Joint Workshop
One Year on from the Arab Spring: Deconstructing past myths and the Role of the EU
on Thursday 02 February 2012 from 10.00-15.30 (registration from 9.45)
at EPC Conference room, Résidence Palace, 4th floor, 155 Rue de la Loi, 1040
Brussels

Past policies of the EU towards the Middle East and North Africa have been governed by a set of assumptions which has been shattered by the uprisings that have swept the region since December 2010. The neo-liberal belief that economic development would be conducive to political reform was buried together with the old authoritarian regimes that were ousted, also demonstrating that the exclusion of large sectors of society from political participation has not meant that they have missed their appointment with modernity. The secular nature of the uprisings, even if Islamist groups and parties are now taking the centre-stage of post-revolutionary politics, and the active role of women also challenge past assumptions about the Islamist nature of opposition to authoritarianism and the subjugation of women in the region.

Is the EU able to live up to these challenges and reframe its policies towards the region? The past months have seen the EU and its member states resort to a broad range of foreign policy tools and actions – from humanitarian aid to military intervention, from trade and oil sanctions to reviewing existing strategies such as the Neighbourhood Policy. The extent to which this experience will lead to a renewed EU approach towards crisis management and a renewal of EU-South Mediterranean relations is questionable, against the backdrop of an increasingly diversified region whose transformation may lead to uncertain outcomes.

The workshop will be based on the findings of two projects. ESRC Project: Paradoxes and Contradictions in EU Democracy Promotion Efforts in the Middle East (Michelle Pace) [http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/activity/government-society/eumena/index.aspx], and the joint CEPS-EPC-Egmont Institute project on ‘An Arab Springboard for EU foreign policy?’ [http://www.epc.eu/pub.php?cat_id=last].

We very much hope that you can attend. Please confirm your participation by replying to m.kenna@epc.eu

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***** WARNING *****This invitation is personal to you or a representative designated by you from your organisation.

The EPC is in strategic partnership with the King Baudouin Foundation and the Compagnia di San Paolo This event is held under the auspices of the EPC’s Europe in the World programme. The event is being organised with the kind support of the Economic & Social Research Council, UK.
Thursday 02 February 2012

University of Birmingham and European Policy Centre
Joint Workshop

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EPC Conference Room
Résidence Palace, 4th floor,
155 Rue de la Loi, 1040 Brussels

PROGRAMME

10.00 Registration

10.30 Deconstructing Past Myths about the Arab Mediterranean World
Chair: Rosa Balfour, Head of the Europe in the World Programme, EPC

Michelle Pace, University of Birmingham
Facing EU Policy Failures in the Middle East: The New Arab Awakening

Amr El Shobaki, Arab Forum for Alternatives.
The Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi movements and the future of democracy in Egypt

Marc Otte, former EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process; Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brussels (TBC)
Rethinking EU policies towards the MENA region post-Arab Spring

Discussant: Michael Emerson, Associate Senior Research Fellow, CEPS

12.30 Sandwich lunch

13.30 An Arab Springboard for EU foreign policy?
Chair: Michelle Pace, University of Birmingham

Michael Emerson, CEPS
Global Transitions and Scenarios in the Mediterranean

Sven Biscop, Egmont Institute
Where is CSDP going post-Libya?

Rosa Balfour, EPC
Continuities and Changes in EU policies towards the Middle East and North Africa

Majed Bamya, Diplomat at the General Delegation of Palestine to the EU
Regional perspectives

Discussant: Merete Bilde, European External Action Service (TBC)

15.30 Concluding remarks

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