



Middle
East
Institute

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

PEACE
PROSPERITY
PARTNERSHIP







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Letter from the Chairman

A few years ago, there was renewed talk in Washington about the United States “pivoting away” from the Middle East to place more attention on the Asia Pacific region. At the time, many at the Middle East Institute (MEI) believed, said, and wrote that such a pivot was short sighted and also unlikely to be something that any U.S. administration could actually implement. In the ensuing years, the importance of the Middle East to the United States, and vice versa, has continued to be obvious and talk of any U.S. disengagement has ceased.

Iran is still on a path to acquiring nuclear weapons and has become Russia’s chief supplier of arms in its war in Ukraine. U.S. Special Forces are still carrying out operations against ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Violence and political discord in Israel and Palestine deeply concern millions of Americans. Oil and gas exports from the region still directly affect the health of the American and the global economies.

And amidst these challenges, MEI is still the place concerned Americans and people of the region go to understand such complex issues and the relationship between the region and the United States. Through its extensive conferences, publications, and internet presence, MEI

brings clarity and the facts to what often seem like complicated and arcane issues.

People listen to MEI’s scholars because they trust the Institute, which for over 75 years has been the non-partisan home for expertise, fact-based analysis, and academic freedom. It has also become the home of rich cultural activities designed to bridge the divide between the U.S. and the Middle East. From language training to contemporary art, MEI contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the full picture of the region.

Understanding comes from dialogue and study. Peace and, we hope, prosperity come from understanding. Personal interaction also contributes to peace, and MEI is a convener of diverse peoples as well as a vehicle for personal enrichment and education.

In the last few years, MEI has grown to the size and shape that its leadership and its Board of Governors have wanted to achieve. Now, our task is sustainment. We seek the resources, human and financial, to sustain MEI’s current level of activity for students, scholars, artists, Congressional and Executive Branch staff, the military, the media, and the American people.



There is so much activity at MEI that some part of it will be right for you to get involved in a meaningful and personally satisfying way. Become active. Join us, as we work together for understanding, peace, and prosperity.

Richard A. Clarke
Chairman, Board of Governors

2022 by the Numbers

4.6M
Website
Visits

1,629
Media
Mentions

549
Publications
& Podcasts

201
Events &
Roundtables

Letter from the President

As it enters its 77th year, the Middle East Institute (MEI) stands stronger than ever as one of the world's leading centers of knowledge about the Middle East, and of exchange between the people of the region and the United States.

In 2022, MEI worked with top U.S. government officials, as well as influential figures from the public and private sector across the Middle East, to develop clear pathways to a sustainable partnership. Our scholars shaped U.S. policy, presented strategies, and published outlooks on how best to tackle economic and foreign policy challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the region today. With the continued development of recently established programs, MEI's scholarship was produced and consumed at record rates, helping to solidify our reputation as the premier source for unbiased, non-partisan information and analysis about the Middle East.

As the threat of COVID-19 diminished, MEI also hosted one-of-a-kind gatherings in Washington, D.C., as well as in the Middle East, that brought together world-famous thinkers, and political, business, and cultural leaders from the United States,

the Middle East, and beyond. Throughout the year, MEI conferences focused on some of the region's most important emerging developments and how they can be addressed through strengthened partnership and collaboration between the United States and its friends and partners in the Middle East.

Similarly, MEI's educational and cultural initiatives fostered interpersonal exchange, bringing individuals and communities together through the universal languages of art, learning, and fellowship. Programming around literature, music, and the visual arts focused on shared themes of climate, refugees, identity, and more, providing opportunities for dialogue and engagement between regional artists and American audiences.

These impressive accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication of my MEI colleagues and the generous support of our many friends and partners. In this report, I invite you to explore the ways in which MEI has had real impact and influence while strengthening its mission to increase U.S. understanding of the region and building stronger people-to-people ties.



Paul Salem
President and CEO

24

International
Trips

64,000

Newsletter
Subscribers

100,000

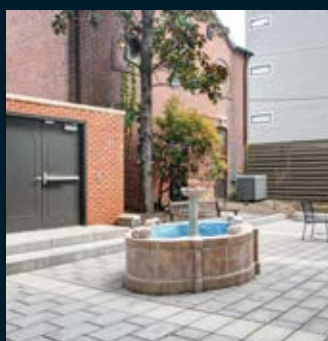
Twitter
Followers

13,000

YouTube
Subscribers

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

Founded in 1946, the Middle East Institute is the leading Washington-based institution dedicated solely to the study of the Middle East. It is a non-partisan think tank providing expert policy analysis, education and professional development services, as well as a hub for engaging with the region's arts and culture.



