense College*

**Rome, the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2020**

Venue: Rome Cavalieri, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel, Rome

### **Draft Agenda**

14,00 - 14,30 Arrival of participants - Registration

14,30 *Welcome remarks*

- **Alessandro Minuto-Rizzo**, President, NATO Defense College Foundation, Rome \*
- **James Huber**, Faculty Adviser, NATO Defense College, Rome \*
- **Karim El Aynaoui**, President, Policy Center for the New South, Rabat (Virtual) \*

14,45 – 15,00  
*Opening remarks*

**Gilles Kepel**, Scientific Director, Middle East Mediterranean Freethinking Platform, Università della Svizzera italiana, Lugano \*

15,00 -16,15

### SESSION 1 AN UNSETTLED MIDDLE EAST

*In the course of the last years the geopolitics of the region has become more complex and apparently less tractable. The persistent fragility of the states in the area has sparked a war of all against all while in some cases hopeless local populations look for ways to leave their homelands. It is clear that some kind of stability and order needs to be established but it is necessary to assist these countries in their efforts. How can the international community help to reconcile the ongoing divergent policies?*

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

- ❑ **Giovanni Romani**, Head, Middle East and North Africa Section, Political Affairs and Security Policy Division, NATO HQ, Brussels (Virtual) \*
- ❑ **Youssef Cherif**, Deputy Director, Columbia Global Centers, Tunis \*
- ❑ **Younes Abouyoub**, Director, Governance and State-Building Division for the MENA Region, United Nations, New York (Virtual) \*
- ❑ **Mitchell Belfer**, President, Euro-Gulf Information Centre \*

*Q&A Session*

16,15 – 16,45 Coffee/Tea break

16,45 – 17,00

*Special intervention*

**Maged Abdelaziz**, Permanent Observer to the UN, Arab League, New York (Virtual) \*

17,00 – 18,15

**SESSION 2**  
**THE CIVIL SOCIETY. AN OPEN ISSUE**

*At the beginning of this decade, uprisings in the region ended up differently: counter-revolutions, a democratic transition (Tunisia) or a war of all against all. Also, the concept of democracy, as conceived in the West, resulted to be insufficient to overthrow the political elite and guarantee to the countries a significant social and economic development. In 2018, the second wave of revolutions asked for a complete renovation of the political system and mechanisms. However, it seems that the lack of clarity from the protesters led to political impasses. How to overcome these deadlocks? Since 2011 how has the balance changed between the military forces and civil societies?*

Chair: **Maurizio Caprara**, Foreign Affairs Commentator, Corriere della Sera \*

- ❑ **Robert Watkins**, Assistant Director; Head of the Middle East and North Africa Division, DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, Geneva \*
- ❑ **Brahim Oumansour**, Associate Fellow, Center for Studies and Research on the Arab and Mediterranean World, Geneva; and Associate Research Fellow, Institute for International and Strategic Affairs, Paris \*
- ❑ **Sofia Barbarani**, Freelance Journalist \*
- ❑ **Mohammed Loulichki**, Senior Fellow, Policy Center for the New South, Rabat (Virtual) \*

*Q&A Session*

*Concluding Remarks*

18,15 – 18,30

**TBD**

**END OF THE WORKING DAY**

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*Special Thanks to Philip Morris International*