



EMEA WEBINAR

FRAGILE STATES POST COVID-19: WHAT STABILIZATION POLICIES?

Thursday 25 March 2021, starting at 3:00 pm CET

Panellists:

Ralph Chami

Assistant Director, International Monetary Fund and member of EMEA Advisory Board Author of "Macro economic challenges in fragile states during and post COVID19"

Raphael Espinoza

Deputy Division Chief, International Monetary Fund, USA Co-editor of "Macro economic challenges in fragile states during and post COVID19"

Prof. Robert Klitgaard

Professor, Claremont Graduate University, USA

Prof. Thomas Risse

Professor, Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany"

Mario Mansour

Director, Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center, International Monetary Fund, USA

Daouda Sembene

Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Global Development, USA

Moderator:

Prof. Rym Ayadi

President, Euro - Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) and Professor at the Business School (Former CASS), City University of London

Discussant:

Cinzia Alcidi

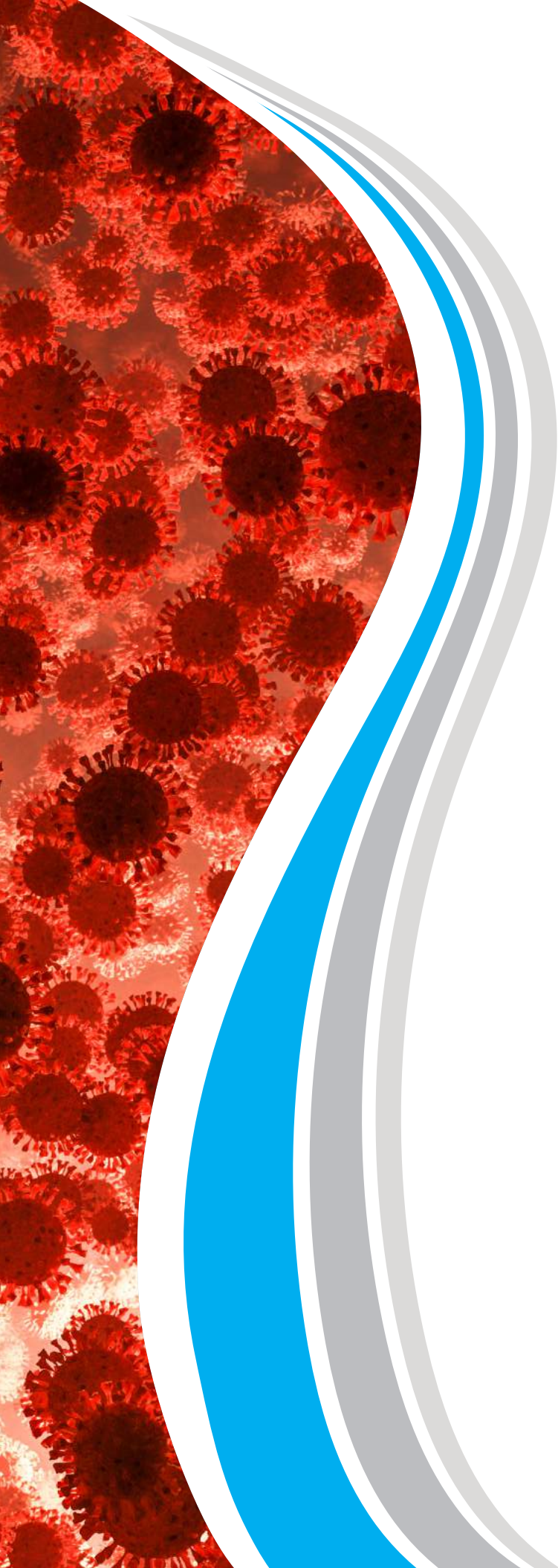
Director of Research, Head of the Economic Policy Unit at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), Brussels

The COVID-19 pandemic, lockdowns, travel restrictions and confinement measures have exacerbated inequality, poverty, health and food insecurity in fragile countries and territories. A recent OECD Report (2020) finds that the progress achieved on several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have stagnated and/or declined in fragile locations in recent years. The health crisis has impacted income security, health and education. As defined in the report, fragility is “the combination of exposure to risk in five areas – economic, environmental, political, social and security – and the insufficient capacity of the state or system to manage, absorb or mitigate those risks”. The OECD estimates that 23% of the world’s population, and 77% of those classified before COVID-19 as extremely poor, live in “fragile” contexts.

