



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Participation of ICBSS Director General at the International Conference “A New EU Vision for Cooperation in the Greater Mediterranean and the Gulf”**

On 30 June 2026, the ICBSS Director General, Mr. Georgios Mitrakos, participated as speaker at the International Conference **“A New EU Vision for Cooperation in the Greater Mediterranean and the Gulf”**, held at the Office of the European Parliament in Italy.

The event was organised by the **Italian Network for the Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue (RIDE)** in its capacity as Head of the Italian Network of the Anna Lindh Foundation, and the **European Gulf Information Center (EGIC)** in cooperation with the **Office of the European Parliament in Italy**, under the patronage of the **Representation of the European Commission in Italy**.

In the 8th edition of the Medi-Jer Annual Euro-Med Inter-Institutional Initiative, the Conference contributed as a high-level follow up to its previous versions by bringing together institutional representatives, diplomats, scholars, and civil society representatives to exchange on cooperation under the evolving Euro-Mediterranean dynamics. The main objective of the conference was to advance discussions to include the religious, geopolitical, and cultural dimensions of regional dialogue and peacebuilding in light of new dynamics.

The ICBSS Director General participated as speaker at the opening session, which aimed at setting the scene for the panel discussions. In his speech, Mr. Mitrakos stressed that, despite millennia of co-existence, multiculturalism and multi-religiocity, the Middle East, the MENA, and the Gulf region face a humanitarian crisis, with human rights violations, displacement, and violence, as a result of the chronic instability, ongoing military tensions, and religious extremism. As he underlined, the “zero-sum game” politics of the great powers feed extremism and perpetuate violence at the expense of peoples. In his concluding points, Mr. Mitrakos commended efforts to maintain high in the agenda regional cooperation and intercultural dialogue as a means to support trust building and mutual understanding in fragile regions.

This working visit aligns with ICBSS' commitment to fostering dialogue, sharing knowledge and building partnerships to promote sustainability and development in the wider Black Sea region and beyond.

For more information about the ICBSS, please visit <https://icbss.org/>

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**About the ICBSS:** The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and its think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim of fostering multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.