



Middle East
Centre

Middle East Centre

Annual Report 2010-2011





Introduction

The LSE Middle East Centre opened in October 2010. It builds on LSE's long engagement with the Middle East and provides a central hub for the wide range of research on the region carried out at LSE.

The Middle East Centre works to develop research and teaching on the societies, economies, politics and international relations of the region. LSE is one of the world's leading social science institutions and comprises departments covering all branches of the social sciences. The Middle East Centre taps into that expertise to promote innovative interdisciplinary research and training on the region. The Centre places special emphasis on active collaboration with colleagues in the Middle East, with international scholars, policy-makers and civil society, and on speaking to a global audience about the region's strengths and challenges. The Middle East Centre was established with support from the Emirates Foundation for Philanthropy and the Aman Trust.

Middle East Centre Aims:

- Establish LSE as a leading centre for Middle East scholarship
- Strengthen relations between LSE and Middle East universities
- Increase LSE capability to engage with countries in the Middle East



Constitution and Governance

The Middle East and North Africa region is arguably the most politically troubled in the world today. This has meant that historically, linguistically and methodologically informed independent academic research remains a rarity. The Middle East Centre aims to address this by engaging in rigorous research and scholarship. The scrupulous preservation of the Centre's academic independence helps ensure research excellence.

The Centre complements strengths present at universities elsewhere in the UK: the study of Islam at Cambridge and Edinburgh, expertise in Middle East politics and culture at Oxford, Exeter, Durham and St Andrews, and most importantly, the strengths at our sister institution, SOAS. Capitalizing on LSE's exceptionally international body of students and staff and London's strong links with the Middle East, the Centre prioritizes intellectual relations with academic institutions in the region.

In keeping with the tradition of other centres at the LSE, the MEC builds on research excellence and innovation to provide those outside the academic community with solid research on contemporary social, political and economic processes and problems in the region. The LSE Middle East Centre is neither an ivory tower, nor a policy think tank. The Centre seeks to develop a world-class research agenda which will be driven not by governments, special interests, or funding organizations but by academics and students.

The governance of the Centre is assured by its director assisted by a Management Group of four other specialists from the LSE, a wider Research Group of LSE staff, and beyond that the Advisory Board of the Centre. This tiered structure ensures the autonomy of academic decision-making with regard to funders and UK and international political concerns.



Centre Director

Fawaz A. Gerges, the inaugural director of the MEC, is a Professor of Middle Eastern Politics and International Relations at LSE. He also holds the Emirates Chair of Contemporary Middle East Studies.

He earned a doctorate from Oxford University and an MSc from LSE. Gerges has taught at Oxford, Harvard and Columbia, and was a research scholar at Princeton and is a chairholder (the Christian A. Johnson Chair in Middle Eastern Studies and International Affairs) at Sarah Lawrence College, New York.

His special interests include: Islam and the political process; social movements, including mainstream Islamist movements and jihadist groups; Arab politics and Muslim politics in the 20th century; the international relations of the Middle East; the Arab-Israeli conflict; state and society in the Middle East; American foreign policy towards the Muslim world; the modern history of the Middle East; history of conflict, diplomacy and foreign policy; and historical sociology.

Gerges' books include: *Debunking the Terrorism Narrative: The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda* (Oxford University Press, August 2011); *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests?* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) and *The Superpowers and the Middle East: Regional and International Politics* (Oxford and Westview, 2000).

His forthcoming book, *Obama and the Greater Middle East: Rhetoric versus Reality* will be published by Palgrave Macmillan Press in November 2011.

Centre Staff

Robert Lowe, Centre Manager

Dania Akkad, Centre Administrator



Senior Visiting Fellows

Dr Saad Jawad is a prominent Iraqi political scientist who taught at the University of Baghdad for more than 20 years. His interests include Iraqi Kurds, the war in Iraq and its effect on the Middle East and the regional influence of Iraq's neighbours. He is currently working on an MEC Research Paper examining the Iraqi constitution, due to be published in the autumn of 2011.

