



Envisioning a Post-Crisis Regional Order in the Sharq Region

8 - 9 October 2016
Istanbul

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8-9 October 2016- Istanbul, Turkey

Conference Description

It is important to mark the Sykes-Picot agreement on its 100-year anniversary not only because it was one of the founding charters of the state system of the modern Middle East, a milestone marking the ending of one era and beginning of another, but also because this anniversary comes while the whole region is subject to dramatic events resulting from what seems to be “a big failure” in the modern state project in the region. The central government has collapsed in many states and primordial identities and loyalties (religious, tribal, racial, and sectarian) have returned to surface after recession of the concept of citizenship. Moreover, the role of non-state actors (or maybe pre-state actors) such as the tribe, the sect, and militant groups has become dominant in many countries. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to revisit the Sykes-Picot agreement on its centennial anniversary in an attempt to understand the underlying causes of this catastrophic collapse of order in the Sharq region and to come up with lessons learned from accumulated historical experience while we grope for a way to bring order back to the region and to establish a new Al-Sharq system.

Indeed, the final configuration of the Middle East was not that of the Sykes-Picot agreement, but the agreement represented the first draft, the seed of what was later to be implemented. Yet, what is noteworthy in this agreement is that the fate of one of the most sensitive and diverse regions in the world and millions of its inhabitants was entrusted

to two middle-ranking British and French officials to decide. At no point between the signing of the Sykes-Picot agreement and the St. Remo agreement, which was to shape the modern Middle East, was there any consultation of the peoples of the region.

The consequences of dividing the Middle East using lines drawn by the imperialist powers without consulting the peoples of the region have been disastrous: weak states; divided ethnic and confessional groups; inter-state mistrust and conflicts; a lack of a national basis for the newly-emerging states, etc. Only Turkey, thanks to its war of independence, succeeded in saving what remained of the Ottoman sultanate from the fate of the rest of the Middle East. To compensate for this deficit in legitimacy, the social base of the ruling class got narrower, ruling regimes came to dominate state institutions, and the police and security branches of the state became the main instruments of control.

By the first decade of the 21st century, the position of the modern Middle Eastern state and the regional order from which it was born had become untenable, as manifested by the wave of revolutions and movements for democratic change that swept the region and turned into civil wars. The chaos created by the widening conflicts between regional powers, exacerbated by the return of direct foreign interventions, reflects a lack of strategic vision combined with the short-sightedness of the policies pursued by local actors. Therefore, the pressing question is: how and through which means can peoples of the region work freely together to decide their own future and reshape the state and the regional order? Now, what is firmly required is a consensual vision that establishes stability and prosperity, transcends the deadly hurdles of the current borders, responds to forces of identity, and guarantees freedom and basic human rights.

Conference Programme 8 October 2016

Conference Registration	08:30 - 09:30
<p>Opening Ceremony Speakers: Prof. Dr. Numan Kurtulmuş - <i>Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey</i> Wadah Khanfar - <i>President of Al Sharq Forum</i></p>	<p>09:30 - 10:30 Fuji Ballroom 1</p>
<p>PLENARY I: Breaking the Cycle of Crisis: How to Reach a Post-Crisis Phase in the Region? Moderator: Galip Dalay - <i>Research Director of Al Sharq Forum</i> Speakers: Ibrahim Kalin - <i>Presidential Spokesperson Ambassador, Deputy Secretary-General of the Presidency and Special Adviser to the President of Turkey</i> Moncef Marzouki - <i>Former President of Tunisia</i> Ayman Nour - <i>Founder and Chairman of the El Ghad Party</i> Wadah Khanfar - <i>President of Al Sharq Forum</i> Joseph Bahout - <i>Visiting Scholar in Carnegie's Middle East Program</i></p>	<p>11:00 - 12:45 Fuji Ballroom 1</p>
<p>Luncheon in Honor of Presidential Spokesperson & Ambassador Ibrahim Kalin</p>	<p>12:45 - 14:15 Fuji Ballroom 2</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Parallel Sessions 1</p> <p>Discerning the Present through the Past Moderator: Gokhan Cetinsaya - <i>Head Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey</i> Speakers: Juan Cole - <i>Professor of History at the University of Michigan</i> Cemil Aydin - <i>Professor of Middle Eastern History and Global History at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill</i> Ilter Turan - <i>Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Istanbul Bilgi University</i></p>	<p>14:15 - 15:45 Fuji Ballroom 1</p>

<p>Competing Ideologies: Regional Ideological Projects</p> <p>Moderator: Resul Serdar Atas - <i>Director of Programmes & Managing Editor at TRT World</i></p> <p>Speakers: Fuat Keyman - <i>Director of Istanbul Policy Center and a Professor of International Relations at Sabancı University</i> Khalil al Anani- <i>Associate Professor at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies in Qatar</i> Omar Ashour - <i>Senior Lecturer in Security Studies at Exeter University</i> Ezzeddine Abdulmela - <i>Manager of Research at Al Jazeera Centre for Studies</i> Salman Sayyid - <i>Professor of Social Theory and Decolonial Thought at the University of Leeds</i> Mohammed Affan - <i>Training Director at Al Sharq Forum</i></p>	<p>14:15 – 15:45</p> <p>Geneva-Luzern Room</p>
<p>Dealing with Questions of Minorities and Majorities in the Region</p> <p>Moderator: Abdul Basit Sida - <i>Former Chairman of the Syrian National Council</i></p> <p>Speakers: Dlawer Alaeddin - <i>Founding President of the Middle East Research Institute & Former Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Kurdistan Regional Government</i> Fahmi Huweidi - <i>Columnist & Islamic Political Analyst</i> Gunter Seufert - <i>Senior Researcher at the German Institute for International Security Affairs in Berlin</i> Ahmet Yildiz - <i>Senior Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum & Advisor to the Speaker of the Turkish Parliament.</i></p>	<p>14:15 – 15:45</p> <p>Zurich Room</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Parallel Sessions 2</p> <p>Indigenous Attempts to Reshape the MENA</p> <p>Moderator: Muhittin Ataman - Deputy General Coordinator, SETA Foundation</p> <p>Speakers: Jamal Khassoughi - General Manager of the Al Arab News Channel Amr Darrag - Member of the Executive Board of the Egyptian Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) Hemin Hewrami - Head of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Walter Posch - Senior Research Fellow at the National Defence Academy in Vienna Mesut Ozcan - Director of Diplomacy Academy at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Turkey</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">16:00 – 17:30</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Geneva- Luzern Room</p>
<p>International Power and Regional Order in the MENA</p> <p>Moderator: Nicola Pedde - Director of the Institute of Global Studies Rome</p> <p>Speakers: Saban Kardas - President of ORSAM Ankara Na'eem Jenah - Executive Director of the Afro-Middle East Centre Johannesburg Dimitar Bechev - Senior Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum and Visiting Scholar at Harvard University Fatma Ceren Yazgan - Deputy Director General for Security and Intelligence at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Amjad Atallah - Regional Director of the Americas for Al Jazeera Media Network David Hearst - Editor-in-Chief of the Middle East Eye</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">16:00 – 17:30</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fuji Ballroom 1</p>

