

## Foreign Policy Dialogues Euro-Maghreb dialogue on nearshoring and post-COVID opportunities

**March 22, 2021**

Online session

*Organized by:* CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Affairs) and CITpax with the support of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation

The HRVP Josep Borrell is not alone in his conviction that one of the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic should be to strengthen Europe's strategic autonomy and re-scale global value chains. The question is to what extent, how feasible it is whether this represents an opportunity for EU's neighbours too. The countries of the Maghreb are in urgent need of opportunities for economic development as the pandemic has amplified previously existing challenges. As the EU ponders where in its near abroad it might encourage new investments and in which sectors, this exploratory meeting shall assess the place of the Maghreb in this discussion. It will assess the potential impact of this strategy, the strengths and weaknesses of the countries of the Maghreb and how to translate this initial diagnose into specific policies that could meet the immediate and long-term interests of both parts.

To do so, this meeting will gather European and Maghrebi experts, representatives of the private sector in Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria and officials from the EU institutions and Spain. The conversation will be structured in three blocs:

### **Nearshoring: transforming an opportunity into a reality**

Why now? How does it feed the EU's broader geopolitical and strategic vision? Which steps have already been taken? Who are the key players pushing into this direction and which arguments do they put forward? Who are the actors that may contest this approach and why? How does it connect to other transformational priorities (digital agenda, green transition, connectivity)?

### **Why the Maghreb, or why not?**

Could nearshoring contribute to stabilize Europe's southern neighbourhood and nurture a positive agenda for cooperation? Does the joint communication on the Southern Neighborhood and the new MFF favor a more ambitious engagement in this field? What should happen for the Maghreb countries to become a priority and a partner in this strategy? Which are the strengths and weaknesses of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco? Which elements could decrease the attractiveness of these countries or the region as a whole?

### **Where to start?**

How to translate this agenda into regional, subregional and country-based initiatives and actions? On which sectors/countries there are more possibilities for quick gains? How can individual member states contribute to it? How to involve the private sector and civil society in the different phases of the project?

## Participants

**Acosta, Francisco**, Head of Political Section, EU Delegation in Tunisia  
**Alaya, Hachemi**, Economist and Editor, ECOWEEK, Tunisia  
**Albinyana, Roger**, Director of the Mediterranean Regional Policies and Human Development, IEMed  
**Audaz, Gerald**, Head of Sector, EU cooperation with Maghreb countries, NEAR, European Commission  
**Ayadi, Rym**, Founder and President, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association  
**Basagni, Laura**, Wider Atlantic & Mediterranean Program Manager, GMFUS (Brussels)  
**Cassinello, Emilio**, General Director, CITPAX (Madrid)  
**Cherif, Youssef**, Director, Columbia Global Centers (Tunis)  
**Ghilès, Francis**, Associate Senior Researcher, CIDOB; Senior Consultant, CITPAX  
**Gili, Rosamaria**, Head of North Africa, European External Action Service  
**González, Isidro**, Deputy SG, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)  
**Hadj Nacer, Idriss**, Economist, Algeria  
**Horj, Alin**, Policy Officer, Middle East and Africa, OECD  
**Kerrar, Lies**, Board Member & CEO, Med Investment Holding & BIOPHARM  
**Ksikes, Driss**, Director CSEM, HEM (tbc)  
**Marrakchi, Hakim**, Vice-President, Moroccan Employers Federation  
**Martín-Yagüe, José Luis**, Deputy Director-General, Head of the Office of Strategy and Foresight, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spain  
**Martinez, Eva**, Director-General, MAMOP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spain  
**Masmoudi, Sara**, CEO & Head of Pharmaceuticals, TERIAK & UTICA, Tunis  
**Megirisi, Tarek**, Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations  
**Mikos, Philip**, Head of Unit, NEAR, European Commission  
**Moreno García-Cano, Luis**, Director-General for Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Spain  
**Morillas, Pol**, Director, CIDOB  
**O'Rourke, John**, Head of EU Delegation, EU Delegation in Algeria (tbc)  
**Perteghella, Annalisa**, Scientific Coordinator, Rome MED Dialogues, Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI)  
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