OUR MISSION

To increase knowledge of the Middle East among citizens of the United States and to promote a better understanding between the people of these two areas

Policy Impact

Generating analysis, convening experts, and providing insight that helps decision makers in Washington and around the world craft foreign policies that prioritize peace, prosperity, and partnership.

An Integrated Think Tank for the 21st Century

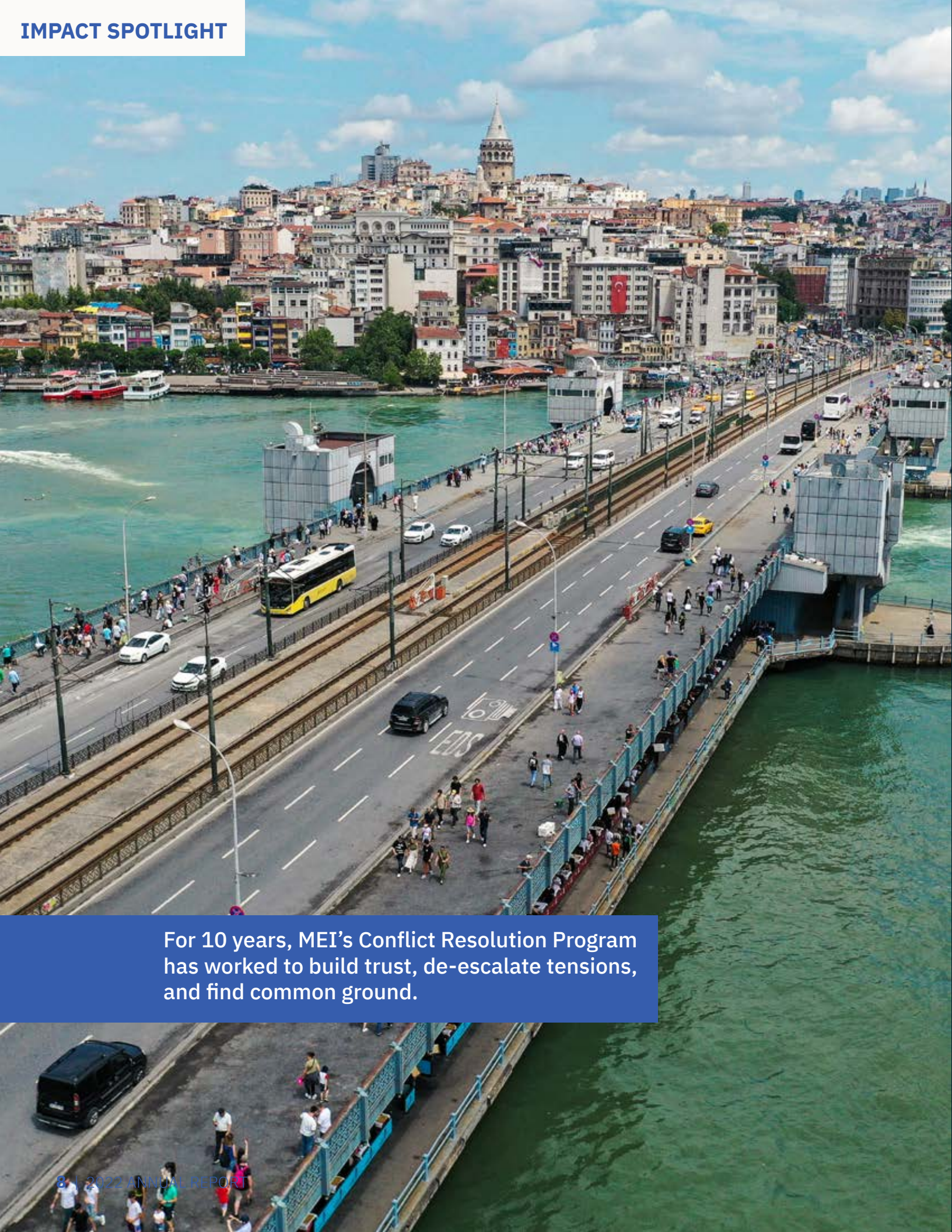
MEI is leading the way for a new kind of think tank: one that thrives at the intersection of policy, education, and culture. Our centers reflect a dedication to promoting a more comprehensive understanding of a complex region.

Cultural Diplomacy

Showcasing the often-overlooked cultural depth of the Middle East, and forging indelible bonds through the power of music, performance, and the arts.

Education

Teaching and mentoring the next generation of policy makers to think critically about the region and engage holistically with its peoples, languages, cultures, histories, and identities.



For 10 years, MEI's Conflict Resolution Program has worked to build trust, de-escalate tensions, and find common ground.

