

Webinar Panel Discussion



The Iran War's Implications for Sectarianism in the Middle East

Tuesday, 28 April 2026

10:00-11:15 GMT; 13:00-14:15 TRT; 19:00-20:15 JST

Moderator



Dr Mohammed Moussa is a Fellow at Demos Tunisia. He is an Assistant Professor at Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University. His publications have addressed the subjects of contemporary Islamic political thought, the Middle East and democracy.



Pre-registration
is required
Register via the
QR code

Panelists



Dr. Fouad J. Kadhem is a Lecturer of International Relation at al-Alamain Institute for Postgraduate Studies, Iraq. He has published numerous studies on Iraq and Shiite Islamic thought in Arabic and English.



Prof. Hidemitsu Kuroki is a Professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. His main field of expertise is the Ottoman and modern history of Syria.



Dr. Betül Doğan Akkaş is an Assistant Professor of International Relations at Ankara University, Türkiye. She is also the Deputy Director of Ankara University's Center for Middle Eastern Studies.

Event Description

Sectarian divisions in the Middle East continue to be implicated in political rivalries and conflicts. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 set off a chain of events that created a conducive environment for the formation of political identities and groups seemingly driven by a zero-sum sectarian logic.



Register via
the QR code

The ongoing Iran war involving ostensible cleavages between Persian and Arab on the one hand and Sunni and Shi'ite on the other hand is increasingly looking like it may turn into yet another American 'forever war' exacerbating ethnic and sectarian tensions.

While this war threatens to escalate in a region that is dominated by Sunni Muslims, the Middle East also contains majority and significant minority populations of Shi'ite Muslims in Iran, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iraq and Lebanon. During the last two and a half decades, this sectarian dimension has stoked fears of a 'Shi'ite Crescent' and the spectre of Iranian regional hegemony through its armed proxies. Iran's targeting of the Gulf monarchies in the current conflict has revived concerns about their larger neighbour's ambitions of late.

However, upon closer inspection, the membership of this Iran-led 'Shi'ite Crescent' or 'Axis of Resistance' reveals notable ethnic, sectarian and ideological differences. With the exception of Hezbollah and other Iraqi militant groups, the remaining groups are not only independent but pursue specific political and social goals.

Demos Tunisia, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University's Department of Political Science and International Relations, and the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (ILCAA), Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, are co-organising a webinar that will bring together a panel of experts to discuss the Iran war's implications for sectarianism in the Middle East.

You can register in advance to join the webinar panel discussion using the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/5AirtCu0TNuvu-DYLeALA>