

Online Conference

Libya's economic future: Which vision? Which priorities?



14-15 July 2021

Scientific Organiser:

Virginie Collombier | European University Institute

Introduction

How can Libya's economic future be envisioned now that a unified government has been formed but while some of the main drivers of conflict remain? What economic priorities need to be addressed to ensure sustainable peace and development in the long run? While there is widespread acknowledgement of the problems pervading Libya's economy, there is no unified vision among Libyans of the economic governance system that they should aim for.

There have been several attempts over recent years to generate discussion among Libyans about the future of the state's governance structures. However, disagreement remains over how best to undertake economic reform. Moreover, the economic dialogue track has remained distanced from the political negotiations.

The conference will gather academics from various countries and backgrounds, Libyan economic experts, technocrats and political figures, and international policymakers to discuss visions and practical economic solutions for how to run the post-conflict Libyan economy. It is a follow-up to previous closed workshops on Libya's economy organised by the Middle East Directions programme. It is also based on a series of research papers entitled 'Economic Vision in Transition Times,' which share the highlights and challenges of economic models implemented in Russia, Malaysia, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Chile to inform Libyan economic policy choices.

Programme - July 14

14:00 – 14:15

Introductions

Virginie Collombier | Middle East Directions Programme, EUI
Musab Elgaed | Peacemakers Libya

14:15 – 18:30

Roundtable “Economic Vision in Transition Times” (public)

What lessons can Libya learn from the economic transformations in other countries that have experienced war or serious political strife? What economic model would be best for Libya: a developmental state, a liberal state, or something in between? What are the main political issues that need to be agreed upon to adopt a constitutional basis for the upcoming elections?

This roundtable gathers international experts who have contributed to the series “*Economic Vision in Transition Times*”. They will share the highlights and challenges offered by economic models from *Ethiopia, Rwanda, Malaysia, Chile, and Russia*. The aim is to stimulate discussion with Libyan experts and policymakers on the most relevant options for economic reform and rehabilitation in post-conflict Libya, as well as their potential impact on politics and society.

Chair: Luigi Narbone | Middle East Directions Programme, EUI

Speakers:

Dr. Mehari Maru | European University Institute
in discussion with **Mr. Khaled Elghuel** | Independent expert

Prof. Kriengsak Chareongwonsak | Nation-Building Institute (NBI), Harvard University in discussion with **Dr. Essmail Al-Sharif** | Former Consultant for Development and Reconstruction, Presidency Council of Libya

Dr. Anders Aslund | Georgetown University; Stockholm Free World Forum in discussion with **Ms. Hala Bughaigis** | Jusoor Center for Studies and Development

Prof. Claudio Sapelli and **Prof. Rodrigo Fuentes** | Economics Department, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in discussion with **Prof. Atif Alhasia** | Academic and member of the Libyan Economic Expert Commission

Programme - July 15

09:45 – 14:00

High-level Political Dialogue on Libya's Economy (invitation only) **"Economic reforms: priorities and inclusion in the political process"**

This closed-door meeting will gather high-level Libyan political figures, economic experts, business people and civil society representatives to discuss how economic reforms should be prioritised and implemented. The panel will also reflect on how economic issues can be discussed within the political process.

Chair:

Virginie Collombier | Middle East Directions Programme, EUI
Tim Eaton | Chatham House