

The Middle East and the West

Dialogues and Perspectives on International Relations



NEDERLANDS
INSTITUUT VOOR
ACADEMISCHE STUDIES
DAMASCUS

المعهد الهولندي
للدراسات الأكاديمية في دمشق



UNIVERSITY OF
KALAMON



In co-operation with the Foreign Ministry
of the Syrian Arab Republic
and the Dutch Institute
for Academic Studies in Damascus
the Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy
of the Private University of Kalamoon
holds an academic conference with the title

**The Middle East and the West -
Dialogues and Perspectives on International Relations**

November 4th, 2007
University of Kalamoon, Deiratiah, Syria

Program

9.00 – 9.30 AM	Opening of the conference by Prof. Dr. Abdelrazzah Cheikh Issa, President of the University of Kalamoon Dr. Amal Yazji, Dean of the Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy, University of Kalamoon
9.30 – 10.00 AM	Coffee Break
10.00 – 11.00 AM	PANEL 1: The Future Relations between the Arabs and the West
11.00 – 11.30 AM	Coffee Break
11.30 – 12.30 PM	PANEL 2: International Humanitarian Intervention between Political and Legal Aspects
12.30 – 1.30 PM	PANEL 3: The Future of Regional Conflicts in the Middle East
2.00 – 3.00 PM	Lunch

PANEL 1: The Future Relations between the Arabs and the West

The crisis of the relations between Arab and the Western states predates 9/11. Yet the responding interventionist policies of the U.S. and some of their Western allies deployed geopolitical shifts in the Arab World and mark a new era in the relations between the Arabs and the West that seems to fulfill Huntington's simplistic prophecy. Distorted and antagonistic perceptions of "the other", inscribed in the collective memory of the peoples, enforce the current physical conflicts in the Arab region in which Western states are directly involved. While the economic, political and military supremacy of the West and its enacted policies toward the region is seen in eyes of the Arab public as a historical continuation of unilateralism, imperialism, provocation, contradiction and injustice, Western societies tend to close their eyes on the repercussions of their national policies in the Arab world. Conflicting issues of the political realm such as the continuing occupation in Iraq and Western policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict are overwhelming cooperation and increase misperception and mistrust on both sides. Contrasting the Arab and the Western world as two opposing and contradictory poles as in Huntington's paradigm creates an interpretation of the relationship that suppresses nuances and exception by ignoring internal heterogeneity on both sides. A differentiation as well as a detailed analysis and identification of the sources of the problems are needed in order to prevent a further sliding along the spiral of conflict.

The two speakers of the panel will give a detailed analysis of the relationship in crisis governed by physical conflicts and prejudices, identify core problems, and offer an outlook into the future relationship between the Arab and the West.

Speakers:

Dr. Maurits Berger, Senior Fellow at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', The Netherlands

Dr. Samir al-Taqi, Director of the Orient Center for Studies, Damascus, Syria

Chairman of the Panel:

Dr. Sami Moubayed, Political Analyst and Lecturer at the Faculty of IR and Diplomacy, UoK, Syria

PANEL 2: International Humanitarian Intervention between Political and Legal Aspects

Humanitarian intervention can be considered the most widely debated concept in the academic debate among scholars of international relations today. There are altering views regarding this concept, ranging from strongly support of international humanitarian intervention to a strong opposition to this type of action. The world witnessed during the 1990s many cases of humanitarian intervention, such as in Somalia, former Yugoslavia, East-Timor and other regions of the World. While there was a humanitarian intervention in certain places such as Somalia, other places cases of genocide were ignored by the international community. This kind of behavior of double standard caused resentment by many countries to the humanitarian intervention as a policy practiced by the superpowers. Many nations believe that the superpowers are using the international legality for their interest.

This panel will address the problematic nature of humanitarian intervention and its legal and political consequences in contemporary international relations.

Speakers:

Dr. Muhamad al-Musa, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, Zeytuna University, Jordan

Dr. Ibrahim Darajee, Head of the Department of Diplomatic Science, UoK, Syria

Chairman of the Panel:

Abdulhamed Saloum, Head of the Research Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic

PANEL 3: The Future of Regional Conflicts in the Middle East

One of the most dramatic ways in which the post-Cold War differs from the Cold War international system is in the pattern of violence that has been developing. Warfare in its traditional sense has been diminishing from the scene. While a different pattern of violence has begun to emerge.

Since the end of the Cold War scholars and Practitioners alike have been debating the nature and type of future war. While a group of scholars argue that civil war will be the next type of conflict and in the form of an intra-state conflict with transnational consequences, others believe that low intensity conflict is considered most likely to dominate future inter-state conflicts. Participants in this conference try to examine both arguments and foresee the future of war in the region. The first speaker professor Reinoud Leenders addresses the nature and the scope of interconnectedness between war and politics in the Middle East focusing on three states Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. While Dr. Khaled Almasri focuses on the impact of the structural change on the future war in the third World countries.

Speakers:

Dr. Reinoud Leenders, Lecturer at the Department of Political Science, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Dr. Khaled al-Masri, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy, UoK, Syria

Chairman of the Panel:

Erik Mohns, PhD candidate in Political Science and Lecturer at the Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy, UoK, Syria

The Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy, UOK

The Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy at the University of Kalamoon is the first and only faculty of its kind in Syria. It is divided to two departments offering two different Bachelor programs: The Department of International Relations which offers a Bachelor of Arts in IR; and the Department of Diplomacy which offers a Bachelor of Arts in Diplomacy.

Since its inception in 2002, the Faculty of IR&D has offered 102 different courses covering a wide range of topics in the academic fields of international relations, international law, political science, economics, sociology, history, and negotiations – taught in Arabic and English. These courses have been attended by 161 students from all regions across Syria. Currently, the Faculty is staffed by 17 faculty members and lecturers representing an important spectrum of academic and practical experiences.

The Netherlands Institute for Academic Studies in Damascus (NIASD)

The Netherlands Institute for Academic Studies in Damascus (NIASD) is a Dutch foundation which aims to advance and maintain the academic relations between Syria and The Netherlands. In relation to that the institute also aims to advance and maintain the relations between both countries in the fields of culture and international co-operation. In this context the NIASD undertakes various activities, such as supporting and encouraging scientific research and studies in Syria and cooperation between Syrian and Dutch scientists in research projects, initiating and facilitating student exchanges, scientific research projects, lectures, courses, seminars and meetings, cooperating with similar institutes in Syria, and offering administrative and residence assistance, besides a range of other activities in the fields of culture and international co-operation.

UNIVERSITY OF KALAMOON

Faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy

P.O. Box: 222

Deiratiah – SYRIA

Phone: +963 (11) 7833 999

Fax: +963 (11) 7833 990

Email: diplomacy@uok.edu.sy

<http://www.uok.edu.sy>

NEDERLANDS INSTITUUT VOOR ACADEMISCHE STUDIES DAMASCUS

P.O. Box: 36103

Mezzeh, Damascus - SYRIA

Visitors address:

East Mezzeh, Al Farabi Street no.85

Damascus - SYRIA

Phone: +963 (11) 6120515

Fax: +963 (11) 6120515

<http://www.niasd.org>