

RUSSIA CHINA VETO UN RESOLUTION ON SYRIA CEASEFIRE



During negotiations on the draft, Russia pressed unsuccessfully to include an exception for "anti-terrorist operations." (File photo: AP) See page .04

US investigations besiege Qatar's "suspicious" endeavours Where do Qatar's billions go?

US investigations have once again surrounded Qatar's suspicious efforts to influence US soft power. They have targeted this time the questionable Qatari funding for US universities. According to the New York Times, the US Department of Education has launched investigations aiming at cracking down on universities, which have failed to disclose donations and contracts from foreign entities and governments, to ensure they were not linked to terrorism. See page..04

An exclusive interview with Canada's Rogue Diplomat (1) describing for the first time in some detail his efforts in opposing Bashar al-Assad regime.

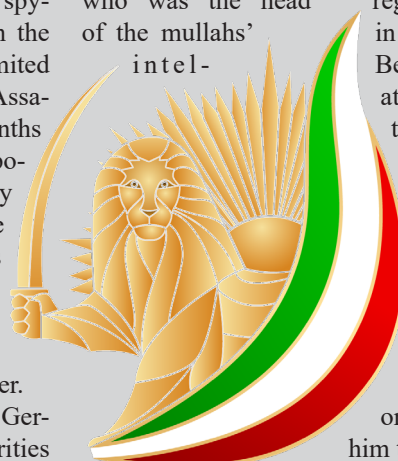


Bruce Mabley photographed at Avesta Turkish-Kurdish restaurant in Montreal, June 20th 2016. (Photograph by Roger Lemoyne)

Dr. Bruce Mabley is a former Canadian diplomat who has served in the Middle East and is the director of the Mackenzie-Papineau think tank in Montreal. See page. 12.13

Iranian resistance uncovers mullahs' terrorist networks in Europe

The Iranian regime's use of diplomatic cover to deploy its terrorist and spying networks in the world, is not limited to Assadollah Assadi Fourteen months ago, German police arrested a key operative of the Iranian regime's long-running terror network in Europe under a diplomatic cover. Eventually, the German authorities handed over the terrorist diplomat Assadollah Assadi, 46, who was the head of the mullahs' intel-
 ligence room in Europe, which was located in the Tehran regime's embassy in Vienna, to the Belgian judiciary at the request of the latter. Despite the desperate attempts by the Iranian regime to prevent the trial of Assadi and release him from prison in order to transfer him to Iran. See page...05



Erdogan threatens to Flood Europe with Syrian Refugees

It is become fashionable in recent months to say that the war in Syria is effectively over, that Bashar al-Assad has won and is staying put in Damascus. But hugely important issues remain to be resolved. The biggest is the fate of the Idlib area in the north-west. Another is the future of Syrians who fled their homeland since 2011 See page...07



Ian Black

This east is killing us!

Women have never had equal status with men, neither as human beings nor as citizens, in our ailing East with distorted values and defective masculinity linking a man's social status to his control over women and his ability to control their actions and restrict their freedom, which is practically known as domestic violence. See page...09



Rima Flihan

A hundred years later, the Kurdish question is again at the gates of Europe!

This year marks the 99th anniversary of the Treaty of Sèvres (August 10, 1920), prescribing the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I by European countries, which included the abandonment by the Ottoman Empire of "territories inhabited by non-Turkish peoples." See page...11



Dr. Radwan Badini

Can Moscow mediate an agreement between Syrian Kurds and Assad's regime?

It seems increasingly clear that, Moscow, as one of the most powerful players in Syria, can mediate between the Kurds and Damascus. However, with the Russia's obvious support for the Assad's regime, would it be able to act as a neutral mediator between the two parties? See page...06



Zara Saleh

What does Turkey Want from the Kurds?