<p>Socio-Economic Drivers of the Regional Crisis</p> <p>Moderator: Zeynep Coskun - <i>Research Fellow at Al Sharq Forum</i></p> <p>Speakers: Yahya Hamit - <i>Former Minister of Investment of Egypt under Dr. Mohammed Morsi</i> Ali Osman Ozturk - <i>Public Diplomacy Coordinator & Chief Advisor to the Turkish Prime Minister</i> Mohamed Okda - <i>Founder of Insight into Crisis Consultancy</i> Dorothee Schmid - <i>Middle East Expert at IFRJ (The French Institute for International Relations)</i> Huseyin al Qazzaz - <i>President of Insan for Civilization Studies & Former Integrated National Development Advisor to the Former President Mohammed Morsy of Egypt</i></p>	<p>16:00 – 17:30</p> <p>Zurich Room</p>
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9 October 2016

<p>Private Invitation Only Sessions</p>	<p>09:30 – 15:30</p> <p>Geneva, Luzern & Zurich Rooms</p>
<p>PLENARY II: Envisioning the Future: Scenarios and Realities</p> <p>Moderator: Sami Zeidan - <i>Senior Presenter at Al Jazeera</i></p> <p>Speakers: Salahaddin Mohammad Bahaaddin - <i>Secretary General of the Kurdistan Islamic Union</i> Burhan Ghalioun - <i>Director of the Centre d'Etudes sur l'Orient Contemporain in Paris & Former Chairman of the Syrian National Council</i> Basheer Nafi - <i>Senior Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum</i> Chazi Salahuddin Atabani - <i>Chairman of the Reform New Movement & Former Minister & Advisor to the President of the Republic of Sudan on the Peace Affairs</i> Juan Cole - <i>Professor of History at the University of Michigan</i> Ali Laarayedh - <i>Former Prime Minister of Tunisia (2013-2014) & Former Minister of Interior Affairs of Tunisia (2011-2013)</i></p>	<p>15:45 – 17:15</p> <p>Fuji Ballroom 1</p>

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PLENARY I: Breaking the Cycle of Crisis: How to Reach a Post-Crisis Phase in the Region?

Where to begin in order to break the vicious cycle of violence of all forms, sectarian conflicts, extremism, political authoritarianism, economic regression, and social decadence in the region? How should we address the questions of failed states, sterile political projects, legitimacy, democracy and rule of law? International powers, are they pouring gunpowder or water on the fire in the region?

Parallel Sessions I

Discerning the Present through the Past

This session will aim to deal with the following themes and questions: The origins of the post-World War I regional order and the crisis of the modern state in the Middle East; authoritarian rule, party politics, religion and politics, identity politics and sectarianism, the phenomenon of failed states, civil-military relations.

Competing Ideologies: Regional Ideological Projects

This session will focus on the competing visions for the remaking of the regional order in Middle East: Pan Arabism, Pan Islamism, National identities, Sectarian Agendas. What do each of these different ideological projects offer the region and its people? How feasible are their visions? What should be the nature of the relationship between these ideological projects and a new social contract for the countries/societies of the region?

Dealing with Questions of Minorities and Majorities in the Region

One of the often-heard criticism of the post-Sykes-Picot order is that it didn't pay sufficient attention to the geographies of identity in the region. This has been held up as one of the main shortcoming of the post-Sykes-Picot order. It has also been cited by many as the proof of the superficiality of the post-Sykes-Picot order and the borders that it imposed. This reading has produced two types of response: whereas minority groups such as the Kurds (particularly the Iraqi Kurds) have argued that drawing new borders will undo the historical injustices resulting from the Sykes Picot agreement, majority groups such as Pan-Arabist or Pan-Islamists have argued for the eradication of current borders in order to establish greater entities. These two currents seem to have produced many grievances and much anxiety and tension across the region. How should the nature of politics and states in the region change to allow the accommodation and appreciation of different identities? What kind of policies and approaches should the countries in the region pursue in order to address questions of minorities and majorities? Is it superficial borders or bad politics that cause so much grievance for minority groups and anxiety for majority groups? How can the dilemma of minorities versus majorities be settled?

Parallel Sessions II

Indigenous Attempts to Reshape the MENA

Major countries in the Middle East have different designs for a regional order. Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Israel all have different contending visions for how the region ought to be restructured. What are the main features of these visions? Can they be reconciled with each other? How does rivalry between these different visions of the region shape regional political and security contours? In addition, this session will examine post-World War II attempts at establishing supranational regional institutions, e.g., the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the Gulf Cooperation Council, etc. Different political and economic organizations in the Al-Sharq

region that attempt to promote cooperation and integration between its countries will be studied in order to explore their major achievements and the main challenges they have faced.

International Power and Regional Order in the MENA

From the mandate era up until the greater Middle East project, how has the nature of the relationship between the major international powers and the MENA region changed? How influential are international powers in the MENA region? Between full domination and impotence, where do major international powers stand? Are there any new international players in the MENA region? How important the roles major international organizations (the IMF, World Bank, and UN) are playing in the MENA region? Has the role of international powers and organizations been constructive or destructive in the MENA region? How can mutually beneficial relationships between international powers and MENA region be established?

Socio-Economic Drivers of the Regional Crisis

How prevalent and serious are economic and social discontentment in countries of the region? How can they be best addressed? What kind of policies should the countries in the region pursue in order to deal with growing numbers of young people, burgeoning economic inequality, skyrocketing unemployment, and a rising tide of radicalism? What are the prospects for cooperation among and between regional countries, international institutions and powers?

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Private Sessions

Working groups will convene in workshop format to produce analysis and policy recommendations. These sessions will be closed to public and by invitation only. Al Sharq Forum will present the outcomes in reports shortly after the conference.

