



**Under the High Patronage of  
H.E. Qubad Talabani, Deputy Prime Minister, KRG**

**Saturday & Sunday,  
June 6- 7, 2026**

*Draft agenda  
as of June 2, 2026*

**Day 1 | Saturday, June 6, 2026**

**The Foundation Hall, Culture Factory, Slemani**

## **The New Global (Dis)Order**

10.30 Registration - Arrival of Guests - Light Lunch

13.00 **Official Opening**

### **Welcome Remarks**

- ✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece
- ✓ **Nikolaos Stergioulas**, Consul General of the Hellenic Republic to the Kurdistan Region

### **Keynote Statement**

- ✓ **H.E. Bafel Talabani**, President of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan

### **Keynote Statements**

- ✓ **H.E. Nizar Amedi**, President of the Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **H.E. Ahmet Davutoglu**, Prime Minister of Türkiye (2014-2016); Leader of the Future Party, Türkiye
- ✓ **Kiril Petkov**, Prime Minister (2021-2022), Republic of Bulgaria

*Chair of the Opening Session:*

- ✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

#### 14.00 **In Conversation**

- ✓ **Falih Al-Sari**, Minister of Finance, Republic of Iraq
- ✓ *Chair: Salam Islam*, Advisor to the President of the Kurdistan Region

#### 14.20 **Iraq & the Kurdistan Region: Balancing Autonomy, Reform and Regional Pressures**

*Iraq and the Kurdistan Region face simultaneous demands for stability, reform, and external balance. This panel considers how internal governance choices interact with regional rivalries, and how both Baghdad and Erbil can strengthen their strategic position without becoming arenas of competition.*

- ✓ **H.E. Khalid Shwani**, Minister of Justice, Federal Government of Iraq
- ✓ **H.E. Dr. Dara Rashid Mahmud**, Minister of Planning, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Volker Perthes**, Sen. Distinguished Fellow, German Institute for International & Security Affairs (SWP), Germany
- ✓ **Omar Alwaily**, Head of Border Ports Authority
- ✓ **Marios Efthymiopoulos**, Associate Prof. of Int'nal Security & Strategy, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania
- ✓ *Chair: Fanis Papathanasiou*, Journalist, ERT

#### 15.10 **Order Without Consensus: Power, Fragmentation and the Limits of Alignment**

*The contemporary international system functions without shared premises or stable equilibrium. This panel examines how states operate in an environment where alignment is fluid, norms are contested, and strategic ambiguity has become a permanent condition rather than a transitional phase.*

- ✓ **François Heisbourg**, Special Adviser, FRS PARIS Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, France
- ✓ **Malgorzata Bonikowska**, President, Centre for International Relations, Poland
- ✓ **Ino Afentouli**, Head, Observatory of Geopolitics & Diplomacy, Hellenic Foundation for EU & Foreign Policy
- ✓ **Greg Mills**, Senior Fellow & Member of the Board, RUSI - The Royal United Services Institute
- ✓ *Chair: Konstantin Valkov*, Special Projects Director and Lecturer, New Bulgarian University

#### 15.50 **The West and the Middle East (including Turkey): Reassessing Partnership in an Era of Mistrust**

*Relations between Western states and the Arab world are undergoing a period of recalibration. This discussion focuses on credibility, expectations, and misalignment, and asks how cooperation can be rebuilt on the basis of mutual interest rather than temporary convergence.*

- ✓ **Mohamed Amersi**, Chairman, The Amersi Foundation, UK
- ✓ **Dr. Muhammed Tamim**, Vice President of the Progress Party; Member of Parliament
- ✓ **Elisabeth Kendall**, The Mistress [President], Girton College at the University of Cambridge, UK
- ✓ *Chair: Athanasios Katsikidis*, Freelance Columnist, Kathimerini newspaper

✓ *confirmed speaker*

16.20 **The New Gulf Security Architecture:  
From Deterrence to Strategic Coordination with Europe**

*This panel will examine how Europe and the Gulf can move past episodic cooperation to co-author mechanisms for regional stability. We will analyze the changing security calculus of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran, the vital balancing role of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region, and how European regulatory power, defense tech cooperation, and diplomatic leverage can be integrated into a resilient, multipolar architecture for global governance.*

- ✓ **Ana Birchall**, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Justice ( 2018-2019) , Republic of Romania
- ✓ **Irakli Alasania**, Deputy PM & Minister of Defense (2012-2014), Georgia; Co-Founder & CEO, Sodi Investment
- ✓ **Massimo Khairallah**, Director, Int'nal Relations for the Middle East & Africa, Med-Or Italian Foundation, Italy
- ✓ **Bader Mousa Al Saif**, Assistant Professor, Kuwait University
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Alexia Tasouli**, Diplomatic Correspondent, Greece

17.00 **The United States and the Region:  
Power, Priorities and Policy Under Donald Trump**