BRIDGING DIVIDES

A decade of Track II Dialogues

Since 2014, MEI has facilitated three dialogues involving regional and international stakeholders, aimed at building trust, de-escalating tensions, and finding common ground for coordinated and collaborative action. The Middle East Dialogue (MED) brings together analysts, policymakers, and influential individuals from the Middle East, including GCC countries, Turkey, Iran, Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon. The U.S.-Russia Middle East Workgroup, launched in July 2016, has focused on the situation in Syria and how the two countries can avoid military escalation there. The U.S.-Turkey Dialogue, launched in December 2019, has held two meetings and mainly discussed the S-400 air-defense system, Turkey's intervention in Syria, and Eastern Mediterranean energy.

Through these dialogues, MEI has developed relations of trust with a large group of official and unofficial stakeholders in the Middle East and international community, including Russia and China. Ideas generated in one dialogue are shared with members of the other two tracks. The proposals and recommendations that came out of

these dialogues have been circulated in the official and public arenas in the region and beyond.

Over the years, the discussions have generated eight streams of ideas and proposals, which have gained traction in official policy arenas. These include U.S.-Russia collaboration in Syria, principles for a comprehensive resolution in Syria, de-escalation zones in Syria, U.N. proposals on Yemen, confidence-building measures on conflict de-escalation in Yemen, tension de-escalation and conflict reduction in the Iran-GCC space, regional cooperation frameworks in the Middle East, and mechanisms and institutions for conflict prevention and management in a new regional cooperation framework.

The Middle East Institute's work is increasingly important in light of deteriorating relations between the U.S. and Russia and the current state of U.S.-China relations. We need unofficial dialogue spaces where focused, policy-relevant, and frank discussions can take place on areas of divergences and competition, as well as areas where interests overlap and cooperation is possible.

- » Facilitated three international dialogues
- » Focused on de-escalating conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and Iran-GCC
- » Built relations of trust between U.S. and Russian, Chinese, and Turkish counterparts





MEI's groundbreaking research programs are at the forefront of discussions on climate change and sustainable energy policy.

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

A focus on climate, water, and energy innovation



» Organized official side-events at COP27 and first United Nations MENA Climate Week

» Held inaugural Climate Week programming and joint World Bank event on Roadmap for Climate Action

» Engaged with energy producers to promote investment in clean energy technologies

The global issue of climate change is an acute concern for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). The region is already experiencing rising average temperatures, water scarcity, and extreme weather events, which are putting significant pressure on communities, economies, and infrastructure. This has led to a growing concern among youth, policymakers, and energy producers about the need for urgent action to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Middle East Institute (MEI) is at the forefront of policy discussions in this area, bringing together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders to discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change in the

region through events such as MEI's 2022 Climate Week, a joint event with the World Bank showcasing the release of their Roadmap for Climate Action in MENA, and official side-events organized at the United Nations MENA Climate Week and the COP27 conference in Sharm el-Sheikh.

One of the key challenges for the region is the need to transition to a more diversified and sustainable energy portfolio. MEI has been engaging with energy producers, policymakers, and civil society to promote clean energy technologies and solutions, such as solar and wind power, and to support the development of policies and regulations that encourage investment in these areas.





MEI is working across borders to address the detainee crisis in northeastern Syria left in ISIS's wake.

RESOLVING A DETAINEE CRISIS

Promoting the repatriation of men, women, and children in Syria

MEI's Countering Terrorism & Extremism Program and the International Center for the Study of Radicalization (ICSR) at King's College London joined forces to address the detainee crisis that emerged in the wake of the Islamic State group's territorial defeat in Syria in 2019. Since then, the U.S. and local Syrian partners have been holding more than 10,000 ISIS fighters in 26 makeshift prisons and 60,000 associated family members in secured camps – all representing more than 55 different nationalities.

In 2022, MEI's Charles Lister and ICSR organized two consecutive international conferences in London and Washington, D.C., which brought together 26 governments as well as senior officials from the U.N., the Red Cross, aid and human rights groups, and subject matter experts from around the world to address the issue. Through closed-door working sessions, participants identified clear policy recommendations and developed a white paper, which was shared with key stakeholders.

As a result of the conference, the U.S. government established an Assistant Secretary-level interagency working group to manage and resolve the crisis, and several governments, including Australia, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada, initiated or significantly accelerated their repatriation efforts. Ian Moss, the U.S. State Department Deputy Counterterrorism Coordinator, praised MEI and ICSR for their role in helping achieve “tangible progress” in resolving the crisis. MEI and ICSR were then invited to co-lead a major multilateral gathering in Malta alongside the State Department in September 2022, and Charles Lister accompanied U.S. Central Command's General Kurilla to inspect prisons and camps in Syria in March 2023.