PLENARY II: Envisioning the Future: Scenarios and Realities

Toward a new, consensual vision for a regional order: out of all these chaotic structures, organizations, projects and theories, this theme tries to offer a futuristic perspective on how to build an efficient regional order, capable of achieving political stability and promoting economic integration and regional cooperation in new Al-Sharq. What should/can be the general contours of the social contract of the Sharq region? At the same time, this session will not remain oblivious to the realities of the region. Instead, it aims to engage in an intellectual exercise of considering possible scenarios for the region without losing the sight of the reality and constraints going forward.

Upcoming Events

Europe's Changing Neighbourhood – Conflict Prevention and Management in the 21st Century

14 November 2016- London, UK



Event Description

The second annual conference on Europe's Changing Neighbourhood, organised by Al Sharq Forum in partnership with Chatham House and International Crisis Group, will assess the effectiveness and external perceptions of Europe's collective and national-level responses to the crises in its neighbourhood. It will also consider how Europe can use its political and social capacity to manage the current crisis environment. The conference will discuss agendas ranging between the challenges Europe is facing today and the different tensions arising in the Southern Mediterranean. Other issues such as the balance between Soft and Hard power Europe is seeking and assessment would be discussed.

Some Previous Events Organized by Al Sharq

Responding to Turkey's Failed Coup: Implications for European Engagement with the Middle East

22 September 2016- London, UK



Event Description

On the wake of the failed coup attempt in Turkey, the workshop aimed at addressing the implications of the failed coup attempt in Turkey. It also shed light on how it would play out in the regional issues with respect of the European Turkish relations and the reverberations occurring in the region. The question of democracy in the Middle East and the European efforts was also a pivotal topic discussed at the workshop.

Al Sharq Forum & Foreign Affairs Live Event: Sykes Picot At 100

3 June 2016- Washington D.C.



Event Description

A century ago, a secret agreement between France and Britain carved the Middle East into spheres of influence supervised by the two superpowers. The Sykes-Picot agreement hastily divided the territory of the former Ottoman empire into a map that did not correspond to the ethnic, tribal or sectarian distinctions on the ground. The joint event organized by Al Sharq Forum and Foreign Affairs looked back at the legacy of the treaty that defined and divided the Middle East. The event brought together experts from the public and private sectors to examine the profound consequences of Sykes-Picot today, as well as the contemporary policy recommendations to address its consequences.

Rethinking Violent Extremism in the MENA Region

9 April 2016- Istanbul, Turkey



Event Description

Al Sharq Forum in cooperation with The Afro-Middle East Centre (AMEC) held a conference in Istanbul - Turkey. The conference aimed at discussing the issue of extremism in the MENA region and its dynamics as to how to approach the future threats in this phenomenon. During the two-day events five panels were presented and experts and analysts from different fields presented insight to the issue, formulating strategic approaches towards the extremism threat in the MENA region.

“What Are the Implications of Regional Developments and Turmoil on the Palestinian Issue?”

14 March 2016- Geneva, Switzerland



Event Description

The workshop was based upon the question of: What are the implications of regional developments and turmoil on the Palestinian issue? During the conference three sessions were conducted and experts from different regions discussed the Palestinian issue. Different aspects of the Palestinian question were put forward and the challenges, threats and the future of the region were examined as well.



Speakers, Moderators & Private Sessions' Participants

Numan Kurtulmuş

Deputy Prime Minister Kurtulmus was born on September 15, 1959 in Ünye, Ordu province located in Northern Turkey. His name comes from his grandfather who fought in the Turkish Independence War as a well-known major in the army. Kurtulmus attended School of Business Administration for his Bachelor (1982) and Masters of Arts degrees (1984) at Istanbul University. He continued his graduate studies at Temple University and Cornell University between 1988 and 1993. He earned his Ph.D. degree in Industrial Relations with Human Resource Management concentration at Istanbul University in 1992. Kurtulmus became Associate Professor in 1994 and Professor in 2004. He is the author of two books and numerous articles pertaining to the field of labor economics, social policies, industrial relations, and human resource management. His political career started in 1998 with the Virtue Party, and followed by the Felicity Party by 2010. He was the founding Chair of People's Voice Party by 2012. When People's Voice Party dissolved itself to join the ruling Justice and Development party, he assumed the Deputy Chairman position for Economic Affairs between October, 2012 and August, 2014. Since August 29, 2014, Prof. Kurtulmus has been serving as the Deputy Prime Minister within the 62nd, 63rd, 64th, and 65th Governments of Republic of Turkey.



Ibrahim Kalin

Ibrahim Kalin is the Presidential Spokesperson, Ambassador, Deputy Secretary-General of the Presidency and Special Adviser to the President of Turkey. Previously he served as the Assistant Undersecretary of State and Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey. Dr. Kalin is the founding-director of the SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research based in Ankara, Turkey and served as its director from 2005 to 2009. He is a fellow at the Prince Alwaleed Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University. He writes weekly columns in Daily Sabah. Dr. Kalin has published widely on Islamic philosophy, relations between Islam and the West and Turkish foreign policy. His publications include Knowledge in Later Islamic Philosophy: Mulla Sadra on Existence, Intellect and Intuition (2010), and Mulla Sadra (2013). His book Islam and the West (published in Turkish, and translated into several languages) has won the 2007 Writers' Association of Turkey award for best book. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the Two Volume Oxford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Science and Technology in Islam.





Moncef Marzouki

Moncef Marzouki is the first democratically elected president of Tunisia after the January 14th Revolution in 2011 and served until December 2014. He is the founder of the center-left Congress Party for the Republic (CPR), which was one of the parties that formed the governmental coalition from November 2011 to February 2014. In 2015, Dr. Marzouki founded the Movement for Popular Citizenship (Harak al sha'b al muwatineen), a civil movement seeking to encourage active citizen participation amongst all Tunisians, particularly those marginalized under previous regimes. Being a doctor of medicine, a human rights activist, an author of numerous works on political philosophy, Marzouki treated a variety of topics related to the ideas and ideals of democracy and human rights in Arab-Islamic society.



Ayman Noor

Ayman Noor is an Egyptian politician, a former member of the Egyptian Parliament, founder and chairman of the El Ghad party. He was a member of the Egyptian parliament for ten years (1995-2005) as well as a member of the Constituent Assembly to draft a constitution in 2012 and was elected as an agent of the Constituent Assembly. He was also a member of the National Council for Human Rights in 2013.



Salahaddin Mohammad Bahaaddin

Salaheddin participated in founding Kurdistan Islamic Union on February 6, 1994. In the first General Conference he was elected as the Secretary General of the party. Later, in the second, the third, and the fourth Conferences he was also elected as the Secretary General. Later succeeded by Hadi Ali and Mohammed Faraj, in 2016 he was again elected Secretary-General. After the fall of the former regime, he was determined to be a member of the Interim Iraqi Governing Council which consisted of 25 Iraqi figures, five of whom were Kurdish. He later became a member of Iraqi National Assembly. Now, he has committed himself as the Secretary General of Kurdistan Islamic Union.

