



Fondazione
Compagnia
di San Paolo



ECFR MENA Forum

21-23 October 2024 | Princesa Plaza Hotel, Madrid

Agenda

Monday, 21 October

19:30-20:00 **Welcome drinks** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, foyer 1st floor*)

20:00-22:00 **Welcome dinner** with Luigi Di Maio, EU Special Representative for the Gulf Region – **The role of the EU-Gulf strategic partnership in supporting regional de-escalation** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 2, 1st floor*)

With comments from Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg, GCC Assistant Secretary General & Javier Colomina, NATO Special Representative for the Southern Neighbourhood

Tuesday, 22 October

08:30-09:00 *Coffee* (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Foyer, 1st floor*)

09:00-09:15 **Welcome remarks** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)

09:15-11:00 **Plenary I – Middle East Conflict: What prospects for averting all-out regional war?** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)

- How are the Gaza war, the Israeli intervention in Lebanon and increasing Iranian-Israeli clashes re-shaping the regional order and can an all-out wider war be prevented?
- Assessing implications for Iranian-Saudi détente and the prospect of Saudi-Israeli normalisation.
- How have recent months impacted Iran's regional positioning and deterrence capabilities, with what implications moving forward?
- What can Europeans do to help contain escalation, revive de-escalatory tracks and restore regional stability?

11:00-11:30 *Coffee break* (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Foyer, 1st floor*)

11:30-13:00 **Plenary II – The Gaza war one year on: Overcoming failed ceasefire efforts and searching for a new peace track in Israel and Palestine?** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)

- How to respond to failed efforts to secure a ceasefire? What options remain to end the war, free Israeli hostages and support Gaza's recovery?
- What next for Hamas and Netanyahu?
- How is regional escalation impacting dynamics on the ground in Israel and Palestine?
- How should Europe engage with Israeli and Palestinian political dynamics and public opinion? How can it work with regional allies and the US to eventually revive a credible Israeli-Palestinian political track?

13:00-14:30 *Lunch* (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Casa Pozas Restaurant*)

14:30-15:30 **Breakout sessions**

- Breakout 1: **Iran under President Pezeshkian: Is there space for new diplomacy with the West or is further confrontation inevitable?** (*Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)
- Breakout 2: **Egypt's economic and political situation: How can Europeans support sustainable stability?** (*Room Chamberí 2, 1st floor*)

16:00-16:30 *Coffee break (Princesa Plaza Hotel, Foyer, 1st floor)*

16:30-18:00 **Plenary III – Spotlight on Libya: The ghost of North Africa's future?**
(*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)

- Is the tug-of-war drawing in the likes of the UAE, Egypt and Algeria the harbinger of a more interventionist and confrontational regional order in North Africa?
- What does Russia's deepening entrenchment mean for Libya, the region and Europe?
- What are the drivers of Libya's recent breakdown and how might these play out?
- What can Europe do to protect its interests and prospects for Libyan stability?

20:30-22:00: **Dinner** with Ghassan Salamé, hosted by the Italian Ambassador to Spain, Giuseppe Buccino – **Order and disorder in the new Middle East**
(*Italian Embassy, Calle de Lagasca, 98, Salamanca, 28006 Madrid*). Participants to meet at 20:00 in hotel lobby for group travel

Wednesday, 23 October

09:00-09:30 *Welcome coffee (Princesa Plaza Hotel, Foyer, 1st floor)*

09:30-11:00 **Plenary IV – The Middle East in a contested global order** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)

- How are the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza, to the backdrop of intensified great power competition, influencing MENA geopolitics?
Assessing the nature and trajectory of Russia's regional interventionism and growing Chinese activism.
- How are pivotal regional actors navigating the evolving global order, including in terms of their deployment of trade links, de-dollarisation and ties with BRICS +, etc?
- What is Europe's added value global offer to the region?

11:00-11:30 *Coffee break (Princesa Plaza Hotel, Foyer, 1st floor)*

11:30-13:00 **Plenary V – Scenario planning for the next US President: Change or continuity?** (*Princesa Plaza Hotel, Room Chamberí 3, 1st floor*)

- What lessons should Europeans learn from the past year regarding US regional engagement? What to expect of Donald Trump or Kamala Harris?
- How are regional actors positioning themselves in advance of the US elections?
- What planning can be done in anticipation of a possible Trump return?
- How can Europeans best work with a Harris administration to support regional interests?

13:00-14:00 *Closing lunch (Princesa Plaza Hotel, Casa Pozas Restaurant)*