



### **Beyond turmoil a positive agenda**

MED 2018 was the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the annual high-level initiative, co-organized by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI). This event was intended to turn Rome into a global hub for high-level dialogues on the broader Mediterranean, with a view to re-thinking traditional approaches and drafting a new "positive agenda".

Among the main speakers were President of Iraq Barham Salih, Foreign Ministers of almost all Arab and North African states, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran Mohammad Javad Zarif, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov, Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg, USA-Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs David Hale, the Prime, Foreign and Defense Ministers of Italy and many more.



The **Euro-MED Think Tank Forum** with representatives of Mediterranean of Think Tanks met simultaneously. Heinz Gärtner (IIP) gave a talk on “Preventing tomorrow’s ISIS – the role of Think Tanks”. He argued that Think Tanks did not see the phenomenon of terrorism emerging. The data show that the number of academic and policy publications on terrorism and Al-Qaida were miniscule before 9/11, but skyrocketed afterwards. There was no serious analyses of ISIS before 2014; since the attempts to explain ISIS drew upon known analogies: cult, clan, mafia, warlords, a liberation movement or a security company with mercenaries. The type of Islamism of ISIS was unknown. How much state, how much non-state actor was it? To be fair, after 70 years of the military defeat of Nazism we still struggle to understand this phenomenon in its complexity. The military defeat of its state like structures reduced ISIS to a local and domestic hazard; the remaining ideology does not have heavy tanks, artillery and fighter jets.