Ghazi Salahuddin Atabani



Ghazi Salahuddin Atabani is a former Sudanese Minister. Since 1992, he held several ministerial posts, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Culture and Information. He worked as an adviser to the President of the Republic on the peace affairs in southern Sudan before secession, and also an adviser to the president for peace in Darfur, where his efforts were crowned by signing the Doha Agreement for Peace in Darfur in 2011. Dr Atabani graduated as a doctor from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Khartoum, and received a doctorate degree in clinical chemistry from the University of Surrey in England in 1985. He is an active writer in both public political and intellectual fields.

Wadah Khanfar



Wadah Khanfar is the President of the Al Sharq Forum and former Director General of the Al Jazeera Network. He is a board member of the International Crisis Group and Global Editors Network (GEN). Khanfar has been named as one of Foreign Policy's Top 100 global thinkers of 2011 as well as one of Fast Company's 'Most Creative People in Business' of the year.

Jamal Khashoggi



Jamal Khashoggi is a Saudi journalist, columnist, author, and general manager of the upcoming Al Arab News Channel. He previously served as a media aide to Prince Turki al Faisal while he was Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the United States. Khashoggi has written for various daily and weekly Arab newspapers, including Asharq al-Awsat, al-Majalla and al-Hayat, and was editor-in-chief of the Saudi-based al-Watan. He was a foreign correspondent in Afghanistan, Algeria, Kuwait, Sudan, and other Middle Eastern countries. He is also a political commentator for Saudi-based and international news channels.

Juan Cole



Juan R. I. Cole is Richard P. Mitchell Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan. For three and a half decades, he has sought to put the relationship of the West and the Muslim world in historical context. His most recent book is *The New Arabs: How the Millennial Generation is Changing the Middle East* (Simon & Schuster, July 2014). He also authored *Engaging the Muslim World* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), *Napoleon's Egypt: Invading the Middle East* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) and many other books. He has written widely about Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and South Asia. He has written about the upheavals in the Arab World since 2011, including about Sunni extremist groups and Shiite politics. He has regular columns at *The Nation* and *Truthdig*. Cole commands Arabic, Persian and Urdu and reads Turkish. He lived in various parts of the Muslim world for more than a decade, and continues to travel widely there.

Abdul Baset Seida



Abdul Basit Sida is a Kurdish writer and activist. He is the former chairman of the Syrian National Council, and represents the Kurdish bloc within it. He has a PhD in philosophy from the University of Damascus. He taught in Libyan universities for three years. Later on, he moved to Sweden where he studied and taught ancient civilizations. He has written a number of books on the Kurds in Syria including, "The Kurdish Issue in Syria: Forgotten Chapters From an Ongoing Tragedy," "Blackout and Disinformation: Arab Media as An Example," and many other articles and papers on the history of religions and political thinking. He is a co-founder of the Syrian National Council and former president of it (09-06-2012 to 09-11-2012). Mr Sieda is also a co-founder of National Coalition for Syrian Revolution and Opposition Forces, and a member of its political committee.

Burhan Ghalioun



Burhan Ghalioun is presently a Professor of Political Sociology and director of the Centre d'Etudes sur l'Orient Contemporain (Ceoc) in Paris at the Universite La Sorbonne Nouvelle. He is the author of several well-cited books as well as over a hundred academic articles in various journals on political Islam, Arab political culture and state and society relations in the Arab World. Mr Ghalioun is also the former chairman of the Syrian National Council, principal coalition of the Syrian opposition in the Syrian Revolution.

Basheer Nafi



Senior Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum and Senior Research Fellow at Al Jazeera Centre for Studies. He writes weekly columns for Middle East eye. His research interests include Egypt, Iraq, Political Islam, and Middle Eastern Politics in general.

Galip Dalay



Galip Dalay is the Research Director at the Al Sharq Forum and the senior associate fellow on Turkey and Kurdish Affairs at the Al Jazeera Center for Studies. He previously worked as a visiting fellow at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) in Berlin and as a political researcher at SETA Foundation in Ankara. He is a regular contributor to German Marshall Fund of the United States' on Turkey policy brief series and a columnist for Middle East Eye.

Ahmet Yildiz



Ahmet Yildiz is a Senior Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum and the advisor to the Speaker of the Turkish Parliament. He has authored many books in Turkish, like "The Crisis of Nation State: Federalism and the Kurdish Issue in Turkey(2010)", "The Republic in Test with Democracy (2012)"; "Two Faces of Kemalism (2014)", and others. He received his MA and Ph.D degrees from the Social Science Institute at Bilkent University.

Ali Osman Ozturk



Ali Osman Öztürk is the Public Diplomacy Coordinator & Chief Advisor to the Turkish Prime Minister. Ali Osman Öztürk received his BA and MA at Istanbul University. He earned his Ph.D. in Public Administration at North Carolina State University (2005). Dr. Öztürk started his administrative career in 2007 serving as the director of Leadership in the Public Sector (LPS) B.A. program, and his academic career as a faculty member at School of Public and International Affairs, North Carolina State University. After moving back to Turkey, he first joined Istanbul Commerce University serving as the director of leadership and entrepreneurship research and application center by mid-2014. Since then, he has been a faculty member in Political Science and Public Administration Department at Istanbul Medipol University. His research has appeared in *Social Science Computer Review*, *Public Administration and Development*, *Journal of Political Science Education*, and *Journal of Business Ethics*. His research interests include new public management, leadership and entrepreneurship in the public sector, public sector ethics and public sector organizational culture. Dr.Öztürk has been working with Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Prof. Numan Kurtulmuş as a senior advisor since late 2014, and serving as the public diplomacy coordinator of Turkish Prime Ministry since April, 2016.

Amr Darrag



Amr Darrag is a member of the Executive Board of the Egyptian Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) currently operating out of Istanbul, Turkey. He is a founding member of the FJP on whose platform Mohammed Morsi ran for presidency. Darrag served as Egypt's former Minister of Planning and International Cooperation during the last two months of Mohammed Morsi's presidency before the military coup. He was elected as Secretary General of the Assembly drafting the 2012 Egyptian Constitution. He used to be a Civil Engineering Professor at Cairo University and he got his Ph.D. from Purdue University, USA 1987. He established and is currently chairing the prominent think tank "The Egyptian Institute for Political and Strategic Studies" based in Istanbul.