Dr Kamil Mahdi is an economist specialising in agriculture, Iraq and the political economy of oil-exporting countries. Dr Mahdi is a former Senior Lecturer in the Economics of the Middle East at the University of Exeter. He is currently writing a book on the political economy of oil and development in Iraq. He is also working to develop research in conjunction with Basra University colleagues on the economic development of Basra province.

Management Group

The MEC Management Group is responsible for the oversight and development of the Centre's research agenda under the direction of the MEC Director. The Management Group provides advice on research strategy, general management and resource issues arising across the Centre, and progress on individual research themes and funded projects.

Members

- **Professor Nigel Ashton**, Professor of International History, LSE
- **Dr John Chalcraft**, Reader in the History and Politics of Empire/Imperialism, LSE
- **Professor Fawaz Gerges**, Director of the Middle East Centre, LSE
- **Professor Martha Mundy**, Professor of Anthropology, LSE
- **Professor John Sidel**, Sir Patrick Gillam Professor of International and Comparative Politics, LSE

Research Group

The MEC Research Group is drawn from LSE and external faculty members with relevant research interests. The Research Group has an advisory role in respect of the MEC's research themes, priorities and its general intellectual direction.

Members

- **Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed**, Professor of Anthropology of Religion, King's College London
- **Dr Roham Alvandi**, Lecturer in International History, LSE
- **Dr Amnon Aran**, Lecturer in International Politics, City University
- **Dr Federica Bicchi**, Lecturer in International Relations of Europe, LSE
- **Dr Katerina Dalacoura**, Lecturer in International Relations, LSE
- **Professor David Held**, Graham Wallace Professor of Political Science, LSE
- **Dr Steffen Hertog**, Lecturer in Comparative Politics, LSE
- **Dr Saad Jawad**, Senior Visiting Fellow, Middle East Centre, LSE
- **Professor Mary Kaldor**, Professor of Global Governance, LSE
- **Dr Michael Mason**, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Geography, LSE
- **Professor Şevket Pamuk**, Chair in Contemporary Turkish Studies, LSE
- **Dr Eugene Rogan**, Director of the Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, University of Oxford
- **Professor Yezid Sayigh**, Professor of Middle East Studies, King's College London
- **Dr Kirsten Schulze**, Senior Lecturer in International History, LSE
- **Dr Hakan Seckinelgin**, Senior Lecturer in International Social Policy, LSE
- **Dr Zhand Shakibi**, Lecturer in Comparative Politics, LSE
- **Professor Charles Tripp**, Professor of Politics, SOAS
- **Dr Kristian Coates-Ulrichsen**, Research Fellow and Deputy Director of the Kuwait Programme, LSE

Activities

The Arab Revolutions: A New Era of Politics

Analysis of the Arab revolutions of 2011 will be at the heart of the MEC's research agenda. A range of connected research activities will examine the causes and future implications of the revolutions on individual countries, on the region as a whole and on relations between the region and the international system. The first phase of this work will be carried out in 2011-2012 and the Centre is seeking funding to expand and extend this research into the following years.

Lecture Series

The first component will be a major lecture series at LSE in the academic year 2011-2012. Leading academics from Europe, North America and the Middle East will present papers on various critical aspects of the revolutions.

Edited Volume

The lecture series papers and others will be collated in a volume edited by Fawaz Gerges and published in 2012. This will be one of the first books written by leading scholars to examine the meanings and effects of the Arab revolutions on local, regional and international politics. The authors will reflect on the comparative causes and drivers behind the Arab revolutions and the prospects for pluralistic transformation and consolidation in the region.



Emirates PhD Awards

This programme supports LSE PhD students by providing financial support to those who need assistance as they approach completion of their degree. 2010-2011 award winners and thesis titles:

- **Hakem Al-Rustom:** Historic ethnography of the Anatolian Armenians in Turkey since 1923 and their migration to France since the 1970s
- **Wifak Houij Gueddana:** Community-based software development for microfinance NGOs in the MENA region
- **Irene Calis:** The everyday order of things: An ethnography of a West Bank Palestinian community under Israeli occupation
- **Bryan Gibson:** Sold out? American foreign policy, the Kurds and the Iraqi civil war, 1958-1975
- **Celine Righi:** Art and representation in post-war Lebanon
- **Laura Ryseck:** Nation-building and national identity in multi-ethnic states: A comparative study of the cases of Lebanon and Eritrea, 1941-1991
- **Yaniv Voller:** The Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq: A case study of de facto regional governance, the pursuit of international legitimacy and informal diplomacy

MSc: The Middle East in Comparative Perspective

The MEC is supporting the establishment of a new LSE taught Masters degree on the Middle East. This MSc will be hosted by the Government Department and teaching will be provided by LSE and MEC departmental staff. This will be a two year degree, including nine months of language training in the region. The aim is to begin the first course in 2012-2013.