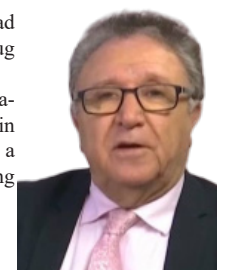
Turkey has threatened to launch a massive military operation against the US-backed 'Syrian Democratic Forces', which are mainly made up of the Syrian Kurds, despite its recent agreement with the United States regarding the "safe zone" in north and north-eastern Syria. See page...08



Jwan Dibo

Never Shake Hands with a War Criminal

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met his Swedish counterpart on Aug 20, 2019, as part of a Scandinavian tour. Iranian diaspora and supporters of the Iranian opposition group People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), held a rally on Wednesday, August 21, protesting the visit by Javad Zarif. See page...10



Perviz S. Khazai

SELLING BODY PARTS

As the economy is falling apart, a lucrative business is on the rise in Iran: most unique trade in the world.

In recent years, rising living costs and poverty have greatly contributed to the booming business. It has become a systemic problem throughout the country.

Kidneys are most in demand, but a business that started more than a decade ago is no longer limited to kidney but includes liver, bone-marrow and cornea. The liver is the second most frequently traded organ. Blood plasma is the latest addition to the list.

Buyers and sellers

Buyers are those in dire need of an organ transplant.

Sellers are those in dire financial need for whom the organ market is the last resort. Sellers are both male and female. Most of those willing to sell their kidney are young people between ages 22 and 34. But there are older people who want to sell their body parts too.

Most of the buyers prefer to purchase younger organs. Since organs offered by young people are not in short supply, buyers usually have no problem in finding what they want.

Average prices in a middleman market- Scope of the business ?

Organ prices are not fixed but constantly change. The prices depend on a number of factors such as the sellers' age, the seriousness of the patient's condition, the severity of the patient's health condition, how urgently the organ is needed and how desperate the seller is. Seller's blood type is a factor too. For example, O- and B+ blood types are more expensive.

Average Market prices in 2018 Below are rough prices for the body organs in 2018:

- between 500 million to 1 billion rials (\$5,000 to \$10,000)
- Liver: between 1.5 billion to 5 billion rials (\$15,000 to \$50,000)
- Cornea: 2 billion rials (\$20,000)
- Bone marrow: 1 billion rials (\$10,000)

Statistics indicate that nearly 3,800 kidney transplants are performed in Iran every year. Of these, about 500 come from donors who are in a vegetative state. Some of the kidneys are donated by relatives to

loved ones who are in dire need of kidney transplant. About 3000 kidneys are provided as a trade.

Methods of selling and buying – The lucrative business of organ brokerage

Buying and selling organs takes place by different methods.

Direct sales

Many sellers post their contact details and details of the organ they want to sell on the walls of buildings near hospitals. The details include the sellers' age, blood type and the organ they want to sell. Many beg the pedestrians not to erase their announcements from the wall since they are desperate and need the money urgently. The sellers usually prefer to contact the prospective candidate directly to avoid giving a commission to the middlemen.

Buying and selling through brokers



A wall in Farhang Hosseini alley filled with selling and buying advertisements

However, being a broker of bodily organs has evolved into a lucrative business for a number of people. Their job is to identify desperate people who urgently need an organ for their relative or are in dire need of the money they could obtain from selling one.

The kidney and liver markets are hot for brokers. Instagram and Telegram apps are among their preferred platforms. The middlemen have also set up websites where they ask sellers to sign up and leave their details for buyers to find. Both sides pay the broker's commission.

One of the sites is <http://kolye-center.mihanblog.com/>.

(Koliyeh in Farsi means kidney)

Images of the first two pages of the site in early September 2019.

Yassin:

Hello, I do not want to sell my kidney. If someone is in real need, I am willing to donate, 34 years old, blood type: B+ Phone: (number)



<http://kolye-center.mihanblog.com/>.

Omid:

Selling healthy kidney, resident of Sannandaj (west Iran), blood type: O- Phone: (number). Please only send sms.

Rouzbeh

Male, 26 years old, willing to sell a kidney due to financial problems. Blood type: O+. Price: 600 million rials (\$5300). Phone: (number)

Omid:

Hello I am Omid. Willing to sell part of my liver, my kidney and bone marrow for an agreed price. It is urgent, urgent. If it is not done quickly, I will go to jail. The respected buyer or the broker, please send a sms first. Phone: (number)

Seyed Morteza

Hello. I am 27. I am healthy. I want to sell my kidney under the market price for 400 million rials (\$3600). The buyer please either call or send a sms. Phone number: (number). Blood type: B+. Totally healthy.