Ali Laarayedh

Ali Laarayedh is the former Prime Minister of Tunisia, he served in the office of Prime Ministry from 2013 to 2014. Previously, he was the Minister of Interior Affairs in Tunisia between 2011 and 2013.



Amjad Atallah

Amjad Atallah Regional Director of the Americas for Al Jazeera Media Network. Previously Amjad served as the Executive Vice-President for Content (Editor-in-Chief) for Al Jazeera America. He first started with Al Jazeera English as its Bureau Chief for the Americas in 2011. Before joining Al Jazeera, he was a director of the Middle East Task Force at the New America Foundation. Prior to his work at New America, Amjad served in senior advocacy and advisory roles in directing international policy and advocacy efforts on behalf of Darfuris and advising Palestinian negotiations with the US and Israel.



Berkay Mandiraci

Berkay Mandiraci joined International Crisis Group in June 2015 and currently works as Turkey Analyst based in Istanbul. He holds an MA in International Relations, Global Governance, and Social Theory from Bremen University in Germany. Berkay previously worked in different projects for the German Foundation for International Legal Cooperation (IRZ) and the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) in the areas of judicial and security sector reform.

Can Acun



Can Acun is a Research Assistant at SETA Foreign Policy Department. He has received his BA from the International Relations Department of the Eastern Mediterranean University and his MA from the Department of Political Science and International Affairs at Yeditepe University. Acun also studied Intercultural Dialogue in Canada, and conducted research for SETA at the Center for Turkey Research in Cairo, Egypt. Acun currently works at SETA-Ankara on Egypt and the Middle East. Mr Acun's research focus is ISIL, Al-Qaida, Syria and Iraq.

Cemil Aydin



Cemil Aydin is a Professor of Middle Eastern History and Global History at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. His research and publications offer new ways to understand the historical roots of the contemporary world order by describing the process of imperial era conflicts and decolonization, especially from the perspective of non-Western actors of the Muslim world and East Asia. He studied at the Bogazici University, İstanbul University, and the University of Tokyo before receiving his Ph.D. in History and Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University in 2002. Cemil Aydin's publications include his book on the Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia (Columbia University Press, 2007), *Regionen und Reiche in der politischen Geschichte des langen 19. Jahrhunderts (1750–1924)* (Region and Empire in the Political History of the Long 19th Century (1750–1924) in *Geschichte Der Welt, 1750–1870: Wege Zur Modernen Welt (A History of the World, 1750–1870)* (Beck Publishers, July 2016) pp: 35–253, and *The Idea of the Muslim World: A Global Intellectual History* (Harvard University Press, Forthcoming 2017 Spring)

David Hearst



David Hearst is the Editor-in-Chief of the Middle East Eye, an independent website based in London covering the Middle East in English and French. He writes a column for the Huffington Post's "The World Post" section and appears as a commentator on the Middle East for Al Jazeera Arabic, Al Jazeera English, TRT, Alaraby TV, Russia Today, Masr Al-Aan TV. Prior to that, he was Chief Foreign Leader writer of The Guardian, Associate Foreign Editor, and Moscow Bureau Chief, European Correspondent, and Northern Ireland correspondent.

Dimitar Bechev



Dimitar Bechev is a Senior Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum. Dimitar particularly focuses on Russian foreign policy towards the Middle East and North Africa region. He is a Visiting Scholar at the Center for European Studies, Harvard University, and is also the director of the European Policy Institute, a think-tank institute based in Sofia. Former positions filled by Dimitar include Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR). Dr Bechev has published widely on EU external relations, the politics and modern history of South East Europe including Turkey and Greece, and Russian foreign policy. He is the author of *Constructing South East Europe: The Politics of Balkan Regional Cooperation* (2011) and editor of a number of collective volumes such as *What Does Turkey Think* (ECFR, 2011). His scholarly articles have appeared in leading periodicals such as the *Journal of Common Market Studies* and *East European Politics and Societies*. Dr Bechev is also a regular contributor to *Foreign Policy*, *Al Jazeera*, *openDemocracy*, *Politico*, *EUObserver* and others. Research Interests: Russia's Foreign Policy Towards the Middle East and North Africa, EU External relations, and Politics of South East Europe.

Dlawer Ala - Aldeen



Dlawer Ala'Aldeen is the Founding President of the Middle East Research Institute, a policy research institute and think tank based in Erbil, Kurdistan Region (KR) of Iraq (meri-k.org). Between 2009-2012, he was the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Kurdistan Regional Government, where he led an ambitious reform program to modernise the higher education system in KR. Prior to this, he was the Professor of Medicine in Nottingham University, UK. He worked in capacity building and nation-building projects in Iraq since 1992 and published extensively on the political dynamics, governance system and democratisation in the Middle East, Iraq and KR.

Dorothee Schmid



Dorothee Schmid is an expert on Mediterranean and Middle East issues. Schmid joined IFRI (The French Institute for International Relations) in 2002 in Paris. She has produced extensive analysis on EU and French policies in the region, induced democratization, the political economy and regional balance of powers. She established the Contemporary Turkey Program in 2008 in order to follow in real time the rise of Turkish foreign policy and the transformations of the Turkish regime. The present agenda of IFRI's Middle East and Turkey department includes the dynamics of political transitions in the post-Arab spring period, the future of the rentier-state culture, rising conflicts, territorial reorganizations and the new competition for influence among powers. Before focusing on academic research, Dorothee Schmid worked as a country-risk analyst for Bank Crédit agricole-Indosuez and as a Euromed attaché for Cités Unies France, a federation of French local authorities. She has carried out various consulting missions for public institutions (the European Commission, French Ministry of Economy, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs), NGOs and private companies. She authored many articles and reports about Turkey and the Middle East and regularly appears in the French and international media.

Edhem Foco



Edhem Foco is the Director of Al Jazeera Network in Sarajevo. Edhem Foco was initiator and one of the founders of Al Jazeera Balkans, news channel that broke the barriers in the turbulent region of the Balkans. The channel's success was recognized in a number of awards it won in just a few years and Mr. Foco was voted as Vision Manager of the Year 2014 for the region. He studied Law and Shari'ah at the International Islamic University of Malaysia, and speaks six languages. In his business career Mr. Foco has professed his leadership expertise while gaining a multitude of experiences in various business sectors such as Consultancy, Oil & Gas, International Trade, Food & Beverage and Investments.

