

A Region in Flux International Conference

17-19 November 2011
Point Hotel Taksim
Istanbul

Thursday, 17 November

Arrival of participants
Transfer from airport to the hotel

Point Hotel Taksim
Topçu Cad. No:2
34437 Taksim / Istanbul
<http://www.pointhotel.com/taksim>

6.00 p.m. Registration

6.30 p.m. **Welcoming Remarks**

Michael Meier, Resident Representative, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Turkey
Mensur Akgün, Advisor, TESEV Foreign Policy Programme

Discussion

7.00 p.m. Dinner

Point Hotel Taksim / View Point Restaurant
<http://www.pointhotel.com/taksim>

Friday, 18 November

9.00 a.m. Introduction to the conference

Sabiha Senyücel Gündoğar, Director, TESEV Foreign Policy Programme
Emil Lieser, FES Regional Project Coordinator

9.15 a.m. Panel 1: Turkey's role in the region: from soft politics to hard facts?

Given that the US, to an extent, is de-engaging with the region and the EU is weak and introverted, the role of regional powers is increasing. Indeed, Turkey's rapprochement with the Middle East was a much discussed topic before the events of 2011; gone are the days when Turkey looked ambivalently upon its neighbours. However the events of 2011 posed difficult questions for Turkey; old allies proved problematic but after some deliberation Turkey decided to stand firmly on the side of popular will as shown by Prime Minister Erdoğan's recent tour of the region.

- Has Turkey's initial hesitation in response to events had a long lasting effect on its image in the region?
- How is Turkey's vision for the future seen from the region? Is it universally popular? Is Turkey aspiring to regional leadership?
- How can the balance between "zero-problems" and increasing regional influence be managed?

Introduction by: Meliha Altunışık, Prof.Dr., Middle East Technical University, Turkey

Comments by: Firouzeh Nahavandy, Prof.Dr., Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium
Ayman Salama, Dr., Member of the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs, Egypt

Discussion chaired by: Günter Seufert, SWP, Germany

11.00 a.m. Coffee Break

11.30 a.m. Panel 2: Iran and a rapidly changing Middle East

The deep rivalry between Iran and many of the Arab states has long been a feature of regional politics. Iran's rhetoric has fostered a sense of mistrust among leaders both in and outside the region. How has Iran reacted to the events and how have these developments impacted on Iran's foreign policy in the region?

- Has Iran been strengthened or weakened by regional events? How important is Syria?
- Is the Iranian vision for the region now obsolete? How does the region see Iran now?
- How will Iran respond in the medium and long terms?

Introduction by: Kayhan Barzegar, Dr., Director, Institute for Middle East Strategic Studies, Iran

Comments by: Fatima Ahmad Al-Smadi, CSS Amman, Jordan
Andre Bank, GIGA Hamburg, Germany

Discussion chaired by: Jonathan Levack, TESEV

1.00 p.m. Lunch

2.30 p.m. Panel 3: Egypt in transition: a re-emerging regional power?

The thirty years of Mubarak rule were pretty dismal for many Egyptians; Egypt lost much of its regional prestige and no longer led the Arab world. Yet the leaderless revolutions of Tahrir have focused attention back on the streets of Cairo. What are the prospects for a new Egypt and how will it shape politics in the region in the years to come?

- How likely is a full democratic transition in Egypt? How long will this take?
- How are key political actors in Egypt, like the military and Muslim Brotherhood, reacting to change and how are they going to shape foreign policy?
- Is Egypt likely to aspire to regional leadership again? If so, what will Egyptian leadership entail?

Introduction by: Mohammed Shaker, Dr., President, Egyptian Council of Foreign Affairs, Egypt

Comments by: Saoussen Ben Romdhane, AFDB, Tunisia
Hoda Rizk, Social Sciences Institute, Lebanese University, Lebanon
Sami Kohen, Milliyet Newspaper, Turkey

Discussion chaired by: Ibrahim Saif, Carnegie Middle East Center,
Lebanon

4.00 p.m. Coffee Break

4.30 p.m. Panel 4: Views from Europe and the US

Like everybody, governments in the US and Europe were caught by complete surprise by the speed of events in early 2011. It took some time to adopt consistent policies towards the region. In the end, backed by public opinion in Europe and the US, the governments were able to give support to the opposition in Arab countries.

- How do events look from the West? Are they sustainable?
- How are the US and the EU repositioning themselves in light of events? How will they react to future developments?
- How has Europe responded to events? Is it evidence of further splits in the block?

Short Statements by: Dietmar Nietan, MP, Germany
Mario Zucconi, Princeton University, USA
Maria Eleni Koppa, MEP, Vice Chairperson of
EU-Turkey Parliamentary Committee, EU

Discussion chaired by: Faruk Loğoğlu, MP, Turkey

6.00 p.m. Closing Remarks

Amb. Ömür Orhun (ret.), former BMENA Coordinator, MFA, Turkey

7.30 p.m. Dinner

Hacı Baba Restaurant/Taksim
İstiklal Cad. No. 39
Beyoğlu/İstanbul
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Saturday, 19. November

Departure

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