

Round Table - Islamic state and crash of values

Chairman:

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Panelists:

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Introduction: objectives of the panel:

- Better understanding of the “islamization” of societies in Arab countries leading to extremism;
- Understanding the motivations leading to radicalization worldwide, looking at the core phenomenon to better understand the situation in the Middle East, and its social impact;
- Understanding the current challenge of flow of migrants and its root causes such as demography and poverty;

Main findings:

❖ Cultural strategy as a way to preserve values under threat in the Arab world

- The values of Islam are the same as the universal values but Muslims are in a questionable status vis-à-vis the rest of the world;
- Diversity is also a value recognized within Islam;
- Islamic organization strategy to review its religion Heritage in an auto-criticism and objective manner has not been implemented so far;
- Terrorist organizations are deviating the interpretation of Islam for political purposes;
- The ethnic factor is more important than the religious factor into conflicts in Muslim regions;
- Solidarity is one of the major values in Islam;
- The development of Islam has to be an inner exercise, and not something imposed from the outside;
- Dialogue between the Shiites and Sunnites is needed, but hardly feasible currently;
- Dialogue among Arab intellectuals should also be encouraged;

❖ Reforming Education as key factor to counter radicalization in Arab world

- Education has been a factor of radicalization in the Arab world, shaping pupils in non-inclusive adults (Example of Egypt and Saudi Arabia);
- Renewal of religious discourse is needed to combat extremism ideology and expand a more tolerant interpretation of Islam;
- Education systems in Arabic states have been Islamized leading to a radicalization of mind and spirits through funding from actors in Gulf Countries;
- Liberalization and reformist attempts including through private initiatives have so far failed as they have been rarely implemented;
- Countering radicalization is key to fighting IS; Strong need to renew the religious speech and to reform education programs throughout the Arab world;

- Arab countries tend to be less secularized, and more theological because of the influence of Gulf countries ideological influence;

❖ **Economic Perspective in the share of values**

- Economic development values are commonly shared by Europe and the Arab world;
- Entrepreneurship as driver of society development is a value equally shared in Arab world;
- Need to stimulate an internal debate within the Islam world for a more mature theological response to the questions of the current century;
- Creating conditions for a inner debate within the Islam world on how to develop one single authority for one voice in Islam;
- Making a precise distinction between Islam and islamisation; This distinction will differentiate us from the far right which purposely confuse them, and the left which does not see any problem at all on this regard;
- Need to re-strengthen regional powers to be models to be followed by the societies in those countries;
- Dialogue between communities is first a question of communication;
- Spread of economic and social prosperity to all the population, by developing middle-classes in those societies would ultimately impact the de-radicalization of the population. Tunisia quoted as an example on this regard.