Ezzeddine Abdelmoula



Ezzeddine Abdelmoula is the Manager of Research at Al Jazeera Centre for Studies, Abdelmoula holds a PhD in politics from Exeter University, a Masters of International politics from SOAS and a Masters of political philosophy from La Sorbonne, Paris. He edited and translated books and contributed research papers and book chapters including "Al-Jazeera & Televised Revolution" in Routledge Handbook of the Arab Spring (2014). His recent book, "Al Jazeera and Democratization: the Rise of Arab Public Sphere" appeared in 2015

Fahmi Huwaidi



Fahmi Huwaidi is an Egyptian columnist. He writes for Al Jazeera and the Egyptian opposition newspaper Al-Dustour. He has been called "probably the most widely read Islamic political analyst".



Fatma Ceren Yazgan

Deputy Director General for Security and Intelligence at the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Fernando Del Canto

León Fernando Del Canto is a double qualified Spanish and British barrister and serves as board member in Al Sharq Forum Foundation. An expert in International Law and a human rights activist, he writes and advocates for intercultural dialogue. He has worked in New York, London, Madrid and Doha and currently practices from his London Chambers



Fuat Keyman

Fuat Keyman is the Director of Istanbul Policy Center and a Professor of International Relations at Sabancı University. Keyman is a leading Turkish political scientist and an expert on democratization, globalization, international relations, Turkey – EU relations, Turkish foreign policy, and civil society development. He is a member of the Science Academy. He has worked as a member on the Council of Wise People as part of the Peace Process to the Kurdish issue. He also serves on advisory and editorial boards for a number of respected international and national organizations as well as for academic journals.

Gokhan Cetinsaya



Gokhan Cetinsaya is a Head Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey. Graduated from the Faculty of Political Sciences, Ankara University in 1985 later he received his M.A. in the same faculty. In 1994, Cetinsaya received his Ph.D. in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Manchester. Later on Gokhan served as an academic at the Department of Public Administration in Hacettepe University and at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences in Istanbul Technical University between 2002-2009. Following 2009 Cetinsaya was appointed rector of Istanbul Sehir University until he was appointed as the Chairman of Turkish Council of Higher Education by former President Abdullah Gül, in 2011.

Gunter Seufert



Gunter Seufert is a senior researcher at the German Institute for International Security Affairs in Berlin. He has focused on political developments in Turkey and the Cyprus dispute. He served as a correspondent for newspapers during 2001-2004 and between 2007-2010 in Istanbul, Germany, Switzerland and Austria. He was a visiting lecturer at the University of Cyprus in Nicosia. In Turkey, he has taught Middle East Studies department between 2004-2007. He worked as a researcher and director of the German Oriental Society Institute which is located in central Beirut between the years 1996-2001. Seufert has a sociology doctorate from the University of Lausanne and has worked as a postdoctoral researcher.

Hemin Hawrami



Hemen Hawrami is currently a member of Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) Leadership Council and the head of its Foreign Relations Office. Mr. Hawrami is the youngest member of KDP Leadership.

Hugh Lovatt



Hugh Lovatt is the Israel/Palestine Project Coordinator for ECFR's Middle East and North Africa Programme. Prior to this, he worked as a researcher for International Crisis Group and as a Schuman Fellow in the European Parliament focusing on Middle-East policy. He also worked for the Aga Khan University's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations as an Arabic translator, specialising in Muslim cultures and Islamic law

Husseyin Al Qazzaz



Hussein Elkazzaz served as the Integrated National Development advisor to Dr Mohammed Morsi, elected President of Egypt. He received his MBA and PhD. in Business Administration and Organizational Behavior from Ohio state University. Taught Management and Organizational Behavior at Ohio State University and Alexandria University Egypt. Al Qazzaz Led a career as an Organizational Development OD consultant in California and many Arab and African countries, during which co-founded and led a regional OD Consulting firm. Has had an ongoing interest in National Development, and worked with teams focusing on paradigms and mega projects of Revival and Renaissance of Muslim Ummah. Currently he is leading "Insan for Civilization Studies," an Istanbul based think tank focusing on issues of change and development especially in Arab countries experiencing revolutionary trends.



Ihtisham Hibatullah

Ihtisham Hibatullah is the international relations manager at Al Jazeera Media Network, and board member of the Al Sharq Forum. Prior to this role, he has held various positions within the Al Jazeera including as head of international relations and project manager for marketing and communications. He continues to attend and contribute to international forums and seminars on issues related Middle East and wider region.

Ilter Turan



Ilter Turan is Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Istanbul Bilgi University and the President of the International Political Science Association (IPSA). He has served as the President of Istanbul Bilgi University (1998-2001). His previous employment included professorships at Koç University (1993-1998), Istanbul University (1964-1993) where he also served as the Chair of International Politics (1987-1993). His academic work has been mainly on Turkish politics and foreign policy. Dr. Turan is the past president of the Turkish Political Science Association (2000-2009) and has been a member of the executive committee, vice president and program chair of IPSA (2000-2009). He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Global Relations Forum (Istanbul) and serves on several foundation and corporate boards. He is a frequent commentator on Turkish politics on TV and newspapers.

Joseph Bahout



Joseph Bahout is a visiting scholar in Carnegie's Middle East Program. His research focuses on political developments in Lebanon and Syria, regional spillover from the Syrian crisis, and identity politics across the region.

Khalil Al-Anani



Dr. Khalil al-Anani is an Associate Professor at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies in Qatar. He previously taught at Johns Hopkins University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, George Mason University, and Durham University. His research focuses on Comparative Politics, Democratization, Religion and Politics, Islamist Movements, Social Movements, Egyptian Politics, Identity Politics, and Arab Politics.

Mesut Ozcan



Mesut Ozcan is currently the Director of Diplomacy Academy of MFA. He serves on the editorial boards of Insight Turkey, Divan and Perceptions journals. He previously lectured at Istanbul Ticaret University's Department of International Relations and continues to teach at Istanbul Sehir University. Ozcan is the author of three books: Sorunlu Miras Irak (Istanbul: Küre, 2003), Harmonizing Foreign Policy: Turkey, the EU and the Middle East (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), and Medeniyetler ve Dünya Düzen(ler)i, Mesut Özcan and Muzaffer Şenel (ed), (Istanbul: Klasik, 2010).

Mesut Yegen



Mesut Yegen is a faculty member at the Department of Sociology in Istanbul Şehir University. He received B.A. and M.A. degrees in sociology from Middle East Technical University and Ph. D. in sociology from Essex University. He taught at the Department of Sociology of Anatolia University and the Department of Soicology of Middle East Technical University. His research and publications have focused on Turkish nationalism, Kurdish question and citizenship in Turkey.

