

Intersecting perspectives on the Maghreb ten years after the Arab Springs

Online evening Conference

24 February 2022

17:00 – 18:30

Prof. Dr Pierre VERMEREN (Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne University)

Dr Michaël Béchir AYARI (International Crisis Group)

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to an **online evening conference** organised on **Thursday 24 February 2022** by the **Centre for Security and Defence Studies** of the Royal Higher Institute for Defence.

On 17 December 2010, the self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi in Sidi Bouzid initiated a formidable chain reaction that would shake the Arab world starting from Tunisia and, in particular, topple several heads of state who had been in place for decades (in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, etc.). Ten years later, this shock wave, popularised through the infelicitous wording “Arab Spring” in the media, yielded a very dreary result, since only Tunisia seemed to have barely made it through, while several other affected countries (Libya, Syria, Yemen) had sunk into civil war. One thing seemed clear in most cases: socio-political demands had not received the expected response and socio-economic shortcomings had largely persisted, or even worsened.

Since 2019, social discontent has even spread to the streets of some capitals that had largely shunned the 2011 protests, prompting the press to evoke an “Arab Spring 2.0” (in Algeria, Lebanon, Sudan). While the health crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily overshadowed issues related to the continuing instability in the Middle East and North Africa, geopolitical developments and associated security challenges did not stay locked down. At a time when the European Union’s Strategic Compass is raising awareness of the risks geographically close to our countries, we should analyse the future of our immediate southern neighbourhood: the Maghreb.

In order to diversify our understanding of this vast issue, we are honoured to welcome Prof. Dr Pierre Vermeren, professor of Contemporary History at Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne University, and Dr Michaël Béchir Ayari, senior analyst at the International Crisis Group (ICG), who will present their views, respectively anchored in Morocco and Tunisia, on Maghreb – and, more specifically, on Algeria – dynamics.

This online conference will take place **in French** on **Thursday 24 February 2022 at 17.00**. We thank you in advance for registering via the following link: www.defence-institute.be. **Registration is compulsory and must be received by Tuesday 22 February 2022 at the latest.** You will then receive a registration confirmation and a link to connect to the conference.

(Signed)

Filip BORREMANS, MSc Eng
Air Force Colonel GS
Director-General
Royal Higher Institute for Defence

Programme:

16:45 – 17:00: Welcome – connection to the online conference
17:00 – 18:30: Conference and Q&A