

Evening conference

20 June 2024

17:00-18:30



ROYAL HIGHER
INSTITUTE
for DEFENCE

Maritime Security and Strategy: Türkiye's 'Blue Homeland' Doctrine

Rear Admiral (Retd) Cem GÜRDENİZ (Director, Istanbul Koç University Maritime Forum)

Air Force Brigadier General (Retd) Patrice MOYEUURE

(Associate Researcher, Institut des relations internationales et stratégiques)

Dear Madam, Sir,

We are pleased to invite you to an **evening conference** organised on **Thursday 20 June 2024** from **17:00 until 18:30** by the **Royal Higher Institute for Defence**.

Maritime security has been high on the agenda of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (BE EU Presidency), whose approach associates four main challenges to four different maritime spaces at the edges of Europe: the North Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea and the Gulf of Guinea. Within this landscape, the Republic of Türkiye stands out, especially in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as the guardian of the Marmara Sea and its straits (Bosphorus and Dardanelles), which connect the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

For quite some time, the Mediterranean basin has undergone dramatic transformations, under the increasing pressure of transversal challenges such as global warming or refugee crises. However, for at least two decades, it has also witnessed significant geoeconomic developments through massive discoveries of natural gas and subsequent rows revolving around – amongst others – exclusive economic zones, energy hubs and commercial corridors. Among the different state actors involved, Türkiye has grown particularly vocal on these maritime issues, often at odds with several neighbours (Greece, Egypt, Cyprus, Israel, etc.). The Turkish strategy regarding those matters has a name: the *Mavi Vatan* ('Blue Homeland') doctrine.

In order to better grasp what the 'Blue Homeland' doctrine is about and which historical grievances are behind it, we will have the privilege to listen to its own creator, Rear Admiral (Retd) Cem Gürdeniz from the Turkish Navy, director of the Istanbul Koç University Maritime Forum. We will also have the honour to host Air Force Brigadier General (Retd) Patrice Moyeuure, former French defence attaché in Ankara and an associated researcher at the Institut des relations internationales et stratégiques (IRIS), to discuss Türkiye's geopolitical ambitions and frictions with international law.

This conference will take place **in English and French** on **Thursday 20 June 2024 at 17:00 in the conference room at campus Renaissance** (entrance: **rue Hobbema 8/Hobbemastraat 8, 1000 Brussels**). A simultaneous interpretation in Dutch, French and English will be provided in the conference room. It will not be possible to follow the conference online. However, subject to the consent of the speakers, a recording of their presentations will be made available afterwards on our website.

We thank you in advance for registering via the following link: www.defence-institute.be. **Registration by Monday 17 June 2024 at the latest is compulsory.**

(Signed)

Filip BORREMANS, MSc Eng

Air Force Major General

Director-General

Royal Higher Institute for Defence

Programme:

16:30	Welcome
17:00	Conference and Q&A
18:30 – 19:30	Reception