*American engagement in the Middle East is entering a phase defined by selectivity rather than withdrawal. This discussion explores how U.S. policy under President Trump approaches security commitments, regional partnerships, and economic interests, and how regional actors — including Iraq and the Kurdistan Region — adapt to a United States that prioritises leverage, deterrence, and transactional clarity over long-term intervention.*

- ✓ **Peter Galbraith**, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, of the UN to Afghanistan (2009)
- ✓ **Daban Shadala**, Deputy Minister, Department of Foreign Relations, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Dr. Bilal Wahab**, President, American University of Iraq in Slemani
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Fanis Papathanasiou**, Journalist, ERT

## Iraq and the Kurdistan Region: Stability & Security

17.30 **In Conversation**

- ✓ **Shoresh Ismail**, Minister for Peshmerga Affairs, Kurdistan Regional Government
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Basil Gavalas**, Managing Partner, Milhous Associates

✓ *confirmed speaker*



17.50 **The Middle East as a Partner:**

**Beyond Crisis, Toward Shared Interests**

*Too often the Middle East is framed through crisis rather than contribution. This panel reconsiders the region as a partner in energy, trade, and connectivity, and discusses how cooperation grounded in shared interests can replace episodic engagement driven by instability.*

- ✓ **Harry Theoharis**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hellenic Republic
- ✓ **Joost Hiltermann**, MENA Program Director (2015-2025), International Crisis Group, Brussels
- ✓ **Zhwan Sabir**, Chief of Staff to the Deputy Prime Minister - KRG & Head of Tourism Board
- ✓ **Greg Mills**, Senior Fellow & Member of the Board, RUSI - The Royal United Services Institute
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

18.40

**Break**

20.30 **Welcome Networking Dinner (*by invitation only*)**  
**The Grand Millennium Hotel Slemani**

**Day 2 | Sunday, June 7, 2026**

**The Foundation Hall, Culture Factory, Slemani**

08.30 Registration - Arrival of Guests

09.30 **Welcome Remarks**

- ✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

09.35 **Opening Remarks**

- ✓ **H.E. Qubad Talabani**, Deputy Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government

**Keynote Statement**

09.45 **H.E. Nechirvan Barzani**, President of the Kurdistan Region

10.00 **Energy Transitions and the Climate-Resource Nexus in the Middle East:**

**Geopolitical Repositioning, Fiscal Strategies, and the Race for Water and Food Security**

*This panel examines how the design and sequencing of diversification efforts—and the institutional capacity behind them—shape whether energy transitions bolster long-term stability or introduce new economic and political risks. Specifically, the discussion will highlight how the transition to renewable energy intersects with the heavy energy demands of desalination, climate-smart agriculture, and regional resource diplomacy, exploring whether the region can successfully decouple its vital water and food supplies from a disappearing hydrocarbon economy.*

- ✓ **H.E. Begard Talabani**, Minister of Agriculture & Water Resource, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Ahmad Muffi**, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Ana Birchall**, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Justice (2018-2019), Republic of Romania
- ✓ **Michalis Mathioulakis**, Energy Strategy Analyst and the Academic Director, Greek Energy Forum
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Konstantin Valkov**, Special Projects Director and Lecturer, New Bulgarian University

10.50 **Dialogue on Governance, Prosperity and the Future of Kurdistan**

H.E. Srwa Abdulwahid, Minister of Environment, Republic of Iraq

- ✓ H.E. Ali Bapir, President of the Kurdistan Justice Group
- ✓ H.E Salahaddin Bahaaddin, Secretary-General of the Kurdistan Islamic Union
- ✓ H.E Darbaz Kosrat Rasul, Member of the political bureau, PUK
- H.E. Hoshiyar Zebari, Member of the Political Bureau, KDP

✓ Chair: **Dlawer Ala'Aldeen**, Founding President of the Middle East Research Institute

11.50 **In Conversation**

- ✓ **George Katrougkalos**, UN Independent Expert for the Promotion of a Democratic & Equitable Int'nal Order withK
- ✓ **Fanis Papathanasiou**, Journalist, ERT

12.10 **The Gulf as a Strategic Investor:**

**Capital, Influence and Long-Term Positioning**

*Gulf capital now plays a decisive role in shaping regional and global economic outcomes. This panel examines how GCC investment strategies affect infrastructure, energy, and industry, and how financial engagement increasingly intersects with political and strategic considerations.*

- ✓ **Mohamed Amersi**, Chairman, The Amersi Foundation, U.K.
  - ✓ **Dr. Ali Wajeeh Mahjoob**, Founder and CEO, EMAAL
  - ✓ **Amanj Faiq**, General Director, Slemani Investment Board
  - ✓ **Bader Mousa Al Saif**, Assistant Professor, Kuwait University
- ✓ Chair: **Dr. Momen Zellmi**, Researcher and Analyst, Center for Future Studies (CFS)

