

THE MEDITERRANEAN AS THE SCENARIO FOR A POTENTIAL COLD WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES

Headquarters: The Three Cultures of the Mediterranean Foundation. Seville.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30th 2017

09.00h – 09.30h CREDENTIALS OF PARTICIPANTS AND ATTENDEES

09.30h–10.00h WELCOME AND OPENING CEREMONY

José Manuel Cervera Gragera, managing director of the Three Cultures of the Mediterranean Foundation.

Emilio Lamo de Espinosa, President of Real Instituto Elcano.

Pedro Martínez-Avial, General manager of Casa Árabe.

Speaker of the Andalusian Government.

10.00h–10.45h KEYNOTE SPEECH

Wadah Khanfar, president and co-founder, Common Action Forum.

MORNING SESSION

11.00h–11.45h TALK 1. RUSSIA'S MISSION: THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE MEDITERRANEAN.

This talk will tackle the historical context and the antecedents of the current presence of Russia in the Middle East, which dates back to 'The Great Game' times.

Robert. O. Freedman. Professor of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University.

'From Khrushchev and Brezhnev to Putin: Has Russian Foreign Policy in the Middle East come full circle?'

11.45h–12.00h Debate

12.00h–12.30h Pause

12.30h–13.15h

TALK 2. RUSSIA'S INTERVENTION IN SYRIA AND ITS APPROACHES TO WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN (LIBYA)

Explanation of the role, degree of involvement, earnings and commitments of Russia in the Syrian war and with the Al-Asad regime. Exposition of the Russia's movements to spread its influence across the Mediterranean space, as in the post-Gaddafi Libya.

Nikolay Kozhanov, Academy Fellow, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House.

13.15h–13.30h

Debate

13.30h–14.15h

TALK 3. REDEFINING THE ROLE OF THE UE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

Where is the own voice of the Mediterranean with regards to the conflictive new scenario when the focus of attention of the UE heads towards the East? Madrid Declaration of April 2017 stands up for strengthening the cooperation in the Mediterranean and with African countries, reinforcing as well the UfM. To this effect, we will also deepen in the analysis of the instruments for cooperation (like those existing between Spain and Morocco) considering them mutually beneficial and remarking the very important role Morocco is to play as a model for other countries of the Maghreb and Mashrek.

Irene Fernández-Molina. Programme coordinator of the MA Politics and International Relations of the Middle East. Exeter University.

14.15h–14.30h

Debate

AFTERNOON SESSION

16.00h–16.45h

TALK 4. UNINVITED GUESTS: TURKEY.

Turkey's role seems to have shifted from being a neutral conciliator to taking sides in the regional conflicts. This talk will analyse whether domestic policy happenings have an impact on this change or it is the other way around.

Soli Ozel. Professor of International Relations at Kadir Has University in Istanbul.

16.45h–17.00h

Debate

17.00h–17.45h

TALK 5. UNINVITED GUESTS: IRAN AND THE GULF STATES.

Rather than acting as a mediator in the conflict, which is essential in the search for solutions, Iran has given itself the main role and does not hesitate when it comes to confronting Saudi Arabia, another protagonist at play. The involvement of the rest of the Gulf States in different regional conflicts, such as the Syrian, has contributed to the cacophony of competing interests.

Jad el Khannoussi, PhD on International Relations. Researcher on Geopolitics. University of Cadiz.

17.45h–18.00h

Debate

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1st 2017

MORNING SESSION

10.00h–10.45h

TALK 1. BILATERAL RELATIONS. THE UNITED STATES AND RUSSIA.

We will work out in the mutual admiration that both leaders have for each other, not only on the personal side and the way of chief-commanding a country but also in the common lines and divergences regarding their leaderships: personalism, the unease with the great multipolar alliances, authoritarianism (in the Russian case), short-sightedness (in the American case), etc. Additionally, we will analyse how the US is responding to Russia's new proactive role.

Mira Milosevich-Juaristi, fellow researcher. Real Instituto Elcano.

10.45h–11.00h

Debate

11.00h–11.45h

TALK 2. THE NEW APPROACH OF THE US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST.

Starting from the controversial appointments of many of the important posts in Trump's administration, and what seems to be a new identity policy that he is lurching, with Islamophobia as the core of his political architecture, we will analyse the possible roadmap as far as foreign policy in the region is concerned.

Joseph Bahout, Middle East Program visiting scholar. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

11.45h–12.00h

Debate

12.00h–12.30h

Pause

12.30h–13.15h

TALK 3. RIVALRIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL OVER THE NATURAL RESOURCES.

The command over natural resources has generated confrontations that, according to some analysts, may well be equivalent to a second 'Cold War'. Qatar is trying to streamline its plan of establishing a straight route with Europe for gas trade through the Mediterranean, which conflicts directly with the Russian interests on the subject. Meanwhile, Iran has been engineered a plan for the construction of an oil pipeline through Syria.

Carole Nakhle, non-resident scholar. Middle East Centre. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

13.15h–13.30h

Debate

13.30h–14.30h

Closing session.

José Manuel Cervera Gragera, Managing Director of the Three Cultures of the Mediterranean Foundation.