

International Conference on Challenges of Food Price Volatility to Take Place in Rabat

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The causes and socio-economic challenges of food price volatility will be discussed at an international conference organized by the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Research Department, OCP Policy Center and New York University's Center for Technology and Economic Development in Rabat, Morocco, February 25-26 2014.

"The conference will enhance our understanding of the drivers of food prices and thus help devise policies to improve food security and keep inflation in check," IMF Deputy Managing Director Min Zhu said. "This is of great importance to many, indeed all, of our member countries. The IMF intends to play its role in supporting other agencies and the international community in ensuring food security and preserving the gains of a low-inflation environment."

This is the kind of informed public policy debate OCP Policy Center aims to foster. The Rabat based think tank hopes to broaden this partnership with the research department of the IMF to cover other issues that will help better understand how international developments affect Morocco, the region and Africa.

The two-day conference, ***Food Price Volatility: Causes and Challenges***, will feature keynote speeches and policy panels in addition to academic sessions. Selected papers are slated for a special issue of *Oxford Economic Papers* edited by Karim El Aynaoui (OCP Policy Center), Yaw Nyarko (NYU) and Rabah Arezki (IMF).

The conference will also tackle issues such as the macroeconomic policy response to food price shocks. "Many central banks have become better at dealing with the effects of supply shocks and keeping inflation expectations anchored," IMF Director of Research Olivier Blanchard said. "The sharing of experiences among policymakers on what has worked—and what has not—will be a very useful outcome from this conference."

Expressing her best wishes for a successful conference, IMF Deputy Managing Director Nemat Shafik said “the IMF assigns great importance to its engagement with the Middle East and North Africa region. The deliberations at this conference will help hone our policy advice as the region strives to achieve socially inclusive growth.”

The agenda for the conference, logistical details, and a link to register for the conference can be found at:
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/seminars/eng/2014/food/index>

CONTACTS

In Rabat: Laila Hamili
OCP Policy Center
Phone: + 212 6 61 91 95 21
E-mail: communication@ocppc.ma

In Washington: Ismaila Dieng
Communications Department
International Monetary Fund
Phone: +1 202 623 7100
E-mail: idieng@imf.org

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