- » Held major conferences in London, Washington, D.C., and Malta
- » Spurred creation of U.S. interagency working group
- » Multiple international governments accelerated repatriation efforts

Resolving this crisis will require many years of sustained effort. MEI and ICSR will co-host a follow-up multilateral gathering in Malta alongside the State Department in May 2023, followed by an even larger working conference in Vienna in June 2023, in collaboration with the State Department and the OSCE. MEI plans to host a further multilateral conference in Washington, D.C. in September 2023.

With additional funding, the joint MEI-ICSR initiative plans to undertake extensive fieldwork in the immediate region, further and sustain bilateral and multilateral engagements, and continue meetings between regional experts and policymakers.

The collaboration between MEI and ICSR and the results achieved so far underline the power of multilateral efforts in addressing complex global issues. Through their joint efforts, they have made a significant impact in furthering the cause of resolving the ISIS-linked detainee crisis and heightening public awareness of an issue of considerable global significance.



POLICY CENTER

*The hub for MEI's expert analysis
on political, social, and economic
developments in the Middle East.*



18
Policy
Programs

188
Scholars

201
Events &
Roundtables

361
Original
Publications

149
Blog Posts

39
Podcasts

PROGRAM UPDATES



Afghanistan & Pakistan Studies

Marvin G. Weinbaum

The Afghanistan and Pakistan Studies Program at MEI provides a nuanced understanding of the economic, political, social, and foreign policy dynamics of these two countries. The program produces opinion pieces, articles, and in-depth reports to promote dialogue and knowledge about Afghanistan and Pakistan in the United States. In 2022, the program continued to provide regular commentary through MEI's weekly briefings on developing issues in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The program has also closely monitored the new governments in both countries.



Arabian Peninsula Affairs

Gerald Feierstein

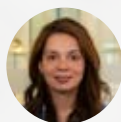
MEI's Arabian Peninsula Affairs Program analyzes major issues, opportunities, and security challenges in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and war-torn Yemen to broaden American understanding of the region. The program also examines Gulf developments involving key neighbors such as Iran and Iraq. In 2022, Program Director Amb. Feierstein led MEI's Ambassador Series Program, featuring representatives from Jordan, Turkey, and Egypt. The program also organized delegations to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Oman to better understand regional problems, dynamics, and diplomacy.



Egypt

Mirette Mabrouk

MEI's Egypt Program focuses on the country's economic, political, and security developments, as well as its regional role. The program also covers the Horn of Africa subregion. In 2022, the program expanded its focus to include pressing issues such as climate change. It hosted Sameh Shoukry, Egypt's Foreign Minister and president of COP27, for an exclusive roundtable at MEI and held a panel at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. The program also examined Egypt's geopolitical relationship with its African neighbors and domestic affairs, while still prioritizing its foreign relations with the United States.



Black Sea Program

Iulia-Sabina Joja

MEI's Black Sea Program explores interactions between countries in the extended Black Sea area – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine – and strategic competition in the intersection of the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. The program examines security, political, economic, and energy relationships and trends in this critical region with the aim of developing greater understanding of its complexities. In 2022, the program was dominated by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. It published and commissioned a number of publications from authors from the region and the United States on the war and its political, security, energy, economic, and social implications for the Middle East, the larger Black Sea region, and Europe. The program additionally managed its first iteration of a State Department grant, hosting five U.S. researchers who traveled to the wider Black Sea region and conducted research relevant to U.S. regional policy.



Iran

Alex Vatanka

MEI's Iran Program covers Iranian domestic politics, civil society, and social trends, as well as Tehran's geopolitical competition with other regional countries. In 2022, the program continued to publish expert analysis on a range of key issues both within Iran and the wider region, including the eruption of popular protests in Iran, the rise of the Iranian-Russian partnership following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, as well as Tehran's regional activities. MEI's Iran Program hosted prominent Iranian opposition figures, such as Masih Alinejad, while also publishing articles by analysts based in Iran. The program also continued collaboration with international think tanks, such as Chatham House in London and Bhuth in Dubai, while launching the Iran-Israel project, aimed at educating the American public about the long history of Iranian-Jewish relations and cooperation between Iran and Israel before 1979.



Lebanon

Fadi Nicholas Nassar

MEI's Lebanon Program seeks to inform and advance the policy conversation on Lebanon both for American and global audiences. More specifically, the program focuses on promoting and investigating viable paths forward for Lebanon as it battles to repair its internal divisions and state institutions. In 2022, the program produced a special briefing pertaining to the elections that took place in May. Following the election results, the program produced a two-part debrief that analyzed the outcomes in greater detail. Upon the announcement of the Israel-Lebanon Maritime Deal, the Lebanon program held an event to further disseminate the news. In December, the Lebanon Program and ATFL jointly produced a comprehensive policy brief that addresses numerous challenges facing Lebanon today.



