CALL FOR PAPERS

Five Years after the Arab Revolutions: “The Arduous Road of Democratization and Future Prospects”

In association with the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS), the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) is pleased to announce “Five Years after the Arab Revolutions: The Arduous Road of Democratization and Future Prospects”, an academic conference to be held in Beirut from January 21-23, 2016. The conference’s organizing committee welcomes submissions which respond to the below mentioned focus areas, and which presents original research that drives forward the understanding of the Arab revolutions.

Submitted papers should fall under one of the following focus areas:

1. **The State: Its Structure and the Way it Impacts the Difficult Transition**
   This topic covers the following issues: the emergence of hereditary republics; identification between power and the state; the effect of the state on revolutions; the effect of the revolutions on the state; the modern Arab state between institutional fragility and the strength of security agencies; excessive state violence in the face of revolutions and protest movements; the roles of military and security institutions; the redefinition of these roles in the new structure of the political system, especially in the first year of the outbreak of revolution; and finally, what are the role of the state and the nature of its relationship with power according to the various revolutionary patterns?

2. **Democracy, Spontaneous Revolutions and Organized Forces**
   Is there an Arab democratic alternative supported by a genuine social base? Is there a real social demand for democracy? What is the role of transitional justice and the legal and judicial institutions in making, impeding, or even reversing democratic change? Do the roles, of institutions as manifested in the concrete situation, provide legitimacy to main political actors? Are they essential in consolidating the process of democratic transition? What is the role of the media, particularly satellite TV channels, in the aforementioned context?

3. **Recent Dynamics in Society**
   What is the relationship between traditional society and civil society during the past five years? How did inherited civil structures reemerge, and is this reemergence functional or structural? To what extent is this determined by power-sharing? What is the impact of the advocacy of federalism and regional self-rule? Is political violence structural in traditional societies with strong sub-national identities? What are the consequences of the Islamic/secular polarization on the intricate process of democratization, on aggravating of the dynamics of social fragmentation, and on impairing social harmony during the stages of transition? Who are the Islamic and secular actors in the polarization? Furthermore, what are the effects of social media on the current situation and what are its limits? Is the role of the media exaggerated in such a
4. Regional and International Polarizations and their Impact on Revolutions

What is the relationship between internal dynamics and foreign influence in a turbulent geopolitical context that is caught between a web of international interests, the political and military "game of nations", and international humanitarian law? In addition, what are the consequences of the erosion of the traditional concept of sovereignty, i.e. the Westphalian sovereignty, especially in a phase where states exercise excessive use of power and violence that falls beyond the standards and the limits of national laws? Moreover, what is the role of direct intervention of foreign state agencies in the revolutionary scene? Does the direct or semi-direct involvement of regional and international parties in the socio-political revolutionary context enhance the possibility of structural changes in the regional order?

Please follow this link to the background paper for more information on each focus area.

Interested scholars are expected to abide by the following requirements when submitting their papers:

a) A concise summary of the proposed research paper, between 1,000 to 1,500 words in length, which covers the main outline and contains: the paper’s main hypothesis and premises; specification of thesis or arguments; specification of research problem; the methodology used and a preliminary bibliography/list of references. The above should be submitted no later than July 1st, 2015, to both Ms. Nermine El Hurr (IFI; ne70@aub.edu.lb) & Mr. Nerouz Satik (ACRPS; nerouz.satik@dohainstitute.org).

b) Complete first drafts of research papers which are approved in principle will be accepted until the end of September 2015. These will be judged by a panel of academic referees who will notify the relevant author of their decision in writing. Some authors may be asked to carry out corrections and amendments to their texts prior to the symposium.

c) Final submissions must be between 6,000 and 8,000 words, inclusive of bibliography/list of references and footnotes.

d) Papers can be submitted in both Arabic and English.

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