Seyed Morteza:

Hello. I am 27. I am an athlete. My kidney is completely healthy. Willing to take any test necessary. Blood type: B+. 400 million rials (\$3600). It is below market price. I am not going to sell it for any lower price. Please do not bargain. Please. I need the money urgently.

Seyed Morteza:

Hello. I am 28. I run our family. For the sickness of my mother, for In addition to functioning through the Internet, brokers often wander around major hospitals and approach relatives of patients who

need a transplant in order to assess their financial status and make an offer an offer. Brokers often take a 50 percent commission on resulting sales.

One of the brokers who has been in the business for years explained his modus operandi in 2013:

“First I began by selling and buying kidney, near one of the hospitals in Vanak Square (a wealthy neighborhood in northern Tehran).

The area nearby the hospital is filed with advertisements for selling kidneys. I spent a whole day to find sellers. I talked to them and collected the necessary information. The main problem was finding a customer. Most of the sellers I talked to were unable to identify them. But I had grown up in Bazar (traditional central market) and knew how to trade. The first step was to have access to the details of the people who needed a kidney transplant and were in a waiting list, waiting for someone to donate a kidney. After a month I obtained such a list.”

“Finally, after two months, I made my first deal. There was one person who had been looking for a healthy kidney for a long time. Most people who advertise organ sales are usually addicts or have other physical problems. So he didn't trust the ads. I was able to get connected to him. By chance, I had the telephone number of a young woman who needed money and was ready to sell his kidney in 2008 for 60 million rials (\$ 6,000 with the exchange rate at the time). To the buyer who was in a huge hurry, I offered the price of 80 million rials (equivalent to \$ 8,000) and eventually the deal went on, and 20 million rials (\$ 2,000) went to my pocket. Twenty million rials was not little money at the time.”

“With the initiatives I took, I was able to thrive and since 2011 I have been trading in other transplanting organs too. After two years, I hired several people to roam around hospitals and to find clients for me. Then, I hired a few people to somehow get the reports of brain-dead patients from the hospitals for me, and after that, I went on to sell other body organs. “Now many people know me, even some physicians refer me to their patients. That's why my list

of sellers and buyers is increasing every day.

“I currently have 20 marketers. There are also six guys who work in the office, I have to give a fee to the specialist doctors for advice that costs at least 500 million rials (\$ 14,000 at the time of exchange) a month and, of course, I have to pay for the psychologist and lawyer as well. Sometimes I have to change them and in order to keep them silent, I have to give them a few hundreds of millions of rials. So the current monthly cost of the operation and the office is about 700 million (\$ 23,000 at the time of exchange).”

He estimated his income per month as 1 billion to 2 billion rials (28 to 56 thousand dollars a month at the exchange rate in 2013).

According to another dealer, “Most of those who sell their kidneys are from the lower strata of the society. I find them through friends who live in small towns or poor suburbs. Subsequently they are satisfied and the price is set. Of course, they are introduced as the donor and the acquaintance of the patient to make the job easier.”

Alley of “Farhang Hosseini,” known as “Kidney Street” in Tehran

In Tehran, Farhang Hosseini Alley (central Tehran) is known as Kidney Street. The central building of the Association of Support for Kidney patients is located in the middle of this alley.

In previous years A4 papers had filled all sides of the alley. Tags full of cell phone numbers were placed all over the walls. All the walls of this alley were full of sale advertisements. Some people had written their message on the wall or on a sheet of paper with a pen or marker. Some had painted their ads on the wall. The message of all the murals on this street's buildings was the same: sales and purchasing ads for kidneys, livers and even corneas. The phone numbers and blood types of the sellers were

also mentioned in the ads. Some ads contained dates. “Kidney A +, for sale, December 2018 ...”, “A 28-year-old, athlete, blood type O Negative... at whatever price you want “... Many insisted that

A TRAGEDY IN IRAN

they are not willing to deal with the broker and want to deal directly with the buyer.

In the last couple of years, instead of paper advertisements, the walls are filled with big, bold lines with sharp colors like red, the name of a kidney seller and his or her contact number. Throughout the alley you can't find a door, a wall, or even a garage without organ sellers' phone numbers on them.

Reactions from regime officials ?



