

APSA MENA Conference: New Landscapes in MENA Politics Research

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Conference attendees gather for a group photo in Amman.

APSA's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Program held its largest event of the year in Jordan this summer after returning to in-person programming in the spring of 2022. A three-day MENA Political Science Conference titled "New Landscapes in MENA Politics Research" was held in Amman from July 27-30. Organized in partnership with Columbia Global Centers | Amman, the Arab Political Science Network (APSN), and the Special Commission on Social Science Research (REMENA), the conference was attended by approximately 70 scholars, including 39 PhD students and early-career scholars from the MENA region, nineteen of whom were APSA MENA Workshops alumni. The conference provided an opportunity for scholars to share and receive feedback on their research manuscripts, network with colleagues from the MENA region, and contribute to contemporary debates in the discipline.

The program consisted of morning research panels in which authors received feedback on their papers from discussants and fellow participants. Fifteen leading faculty in the field of MENA Political Science served as discussants across the small working groups, which covered a wide range of themes, including "Civil War, Militias, and Critical Security Studies," "Grievance, Protest, and Resistance," "Migration," "Political Economy," and "Identity and Colonial Legacies."

The program also included afternoon plenary sessions, roundtables, and professional development discussions. APSN organized a panel titled "Research Agenda Stocktaking: Where do Regional Institutions Stand?" featuring representatives from research and policy institutes in the Arab world. Panelists exam-

ined the opportunities for social science research and the challenges for the discipline from the perspective of MENA-based institutions.

A plenary on "Civil Society and the State in Jordan" featured a diverse group of Jordanian speakers from both civil society and academia. REMENA held a series of focus groups with scholars working in and on the region to explore PhD advising on the ethical issues associated with research in and on communities under duress, specifically in refugee and very poor populations, in violent conflicts, and in authoritarian settings. Attendees were also invited to an evening Exhibit Hall reception spotlighting various scholarly and policy-oriented research organizations in Amman.



From left: Samar Abdelmageed (The British University in Egypt), Abeer Aleryani (University of Sussex), Rihab Hafhaf (University Mohammed V of Rabat) in a working group on "Political Economy" with discussant Dr. Pete Moore (Paris School of International Affairs).

ASSOCIATION

The conference is part of APSA's effort to support early-career scholars from the MENA region in their research, networking, and professional development and engage them with the international political science community. This is the second MENA Political Science Conference APSA has organized since the launch of the MENA Program in 2013. In 2017, the first MENA Political Science Research and Publication Conference was held in Tunis in collaboration with the Center for Maghreb Studies in Tunis (CEMAT) and the Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS), which was attended by approximately 50 scholars from the region.

Funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York, APSA's Mena Program is a multiyear effort to support political science research and networking among early-career scholars across the Arab MENA region. For program news, updates, and additional information, visit the project website: <http://web.apsanet.org/mena/>. ■



Attendees speak with representatives of research organizations in Jordan at the Exhibit Hall reception.



Conference participants attend the opening reception hosted by the Columbia Global Center in Amman.



Scholars gather for lunch at the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman.