

# POLICY PLANNERS FORUM

IN COOPERATION WITH

**GMF'S MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY GROUP**

**ITALIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**NOVEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup> > 22<sup>ND</sup> 2018**

## PROGRAMME

### Wednesday, 21 November

*Location: Hotel Aldrovandi Villa Borghese*

**19:30-20:45**

**Welcome Dinner**

**21:00-22:30**

**Night Owl | After the United States' Mid Term Elections:  
Implications for Mediterranean Partners**

**Moderator: Charlotte Brandsma**, Senior Program Officer, The German Marshall Fund of the United States

On November 6, the US will hold critical midterm elections. These will determine the composition of both house of Congress and are widely seen as a key test for the Trump Administration. What does the outcome tell us about American politics? What difference could it make for Mediterranean partners, and for American engagement across the Middle East and North Africa?

### Thursday, 22 November

*Location: Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

**08:00-08:30**

**Registration of Participants**

**08:30-09:00**

**Welcoming Remarks**

**Ian Lesser**, Vice President, The German Marshall Fund of the United States

**Armando Barucco**, Director, Department of Policy Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy

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**Nicolò Russo Perez**, Coordinator, International Affairs Program, Compagnia di San Paolo

**09:00-10:30**

## **Session 1 | JCPOA After the US Withdrawal: What Now? What Next?**

**Moderator: Nathalie Tocci**, Director, Institute of International Affairs

The US withdrawal from the JCPOA has altered the panorama of nuclear proliferation and geopolitical balance in the MENA. It has also put the US and Europe on opposing sides of a key regional security issue as the EU vies to hold on to the deal alongside Russia and China. How likely and desirable is a survival of the JCPOA in its current form without US participation? How will the disarray between transatlantic partners on this issue affect strategic stability? What is the outlook for engagement with Iran across a wider set of security issues? What can be done to reduce the risks of brinkmanship?

**10:30-11:00**

## **Coffee Break**

**11:00-12:30**

## **Session 2 | The End Game in Syria and the Outlook for Regional Stability**

**Moderator: Maha Yahya**, Director, Carnegie Middle East Center

While Washington remains ambiguous as to the scope and future of its deployment in Syria, the Assad regime continues to consolidate its position with the backing of Russia and Iran. As regime forces close in on Idlib as the last major stronghold of anti-Assad opposition forces, the war in Syria is set to enter a new phase. Pressing concerns such as access to humanitarian aid, stabilization and eventual reconstruction and return of refugees are high on the agenda, while the nature of a political settlement remains an open question. How do we assess the current situation? Where do key actors share similar goals? Under what conditions can they come together? What are the risks of a clash between regional and external actors, and how can these be reduced? How will the end game in Syria shape the broader outlook for stability in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant?

**12:30-12:45**

## **Closing Remarks**

**Alberto Anfossi**, Secretary General, Compagnia di San Paolo

**Mohamed Loulichki**, Senior Fellow, OCP Policy Center