A wall in Farhang Hosseini alley filled with selling and buying advertisements



A wall in Farhang Hosseini alley filled with selling and buying advertisements

A number of regime officials have formally and publicly backed the selling and buying of organs.

State run newspaper Mashregh reported on February 28, 2017 that regarding the sale of kidneys by people in extreme poverty, Dr. Hossein Ali Shahriari, a member of the Health Commission of the Majlis (parliament) said: "There is nothing wrong when a person who lives in poverty, and by receiving 200 to 300 million rials (\$ 2,000 to \$ 3,000 at the time exchange rate) transforms his life." The Health Commission member said: "Based on Sharia, organ transplant is not a problem and is permissible, and his holiness Imam [Khomeini] gave the authorization for and the grand clerics are not opposed to it."

Regarding the fact that this is considered immoral and inhuman in most countries, he said: "How is it not immoral when they kill humans and children? Bombing women and old men and women is

not inhumane?"

A few cases:

- On December 2, 2018, the state-run Salamatnews wrote: "Amir, who is about 18 years old, has auctioned his kidneys due to poverty. He doesn't want more than 500 million Rials. (5,000 dollars). He says he can no longer cope with the landlord's complaints. He and his brother have each decided to sell one of their kidneys and buy a small house with the help of a loan to relieve their mother of the suffering of not having a home. Amir said he had been trapped by dealers several times and was close to auctioning off his kidneys, but with the help of a friend who had a history of kidney sales, he drew a line around dealers, and is now looking for a real buyer without intermediaries."

- On December 1, 2018, the state-run newspaper Shafa Online, after talking to a liver vendor who had posted an ad on a wall, wrote that the seller was a middle-aged man with a southern accent who in reply to the phone call said: "My blood group is O negative. I will sell my liver for 1.5 billion rials (\$15,000). If you are a buyer, we can meet ... My child has a rare disease. Specialist doctors have diagnosed the illness differently and no one knows what my child's main problem is. There was a gland next to his neck that became more swollen day by day until the gland became infected and since then my child's weight has been lowering and he has fever two or three nights a week. We now live in a relative's house in Tehran around Shoosh (a poor neighborhood in south Tehran). I couldn't come to Tehran every month with my three children and my wife and go back to Bandar Abbas (southern Iran). Last month I sold my kidney and the broker got half of the money and now I want to sell part of my liver directly to cover the cost of my child's treatment." He continued: "In Bandar Abbas, I was a street vendor and I had Slammat health insurance. This insurance is not accepted by many physicians and hospitals in Tehran and we have to pay for the visit. So far I have spent 500 million rials but I have not succeeded. I am also ready to sell my heart to keep my



A wall in Farhang Hosseini alley filled with selling and buying advertisements

child healthy. I used to be a street vendor on the streets in Tehran as well, but it is difficult to be a street peddler in Tehran, the authorities took away my goods several times and to be honest I'm sick of it. I know the liver operation is hard and the period of treatment is difficult and long, but with my sick child and financial problems, life is not easy at all. Maybe from selling my liver, some money remains and I can live with it as long as I live."

- Shahla, who had come to Tehran from Dehdasht in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad province (west Iran) in 2017, told the Hamshahri state-run newspaper on January 14, 2109: "We have done everything you say but it is useless. Anywhere we go for work, they either want experience or references, and we have neither. So my husband decided to sell his kidney. We've brought our stuff here so they don't erase our phone numbers from the wall." She adds: "If this money comes in, it can be a huge help to our lives. I no longer have to go back to our city and live away from my wife."

- Shahin wrote his name boldly on the wall next to the association in the alley of "Farhang Hosseini". He told the Hamshahri state-run newspaper on January 14, 2019: "The financial problems and the addiction and illness of family members have made me reach to the bottom of the line and so I want to sell my kidney. Anyone who calls me requests a discount. As if they are all worse off than

me, but there is no one telling them we are not bargaining over a few pounds of chicken and meat."

He said he has been called several times from the Association to erase his number from the wall, but he has no choice: "If I can't afford to pay for my family, the landlord will throw our belongings in the street. I have also told this to association authorities... I am not seeking a high price. Do you think 200 million rials (\$2,000) is too much for a kidney?"

Conclusions, Observations:

The tragedy of Iranians, especially the youths, selling their body parts to survive or to address their own basic needs or those of their families in a country like Iran is an untold catastrophe. Iran's population is one percent of the world's population, yet has seven percent of the world's natural resources; it is among the richest.

Through embezzlement, theft and astronomical pillaging of these resources, the Iranian regime's leaders have devoted most of these resources to suppression at home and export of terrorism as well as arming, training and financing terrorist groups, fomenting proxy wars in the Middle East and working to obtain weapons of mass destruction. This is while a vast majority of the Iranian people live below the poverty line with no prospects for improvement in their daily life.

The lion's share of the Iranian na-

tion's wealth has been plundered by the Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, his office and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). Khamenei's personal wealth is reported to be around \$200 billion dollars. In addition to huge sums allocated to the repressive agencies, the regime has allotted several billion dollars to prop up the Syrian dictator Bashar Al-Assad and roughly a billion dollars a year to the terrorist Hezbollah in Lebanon. It has also been extensively financing and helping the Houthis in Yemen and the terrorist Shia militias in Iraq.

The painful trend of selling body parts continued and even intensified following the signing of the Iran Nuclear Deal (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA), which released more than 100 billion dollars and enabled the regime to sell more than two million barrels of oil on a daily basis. As the Iranian Resistance said at the time, this windfall was not spent on improving the abysmal living conditions of the Iranian people.

In the nationwide uprising in 2018, which spread to more than 160 cities, the Iranian people demanded the overthrow of the regime in its entirety. The deprived and destitute masses played a critical role in that upheaval. Keenly aware of the explosive state of society, the regime's officials repeatedly warn of another major upheaval and have grown quite paranoid over the bleak prospects awaiting them.

US investigations besiege Qatar's "suspicious" endeavours Where do Qatar's billions go?

US investigations have once again surrounded Qatar's suspicious efforts to influence US soft power. They have targeted this time the questionable Qatari funding for US universities.

According to the New York Times, the US Department of Education has launched investigations aiming at cracking down on universities, which have failed to disclose donations and contracts from foreign entities and governments, to ensure they were not linked to terrorism.

The newspaper pointed out that in July the ministry corresponded with universities inquiring for nine-year records in regards to financial transactions with countries including Qatar and China.

The investigations into suspicious Qatari funding for US universities was conducted in conjunction with the Emir's visit to the White House last July.

This summer, the US Department of Higher Education announced that it was investigating whether Georgetown, Texas A&M, Cornell and Rutgers universities were in full compliance with federal law



Donald Trump and Tamim Prince of Qatar during a ceremony for the US Treasury Department (file photo : Reuters)

which requires universities and colleges to report all gifts and contracts received from any foreign sources that are worth more than 250 thousand dollars.

In the letters to the universities, ministry officials said they were looking for nine-year records of agreements, contacts and financial transactions with entities and governments in countries such as Chi-

na and Qatar.

This month, universities were expected to hand over thousands of records that could reveal millions of dollars of foreign aid to support and operate overseas campuses as well as academic research and other cultural and academic partnerships.

The ministry's spokeswoman, Liz Hill, said the department's main

concern was "transparency," noting that they expected "colleges and universities to provide full, accurate and transparent information when reporting foreign gifts and contracts."

"Our national security depends on this, and transparency is required by law," she said. "Our investigation shows that the department expects institutions to take their reporting obligations seriously."

The US Department of Education's campaign comes amid increased scrutiny of "foreign influence" in recent years; be it "Russian interference" in US elections, "Chinese economic espionage" or outside efforts to influence US think tanks as Qatar does.

Targeting Qatari funding

During the investigation, high-level Qatari organizations such as the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, which help fund US universities in the country, were repeatedly mentioned.

The ministry stated that the universities have sometimes omitted

documents. For example, reports from Texas A&M should have included its Qatar campus, which receives millions of dollars from Qatar Foundation.

Several universities and colleges under investigation have praised earlier their partnerships with Qatar Foundation.

In June, the Associated Press revealed that Qatar Foundation provided \$ 33 million in 2018 to Georgetown University. It also provided \$ 6.1 million to Texas A&M University.

The disclosure does not seem to suit Qatar. Lawyers filed a lawsuit in Texas last year in an attempt to prevent Texas A&M from issuing records on Doha's donations. They argued that these donations measure up to "trade secrets".

It is noteworthy that doubting the objectives of Qatari funds is not new to the Americans. Media reports have previously revealed details on the money Doha spends on academics and journalists in the West in order to recruit their pens to raise its reputation, so as to reassure that things are on the scale of its agendas.

Russia, China veto UN resolution on Syria ceasefire

Russia and China vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling for a ceasefire in Syria's war-torn Idlib province after other members warned the conflict could become the century's worst humanitarian crisis. During negotiations on the draft, Russia pressed unsuccessfully to include an exception for "anti-terrorist operations."

Russia cast its 13th veto, blocking a demand for a truce in northwest Syria because it does not include an exemption for military offensives against UN black-listed militant groups.

China backed Russia by also blocking the text, drafted by Kuwait, Belgium and Germany. It was Beijing's seventh veto on the Syrian

conflict. Equatorial Guinea abstained and the remaining 12 members of the council voted in favour.

Western states have accused Russian and Syrian forces of targeting civilians, a charge they deny; they claim to be targeting militants.

Russian UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told the council before the vote that he believed the "real objective" of the draft resolution by Germany, Kuwait and Belgium was "to save the international terrorists who are entrenched in Idlib from their final defeat."

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces, backed by Russian air power, have been waging a five-month-long offensive in the Idlib



Regime and Russian fire has killed at least six civilians in Syria's north-western province Idlib, a war monitor said. (File photo: AFP)

region, the last major chunk of territory still in rebel hands after more than eight years of war. "What we are witnessing is not counter-terrorism, but an excuse to continue a violent military

campaign against those who refuse to accept the rule of Assad's regime," US Ambassador to the United Nations Kelly Craft told the council. "Those ... who object to humanitarian access

to Syria, those who are currently carpet-bombing Idlib, will be held accountable. And those who are doing so will have to pay for the reconstruction. We act on the principle you broke it, you own it," French U.N. Ambassador Nicolas de Riviere told reporters.

Shortly after the first draft UN resolution was proposed by Kuwait, Germany and Belgium, Damascus declared a truce on August 31 that brought a lull in air strikes. However, Syrian troops on Sunday shelled south of Idlib, according to rescue workers and residents. The United Nations said that since the start of hostilities in northwest Syria in April, more than 550 civilians have been killed

and some 400,000 people displaced. Almost half of the displaced people are living in open-air areas or under trees.

The leaders of Turkey, Russia and Iran meeting in Ankara on Monday agreed to try to ease tensions in the Idlib region, but disagreements between the countries appeared to linger, especially over the threat from ISIS.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced last month that the world body would investigate attacks on UN-supported facilities and other humanitarian sites in northwest Syria. Russia and Syria have said their forces are not targeting civilians or civilian infrastructure.

The Iranian resistance uncover the mullahs' terrorist networks in Europe

The diplomat, who had been working at the embassy since June 23, 2014 under the cover of third secretary, was found to have been involved, according to the Belgian prosecutor, in a terrorist plot that targeted a gathering of the Iranian opposition at the Villepinte Hall in Paris, France, on June 30, 2018. Intelligence revealed that Assadollah Assadi travelled to Tehran on June 20, where he received high explosives weighing up to half a kilogram, and on June 22 returned from Tehran to Vienna carrying the explosives in his Diplomatic Pouch, on board of an Airbus plane of Austrian Airlines carrying 240 passengers.

On July 2, 2018, the terrorist diplomat was arrested by German police. On July 6, 2018, the Federal Attorney General applied for habeas corpus at the Supreme Court based on his activities as a secret agent carrying out operations (in accordance with section 1, article 99, of the Criminal Act) and conspiracy to murder (article 1, paragraph 2, and paragraph 211 of the Penal Code).

In March 2018, Assadi delegated the mission of bombing of the annual gathering of the Iranian opposition abroad at the Villepinte Hall, to couple residing in the Belgian city of Antwerp. He was supposed to hand them over the explosive material (500 grams of an explosive substance, Tri Aston Tree Peroxide TATP) in the Belgian capital of Luxembourg in July 2018.

Assadi's espionage and terrorist activities were not confined to Europe, a document uncovered by the Iranian resistance indicates that from 2005 to May 2008 he was an agent of the Iranian regime in Iraq tasked with spying and assassinating members of MEK, the Iraqi opposition, and coalition forces.

According to the document, the Iranian Foreign Ministry, in its memo number 84244/721 dated May 11, 2008, granted the third secretary visa to Mr. Keumarth Gholamali Rashadmand, holder of diplomatic passport number 9002641 to work in the Iranian embassy in Baghdad instead of Assadollah Assadi.



The Iranian resistance reveals the mullahs terrorist networks in Europe

The Iranian regime used diplomatic cover to deploy its terrorist and spaying networks all over the world, Assadollah Assadi was merely a member of an extensive network that included several agents, such as Ghulam Hussain Mohammad Nea, who was the deputy minister of intelligence for international affairs and who for years served as the head of the regime's intelligence station under the cover of the regime's representative in New York. In 2016 he was appointed as the regime's ambassador to Albania, to be expelled on 19 December 2018, after his involvement in terrorist acts against MEK.

Mustafa Rodki, who was the head of the intelligence station before Assadi in the Austrian capital Vienna and head of the European intelligence stations, was sent after returning from Iran to Albania to spy on MEK under the cover of first secretary, to be expelled by the Albanian government on 19 December 2018 for being accused of participating in terrorist operations.

It is worth mentioning that the trial of Assadollah Assadi, the main element in the terrorism networks of the Iranian regime, will expose all its terrorist networks in a number of countries, especially in Europe, as his trial will deprive the regime of its most important weapons in blackmailing European countries.

Intelligence stations in embassies of countries run by presidents and agents

The intelligence stations in the embassies of the Iranian regime in different countries fall under "ط" group or "the foreign assistant of the intelligence ministry". The General Administration of Investigation and Reports is part of the Foreign Information and Movements Organization of the Ministry of Intelligence located in the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the regime, where it manages the intelligence stations in the regime embassies.

The public administration is called 210, and its current director is Reza Lutfi who took over from Masha Allah Samadi had been a director for several years.

The following are the most important heads and agents of the Iranian regime's intelligence ministry in embassies, according to Western intelligence sources:

The intelligence station in Paris

In September 2018 Hussein Shah-rabi Frahany was expelled several weeks after his presence in France. Ahmad Zarif, alias Abadi, was the head of the Paris intelligence station and ran the regime's intelligence agents in France, specifically against MEK and the National Council of Resistance of Iran from 2013 to 2018. Prior to this position, from 2009 to 2012, Mohammad Shirazi and Ghulam Reza Ja

fari ran the station.

The intelligence station in Germany

Morteza Shaabani, who entered Germany in 2004, Reza Dad Darwish entered in 2006, Afshar entered in 2010, Abbas Jafari entered in 2014, and Hussein Mahdian Fard who entered in September 2015 under the cover of the third secretary, and their task is to collect information against the Iranian resistance.

In addition, there are intelligence agents in the consulates of the Tehran regime in Germany. According to the annual reports of the German security services, the main objective of the agents of the Ministry of Intelligence is to work against the Iranian opposition, especially MEK and the National Council of Resistance.

The intelligence station in Albania

The Albanian government accepted to host the MEK in early 2013 in Albania, while the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence established its intelligence station in Albania by sending one of its agents, Fereydoon Zandi Aliabadi in the winter of 2013, to return to Iran in 2017 and be replaced by Mustafa. Rudki, who served as head of the intelligence station in Austria until 2013, and coordinator of intelligence stations of the Ministry of

Intelligence in Europe, where he entered Albania under the cover of the first secretary of the embassy.

Gholam hossein Mohamed Nea was the Director of International Affairs of the Foreign Information and Movements Organization at the Ministry of Intelligence and entered Albania in the summer of 2016 under the cover of an ambassador.

Muhammad Ali has been in Bema Nemati also in Albanian territory since September 2018, all working to gather information and manage the network of intelligence mercenaries to carry out terrorist acts against the MEK in Albania.

The intelligence station in Iraq

The intelligence station at the Iranian regime's embassy in Iraq became the largest intelligence station in the country after 2003, due to the presence of the MEK in Iraq, where there were more than 10 employees at the embassy.