Events

Middle East Centre Lecture Series 2010-2011

Pakistan, its Journalists and the Stories the West Forgets

Rahimullah Yusufzai, The News
Beena Sarwar, Journalist and Filmmaker
Quatrina Hussain, Express News
Mustafa Qadri, Journalist
13 October 2010

Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism

Dr John Calvert, Creighton University
18 October 2010

Invisible War: The United States and the Iraq Sanctions

Professor Joy Gordon, Fairfield University
28 October 2010

Edward Said: A Legacy of Emancipation and Representation

Various speakers
11 November 2010

Afghanistan: Getting Back to Basics

Jolyon Leslie, The Agha Khan Trust for Culture
15 November 2010

How Serious a Threat Does Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Represent to Yemen and the West?

Professor Fawaz Gerges, LSE
16 November 2010

The Future of Iraq: Opposition Views

Haifa Zangana, Author
Dr Kheireddine Haseeb, Centre for Arab Unity Studies
23 November 2010

Why Foreign Policies Change: The Case of Turkey

Dr Philip Robins, St Antony's College, University of Oxford
30 November 2010

The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process: Prospects for 2011 and Beyond

Professor Yezid Sayigh, King's College London
2 December 2010

Fight or Shake Hands? Syrian-US Relations Under Bashar al-Asad

Dr David Lesch, Trinity University
6 December 2010

Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean

Professor Bassem Ra'ad, Al Quds University
31 January 2011

Transition in Tunisia

Mohamed Ali, Islam Channel
Said Ferjani, Al-Nahda Party
Nadim Mahjoub, Tunisia Solidarity Campaign
Dr Michael Willis, St Antony's College, University of Oxford
7 February 2011



Events continued

Ottoman Cuisine and the Mediterranean Diet

Professor Sami Zubaida, Birkbeck, University of London
9 February 2011

Obama and the Minefields in the Middle East

Dr James Zogby, Arab American Institute
10 February 2011

The Economics of Palestinian-Israeli Peace

Professor Ephraim Kleiman, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
14 February 2011

The Changing Geostrategic Landscape in the Middle East

Professor Mohammed Ayoob, Michigan State University
Dr Patrick Seale, Writer and Journalist
Professor Avi Shlaim, St Antony's College, University of Oxford
2 February 2011

Can Middle East Peace be Imposed?

Henry Siegman, US / Middle East Project
21 February 2011

A Perfect Storm in the Arab World?

Professor Fawaz Gerges, LSE
Dr Maha Azzam, Associate Fellow, Chatham House
24 February 2011

Israeli Society and the Occupation

Gideon Levy, Haaretz
7 March 2011

Why Arabs Burn for Freedom

Rana Kabbani, Author
21 March 2011

The Economic Fuel of the Arab Intifada

Dr Ali Kadri, LSE
11 May 2011

The Politics of Religious Dissent in Contemporary Saudi Arabia

Dr Stéphane Lacroix, Sciences-Po
Dr Steffen Hertog, LSE
16 May 2011

Democracy in the Arab World

Various speakers
19 May 2011

Following the Trail of Islamism Across Time and Borders

Professor Leila Ahmed, Harvard University
26 May 2011

The Outsiders Inside: Palestinian Citizens of Israel, their Context and Contests

Dr Tilde Rosmer, LSE/University of Oslo
1 June 2011

Why Egypt and Tunisia and not Iran (yet)?