Middle East-Asia Project

John Calabrese

The Middle East-Asia Project (MAP) concluded its successful 10-year run, having produced over 600 articles on a wide variety of topics in that time. When the MAP was launched in November 2012, there were few, if any outlets covering this terrain. Since then, interest in the subject matter explored by the project's numerous contributors — especially issues related to China-MENA relations — has risen, as reflected in the proliferation of online platforms covering it. During its lifespan, this pioneering effort brought fresh views and voices to U.S. readership and helped expand and diversify MEI's audience.



North Africa and the Sahel

Intissar Fakir

MEI's North Africa and the Sahel (NAS) Program studies this region's evolving internal social, political, and economic dynamics and draws attention to its growing geopolitical significance. The program brings the voices and experiences of new and established actors to a global audience and provides a space to build closer ties and promote shared peace and prosperity. In 2022, the program saw the number and quality of our publications steadily rise, increasingly focusing on providing original content with strong analytical value. NAS continues to publish research from regional experts, offering comprehensive regional analysis and highlighting many aspects often neglected. To help expand the events-based content, NAS continued to build on its history of collaboration with other think tanks and research institutions in the region and beyond, including the North African Policy Initiative, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, and the European Council on Foreign Relations.



Palestine & Palestinian-Israeli Affairs

Khaled Elgindy

MEI's Palestine and Palestinian-Israeli Affairs Program looks at the future of Palestinian politics and the Palestinian national movement, prospects for a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as Palestine's wider role in the stability of the broader Middle East. In 2022, the program successfully executed a grant that funded six Palestinian journalists to travel to the United States to engage with U.S. policymakers and media. The opportunities helped to educate all parties on the nature of the conflict within Palestine and the implementation of a free press as a tool for democracy. In addition, the program convened the heads of six Palestinian civil society organizations that had earlier been designated as terrorist groups by the Israeli government to discuss their experiences and pathways forward. The program director also appeared in various media outlets such as NPR to report on under-covered Palestinian human rights issues in 2022.



U.S. President Joe Biden arrives at the King Abdulaziz International Airport in the Saudi coastal city of Jeddah, on July 15, 2022.

Photo by MANDEL NGAN/AFP

Ukrainian servicemen ride on tanks toward the front line with Russian forces in the Luhansk region of Ukraine on Feb. 25, 2022.

Photo by ANATOLII STEPANOV/AFP



Syria

Charles Lister

MEI's Syria Program aims to remain at the forefront of insightful and grounded research and analysis on all things Syria to better inform a wide range of audiences and to help sustain and shape a more meaningful policy-oriented dialogue. The Syria Program covers the country's internal affairs, ongoing crisis, and domestic conflict — focusing specifically on its political, economic, legal, social, ethnic, and religious aspects. In 2022, the program remained a world-leading source of timely and unique policy research into all aspects of the crisis in Syria. In October, MEI hosted the public release of an unprecedented investigative report revealing serious problems with the U.N. procurement system in Damascus, with nearly 50% of all projects sourced to actors likely linked to human rights abuses and crimes. The Syria Program also released dozens of unique publications, including original Arabic content and exclusive dispatches from inside Syria, while Charles Lister's paper "Freeze & Build" generated substantive multilateral consideration across governments in Europe, the U.S., and the Middle East, which continues today.



Turkey

Gönül Tol

MEI's Turkey Program seeks to analyze and highlight Turkey's political, economic, and social developments. While it produces work in the form of opinion pieces, articles, and reports, the program also holds an annual conference featuring leading experts and policy practitioners from Turkey, the United States, and the European Union. In 2022, the Turkey Program held its 11th annual Turkey conference. The event brought together Turkish officials, policymakers, journalists, and academics from around the world. The program has also led the way in monitoring and examining the upcoming elections, expected to be one of the most contentious and consequential in Turkey's history.



Climate and Water

Mohammed Mahmoud

MEI's Climate and Water Program seeks to assess and understand the broader impacts of climate change in the region, with emphasis on water resource management, sustainability, and environmental protection. The program also explores the use of water and environmental policy, climate adaptation and mitigation, and green initiatives to enhance the climate resilience of the Middle East and North Africa. In 2022, its inaugural year, the Climate and Water Program showcased several noteworthy accomplishments: the program partnered with the World Bank for the release of their Roadmap for Climate Action, hosted an official side event to the first UNFCCC MENA Climate Week on climate strategies, and spotlighted COP27 with in-depth coverage and analysis leading up to the conference as well as organizing a live in-person panel event at the conference.



Conflict Resolution and Track II Dialogues

Randa Slim

MEI's Conflict Resolution and Track II Dialogues Program helps to maintain the lines of communication on issues critical to inter-state relationships and provides platforms for independent, open discussion on political and security issues with participants from the public and private sectors. The program hosts three Track II Dialogues annually. The Middle East Dialogue (MED) brings together policymakers, academics, and experts from across the MENA region, including the Gulf states, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey. MED runs parallel to two separate Dialogues that convene stakeholders with material investment and involvement in the region, namely the United States, Russia, and Turkey, in separate spaces. These three concurrent discussion platforms seek to inform each other, and provide spaces for analysis and problem solving.



Countering Terrorism & Extremism

Charles Lister

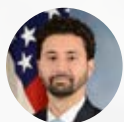
MEI's Countering Terrorism and Extremism Program seeks to generate a more locally rooted understanding of the threats and challenges of today and tomorrow — grasping where they come from and why they come about and, most importantly, how to more effectively and sustainably defeat them. In 2022, the program hosted a two-day major international conference entitled, "Resolving the Detainee Dilemma: What Next for the Men, Women & Children of Islamic State." The conference gathered 26 governments, along with officials from the United Nations, ICRC, human rights groups, and experts for closed door negotiations and workshops. Seven high-profile public sessions were also conducted, involving senior officials from the White House, State Department, Defense Department, and USAID, as well as E3 officials — which garnered considerable public and media attention. This conference was born from a joint initiative with King's College London and led to MEI's inclusion in convening an official multilateral government conference in Malta in September 2022, alongside the U.S. State Department, involving approximately 25 governments from Europe, the Middle East, and Central Asia.



Strategic Technologies and Cyber Security

Mohammed Soliman

MEI's Strategic Technologies and Cyber Security Program studies how emerging technologies are impacting the region, analyzes the rise of new tech powers, and seeks to open up opportunities for new tech cooperation between the U.S. and leading regional actors. In 2022, the program entered a transition phase. The new director, Mohammed Soliman, organized a panel at the Global Cyber Security Forum in Saudi Arabia and spoke at DeepIntel and DeepSec in Vienna, Austria.



Defense and Security

Bilal Y. Saab

MEI's Defense and Security Program provides rigorous and multidisciplinary analysis of the current and emerging defense and security challenges and opportunities facing the United States and its regional partners. It also works to create a unique, credible, and independent platform for defense and security stakeholders from both the U.S. and the region to more closely interact, exchange views, and share experiences regarding

various matters of national security. In 2022, the program hosted its Annual CENTCOM Conference featuring CENTCOM and other defense leaders, including a keynote address from Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie Jr. Gen. McKenzie has since joined the MEI Defense and Security Program in addition to Commander Michael Garrett. The program also released a major report highlighting areas to increase U.S. and Kuwaiti defense cooperation.



Strategic Foresight Initiative

Steven Kenney

MEI's Strategic Foresight Initiative (SFI) examines key drivers of change in the region, developing and assessing alternative scenarios across a wide range of issues and topics. The program employs a broad range of strategic, creative, and methodologically rigorous techniques to evaluate policies, risks, and opportunities to help decision makers in the region and the U.S. chart courses that can lead to preferred MENA futures. In 2022, the program conducted a major analysis for the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (U.N. ESCWA) on alternative future pathways for the advancement of electric mobility in the Arab region between now and the year 2040. The SFI also put on its second annual MEI Futures Forum, in collaboration with the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP). More than 500 registered attendees viewed four panel discussions on megatrends affecting the MENA region, the future of startup business ecosystems, and future sustainable cities.



Economics & Energy Program

Chairperson: Karen E. Young

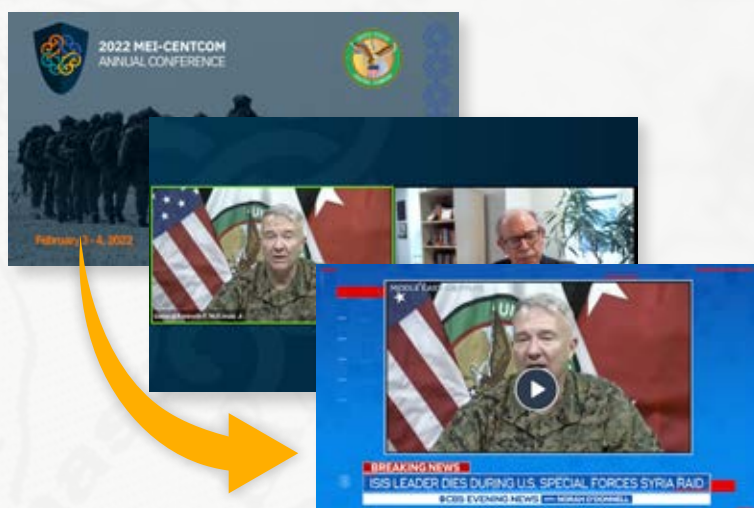
MEI's Economics and Energy Program seeks to advance understanding of the impact of a global energy transition away from hydrocarbons for those traditional oil and gas exporters of the Middle East. The program also investigates the relationship between oil and gas exporters and importers across MENA, as well as the role of financial aid and investment, remittances, and labor markets. In 2022, on the sidelines of the Middle East Peace and Security Forum in Iraqi Kurdistan, the program organized a workshop on the challenges of economic diversification, energy transition, and labor market impacts in Iraq and the Gulf region. It also hosted events such as the launch of the IMF's MENA Economic Update, and published papers on key economic issues for the region, including post-COVID recovery, food security, and green energy transition.

