



Hiwar

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An MDC Forum for Intra-Regional Dialogue

**The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Israel
and
The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle
Eastern and African Studies (MDC)**

cordially invite you to attend the third virtual meeting of the
Hiwar Forum for Intra-Regional Dialogue

**“Syria after the Arab Spring: War, Identity, and
Generational Change”**

with

Ahed al-Hendi

Project Manager - Heracles Group
Former political prisoner in Syria and human rights activist

and

Shadi Martini

Executive Director of Humanitarian Relief and Regional Relations
Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees

Wednesday, 28 October 2020
18:00- 19:30 (Israel Standard Time)
Venue: Zoom

Please RSVP [here](#).

The link to the event will be sent to the email used to register.

*This event is being held under the [Chatham House Rule](#).

Syria was often described as the “last bastion of Arab nationalism.” It took an active part in all military confrontations against Israel since 1948 and continues to play a vital role in the “axis of resistance” that serves as the main link between Iran and Hizballah. However, the Syrian war, which has devastated Syria, has changed Syria’s political dynamics.

In our dialogue we will speak with two Syrians who have experienced the Syrian war, the Syrian transition and have found themselves doing their part to create a new discourse in the region.

Bios



Ahed al-Hendi is a Syrian-American human rights activist who has lived in Washington, DC since 2009. In December of 2006 he was detained in Damascus and spent 40 days in prison for co-founding a pro-democracy group known as Syrian Youth for Justice. He subsequently fled Syria to Jordan in April 2007. When Syrian protests began in 2011, Al Hendi became one of the most outspoken Syrian activists in the US, speaking in support of democracy. He has briefed many Members of Congress, and he has met with President George W. Bush, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, President Trump and other high-level officials. His research on the Middle East has been

published in *Foreign Policy*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Daily Beast*, *Huffington Post*, *Reuters*, *CNN*, *al-Hayat*, and *al-Mustaqbal*. He has been interviewed by many International and Arabic TV networks such as *CNN*, *Bloomberg*, *Al Jazeera*, *al-Hura*, *France 24*, and *Russia Today*. He has also lectured at the *US Institute for Peace* and the *New American Foundation*. Al Hendi works as Project manager for the *Heracles Group*. The *Heracles Group* is a U.S. based organization that supports development of sustainable agriculture, inclusive educational programs, holistic medical institutions, and helps implement a self-sustaining economic model that stimulates growth, prosperity and interconnectedness across international communities.



Shadi Martini, a former General Manager of a hospital in Aleppo, found himself involved in the war as a medical coordinator working covertly to provide aid to wounded and ill civilians in the midst of the Aleppo bombings. Martini began organizing assistance programs for Syrian refugees and Internally displaced Syrians. Martini co-founded Refugee Support Group; a humanitarian aid organization based in Bulgaria. He was elected by Bulgarian NGOs to serve on the Bulgarian crisis commission to help overcome the obstacles to aiding and integrating refugees. His work attracted partnerships with numerous faith-based organizations in the U.S. and abroad, which led to his involvement with the Multifaith Alliance.

This secret network was discovered in mid-2012, forcing him to flee his country. He currently serves as the Executive director of humanitarian relief and regional relations at the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees. His roles allowed him to deliver aid to Syrians throughout the country including through the Israeli border.

Discussion Questions

- How has the Syrian War changed the way Syrians think about their homeland?
- Syria has been home to Sunni Arabs, Kurds, Druze, 'Alawis, Ismailis, Christians, Turkmen. What does it mean to be Syrian after ten years of civil war?
- For years, Syrians and Israelis were enemies, having fought directly in three major wars in the twentieth century. However, a younger generation of Syrians may have no direct memory of Israel as an enemy. What do Syrians under the age of 35 think about Israel? Where do their ideas about Israel come from?
- Have events in Syria over the last decade changed the way Syrians think about Israelis, Israel, and Jews? If so, how? How has it changed the way Israelis think about Syrians?
- Have Syrian attitudes towards the Palestinian cause changed over the last decade? If so, how?
- Is there room for more interaction between Syrians and Israelis? In what areas? What would it look like and where should it happen?

Please Note

We cordially invite the audience to participate in thirty minutes of questions and answers with the speakers. The moderator will permit members of the audience to ask their questions directly by activating their microphones and video feeds, rather than submitting them to the moderator through the “chat” function.