

## RENAUD GIRARD

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Hello, everybody. We have a very challenging subject, which is War and Peace in the Middle East: What Role for the Europeans. It is very challenging because, after the victory in World War I, the British and the French played a big role in reshaping the Ottoman Empire and America was not involved in that far remote conference. They divided up the Middle East but since 1956 and the failure of the Suez expedition, the Europeans mainly and concerned, were quite absent from the Middle East, although they came back a little bit with the Madrid conference. You know they say about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Americans are paying for the Israeli bombs, the UN is paying for the food, and the EU is paying for the reconstruction.

War and peace in the Middle East are not only about the Israelis and the Palestinians; it is also Turks and Kurds through Julani in Syria, and of course war between Israel and Iran. When I met Netanyahu in his office a month ago, he told me that there was no way Iran would ever be nuclear. You have a war in Sudan between the army and the border security forces of Hemedti and there are problems with the Houthis in Yemen. To answer this very challenging question of what the role of the Europeans can be in this, we have Mohammed Baharoon, who is kind of our host here. He is from Dubai and is General Director of the Dubai Public Policy Research Center and before that, he founded Bussola specialising, if I understood correctly, the relationship between the Emirates and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). We have Marck Hecker, who is Deputy General Director of Ifri, of which Thierry is the President, and he has written a book on the 20-year war from 2001 to 2021, and he is a recognized specialist on terrorism in France among other things. Volker Perthes is a Senior Distinguished Fellow of the Germany Institute for International and Security Affairs, which is the biggest foreign policy thinktank in Europe, and he used to be United Nations Deputy Secretary General and special envoy or representative for Sudan, which is still at war today.