

Black Sea and East Med Conference Thessaloniki 2026

October 31 – November 1

Thessaloniki

General Information

Hotel Mandrino

29 Egnatia Street
54630 Thessaloniki Greece
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Conference Venue:

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Agiou Dimitriou 1 Thessaloniki
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Program

Saturday, October 31

16:30-17:00

Registration

Anna Tsangari & Margarita Kastanidou

17:00 – 17:30

Welcome Addresses by the Organizers

Sophia Kaitatzi-Whitlock, Emerita Professor of Politics and Political Communication, School of Journalism & Mass Communication, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Editor-in-Chief of the Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Review

Grigoris Zarotiadis, Professor, School of Economics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Director of the Interdisciplinary Laboratory of Black Sea and Mediterranean Studies

Hubert Faustmann, Professor, Department of Politics and Governance, University of Nicosia, Director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Cyprus office

Michalis Kontos, Associate Professor, Department of Politics and Governance/School of Law, University of Nicosia

Session I: Keynote Speech

17:30 – 18:15 The Shadow of the Leviathan: Decolonization and Post-colonial Insecurity

- Input:
 - **Daniel Rio Tinto**, Teaching Professor, School of International Relations, Fundação Getulio Vargas, Brazil
- Chair:
 - **Grigoris Zarotiadis**, Professor, School of Economics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Director of the Interdisciplinary Laboratory of Black Sea and Mediterranean Studies
- **Q&A Session**

18:15-18:45 Coffee Break

Session II: Reframing Relations in the Global (ex)Periphery

18:45 – 20:15

- Chair:
 - **Themistoklis Tzimas**, Assistant Professor, School of Law, University of Nicosia

Norm as a Terrain of Struggle: Authoritarian Multilateralism, the (Ex-) Periphery, and the Semantic Contestation of International Order

- Input:
 - **Konstantina D. Oikonomou**, Adjunct Lecturer and Research Fellow, University of Peloponnese

Doctrine & Personal Interest: The Decadence of the Empire in the Newly Shaped North-South Relation

- Input:
 - **Davide Di Battista**, undergraduate, University of Naples “Federico II”

Reclaiming Historical Significance: Iran, Historical Re-Centralisation and the Limits of Order-Shaping in a Transforming International Order

- Input:
 - **Heybatollah Najandimanesh**, Associate Professor of International Law at Allameh Tabataba’i University, Tehran

Human Rights, Peace and International Governance: The Role of Civil Society in Addressing Contemporary Global Challenges

- Input:
 - **Kamal Bdah**, Ambassador, President of the World Human Rights and Peace Organization – Al Mawada

Liberal-Illiberal: A re-interpretation of economic interdependence

- Input:
 - **Melis Menent**, Doctor of Philosophy in Social and Political Thought Department of Philosophy University of Sussex, UK

21:30-23:30

Conference dinner @Massalia Restaurant

Sunday, November 1

Session III: Transitions in Southern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean

10:00-11:30

- Chair:
 - **Hubert Faustmann**, Professor, Department of Politics and Governance, University of Nicosia, Director of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Cyprus office

Self-Representation and Migration Experiences on TikTok: Woman Content Creators in Greece and Italy

- Input:
 - **Panagiota (Naya) Kalfeli**, Adjunct Lecturer, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki,
 - **Angeliki Kogiou**, psychologist and journalist, MA in migration studies
 - **Myrto Lyka**, political scientist, MA in “Management of Mass Migration and People on the Move”, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Reticular Order Under Fire: The Iran-Israel-US Confrontation, Network Resilience, and the Eastern Mediterranean

- Input:
 - **Alessio Zattolo**, PhD (cand.), UNINT – University of International Studies, Rome GEODI – Geopolitics and Law Research Centre

Explaining Sequential Territorial Recording in Post-Baath Syria: How Eroded Shields and Converging Interests Reshuffle a Transitional Order

- Input:
 - **Nikolaos Stelgias**, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Nicosia

A New Security Environment: Cypriot Defense Policy after the Third Gulf War

- Input:
 - **Theodoros Tsakiris**, Professor for Geopolitics and Energy Policy, School of Business, the University of Nicosia

Charismatic Leadership and Sectarian Rhetoric: The 2024 Syrian Transition and the Social Architecture of the Eastern Mediterranean

- Input:
 - **Riana Jicha**, Columbia International University (USA)
 - **Veljko Kotlaja**, University of Belgrade (Serbia)

11:30 –12:00 Coffee Break

Session IV: Transitions in Africa and the Americas

12:00-13:30

Chair:

- **Michalis Kontos**, Associate Professor, Department of Politics and Governance, University of Nicosia

Geopolitical Checks and Balances: A constitutional Theory of U.S. Influence in Venezuela

- Input:
 - **Despina Kotsi**, Attorney-at-law, PhD

The Impact of the Collapsed Bipolar World Order on African States and the Consequent shifting of Regional Alliances in Africa: The Case Study of Sudan

- Input:
 - **Judy Ronen**, Professor, Department of Political Studies, Bar Ilan University

The Return of Civilizational Politics: Turkey`s Decolonial Narrative in Africa

- Input:
 - **Sezin Öney**, journalist and political scientist

The Impact of Inequalities on US Foreign Policy

- Input:
 - **Themistoklis Tzimas**, Assistant Professor, School of Law, University of Nicosia

13:30 – 14:30 Light Lunch, Networking and Farewell