

**RETHINKING THE ROLE OF THINK TANKS IN THE ARAB SPRING AND EU POLICIES
TOWARDS THE MEDITERRANEAN**

14th December 2012

Real Instituto Elcano

Calle Príncipe de Vergara, 51, Madrid

The implementation of the EU's post-Arab Spring policy guidelines requires sound advice from think tanks, research institutes and foreign policy experts. So far, most policy recommendations have come from European opinion-makers, who often lack knowledge on the political, social and economic dynamics of Southern Mediterranean countries. It is more difficult for Southern voices to reach out to European institutions with specific demands on how Europe should accompany the processes of democratic reform.

Civil society organisations of countries affected by political transformations are also experiencing their own spring. A series of new research institutes and think tanks are emerging in the Southern shore of the Mediterranean. New experts and institutions are better placed to provide sound policy advice in the framework of more open societies and led by younger and independent opinion-makers.

This workshop builds on both trends. It aims at discussing the role of think tanks in policy formulation in light of recent regional transformations. In addition, it aims at providing policy recommendations to EU policy-makers. Policy advice will come mostly from Southern Mediterranean experts, who are best suited to interpret the needs in their own countries and how EU's policies should respond.

The workshop will be structured around two working sessions, with two kick-off statements aimed at triggering debate. It will be closed to the public to facilitate dynamic interaction among participants. The organisers will draft a list of concrete policy proposals to be submitted to the EU's authorities.

Programme

14th December 2012

8.45h Opening and Welcome Remarks

Haizam Amirah-Fernández, Senior Analyst, Real Instituto Elcano

Andreu Bassols, Director General, IEMed

Kristina Kausch, Senior Researcher and Research Coordinator, FRIDE

9.00-11.00h **Session 1: The role of think tanks in policy formulation: How can think tanks shape democratic transitions in Arab countries?**

Chair: **Haizam Amirah-Fernández**, Senior Analyst, Real Instituto Elcano

Kick off statement: **Anas El Gomati**, Founder and General Director, Sadeq Institute

Debate among participants

11.00-11.15h **Coffee Break**

11.15-12.45h **Session 2: The emergence of a multipolar Mediterranean. What leverage for the European Union and how to respond to local demands?**

Chair: **Kristina Kausch**, Senior Researcher and Research Coordinator, FRIDE

Kick off statement: **Ibrahim El Houdaiby**, Senior Researcher, House of Wisdom

Debate among participants

12.45-13.00h **Conclusions**

Andreu Bassols, Director General, IEMed

Note: The working language of the workshop will be English, without translation

List of participants:

Hossam Eldin Aly, Board Chairman, Egyptian Democratic Academy, Cairo, Egypt
Amine Amara, Research Coordinator, Institut Amadeus, Rabat, Morocco
Haizam Amirah-Fernández, Senior Analyst, Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid, Spain
Mohammed Al Ansari, Researcher, Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Andreu Bassols, Director General, IEMed, Barcelona, Spain
Hania Bekdash, Independent Researcher affiliated with Tawasul, Muscat, Oman
Georges Fahmi, Researcher, Arab Forum for Alternatives, Cairo, Egypt
Anas El Gomati, Founder and General Director, Sadeq Institute, Tripoli, Libya
Ibrahim El Houdaiby, Senior Researcher, House of Wisdom, Cairo, Egypt
Kristina Kausch, Senior Researcher and Research Coordinator, FRIDE, Madrid, Spain
Ayman Khalil, Arab Institute for Security Studies, Amman, Jordan
Mohammed Masbah, Fellow researcher Middle East and Africa Division, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Casablanca, Morocco
Pol Morillas, Coordinator of Euro-Mediterranean Policies, IEMed, Barcelona, Spain
Bahaa Omran, Communications Manager, Brookings Doha Centre, Doha, Qatar
Olivia Orozco, Coordinator of the Socioeconomic and Business Programme, Casa Árabe, Madrid, Spain
Eman Ahmed Rajab, Researcher, Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, Egypt
Omar Shaban, Director, Pal-Think, Gaza, Palestine
Nadine Sherif, International Advocacy Officer, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Cairo, Egypt
Alicia Sorroza, Researcher, Real Instituto Elcano, Madrid, Spain