

First Elcano Royal Institute – Chatham House Seminar

Tuesday, 15th March 2022
Fundación Botín (c/ Castelló nº 18C, Madrid)

The Elcano Royal Institute and Chatham House, in collaboration with the British Embassy in Spain, hold the first Elcano-Chatham seminar on March 15. These encounters bring together researchers from both think tanks to explore avenues for British-Spanish bilateral cooperation in international affairs. The United Kingdom, the EU and its member states have shown great unity in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine. A new Europe is being born enabling improved relations between London and Madrid with new prospects for joint initiatives in this more insecure world which is emerging.

This first encounter, to be held at Madrid's Fundación Botín, hosts three debate panels. Each panel focuses on a specific area of potential collaboration between both countries in this context of systemic change and a more united Western Europe following the war in Ukraine: (a) the promotion of democratic values, human rights and gender parity, (b) diplomatic and security prospects in North Africa and the Sahel, and (c) how to address China's global rise.

Programme

09:30	Introductory remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Robin Niblett, Director and Chief Executive of Chatham House• Charles Powell, Director of the Elcano Royal Institute.
09:45	Panel I: Human rights, democracy and gender equality <p>Throughout the past decade, hopes for increased democratization—steered by technological change and economic interconnectedness—have been dashed not just across the developing world, but also within Europe and North America. The rise of anti-system parties, political fragmentation, and social polarization have placed a toll on Western democracies. It is now common to talk about democratic backsliding across Europe and North America, and the promotion of normative values—form the rule of law to gender equality—seems to have stalled in an increasingly multipolar world. Countries like Spain and the United Kingdom have both normative and material stakes in maintaining the basic tenets of a liberal world order driven by clear norms.</p> <p>Chair: Ignacio Molina, Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute.</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Richard Youngs, Senior Fellow in Carnegie Europe's Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program; member of Elcano Royal Institute's Scientific Council• Roxanne Escobales, Editor of <i>The World Today</i>, Chatham House• Harriet Moynihan, Director of Chatham House's International Law Programme• María Solanas, Director of Programmes at the Elcano Royal Institute
11:15	Coffee Break

11:30

Panel II: Diplomatic and security cooperation in North Africa

The past decade has been characterized by political instability, rising security concerns, and economic stagnation across the Middle East, Northern Africa, and the Sahel region. Democratic revolts in 2011 led to tenuous reforms in Tunisia, but stalled elsewhere, as did the 2019 protests. At the same time, armed conflicts have ravaged countries like Mali, Libya, and Burkina Faso.

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, as well as war in Ukraine, will make prospects for entire societies across the region more somber. The question that is posed of countries like Spain and the United Kingdom is whether they can contribute to their stability and wellbeing, among other things by developing diplomatic ties that are not dominated entirely by security and migratory concerns, and instead take into account issues like human security and economic cooperation.

Chair: **Jorge Tamames**, Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute.

Panellists:

- **Haizam Amirah Fernández**, Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute
- **Carmen González Enríquez**, Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute and head of the Migration and Public Opinion areas
- **Galip Dalay**, Associate Fellow with the Middle East Programme at Chatham House

13:00

Finger lunch

13:30

Panel III: How to address the rise of China

China's meteoric rise—first economic, then diplomatic and military—has been a running theme throughout the last twenty years. In recent times, however, it has come to structure international relations across the globe. The growing Washington-Beijing rivalry, China's increasingly assertive role following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and its diplomatic ambiguity regarding the ongoing war in Ukraine bring to the fore its importance in global affairs.

Europe and North America no longer seem confident in harnessing China's growing weight through economic and commercial ties. However, there is no consensus on whether its rise should be frontally opposed or engaged in a more multi-layered approach. Countries like Spain and the United Kingdom also share different approaches toward the Indo-Pacific region, as witnessed in the AUKUS defence agreement.

Chair: **María Solanas**, Director of Programmes at the Elcano Royal Institute

Panellists:

- **Luis Simón**, Senior Analyst and Director of the Elcano Royal Institute's Brussels Office
- **Mario Esteban**, Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute
- **Robin Niblett**, Director and Chief Executive of Chatham House and co-Chair of the World Economic Forum's Global Futures Council on Geopolitics
- **Philip Shetler-Jones**, Consulting Fellow for the Indo-Pacific at Chatham House.

15:00

End of seminar