The Center for International and European Studies (CIES) at Kadir Has University will host the 5th International Neighbourhood Symposium (INS) at Heybeliada, near Istanbul between Tuesday, 23 June and Sunday, 28 June 2015. This year’s Symposium will focus on “Leadership and Change in the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South”.

The setting: The INS focuses principally on the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South, two regions that are shared neighborhoods of the European Union, its member states, the Russian Federation, and Turkey. While each region is distinct with its own historical, political, social, cultural and economic features; their contiguity implies a number of synergies on different sectoral concerns such as energy and energy security as well as more immaterial concepts such as identity, culture, and democracy. The two neighborhoods are also in the spotlight given their flux with the Russian factor playing prominently in the Black Sea region as epitomized by the annexation of Crimea, the ongoing crisis in Donbass, and its tensions with the West. On the other hand, in the Mediterranean South (a region encompassing the Mediterranean and the wider Middle East), a plethora of state and non-state actors such as Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Egypt, Israel, Turkey, ISIL, Hezbollah, and the Kurds try to find a modus vivendi with each other in an unstable setting.

Objective: The 2015 International Neighbourhood Symposium aims to discuss, assess, and understand these developments through the prism of leadership and change. Consequently, each presentation and discussion will focus on the themes of leadership and change in order to present fresh perspectives on the issues and to challenge the participants as they debate these. While some sessions have a general geographic focus, others will be thematic by stressing issues such as gender, the role of business, and democratization and civic engagement. All of these points will be discussed further through Structured Dialogue workshops facilitated by Professor Benjamin Broome from Arizona State University whereby participants will be presenting project proposals emanating from their cooperation in the workshops.

Target audience: The International Neighbourhood Symposium aims to promote further understanding and cooperation in the Eastern Neighbourhood and the Mediterranean South and beyond by providing a forum for study, dialogue and networking in a multicultural and interdisciplinary environment. Young professionals and graduate students primarily from the countries of the Eastern Neighbourhood, the Mediterranean South, Central Asia, EU member states, and the United States are the Symposium target group. In addition, applicants from the fields of public policy, politics, journalism, and business are especially encouraged to apply. The target age group is 22-35 years of age.

Partners: The CIES project enjoys the support of numerous international partners and sponsors. To date these include The Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation; Friedrich Naumann Foundation; the Harvard University Black Sea Security Program; Kadir Has University; the Corporate Social Responsibility Association of Turkey; the International Relations Council of Turkey (UIK); and Arcadia University.

The deadline for applications is Tuesday, 31 March 2015
The draft program and application can be accessed at http://cies.khas.edu.tr