Monica Marks



Monica Marks is a Visiting Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations and a Rhodes Scholar at St Antony's College, Oxford, where she is completing her Ph.D. A leading analyst on Islamist politics in Tunisia. Her work has appeared in peer-reviewed academic publications, think tanks including the Brookings Institute and Carnegie Endowment, and more popularly oriented publications including the New York Times, Washington Post, Guardian, and Foreign Policy. Her research is currently supported by the IREMAM institute in Aix-en-Provence, France, where she is a Research Fellow. She is currently based in Istanbul and Tunisia, researching Islamist movements and MENA regional politics in Arabic, French, and Turkish.

Mounir Daymi



Mounir Daymi joined Aljazeera Media Network in 2005 as Executive Manager of the Director General's office. Since 2012, he is Director of the Aljazeera Media Training & Development Centre. He holds two bachelor degrees: one in Public Law and the second one in Translation. He has a master degree in Refugee Studies from the University of East London.

Muhittin Ataman



Muhittin Ataman is SETA's Deputy General Director in Ankara, and conducts academic research on Turkish Foreign Policy, the Middle East Politics and the Gulf Politics. Graduated from the Faculty of Political Science in the Department of International Relations at Ankara University, Ataman earned his MA at Central Oklahoma University, and PhD at University of Kentucky between 1996 and 1999. He worked as an RA and a faculty member afterwards in the Department of International Relations at Abant İzzet Baysal University from 1993 until 2014. Currently, Ataman is also a faculty member at the Faculty of Political Science in the Department of International Relations at Yıldırım Beyazıt University.

Na'eem Jeenah



Na'eem Jeenah is the Executive Director of the Afro-Middle East Centre, a research institute based in Johannesburg, South Africa, that focuses on the Middle East and Africa. Na'eem taught political science at the University of the Witwatersrand. His recent publications include: *Pretending democracy: Israel, an ethnocratic state* (2012) and (co-edited) *The PLO: Critical appraisals from the inside* (2014). He also coauthored (with Shamima Shaikh) *Journey of discovery: A South African Hajj* (2002). Na'eem is sought-after as a commentator on a range of issues regarding the Middle East and North Africa, Political Islam, Islam and Muslims in South Africa.

Nicola Pedde



Nicola Pedde is the Director of the Institute of Global Studies (IGS) in Rome, and the Director of the Geopolitics of the Middle East Journal. He taught International Relations at the University of Rome La Sapienza University and John Cabot University in Rome. He conducts research on the Middle East and the Persian Gulf at the Italian Military Centre for Strategic Studies (Ce.Mi.S.S.) of the Centre for High Defense Studies (CASD) of the Ministry of Defense. He has published numerous essays, including *Iran 1979 Islamic Revolution* (Rome 2009), *Almanac of the Italian airline from 1947 to 2007* (Rome 2007).

Nigar Goksel



Diba Nigar Goksel is the Director of Crisis Group in Turkey, and a Senior Analyst for ESI covering Turkey and the Caucasus. Since 2003, she has also been the Editor-in-Chief of the Turkish Policy Quarterly (TPQ). Nigar studied International Relations at Koc University in Istanbul. She began her professional career in 1998 in Washington DC, first working at the Embassy of Azerbaijan and subsequently at TÜSIAD-US (Turkish Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association, Washington Office). After returning to Istanbul in 2001, she was the Country Director at IREX (International Research and Exchanges Board), project manager at TESEV (Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation) and the Secretary-General for International Relations at the ARI Movement, an NGO promoting a strong civil society in Turkey. Nigar Goksel regularly writes on Turkey and the Caucasus for various publications and platforms, focusing largely on women's issues, civil society development and relations with the EU. She joined ESI in 2004.

Omar Ashour



Omar Ashour is a Senior Lecturer in Security Studies at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies of University of Exeter and an Associate Fellow at Chatham House in London. He is currently working on a book analysing the military tactics and strategies of IS in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Egypt. He specializes in asymmetric armed conflict, Islamist movements, insurgency/counterinsurgency, terrorism studies, and democratization. He is a regular contributor to media outlets including the BBC, Al-Jazeera, Sky News, CNN, al-Arabiya and others and his op-eds are frequently published in many media outlets in seven languages, in over 40 countries. He previously served as a senior consultant for the United Nations on security sector reform, counter-terrorism, and de-radicalization issues. He is the author of *The DeRadicalization of Jihadists: Transforming Armed Islamist Movements*.

Omer Aslan



Omer Aslan is an Associate Fellow at Al Sharq Forum, and a researcher at the Institute for Security Sciences at the Turkish National Police Academy (TNPA). He previously worked at the political research department of the Ankara-based SETA Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research. He received his B.A. degree in political science from Bilkent University. After finishing MSc in International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science, he entered the Ph.D. program in political science at Bilkent University in 2010. Ömer is now a Ph.D. candidate at the same university, currently working on his dissertation in the field of civil-military relations. Among his publications are “A Turkish Muslim Between Islamism and Turkish Nationalism: Seyyid Ahmet Arvasi (1932–88)”, and “‘Unarmed’ we Intervene, Unnoticed we Remain: The Deviant Case of ‘February 28th Coup’ in Turkey “. Research Interests: Military and Politics in the Muslim World, External Actors and Military Coup d’états, Police and Politics.

Mohammad Affan



Mohammad Affan is the Training Director at Al-Sharq Forum. A medical doctor by training, Affan obtained his MA degree in Political Science from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the American University of Cairo (2015). He also holds three post-graduate diplomas: One in “Civil Society and Human Rights”, from the Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences at Cairo University (2010), another one in Political Research and Studies from the Institute of Arab Research and Studies at the Arab League (2012), and the third diploma in Islamic Studies from the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies in Cairo (2012). Among his publications is his book titled: “Wahhabism and the Brotherhood: the conflict on the concept of the state and the legitimacy of power.” Affan is currently pursuing his PhD in the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the Exeter University in the UK. His research interests include, Islamism, State-Theory, and Comparative MENA Studies.

Rafael Heiber



Rafael Heiber is the co-founder and executive director of the Common Action Forum, an organization that works as a think-tank committed to social justice and as an incubator of practical projects oriented to global citizenship. His previous academic activities of research and teaching were related to social sciences, politics, geography, philosophy and technology.

Resul Serdar Atas



Resul Serdar Atas is the Director of Programmes and Managing Editor at TRT World. He is a member of the Euronews Editorial Board on behalf of TRT Network, which is the fourth biggest shareholder of Euronews. He has worked for Al Jazeera Network for about five years, where he served as planning producer, senior producer and the head of the Middle East Desk. He is also presenting a weekly show on Tvnet covering regional affairs.

