The relative weight of Africa on the international agenda is increasing and the new EU leadership has announced that this will be one of the main priorities of the EU's external action. The interest in Africa is often framed in terms of opportunity (economic growth, trade, infrastructure, urban development, social dynamism and culture, democratic transitions) but it is also a space of rivalry between regional powers (Morocco-Algeria) or even global ones (EU-China). Another factor that invites us to pay more attention is the (in)security nexus between the Maghreb and Africa, with the Sahel as the most obvious case. The growing importance of Africa in the European agenda should reinforce rather than replace or overshadow existing policies towards the Mediterranean and the Maghreb. This seminar will aim to discuss how to make this possible and what alliances are necessary to generate innovative and transformative proposals.

This initiative is part of the series of Foreign Policy Dialogues, a new methodology developed by CIDOB with the support of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Through this and other workshops, CIDOB aims to connect the thinking generated in Spain with other European and international organisations so as to increase capacity of incidence in Brussels and other decision-making centers. Thus, think tanks and research centres will feed, complement and contribute to the activities undertaken at the governmental level.

The workshop will be based on semi structured discussions to share ideas and insights with the goal of answering the questions reflected in the programme below. Prior to the event you will be provided with a selection of relevant readings and background data.

09.30 Welcome remarks and introduction to the exercise

10.00 Towards a common diagnosis
- 2020: Is this year a turning point? What awaits post-Cotonou and where are we on the 25th anniversary of the Barcelona Process?
- What place is there for the Maghreb and Africa in the list of EU priorities?
- Is there a risk of the Maghreb (and the Mediterranean more broadly) being replaced or overshadowed by Africa as THE priority?
- Which could be the drivers favouring a positive synergy between the Maghreb and Africa as European priorities?
- Is the EU a priority for the Maghreb and African countries and, if yes, in which domains?

11.30 Coffee break

12.00 Who are the the key players? promoters and veto-players; rivals and allies
- Which Member States will shape EU policy toward Africa and the Maghreb?
- Which of these are historically prominent in EU-Africa-Maghrebi relations and which are emergent?
- How are regional bodies currently relating to each other and to other influential actors across the EU Maghreb-Africa?
- How are interregional relationships changing?
- What extra-regional actors and interest groups are influential on Eu-Maghreb-Africa interregional dynamics.
13.30  Lunch

14.30  Incubation of ideas
- What ideas could this group come up with and how to upload them into EU, African or Maghrebi policy circles?
- What areas and which methods should be prioritised?
- Which strategy, and with which instruments and alliances, would bear more fruits?
- What added value can Spain bring?

16.30  Conclusion and next steps

This working group will take place in Barcelona and this is the list of confirmed participants:

- Roger Albinyana, of Mediterranean Regional Policies and Human Development at the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)
- Gemma Aubarell Solduga, Responsible for Mediterranean Strategy and Networks at the Directorate General for European and Mediterranean Affairs, Government of Catalonia
- Cristina Barrios, Political Officer at European External Action Service (EEAS)
- Emmanuel Cohen-Hadria, Head of Euro-Mediterranean Policies and EuroMeSCo at the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)
- Giovanni Dini, Research Assistant, CIDOB and technical coordinator of the workshop
- Itxaso Dominguez de Olaizabal, Middle East and Maghreb Coordinator - Observatory of Spanish Foreign Policy (OPEX) at Fundación Alternativas
- Emmanuel Dupuy, President Institut Prospective et Sécurité en Europe (IPSE), Paris
- Giovanni Faleg, Senior Analyst, EUISS, Paris
- Francis Ghalbès, Associate Senior Researcher, CIDOB
- Elena Gómez Aoiz, Political Advisor to the EU Special Representative for the Sahel
- Isidro González, Deputy Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean (Barcelona)
- Paul-Simon Handy, Senior Regional Adviser at the Institute for Security Studies (Pretoria-Dakar)
- Larabi Jaidi, Senior Research Fellow, Policy Center for the New South (Rabat)
- Akram Kharief, Independent Analyst (Algeria)
- Elena López Werner, Policy Officer for Sub-Saharan Africa, Directorate General for Global Affair, Government of Catalonia
- Ángel Losada, EU Special Representative for the Sahel
- Ainhoa Marin Egoscozabal, Senior Analyst, Real Instituto Elcano
- Iván Martín Associate Researcher, GRITIM, Universitat Pompeu Fabra de Barcelona
- Óscar Mateos, Lecturer, Ramon Llull University and Associate Researcher at CIDOB
- Pol Morillas, Director, CIDOB
- Oriol Puig, Researcher, CIDOB
- Javier Puig Saura, Subdirector General (Maghreb, Africa, Mediterranean and Middle East), Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Raimundo Robredo Rubio, Director General for Africa, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Albert Rocas, Principal Researcher GESA; Professor, University of Lleida; President, CEA
- Martin Ronceray, Policy Officer for the LQS team at ECDPM
- José Antonio Sabadell, Director of Policy Planning, Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Ana Santos Pinto, Researcher at IPRI and Assistant Professor at NOVA University of Lisbon
- Eduard Soler i Lecha, Senior Researcher, CIDOB
- Bernardo Venturi, Senior Fellow, IAI (Rome)

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