12.50

**Networking Break - Light Lunch**

## Governance, Innovation, and Local Resilience

### 13.40 Iraq and Kurdistan Between Great Powers: Stability in a Fragmented Region

*This panel will evaluate Iraq's role as a vital regional buffer and analyze the contrasting dynamics of investment versus instability. Focus will be placed on how the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) can preserve its status as a relative haven of safety amidst regional fragmentation, the economic toll of cross-border spillovers, and the specific governance mechanisms required to insulate local markets from geopolitical crossfire.*

- ✓ **Peter Galbraith**, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, of the UN to Afghanistan (2009)
- ✓ **H.E. Dr Amanj Raheem**, Cabinet Secretary, Kurdistan Regional Government
- ✓ **Dr. Muhammed Shukri**, President of the Investment Board, Kurdistan Region
- ✓ **H.E. Omar Ali Sheikmous**, PUK Founding Member
- ✓ **François Heisbourg**, Special Adviser, FRS PARIS Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique, France
- ✓ **Chair: Athanasios Katsikidis**, Freelance Columnist, Kathimerini newspaper

### 14.40 Navigating Volatility: The Kurdistan Region as a Resilient Partner for International Capital

*In an era of global volatility, international capital prioritizes stability and the rule of law over rapid growth. This panel explores how the Kurdistan Region builds resilience and provides a strategic anchor for Western partners in a volatile landscape. By aligning governance frameworks with international standards and fostering social cohesion, the region offers a predictable environment for investment. We will discuss how institutional reliability and long-term risk management create the necessary conditions for sustained, high-value economic engagement between the Kurdistan Region and its key international allies.*

- ✓ **Yann Braem**, Consul General of the Republic of France to the Kurdistan Region
- ✓ **Radu Butum**, Head, EU Liaison Office in Erbil, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Iraq
- ✓ **Andrew Bizley**, Consul General of the United Kingdom to the Kurdistan Region
- ✓ **Chair: Peshawa Muhammed**, Diplomatic Advisor to the Prime Minister, Kurdistan Regional Government

#### 15.10 **Gender Equality and Institutional Progress:**

##### **Lessons and Trajectories from the Region**

*Gender equality is increasingly recognized as a core metric of institutional development and social resilience. This panel examines regional experiences in advancing women's participation in education, the workforce, and public life, with a specific focus on the Kurdistan Region's recent frameworks. The discussion will assess how legal structures, policy choices, and cultural dynamics interact across the Middle East to support inclusion, economic growth, and long-term societal stability .*

- ✓ **Sherri Kraham Talabany**, President and co-founder of SEED Foundation, Kurdistan Region
- ✓ **Elisabeth Kendall**, The Mistress [President], Girton College at the University of Cambridge, UK
- ✓ **May Zanni**, President & Co-Founder, Women Act, Greece
- ✓ **Goshan Karadaghi**, Dean of Students, American University of Iraq at Sulaimani
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **May Fareed Hasan**, Business Advisor at the Foundation Hub

#### 16.00 **The Architecture of Innovation:**

##### **Urban Stability, Governance, and the Rise of the Resilient City**

*This panel explores the intersection of municipal stability and state modernization, drawing on the evolving experiences of cities like Slemani and the broader Iraq and Kurdistan Region. We will examine how local governance, social cohesion, and educational ecosystems form the bedrock of a distinct urban identity—and how these factors must be paired with regulatory clarity and administrative capacity to let startups and new enterprises scale.*

- ✓ **Shnyar Anwar Hassan**, Founder & CEO, Green Force Initiative, PUK Member of the Kurdistan Parliament
- ✓ **Shubh Soni**, Head of Partnerships and Administration, Observer Research Foundation, India
- ✓ **Nicos Theodoropoulos**, Founder & CEO, Paragon, Greece
- ✓ **Dr Dylan Kurda**, Cons. Interventional Neuroradiologist, Faruk Medical City; Assoc. Prof., Australian National University
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Amanj Yarwaessi**, Director, MEED Foundation, Republic of Iraq

16.50 **Evaluating Turkey's Peace Process and the Future of Iraqi-Kurdistan Stability**

*This panel brings together policymakers, security experts, and regional stakeholders to analyze the geopolitical ripples of this peace process.*

- ✓ **Serhan Afacan**, President, IRAM
- ✓ **Kadir Temiz**, President, ORSAM
- ✓ **Reyhan Aktar**, Vice President, TURKONFED
- ✓ **Reha Ruhavioğlu**, Director, Kurdish Studies Center
  
- ✓ *Chair:* **Kübra Sağır**, University of Virginia

17.50 **Closing Remarks**

- ✓ **Symeon G. Tsomokos**, Founder & President, Delphi Economic Forum, Greece

17.55 **End of Forum**