

THE 2nd CAIRO FORUM

2025

3RD & 4TH OF NOVEMBER
THE NILE RITZ-CARLTON HOTEL
AL-QUAHIRA BALLROOM, EGYPT

MORE GLOBAL DISRUPTION IN 2025:
WHAT'S HAPPENING? & WHAT'S NEXT?

CONCEPT NOTE

The disruption of the world has been building up for the last decade, primarily due to accumulated failure of the multilateral system in light of weaponized geopolitical conflicts and deteriorating climate conditions. The pace of disruption has multiplied several times, with the dawn of 2025 coinciding with the inauguration of Trump's second presidency. In a matter of hours, he took extreme actions that gravely shook the global health system, international trade system, all international efforts to slow down the deterioration of the climate condition, not to mention radical positions in dealing with the ongoing geopolitical conflicts especially in the Middle East.

The disruption in global financial markets is unprecedented, and global as well as regional growth and development in 2025 - not to mention the years to follow - are impossible to forecast. All regions in the world have been hit hard; whether Europe, Asia, Canada, Latin America, Africa or the Middle East. Protectionism is emerging more than ever as countries seek to protect their interests from the aggression of the biggest economic and political power in the world, the United States of America. The failure of the multilateral system is dragging the world back to the Mercantilist era.



CAIRO FORUM 2, scheduled to take place in November 2025, has two objectives: First, to explore developments in key existential issues such as the future of the multilateral system in light of its daily exposed failure and the roles of BRICS and G20; How the US China contest is affecting the rest of the world; The turmoil in the Middle East and its economic implications especially with energy concerns; The climate, energy and poverty nexus; not to mention the faster-than-human-coping developments in artificial intelligence and its implications; and the spider web interconnections among all the above topics.

Its second objective is to capture a landscape snapshot of the world economy following 11 months of Trump's presidency. Specifically, how the US "America First" policies and disruptive withdrawal from international organizations affect Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Its specialized technical sessions will also offer expert analysis and debates of what is happening in global and emerging financial markets; the obstructions facing climate financing & fair green transition; and debt management challenges. Since Egypt is at the heart of Africa, the beautiful, unlucky, yet highly promising continent is highly focused upon in all aspects. Last but not least, since we at ECES believe that the youth are not just the future but rather the leaders of today, Gen Z's opinion in all of the above issues will be heard.



CONFERENCE AGENDA

DAY ONE: MONDAY 3RD OF NOVEMBER

8:15 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration
9:00 AM – 10:10 AM	Opening Session <u>Opening Statements:</u> • Dr. Abla Abdel Latif, Executive Director and Director of Research, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES) • Omar Mohanna, Chairman, the Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES) • Dr. Thomas Volk, Head of the Middle East and North Africa department, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) • H.E. Lieutenant General Kamel El Wazir, Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Transport and Industry
10:15 AM – 10:35 AM	<u>Keynote Speaker:</u> Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs <i>(via ZOOM)</i> University Professor & Director, Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University, and President, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network
10:35 AM – 11:05 AM	<u>Keynote Speaker:</u> H.E. Stefan Löfven, Former Prime Minister of Sweden
11:05 AM – 12:05 PM	<u>Plenary Session One:</u> Can the Existing World Order Survive the Present Geoeconomic and Geopolitical Entanglement? Or is there a Need for a Brand-new One? And What would it look like? <u>Moderator:</u> Dr. Abla Abdel Latif, Executive Director and Director of Research, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES) <u>Speakers:</u> • Dr. Jorge Chediek, Chair, Academic Council, Center for International Studies, Catholic University of Argentina

	• Dr. Seyed Kazem Sajjadpour, Distinguished Senior Fellow, Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), & Professor of International Relations, School of International Relations, Tehran <i>(via ZOOM)</i> • Dr. Jin-Yong Cai, Partner, Global Infrastructure Partners (GIP), China • Paolo Magri, President Advisory Board, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI), Italy • Dr. Samir Saran, President, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), India • H.E. Ana Palacio, Former Foreign Affairs Minister of Spain, and Visiting Professor at Georgetown University
12:05 PM – 1:00 PM	<u>Plenary Session Two: Shrinking Resources of Development Finance Institutes (DFIs) and the Threat to SDGs Implementation, especially in Africa</u> <u>Moderator:</u> Tarek Tawfik, Deputy Chairman, The Federation of Egyptian Industries, & Vice Chairman, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES) <u>Speakers:</u> • Elena Panova, UN Resident Coordinator in Egypt • Stephane Guimbert, World Bank Division Director for Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti. • Dr. Mark Davis, the Managing Director for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEMED), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. (EBRD) • Dr. Nangula Nelulu Uaandja, Chief Executive Officer, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB) • H.E. Dr. Rania El Mashat, Egyptian Minister for Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation
1:00 PM – 1:20 PM	Coffee Break
1:20 PM – 1:50 PM	<u>Keynote Speaker:</u> H.E. Dr. Nabil Fahmy, Egyptian Former Minister of Foreign Affairs

1:50 PM – 3:00 PM

Plenary Session Three: The Middle East Dilemma... Where To? Are We Ever going to reach the Day After? And How would it look like?