DRIVING THE NEWS

MEI's experts and programs are a critical resource for non-partisan, trusted analysis of key events shaping U.S. policy on the Middle East.

BREAKING THE STORY

In early February 2022, MEI experts were at the forefront of breaking news coverage of a U.S. raid targeting the leader of ISIS in Syria.



MAKING NEWS

Hours after the raid, Gen. Kenneth M. McKenzie gave a keynote address at MEI's annual CENTCOM conference, sharing new details about the operation. His speech was covered by CBS News, Reuters, *The New York Times*, and other outlets.

CBS NEWS

The New York Times



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

ISIS Leader Killed Himself, Family During U.S. Raid in Syria, Biden Says

Charles Lister, a Syria specialist at the Middle East Institute, said that based on conversations he had with individuals in the area and videos posted on social media the raid began about 1 a.m. local time when two or three helicopters landed in the Atmeh area—where there are several camps for internally displaced people—and surrounded a residential building.

The Washington Post

Islamic State's 'ghost' of a leader was plotting comeback when U.S. commandos cornered him

"It is certainly a blow to the morale boost that followed the Hasakah prison break," said Charles Lister, director of the Syria and Countering Terrorism and Extremism programs at the Middle East Institute, a Washington think tank. "The big question, given the terrorist group's decentralized state, is whether 'the killing of the leader is an overall strategic achievement for the U.S., rather than a tactical blow.'"

IMPACT

MEI experts' insights and analysis of the operation's policy implications were quoted **36 times** in national and international news outlets with combined circulation and viewership in excess of **350 million** people.



ARTS & CULTURE

MEI's Arts & Culture Center facilitates cross-cultural understanding by promoting the work of Middle Eastern artists, hosting them in conversation, and connecting them with American audiences.



2022 ART EXHIBITIONS

Between the Sky and the Earth: Contemporary Art from the UAE

CURATED BY MUNIRA AL SAYEGH

Marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United Arab Emirates, “Between the Sky and the Earth: Contemporary Art from the UAE” brought together 12 artists reflecting the diverse contemporary art ecosystem in the UAE today. With roots in the Gulf, the Levant, Southeast Asia, and the United States, the artists — all of whom now call the UAE home — challenge standard narratives about the Emirates through an intergenerational dialogue exploring their social, cultural, and natural landscapes.



More Than Your Eyes Can See: Contemporary Photography from the Arab World

CURATED BY LAILA ABDUL-HADI JADALLAH

Organized in partnership with Tribe magazine

“More Than Your Eyes Can See” featured the work of 15 photographers from the Arab world and its diaspora who are defining the practice of photography in the Middle East. Employing photojournalism and fine art photography, their diverse work provides an intimate and dynamic lens through which to see the Arab world — shedding light on the lived experience and taking viewers to new and unexpected places.



Perceptible Rhythms/Alternative Temporalities

CURATED BY MAYA EL KHALIL

Organized in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation (ADMAF)

