



Dear colleagues,

The European Council on Foreign Relations and Capital Foundation

have the pleasure of inviting you to a roundtable discussion:

Internal and external dimensions of the refugee crisis in Europe: Solidarity crisis or EU's foreign policy crisis

*November 24th, 2015
Sofia Hotel Balkan*

The terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13th prompted calls for active foreign policy action and at the same time exposed the deepening European divisions that stem from the response to the refugee crisis.

The refugee crisis in Europe challenges the European Union in a way, which is incomparable with previous crises. While some countries today react with open doors and others with a display of anxiety, the citizens' fears should be carefully considered. In two debates we will try to explain, with the help of politicians, experts and analysts, the challenge that Bulgaria and Europe face, the possible common foreign policy responses and what this situation means for the unity in the EU.

We will also examine the reasons that led us to that situation and how this will affect our ability to find joint solutions in the long term.

11:30 Opening

11:45 – 12:00 Introductory remarks

Nickolay Mladenov, *United Nations Secretary-General's Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (video conference)*

12:00 – 13:30 Panel 1: **After the Paris attacks: crisis or opportunity for EU's foreign policy?**

Bassam Al-Kuwatli, *Syrian political expert and conflict management specialist*

Roumen Alexandrov, *Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bulgaria*

Sinan Ülgen, *Chairman, Center for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM) and Visiting Scholar, Carnegie Europe*

Svetlomira Gyurova, *Capital*

Moderator: Vessela Tcherneva, Head of ECFR's Sofia Office and the organisation's Programmes Director

Q&A session.

13:30 – 14:00 Coffee break

14:00 – 15:30 Panel 2: **Will closing Europe's doors save solidarity and unity?**

Almut Möller, *Head of ECFR Berlin Office and Senior Policy Fellow*

Dzhema Grozdanova, *Chairperson of the Foreign Policy Affairs at the National Assembly*

Gerald Knaus, *President of the European Stability Initiative*

Ognyan Minchev, *Director of Institute for Regional and International Studies*

Moderator: Boyko Vassilev, *Host and producer of Panorama news talk show, Bulgarian National Television*

Q&A session.

Simultaneous translation from and to English will be provided.