Moderator: H.E. Dr. Ziad Bahaa El Din, Lawyer and Egyptian Former Deputy Prime Minister

Speakers:

- Mirette F. Mabrouk, Senior Fellow, the Middle East Institute (MEI)
- Dr. Khaled Ezzelarab, Associate Professor of Practice, and Director of Middle East Studies Program, AUC, Egypt
- Dr. Majd Al Naber, Director General, Team Leader and Senior Researcher – Sustainable Development, WANA Institute, Jordan
- Dr. Tarik M. Yousef, Senior Fellow, the Middle East Council on Global Affairs

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Plenary Session Four: A New Cycle for North-South Connectivity: The Mediterranean Sea and IMEC-Egypt

Moderators:

- Dr. Abla Abdel Latif, Executive Director and Director of Research, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES)
- Mohamed Sherine El Naggar, Chairman, Naggar Shipping Company, & International Expert for Connectivity

Speakers:

- Anita Prakash, Director, Policy and Partnership at Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, Jakarta & Head, Research Lab Asia (*via ZOOM*)
- Ambre Eyoun, Special and Diplomatic Advisor to Gérard Mestrallet, French President's Special Envoy for IMEC
- H.E. Romana Vlahutin, Special Envoy for Strategic Connectivity, Three Seas Initiative National Coordinator, Croatia
- H.E. Nasser Kamel, Secretary General, the Union for the Mediterranean

	• H.E. Francesco M. Talò, Italian IMEC Special Envoy, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Open Buffet Lunch for All Participants
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	<u>Policy Platter Session one: The Escalating Crisis in Sudan and the Horn of Africa</u> <i>(by invitation only)</i> <u>Moderator:</u> Mirette F. Mabrouk, Senior Fellow, the Middle East Institute (MEI) <u>Kick-Off Interventions:</u> • Dr. Amani El Taweel, Consultant, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies • Dr. Mustapha Kamel Al-Sayyid, Emeritus Professor of Political Science, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University • Dr. Khaled El Sakty, Dean of the College of International Transport and Logistics, Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport • Anja Berretta, Head of the Regional Programme for the Economy of Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) • Nabil Nagemeldin, Journalist Specialized in International Relations • Asmaa Mohamed Alhusainy, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of Al-Ahram Newspaper and Head of the Arab Affairs Department

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Policy Platter Session Two: Can Global Cooperation actually transform the Global Financial Landscape to achieve Fair and Inclusive Climate Finance? *(by invitation only)*

Moderator: Dr. Noha El-Mikawy, Professor of Practice in the Public Policy and Administration Department and Dean of the School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, AUC

Kick-Off Interventions:

- Elias Demian, Head of Environmental Economics Unit, Regional Coordinator of South-East Europe and Benelux LIFE Monitoring Teams, Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research (IOBE)
- Afif Barhoumi, Investment Promotion Expert- UNIDO ITPO Bahrain
- Dr. Amro Elshurafa, Executive Director of the Utilities and Renewables Program, King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center (KAPSARC)
- Roula Majdalani, Senior Climate Change Advisor, Director General's Office of ICARDA
- Alex Benkenstein, Programme Head, Climate and Natural Resources Programme, South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)
- Nathalie Delapalme, Chief Executive Officer, Mo Ibrahim Foundation

4:30 PM – 5:30 PM

Policy Platter Session Jointly Organized by ECES & ORF:

(Session Three)

Towards Inclusive, Responsible and Impactful AI Cooperation –
Discussion of Expectations from the AI Impact Summit in India
February 2026 *(by invitation only)*

Moderators:

- Dr. Samir Saran, President, Observer Research Foundation (ORF), India
- Dr. Abla Abdel Latif, Executive Director and Director of Research, The Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES)

Kick-Off Interventions:

- Abhishek Singh, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India *(via ZOOM)*
- H.E Suresh K. Reddy, Ambassador of India to the Arab Republic of Egypt
- Karima El Hakim, Country Director, Egypt and Director Africa, Plug and Play Egypt
- Anirban Sarma, Director, Centre for Digital Societies, Observer Research Foundation (ORF)
- Dr. Noha Adly, the Advisor to the Egyptian Minister of Communications & Information Technology for R&D
- Mohamed Hanno, Partner and Managing Director, Arab Computers and Chairman, Alexandria Business Association (ABA)
- Dr. Hoda Baraka, ICT Minister Advisor for Technology Talents Development & AI National Lead & Acting Director of the Egyptian Center for Responsible AI

DAY TWO: TUESDAY 4TH OF NOVEMBER

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Plenary Session Five: International Trade Policy in a Severely Disrupted World: Threats to Necessary Predictability and Stability for Investments Decisions

Moderator: Abdel Hamid Mamdouh, Senior Counsel, King and Spalding LLP - Geneva Office, & Former Director of Trade in Services and Investment, WTO

Speakers:

- Ambassador Alan Wm. Wolff, Senior Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) *(via ZOOM)*
- Dr. Stefan Schepers, Executive Director, Independent High-Level Groups for EU Policy Innovation
- Valerie Picard, Head of Trade, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
- Dr. Simon J. Evenett, Professor of Geopolitics and Strategy, IMD Business School, Switzerland *(via ZOOM)*
- H.E Waleid Gamal Eldien, Chairman, Suez Canal Economic Zone
- H.E Hassan El Khatib, Egyptian Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	<u>Plenary Session Six: Europe's Predicament: Lost between Disagreements within the EU and Trump's Pressure</u> <u>Moderator:</u> Ivana Dragicevic, Founder, Europe Future Center <u>Speakers:</u> • Piotr Buras, Head of Warsaw office, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) • Dr. Claudia Schmucker, Head of Geopolitics, Geoeconomics and Technology Center, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) • Paolo Magri, President Advisory Board, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI), Italy • H.E. Ana Palacio, Former Foreign Affairs Minister of Spain, and Visiting Professor at Georgetown University • H.E. Dalia Grybauskaitė, Former President of Lithuania
12:00 PM – 12:30 PM	Coffee Break
12:30 PM – 2:00 PM	<u>Plenary Session Seven: Caught Between BRICS and a Disoriented West, How does the Future of the Global South Look Like?</u> <u>Moderator:</u> Dina Sherif, Executive Director, The MIT Kuo Sharper Center for Prosperity and Entrepreneurship <u>Speakers:</u> • Dr. Jiuzhou Duan, Assistant Professor, Tsinghua University • Mamadou Biteye, Executive Secretary, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) • Dr. Thomas Gomart, Director, French Institute of International Relations (IFRI) • Sunjoy Joshi, Chairman, Observer Research Foundation (ORF) • H.E. Mariya Gabriel, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Republic of Bulgaria, & President, Robert Schuman Institute

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Plenary Session Eight: Emerging Markets & Financial Markets Disruption following 11 Months of Trump

Moderator: Omar El Shenety, Research Consultant, ECES, & Adjunct Faculty, AUC

Speakers:

- Dr. Farouk Soussa, Head of MENA Research, Goldman Sachs
- Wael Ziada, Managing Partner, Zilla Capital
- Karim Sawabini, Partner & Portfolio Manager, Moon Capital
- Ehizogie Binitie, CEO, Resrv Technologies LTD
- H.E. Ahmed Kouchouck, Egyptian Minister of Finance

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Plenary Session Nine: How do we Reach the Africa that We Want?

Moderator: Mohamed Kassem, Secretary General, ECES, & Chairman, World Trading Co., Egypt

Speakers:

- Ehizogie Binitie, CEO, Resrv Technologies LTD
- Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli, President and CEO, ONE Campaign (*via ZOOM*)
- Ayo Sopitan, CEO and Founder, Metalex Commodities Inc.
- Mamadou Biteye, Executive Secretary, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)
- Nathalie Delapalme, CEO, Mo Ibrahim Foundation
- Dr. Nangula Nelulu Uaandja, Chief Executive Officer, Namibia Investment Promotion and Development Board (NIPDB)

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Open Buffet Lunch for All Participants

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Policy Platter Session Four: A Deep Dive into the Future of AI Technologies: Risks, Opportunities & Regulatory Challenges (by Invitation Only)

Moderator: Ziad Aly, Chief Executive Officer, Peacock Investment Holding, & Host of the 2043 Podcast

Kick-Off Interventions:

- Ebtehal Basiouny, Regional Government Affairs Director Corporate, External and Legal Affairs, Microsoft
- Anirban Sarma, Director, Centre for Digital Societies, Observer Research Foundation (ORF)
- Hyun Goo Kang, Director, Korea-Egypt Digital Government Cooperation Center (DGCC)
- Marwa Abbas, General Manager North-East Africa, IBM
- Dr. Ahmed N. Tantawy, Partner and Chief Technology Advisor to SDM HealthTech
- Saad Sabrah, IFC Country Head for Egypt, World Bank Group (WB)
- Dr. Hoda Baraka, ICT Minister Advisor for Technology Talents Development & AI National Lead & Acting Director of the Egyptian Center for Responsible AI
- H.E. Dr. Mohamed Salem, Egyptian Former Minister of Communications and Information Technology

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Policy Platter Session Five: Fueling Uncertainty, The Energy Dilemma in the Region and its Ripple Effects on Maritime Trade *(by invitations only)*

Moderator: Heba Saleh, Financial Times Cairo Correspondent

Kick-Off Interventions:

- Kabir Taneja, Deputy Director and Middle East Fellow, Strategic Studies Programme, Observer Research Foundation (ORF)
- Marwan El Sammak, Chairman & CEO, Ship & CREW S.A.E. and Vice Chairman of Alexandria Chamber of Shipping
- Steffen Krueger, Country Director Egypt, Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS)
- Linda Mabhena-Olagunju, Founder and CEO, DLO Energy Resources Group
- Mohamed Sherine El Naggar, Chairman, Naggar Shipping Company, & International Expert for Connectivity