Dr Nader Hashemi, University of Denver
Danny Postel, The Common Review
7 June 2011

Iranian Foreign Policy: Continuity and Change

Dr Mahdi Ahouie, University of Tehran
13 June 2011

Reconsidering the 1948 Arab-Israeli War

Professor Benny Morris, Ben-Gurion University
14 June 2011

City of Strangers: Ethnographic Perspectives on Labour Migration in the Gulf States

Dr Andrew Gardner, University of Puget Sound
23 June 2011

Bread and Butter: Food, De-Development and the Arab Revolutions

Dr Rami Zurayk, American University of Beirut
23 June 2011

The Sahara: A Cultural History

Eamonn Gearon
6 July 2011

Democracy, Authoritarianism and Regime Change in the Middle East

Professor Lisa Anderson, American University in Cairo
13 July 2011





Forthcoming Conferences

Arab-Iranian Relations: Discourses of Conflict and Cooperation

7 September 2011

Run jointly with the International Relations Department, this conference will examine the complexities of relations between Arab states and Iran. Confirmed speakers include: Professor Gary Sick, Columbia University; Professor Ali Ansari, St Andrews University; and Dr Mahjoob Zweiri, Qatar University.

The Middle East in the Middle: Dynamics and Emerging Changes

LSE Middle East Centre PhD Students Conference

15 September 2011

This conference will help LSE doctoral students develop and present their research through providing a collaborative interdisciplinary forum for debate and dissemination. Deliberately placing the Middle East in 'the middle', a new perspective is being sought: rather than studying the region from the outside, this conference aims to offer a debate that places the observer in the centre.

Iraq: Institutional solidity, national or collective identities, and international challenges to sovereignty and state interests

January 2012

Led by Dr Kamil Mahdi, Senior Visiting Fellow at the MEC, this conference will consider a range of critical questions affecting Iraq since 2003. Areas of focus will include Iraqi national identity, public versus practical discourses and the question of whether Iraq's politics can ever be that of Iraq alone. Dr Mahdi, Professor Charles Tripp of SOAS and Professor Fawaz Gerges will convene the conference and edit papers for publication.



Forthcoming Lectures

Iraq

Professor Charles Tripp, SOAS

Professor Juan Cole, University of Michigan

5 October 2011

Framing the Arab Revolutions

Professor Juan Cole, University of Michigan

6 October 2011

Islamist Terrorism and Democracy in the Middle East

Dr Katerina Dalacoura, LSE

11 October 2011

A Saudi Spring of Sand Storms: Signs of Domestic Turbulence

Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed, King's College London

17 October 2011

The US and the Arab Revolutions

Professor William Quandt, University of Virginia

8 December 2011

Forthcoming Publications

The Arab Revolutions: A New Era of Politics

Leading academics from Europe, North America and the Middle East will contribute to a major lecture series at LSE in 2011-2012. These papers and others will be collated in a volume edited by Fawaz Gerges and published in the summer of 2012.

Contributors include Professor Juan Cole (University of Michigan), Dr Rami Zurayk (American University of Beirut), Dr Ali Kadri (LSE), Professor Charles Tripp (SOAS), Professor Madawi Al-Rasheed (King's College London), Professor Yezid Sayigh (King's College London), Professor William Quandt (University of Virginia), Professor Karim Mezran (Centre of American Studies, Rome) and Professor Mohammed Ayoob, (Michigan State University).

The Iraqi Constitution: A Solution or a Continuing Dilemma?

Dr Saad Jawad will examine the political implications of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution in this MEC Research Paper. Dr Jawad will analyse Iraq's constitutional history and the process of drafting the constitution to explain its impact on Iraqi politics.

Conference Proceedings

- **Democracy in the Arab World**
Workshop held by the Middle East Centre and LSE IDEAS Middle East,
May 2011
(Publication due August 2011)
- **Arab-Iranian Relations: Discourses of Conflict and Cooperation**
Conference held by the Middle East Centre and the International Relations Department,
September 2011
(Publication due December 2011)
- **Iraq: Institutional solidity, national or collective identities, and international challenges to sovereignty and state interests**
Middle East Centre Conference,
January 2012
(Publication due May 2012)





Middle East Centre
London School of Economics and Political Science
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE

Robert Lowe
r.lowe@lse.ac.uk

020 7955 6365