

Foreword

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The Mediterranean area is possibly the most exciting region on the planet to analyse and study, fruit of the complexity of its history, its different societies and its diverse political, social, cultural and economic relations. Despite the Yearbook's length, covering all this complexity is an almost impossible task; our intention, however, is to come as close as we can to achieving this. The IEMed thereby offers its Yearbook readers a tool to gain information, insight and understanding of the Mediterranean reality, for both actors and experts, as well as the general public interested in the region.

In the *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook 2014*, the articles are organised into its three traditional sections: *Keys*, which contains the region's most relevant events, those we consider to be essential for understanding its major challenges. A second section entitled *Dossier* once again offers a series of articles that provides an in-depth analysis of, in this case, a single theme of particular significance, from a range of different perspectives. This year our *Dossier* is focused on the constitution-making processes of the Arab transitions. And finally, *Panorama* offers a review of current affairs in the Euro-Mediterranean with regard to themes such as Mediterranean countries' internal policies, security, economic relations, migration or socio-cultural themes.

Four topics have been selected for *Keys*, two of which were already part of last year's edition. The first provides observations of the Arab transitions, in terms of both the diversity of the models that have unfolded and the effect they have had on the re-

gion's geopolitics, which is undergoing a difficult, tumultuous and significant period in its history. Secondly, is the bloody conflict in Syria, which has already claimed more than 100,000 lives and left more than 9 million refugees or displaced persons. The country today remains entrenched in a desperate situation and looks to have a tough future ahead. *Keys* also looks at the challenges facing youth in the Arab countries, whether economic, political or socio-cultural. Lastly, the section closes with another of the Yearbook's traditional themes: the future of relations between Europe and the Mediterranean.

In this edition, the *Dossier*, which returns to its format of multiple articles, focuses on the constitution-making processes used by the Arab countries in transition. This group of articles analyses these processes firstly across the board, including political models, constitutions, the role of Islam, human rights or political parties and elections, and then individually, looking at the cases of the constitutions of Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt.

As in all editions, the articles in *Panorama* complement and complete the perspective of the major events in the Mediterranean area. This section reveals the Yearbook's intention not to leave aside any geographical area or theme, offering a wide selection of articles which deal with everything from internal politics to trade, immigration to security, energy to climate change, agriculture to freedom of expression and tourism to the situation of women. It also provides its readers with the political, economic, social and cultural keys of the Mediterranean agenda. Finally, the Yearbook complements the analysis of the articles and offers a different perspective through the *Appendices*, which provide readers with direct information, from the wide selection of statistical indicators – offered both in *Country Profiles* and *The Mediterranean in Brief* – to the various exhaustive

chronologies or the selection of specific data related to cooperation, development, immigration or the signing of international agreements. Finally, *Maps* presents data and indicators, which may be difficult to understand in other sections, in a clearer format. To reach ten editions of a Yearbook certainly requires hard work and a lot of effort, but above all it needs a dream. The dream of giving our readers a rigorous and pluralistic analysis of the Mediterranean reality; of offering a tool to transmit the situation of a geographical area beyond the headlines; the dream of maintaining quality, both in terms of

the authors and the appendices; the dream that anyone interested in the Mediterranean area can access a reference product containing a considered analysis. And all this at a time when the distribution of information and the search for immediacy increasingly leads us to give our opinion before we reflect, to focus on the trees before reaching a global vision of the forest. Our goal with the Yearbook is to offer this limited yet essential global vision, through the in-depth knowledge of our authors, who write the articles with this vision of synthesis. We hope we have achieved our goal.