One year after the global eruption of COVID-19, several countries in the Middle East and Africa are battling with increasing poverty, inequality, losses of jobs particularly women, political and social instability, weaker States and poorer infrastructure. Fragility is a growing plague that materializes in the continuing loss of legitimacy of the governments and the near break-up of the social contract, the governments confirmed incapacity to perform essential functions (such as tax collection, public health services and combatting corruption and crime), increased societal divisions, conflicts and discontent and endemic lack of accountability.

Understanding issues facing Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCS) such political economy, governance frameworks, fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies, as well as modalities of International Financial Institutions’ engagement with FCSs is essential to provide the adequate policy answers in a context of shock such as COVID-19 pandemic and to design the adequate stabilization policies.





There are policy actions that can help mitigating States fragility trends and transform these in a context of shock into a push towards greater transparency via digitalization to achieve more efficiency in the public service, better tax administration and adequately monitored budget spending, more accountability, responsibility that are pillars for resilience. However are these policies workable in the fragile States in MENA and Africa? How can they be implemented to produce the expected effects? Is there a role for global coordination to combat the sources of fragility?

A book on "Macroeconomic Policy In Fragile States," coedited by Ralph Chami, Member of EMEA Advisory Board and others, covered the challenges of developing and implementing macroeconomic policy in (FCS). This book provides the backbone to grasp the multifaceted fragility and how to mitigate via analytical frameworks and case studies.

Against this backdrop, the EMEA Webinar discusses the increased fragility in the Middle East and Africa particularly in the context of COVID-19, while addressing the political economy issues and corruption, and provides avenues for stabilisation policies anchored in fiscal policy, trust, governance and private sector involvement. The webinar will question the role of international partners, coordination and solidarity to tackle fragility.

Moderator:



Prof. Rym Ayadi

President and Founder
Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

Professor Rym Ayadi is the Founder and President of the Euro – Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA). She is Founder and Director of the Euro-Mediterranean Network for Economic Studies (EMNES). She is Senior Advisor at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); Professor at the Business School (Former CASS), City University of London; and Member of the Centre for Banking Research (CBR); Academic member and Chair (2018-Present) of the European Banking Authority – Banking Stakeholders Group (EBA- BSG). She is also Associated Scholar at the Centre for Relationship Banking and Economics (CERBE) at LUMSA University in Rome.

Discussant:



Cinzia Alcidi

Director of Research, Head of the Economic Policy
Unit at the Centre for European Policy Studies
(CEPS)

Dr. Cinzia Alcidi is Director of Research, Head of the Economic Policy Unit at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels and LUISS- School of European Political Economy- research fellow. Since November 2019 she is also the acting Head of the Jobs and Skills unit.

Prior to joining CEPS, she worked at International Labour Office in Geneva and she taught International Economics at University of Perugia (Italy). Her research activity includes international economics, macroeconomics, central banking and EU governance.

Since 2015 she is the coordinator of CEPS Academy Activities. She has experience in coordinating research projects and networks. She has published extensively on the economics and governance of the Euro area crisis and participates regularly in international conferences. She holds a Ph.D. degree in International Economics from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva (Switzerland).

Speakers:



Ralph Chami

Assistant Director, International Monetary Fund and member of EMEA Advisory Board

Ralph Chami oversees the development and implementation of the internal economics training program for all IMF economists as well as the revamping of the Institute's external training program for officials from member countries. Most recently, he was Assistant Director and Division Chief in the Middle East and Central Asia Department where he oversaw surveillance and program work on fragile states: Egypt, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Yemen, and was Mission Chief for Libya and Somalia. He is the recipient of the 2014 IMF Operational Excellence Award for his work on fragile states. His areas of specialization are climate, fragile states, remittances, banking regulation and supervision, and financial markets. His hobbies include music and yoga. Ralph is a semi-professional guitarist for over 40 years.