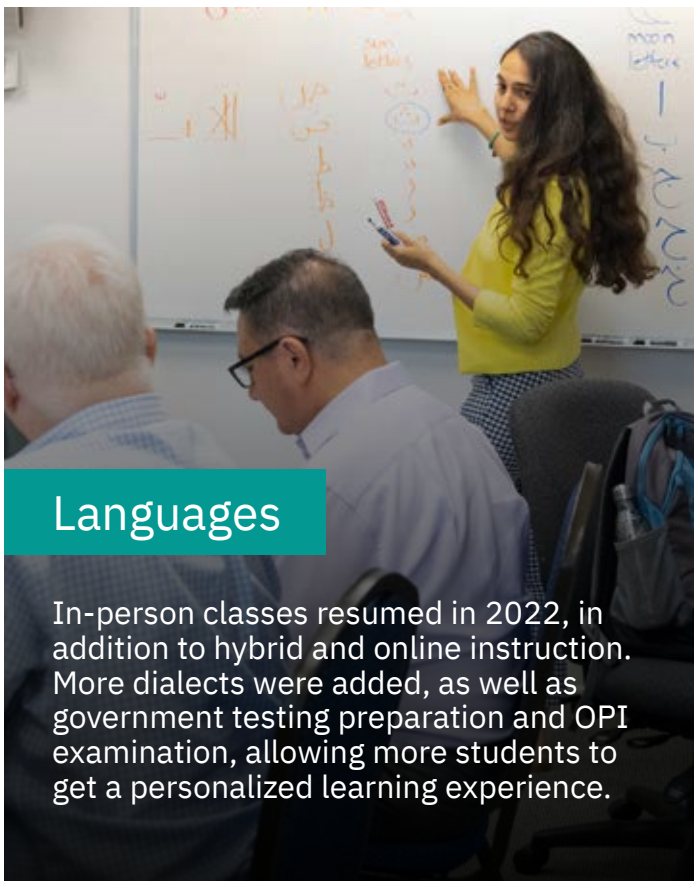
“Perceptible Rhythms/Alternative Temporalities” featured 12 artists from the Middle East and South Asia who explore the impact of conflict, urbanization and the climate crisis on their environments and the ways in which humankind can better care for the planet. Using multimedia, installation, photography, drawing, and painting, they explore ways to live in harmony with the planet by reconnecting with past cultural histories, remembering extinct plant species, and imagining alternative ways for humankind to attune to nature.



EDUCATION

MEI's Education Center is home to the Languages and Regional Studies Department, the Middle East Journal, the Oman Library, and the Leadership Development Program, which equips the next generation of leaders with the skills necessary for international careers.





Languages

In-person classes resumed in 2022, in addition to hybrid and online instruction. More dialects were added, as well as government testing preparation and OPI examination, allowing more students to get a personalized learning experience.



The Oman Library

With more than 20,000 items, the Library holds the largest collection of English-language materials on the Middle East in the Washington, D.C., area outside of the Library of Congress. Following two years of pandemic restrictions, the Library fully reopened to the public in 2022.



Internship Program

MEI provided valuable professional experience and skills training to over 70 interns and research assistants in 2022, including a growing number of international students as a result of remote work options.



Middle East Journal

The *Journal* was cited by academic journals a record 828 times in 2022 and had one of the highest Impact Factor scores of any journal covering the Middle East region. It also had more than 450,000 views online.



2022 BOARD OF GOVERNORS

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ASSETS	2022	2021	2020
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	953,011	661,531	2,079,706
Accounts receivable	96,392	128,247	78,244
Grants and contributions receivable	1,485,160	1,040,620	-
Prepaid expenses	75,706	78,453	80,869
Total Current Assets	2,610,269	1,908,851	2,238,819
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	14,457,316	14,457,316	14,855,580
OTHER ASSETS			
Investments in board designated account	11,471,829	12,494,035	11,116,442
Endowments	3,934,639	4,720,058	4,285,546
Investments in beneficial interest in perpetual trust	1,243,587	1,457,951	1,366,208
Total Other Assets	16,650,055	18,672,044	16,758,196
TOTAL ASSETS	33,717,638	35,038,211	33,862,595
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
Current Liabilities	1,103,848	1,016,993	1,560,260
Long-Term Liabilities	3,631,941	1,523,285	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,735,789	2,540,278	1,560,260
NET ASSETS	33,717,638	32,497,933	32,302,328
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	33,717,638	35,038,211	33,862,595
REVENUE AND SUPPORT			
Contributions	3,855,165	3,379,162	2,689,539
Grants	923,128	1,243,987	1,871,687
Membership Dues	22,145	34,300	29,290
Center for Policy Studies		539,859	275,769
Center for Education	259,007	327,060	347,736
Interest and dividends, net	198,334	341,318	284,255
Rental and other income	154,096	96,527	54,561
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	5,853,074	5,962,213	5,552,837
EXPENSES			
Program Services:			
Center for Policy Studies	3,580,033	3,899,992	4,028,470
Center for Arts & Culture	178,875	577,777	303,759
Center for Education	688,652	722,221	367,865
Communications	347,319	649,999	403,425
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	4,794,879	5,849,989	5,103,519
SUPPORT SERVICES			
Fundraising	1,173,065	649,999	509,696
General and administrative	1,231,088	846,679	568,060
Total Support Services	2,404,153	1,496,678	1,077,756
TOTAL EXPENSES	7,199,032	7,346,667	6,181,275
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	(1,345,958)	(1,384,454)	(629,475)
OTHER CHANGES	(2,170,258)	1,580,052	1,769,178
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(3,516,216)	195,598	1,139,432
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	32,498,196	32,302,335	31,162,896
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	28,981,980	32,497,933	32,302,328

* Financial figures for 2022 are internally compiled and have not undergone Audit Review.

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