TÜRK ASYA STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ
TURKISH ASIAN CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES
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PRESS RELEASE

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Change in the Middle East Comes to the Table

Is It Democracy or Chaos on the Horizon?

The social events either called as "Arab Spring" or "Arab Awakening" happening in the North Africa and the Middle East will be discussed in the **2nd I**nternational Middle East Congress, which will be arranged in Hatay.

The theme of **2nd** International Middle East Congress, which is going to be held between the dates of 7-9 December 2011, is determined as **"Change in the Middle East".** Both local and foreign researchers, academicians, representatives of think tanks, diplomats and journalists who are directly related to the Middle East will participate to the congress.

2nd International Middle East Congress is going to last three days. The congress is going to be held in Anemon Antakya Hotel in Hatay in the hosting of Mustafa Kemal University and Hatay Governorship. It is organized by TASAM (Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Studies) in cooperation with ORSAM and M.U. (Marmara University) Institute of Middle East Studies.

A strong declaration is expected as a result of the congress to which both local and foreign 70 intellectuals will participate.

The opening speeches of the congress will be given by the Chairman of ORSAM Dr. Hasan Kanbolat, the Manager of the M.U. Institute of Middle East Studies Prof. Talip Küçükcan, the Chairman of TASAM Süleyman Şensoy, the Chancellor of MKU Prof. Hüsnü Salih Güder, Presidential Advisor on the Middle East Esat Hürmüzlü, Governor of Hatay M. Celalettin Lekesiz and Minister of Food, Agriculture and Livestock Mehdi Eker*.

Süleyman Şensoy, the chairman of TASAM stated that "Uncertainties caused by the social and political change and transformation process in the Middle Eastern countries by the end of 2010 leaves the actors related to the region in a difficult situation in terms of policy-making and future projections. Insufficient education and human development programs, inadequate employment in the rapidly growing young population, deepening poverty, improved communication facilities, increase in food prices over the last two years in the Middle Eastern countries have been the main reasons for the people's movements."

The Chairman Şensoy also underlined that "at a time when transparency, accountability and democratic legitimacy have become generally accepted principles, the Middle Eastern governments have faced a problem of political legitimacy, which is hard to resolve. In terms of global politics, because of huge energy resources in the Middle East and its geo-strategic importance, the region has remained as a direct intervention area for the global powers. New market and investment opportunities in the region have let the region to become an expansion area. Because of the central symbolic importance of the region for the Islamic world, geo-cultural and global strategic considerations have become more complex.

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From this point of view, **"2nd International Middle East Congress"** aims **to construct a field of consciousness peculiar to the Middle East** in terms of political relations among the Middle Eastern countries, security cooperation and democratization etc. Participation of senior staff, journalists, diplomats, academicians and opinion leaders from the countries that is directly related to the Middle East and from international institutions is expected to this congress".

Sub themes of "Historical Background of Transformation in the Middle East", "Sociological Foundations of Change in the Middle East", "Political Regimes in the Middle East and Change", "Interplay Between the International System and the Change in the Middle East" and "Change in the Middle East and Turkey " are going to be discussed in 6 sessions during the 2nd International Middle East Congress.

Please click the link below for detailed information:
http://www.tasam.org/en/Etkinlik/129/2nd_international_middle_east_congress

*To be confirmed.

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