



## INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND POLICY WORKSHOP

# The “Arab Revolutions” as a Challenge for Islam and Muslims in the EU and their Perception in Europe

Future Perspectives for Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities Research

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9 February 2012

### Abstract:

The so-called “Arab Revolutions” in the Maghreb Region and in the Near and Middle East in early 2011 have to be considered one of the crucial historical turnarounds and paradigm shifts of the beginning 21st century. As a consequence of their unforeseeable primarily secular nature and due to their basic-democratic “bottom-up” character, a bunch of questions arises such as to the cross-linkages, interconnections and interaction between Arab and Muslim communities in Europe and in the MENA region, which had an impact on the political discourses and agendas; or as to the influence of these developments on Arab and Muslim communities, their self-perception and political status in the EU.

Moreover, the question has to be raised, whether the ongoing revolutionary processes in the Arab and Muslim world have already affected and changed the European perception of the Arab and Islamic world and its readiness for democracy. Thus, finally, we have to ask: Is there a specific need to re-consider or to change, modify or adopt new forms of religious regimes and political governance towards Muslim communities in Europe in the aftermath of the Arab Revolutions? And how to (re-) establish a fruitful and sustainable dialogue with old and new Arab resp. Muslim social, cultural, economic, political and religious elites both within the EU and beyond, in particular in the post-revolutionary states in the European neighbourhood?

## WORKSHOP AGENDA

10:00–10:10 Welcome Address

WOLFGANG HEUBISCH (*Bavarian State Minister of Sciences, Research and the Arts, Germany*)

10:10–10:30 Opening Statement and Introduction

MATHIAS ROHE (*Full Professor, Chair of Civil Law, Private International Law and Comparative Law, Former Judge at the Court of Appeal at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Director of the Erlangen Centre for Islam and Law in Europe – EZIRE*)

10:30–11:00 The European Commission's Research Policy Point of View

- ANGELA LIBERATORE (*Research Programme Officer, European Commission, Directorate General for Research & Innovation, Directorate B, Unit B.5 Social Sciences & Humanities*)
- PETER FRISCH (*Lead political Economist, Maghreb Department, European External Action Service – EEAS, European Union, Brussels*)

11:00–11:15 Coffee Break



11:15–13:00 Future Research Perspectives (*short statements followed by an open panel discussion, to be chaired by JÖRN THIELMANN, Executive Director of EZIRE*)

### **Challenge 1**

Democracy – Pluralism – Rule of Law – Human Rights: Towards a New Empirical Approach in Research on Flux and Re-flux of Ideas and Values between the EU and the MENA Region in the Focus of Individual and Collective Life-worlds of Muslim Diaspora Communities

#### Short Statements:

- MARIE-CLAIRE FOBLETS (*Full Professur at the Faculty of Law, Head of the Institute for foreigners Law and Anthropology of Law and Coordinator of the Research Unit Study of the Foundations of Law at the K.U. Leuven, Coordinator of the FP7 RELIGARE project*)
- THIJL SUNIER (*VISOR Professor for Islam in European Societies, Head of the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Faculty of Social Sciences of the VU University Amsterdam*)

## Challenge 2

Future Prospects on the Development of Islamism and Muslim Extremism in the Post-Arab-Revolution Societies: Consequences for research agendas in Europe

### Short Statements:

- BAHEY ELDIN HASSAN (*Director, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies*)
- JØRGEN S. NIELSEN (*Professor of Islamic Studies, DNRf-funded Research Chair at the Faculty of Theology and Director of the CEIT – Centre for European Islamic Thought at the University of Copenhagen, Former Director of the Danish Institute in Damascus*)

13:00–13:30 Panel Discussion, Conclusions and Future Steps towards Tackling this Societal Challenge in a new SSH Research Approach (to be chaired by MATHIAS ROHE)

13:30–14:30 L u n c h

### Venue of the Event:

Representation of the Free State of Bavaria  
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