Raphael Espinoza

Deputy Division Chief, International Monetary Fund

Raphael Espinoza is Deputy Division Chief at the IMF and an external research associate at the University of Oxford. He was an Assistant Professor in Economics at University College London (UCL), where he was also the Director of the Centre for Studies of Emerging Economies. At the IMF he worked on the UK desk (2018-19), on Spain during the euro area crisis, on the Dominican Republic (2009-10 IMF program), and on Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E during the GFC (2008-10). Before joining the IMF, he was an Economist at the ECB. He has published extensively on financial stability, monetary and fiscal policy, and development macroeconomics, including two books with Oxford University Press.



Prof. Robert Klitgaard

Professor, Claremont Graduate University, USA

Robert Klitgaard is a University Professor at Claremont Graduate University. Formerly Dean of the Pardee RAND Graduate School and a professor at Harvard and Yale, he consults around the world on government reform and economic strategy. His eleven books include *The Culture and Development Manifesto* (Oxford University Press, 2021) and *Tropical Gangsters*, which was named one of the *New York Times*' Books of the Century.



Prof. Thomas Risse

Professor, Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

Thomas Risse is professor of international politics at the Otto Suhr Institute of Political Science, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany. He is the dean of the political and social science division at Freie Universität Berlin and director of the Berlin International Research and Training College, part of the Cluster of Excellence "Contestations of the Liberal Script," funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). His most recent publications include "Challenges to the Liberal International Order" (co-editor, 75th anniversary issue of *International Organization*, 2021) and *Effective Governance Under Anarchy. Institutions, Legitimacy, and Social Trust in Areas of Limited Statehood* (Cambridge University Press, 2021, with Tanja A. Börzel). Risse received his PhD. in political science in 1987 from the University of Frankfurt, Germany. He has taught in the U.S. at Cornell, Yale, Stanford, and Harvard universities as well as the University of Wyoming, in Europe at the University of Konstanz, Germany, and the European University Institute, Florence, Italy. His research interests include international relations theory, norms and transnational actors in world politics, governance in areas of limited statehood, European integration and European identity, as well as transatlantic relations, and the contemporary challenges to the liberal international order.



Mario Mansour

Director, Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center, International Monetary Fund, USA

Mr. Mario Mansour is the Director of the IMF's Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center (METAC) since November 2018, where he oversees the provision of advisory and capacity development services in macroeconomic management to 14 MENA countries. Prior to this, he was Deputy Chief of the IMF's Tax Policy Division (Fiscal Affairs Department). Mr. Mansour has over 25 years of experience in public finance, has advised on taxation in over 40 countries of all income levels, and has published on a wide range of tax issues. Before joining the IMF in 2004, he held the positions of senior tax analyst at the Canadian Department of Finance and led tax policy reform projects in the Middle East and the Eastern Caribbean for a Canadian consultancy.



Daouda Sembene

Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Global Development, USA

Daouda Sembene is a Distinguished Non-Resident Fellow at the Center for Global Development. He was previously a senior economic advisor to the President of Senegal. Daouda was also an Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund where he represented 23 African countries on the Executive Board. During his IMF board tenure, he chaired the statutory Board Committee that is tasked with strengthening collaboration at the board level between the IMF and other international institutions, notably the World Bank Group, the United Nations, and WTO. Prior to serving as Executive Director of the IMF, Daouda spent most of his professional career in that institution, assuming various positions at the Research Department, the Independent Evaluation Office, and the executive board. He also served as senior advisor to the Minister of Economy, Finance, and Planning in Senegal. In that capacity, he was appointed as IMF and World Bank Alternate Governor for Senegal. He also served briefly as Head of the Financial Sector and Competitiveness General Directorate in the same ministry. He participated in the Expert Group Meetings of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Daouda began his career at the World Bank in Washington as part of a team of lecturers in macroeconomic management. He is the founding CEO of a non-profit organization based in Senegal that aims to promote digital and social inclusion in local communities (www.sunubibliotech.org). He serves as a member of the Project Steering Committee of the Financial Sector Development Programme in the West Africa Economic Monetary Union (FSD WAEMU). Daouda holds a PhD in development economics from American University in Washington. He has authored, and contributed to several publications, including a book on macroeconomic policy in fragile countries published by Oxford University Press.