Supporting A Stable and Durable Regional Security Environment in North Africa

A Joint RUSI-OCP Policy Center Conference

Thursday 9 March 2017
RUSI, Whitehall, London, United Kingdom

Seminar Brief

While Europe is struggling with one of its worst migration crises in modern times, government officials, policy-makers, and the international community are increasingly looking at other strategies to tackle this pressing humanitarian and security dilemma. Controversial methods such as closing borders and deporting illegal immigrants are just not enough to deal with push factors that drive these migration flows. With development, stability and security increasingly seen as being interconnected, this conference series will explore the economic, political and security challenges facing Africa and ask whether it is time for Europe and the UK following ‘Brexit’ to treat Africa as more than simply a security issue to be managed.

Beyond the lawlessness and the escalating violence that exists in some countries of origin, migrants and refugees are generally drawn to Europe with hopes of better living conditions: one that provides a secure lifestyle which meets their basic daily needs (security, housing, education, healthcare, food, work opportunities ...). This situation is challenging host countries to review and tighten their security and surveillance measures in order to respond to the potential exploitation by terrorist groups of the migration crisis. In this sense, the heightened border security concerns that African and European states are currently facing highlight the necessity to address the development issues that undermine sustainable stability and security in the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The past years have therefore emphasized once more the interconnectedness between the social, political and economic spheres in order to maintain stability and security - a mechanism that provides a solid platform for the implementation of tangible human security and development initiatives.

At the heart of this conference will be an attempt to address the impact from Brexit on the EU and the UK’s relationships with the African continent and to move on from a fixation with short-term security challenges to a wider look at the long-term drivers of instability. This conference hopes to offer a few answers as to how Europe –taking into account the possibilities following Brexit– and regional powers such as Morocco can live up to the responsibility of ensuring human security within an evolving and increasingly challenging context.
The RUSI-OCPPC conference will be broken down into two parts, with two panels each:

**Part I: Prospects for the EU and Africa after Brexit**

**Panel I:** The Impact of Brexit on Regional Stability in the Maghreb  
**Panel II:** The Future Structure of the EU and its Impact on EU-Africa Relations

**Part II: Security and Stability Dimensions in Europe and North Africa**

**Panel III:** Developments in Border Controls and the Future of the Migration Crisis  
**Panel IV:** Developing Stability and Security Through the Use of Soft Power in Africa

**Agenda**

**09:00 – 09:30**  Registration, and Tea and Coffee Served  

**09:30 – 09:45**  Opening Remarks  

Karim El Aynaoui, Managing Director, OCP Policy Center  
Dr Jonathan Eyal, Associate Director for Strategic Research Partnerships, RUSI

**Part I: Prospects for the EU and Africa after Brexit**

**09:45 – 11:15**  Panel I: The Impact of Brexit on Regional Stability in the Maghreb

*With the forthcoming departure of Britain from the European Union (EU) the EU may lose one of its major security actors. Given the prominence of EU-led projects across North Africa, whether they relate to economic development or countering violent extremism, the future of Britain’s involvement in the region could have a major impact on regional stability and security. This session will discuss the future of regional stability in the Maghreb after ‘Brexit’, examining what new role Britain will create for itself in the region.*

**CHAIR**  
Dr Jonathan Eyal, Associate Director for Strategic Research Partnerships, RUSI

**SPEAKERS**  
David D. Kirkpatrick, Correspondent for the New York Times, and Associate Fellow of RUSI  
Bouchra Rahmouni Benhida, Senior Fellow, Al Akhawayn University
11:15 – 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 13:00 Panel I: The Future Structure of the EU and Its Impact on EU-Africa Relations

The impact of Brexit will be far-reaching and profound, not least for the EU as a whole. With the departure of one of its major members, serious questions are being asked about the relevance of the EU in an increasingly competitive, diverse and fluid world. The EU will have to evolve in order to meet this challenge, but it is not yet clear what future shape it will take, and what impact this will have on its relationship with the rest of the world, including with Africa. Looking through the ‘crystal ball’, this panel will discuss the likely future direction of the EU and what this means for EU-Africa relations.

CHAIR
Rachid El Houdaigui, Senior Fellow, OCP Policy Center

SPEAKERS
Raphaëlle Faure, Overseas Development Institute
Mohammed Loulichki, Senior Fellow, OCP Policy Center

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch Break

14:00 – 15:30 Panel III: Developments in Border Controls and the Future of the Migration Crisis

Europe has seen unprecedented levels of migration from the Middle East and Africa in the last two to three years, driven first and foremost by the conflict in Syria but also by the lack of economic opportunity across many countries in Africa. This has fuelled a boom in drug trafficking, which has caused problems not only for Europe, but also for North Africa, playing host to many of the major transit routes to Europe. Looking at future developments in border controls, including the use of bilateral and multilateral agreements to patrol the waters between the continents, this session will ask how the two regions can work together to manage the crisis and its impact on drug trafficking.

CHAIR
Dr Jeff Crisp, Chatham House

SPEAKERS
Kristy Siegfried, Global Migration Editor, IRIN
Abdelhak Bassou, Senior Fellow, OCP Policy Center
15:30 – 15:45  Coffee Break


Britain is well-known for its soft power, with its popular cultural exports across the globe, the dominance of the English language in international business and good-will engendered by its long-serving and popular monarch. Using this soft power in a conscious way to influence and guide other nations however is a more complicated matter. It is clear that soft power has a role to play in promoting peace, stability and development in Africa, but the question is how best it can do so. The panel will look at this topic in more detail and ask how best soft power can be translated in positive and meaningful changes across Africa.

CHAIR
Professor Malcolm Chalmers, Deputy Director General, RUSI

SPEAKERS
Alistair Harris OBE, CEO of ARK
Fatima Harrak, Professor, Université Mohamed V de Rabat

17:15– 17:30  CLOSING REMARKS
Karim El Aynaoui, Managing Director, OCP Policy Center
Dr Jonathan Eyal, Associate Director for Strategic Research Partnerships, RUSI

–End of Conference–
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