Saban Kardas



Saban Kardas is the President of ORSAM and a faculty member at the Department of International Relations at TOBB University. He has published scholarly articles and book chapters on Turkish domestic and foreign policies, human rights, energy policies and international security and has been an occasional contributor to Turkish and international media. He has taught classes at Diplomacy Academy, Sakarya University, Police Academy and Turkish Military Academy. He received his doctoral degree in political science from the University of Utah. Dr. Kardas also holds a master's degree in international relations from the METU in Ankara, and a second master's degree in European Studies from the Center for European Integration Studies in Bonn, Germany.

Salah Eddine Elzein



Dr. Salah Eddine Elzein is a Sudanese scholar and currently serves as the Director of Al Jazeera Centre for Studies. The centre is the research arm of the Al Jazeera Media Network, which functions as a think tank that focuses on studying and analyzing geopolitical changes and developments in the Middle East-North Africa region and its surroundings. Dr. Elzein is also a regular media commentator on issues relating to politics in the MENA region and Sudan in particular. His research and teaching was focused on citizenship and development challenges in Africa and Latin America. Dr. Elzein also has a long history of youth leadership and activism, involvement in non-governmental organizations, and participation in policy-making and legislation processes in Sudan.

Salman Sayyid



Salman Sayyid is a Professor of Social Theory and Decolonial Thought at the University of Leeds, and Senior Research Associate at Al-Sharq. From 2010-2013, he was the inaugural director of the International Centre of Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding in Australia. Some of his major publications include: *A Fundamental Fear*, *Thinking Through Islamophobia* (co-edited with A.Vakil), and *Recalling the The Caliphate*. Sayyid is the founding editor of an interdisciplinary peer reviewed academic journal *ReOrient: The Journal of Critical Muslim Studies*. Sayyad's publications have been translated into half dozen languages, and he is a frequent and regular contributor to international and national media.

Sami Atroushi



Sami Atroushi is a researcher at University of Duhok Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies, a former Member of Iraqi Parliament (2006-2010), Finance Adviser to the Iraqi Parliament Spokesperson, Republic of Iraq (2014-2015), and a member of the Steering Committee of Center for Peace and Human Security of American University of Kurdistan (AUDK). He earned his M.A degree in Peace Studies in 2015 from University of Duhok, and he is a PH.D student in Peace Studies in the Sudan University of Science and Technology.

Sami Zeidan



Sami Zeidan is an award winning Senior Presenter with Al Jazeera English since 2005. He was chosen to present the channel's first live words when AJE launched on November 15th, 2006. Sami joined Al Jazeera after presenting with a number of the largest broadcasters in the world including CNN, CNBC and NBC.

As a news anchor and talk show presenter Sami has interviewed a wide range of legendary world leaders, including South African President Nelson Mandela and Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, just to mention a few. Sami's engaging interviewing style earned him wide recognition and he has been selected to host interviews for the network's talk show Talk To Al Jazeera. As a reporter Sami has covered several seats of power including the United Nations, the White House and the European Commission, as well as conflict zones stretching from Syria to Korea.

Themبisa Fakude



Themبisa Fakude is the Head of Research Relations at Al Jazeera Centre for Studies in Doha. He holds a masters degree in politics from the university of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. He is the former Bureau Chief of Al Jazeera Media Network in Southern Africa and the former Chairperson of the Foreign Correspondents Association of Southern Africa. He is also a regular contributor in the Peninsula Newspaper, a leading English daily newspaper in the state of Qatar.

Tuba Nur Sonmez



Tuba Nur Sonmez is advisor to the President of the Republic of Turkey, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan. She graduated from the Political Science Department of the International Islamic University in Malaysia, and she received her MA in European Studies MA from Istanbul Bilgi University. Her professional life has been in the areas of media, civil society, political party activities and the state institutions. She served as the advisor to the Ministry of European Union Affairs and as the Foreign Affairs Coordinator at the Justice and Development Party (AK Parti) Headquarters. Sonmez is an active member of several civil society organizations especially those that focus on woman issues, human rights, and media. She specializes on the South East Asian Politics, Development Studies, Public Diplomacy, and Women Studies.

Mohamed Okda



Mohamed Okda is a Political Consultant, focused on the Middle East and Political Islam; active in the issues of interfaith, crisis mediation and assessment, the economics of conflict and religious–secular dialogue. He is also the founder of Insight into Crisis, a conflict advisory.

Walter Posch



Dr. Walter Posch is a Senior Research Fellow at the National Defence Academy in Vienna, Dr. Posch holds a PHD in Iranian Studies and a MA in Turkish studies, he focusses on modern Iran, modern Turkey and the Kurdish issue. Previously, he was posted at the European institute of Security Studies EUISS in Paris and at the German Institute for Foreign and Strategic Affairs SWP in Berlin.

Yahya Hamid



Yahya Hamid is the former Minister of Investment of Egypt under Dr. Mohammed Morsi. He used to be part of the presidential advisory team and a spokesman for Dr. Morsi presidential campaign. Hamid comes from a business background and has his post graduates in public administration and program management. Hamid currently heads the South Forum, a forum for empowering international and economic relations with southern Mediterranean countries.

Zeynep Coskun



Zeynep Coskun is a Research Fellow at Al Sharq Forum. Prior to joining Al Sharq, she was a Dr. Herchel Smith Fellow at the University of Cambridge conducting Economic and Anthropological research concerning the MENA region. Zeynep has an MPhil in Social Anthropology from the University of Cambridge and a B.A. from Williams College in Economics and Arabic Studies. Her research interests include Turkish Foreign Policy, Regional Kurdish Politics, Iraq, Energy Politics and Nationalism

Zeynep Kaya



Zeynep Kaya is a Research Fellow at the LSE Middle East Centre and a Research Officer at the LSE Centre for Women, Peace and Security. Zeynep is currently researching gender, displacement and the implementation of the WPS agenda in Iraq. Her wider research interests are in the international politics of the Middle East with a focus on Kurdish politics in Iraq, Syria and Turkey, as well as Turkish domestic politics and foreign policy. Zeynep recently completed a research project on how international-local interaction shapes gender norm compliance in Iraqi Kurdistan, and she is currently leading a project on responses to internal displacement in Iraqi Kurdistan. Zeynep completed her PhD in International Relations at LSE and is currently working on her book Mapping Kurdistan: Self-determination, Territoriality and Quest for Statehood.

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