The following are the names of some of the heads of the intelligence station and important agents in the regime's embassy in Iraq since the beginning of 2005:

Hashemi or Abu Hashem and Isma'il Pour Mahdavi, Rasoul nominee, Assadollah Assadi as head of the intelligence station from 2005 until mid-2008, and Kumrath Ghulam Ali Rashad, with the alias Haj Ali Noudi, assumed the mission as a replacement for Assadollah Assadi since 2009.

Kiyanmahr with the alias Sajjad has become a substitute for Kumrath Ghulam Ali since 2013 where he remained until 2016 when MEK elements left Iraq.

All of these agents were involved in the terrorist attacks on Ashraf and Liberty's headquarters, the killing of unarmed MEK members in Iraq, and the assassination of a number of Iraqi figures opposed to the mullahs and coalition military forces.

After MEK left Iraq, Mehdi Qasimi currently heads the intelligence station at the regime's embassy in Iraq, while Ali Qaami acts as his deputy, Bahruz Nowruz Pour, an intelligence ministry employee, and three ministry agents.

Can Moscow mediate an agreement between Syrian Kurds and Assad's regime?



Zara Saleh

It seems increasingly clear that, Moscow, being one of the most powerful players in Syria, might be a mediator between the Kurds and Damascus. However, with the Russia's obvious support for Assad regime, could it act as a neutral mediator between the two parties?

As Syrian Kurds control the

north-eastern part of Syria, they have urged Moscow to mediate in the talks with Bashar Al-Assad. Ilham Ahmad, co-chairman of the SDF [Syrian Democratic Forces], who held negotiations with the Syrian government, week visited Russian military air base in Syria [Hmeimim- Tartous] last week, coinciding with the Turkish threat to invade the Eastern Euphrates and create a safe zone.

Moscow has always spoken in general terms of its will to be 'the guarantor of the Kurdish rights in Syria' as part of a propaganda aimed for the media, in return for the American military departure and in favour of Assad reclaiming full control of Syria. On the other hand, Russia always has always insisted that Syrian Kurds must to reconcile with the Syrian regime without any guarantee of their constitutional rights such

as autonomy or self-governance.

Russia has been using the 'Kurdish card' to serve its interests. The Russians want to take control over most of the Syrian territories, including the Northeast which is under the control of the US and its allies, the Kurds. Russia's secret motive is to put its hands on the resources in the Eastern Euphrates such as oil, gas, water and crops, as has been the case in the areas under Assad's control. Russia signed a long-term trade agreement with the Syrian government, including the purchase of the port of Tartous and Latakia and full control of the military bases and the army. In October 2018, Sergei Lavrov, the top Russian diplomat, said:

"the US has planned to establish a territory that would be a kind of prototype of a new state, the idea of the so-called

unified Kurdistan".

Moscow believes that the American support for the Kurds is an attempt to continue foreign interference in Syria and threaten the unity of the country. Furthermore, Russia officially line states that the US military presence in Syria has no legal basis, however, the same position does not apply to Turkey and Iran despite their military intervention in Syria, or Russia itself.

This issue was on the table of the negotiations in Astana at the 13th round of meetings on Syria on 2 August. Russia along with Iran and Turkey as 'guarantor countries' stated that they rejected the Kurdish separatists agenda in North Syria'. All three countries announced their disagreement to the autonomous regions set up by the Syrian Kurds in North Syria, on the basis that it would threaten the

sovereignty and unity of the country.

Meanwhile, relations between Russia and Turkey have fluctuated wildly after Moscow's intervention in Syria, in September 2015 to support the Assad's regime, but Moscow's green light for operation "Olive Branch" in Kurdish areas of Afrin and Turkey's apparent silence on Eastern Ghouta, shows some parameters in the political bargaining processes.

This shows a contradiction in the official position of Russia over its claim to maintain the territorial unity and sovereignty of Syria and what has been declared in the last round of Astana's meeting. Consequently, Moscow will not be able to lead any negotiations as a neutral party because it has always supported the Bashar Al-Assad's regime.

Washington: We will continue to target entities that fund Hezbollah

The US State Department announced that it will continue to target groups and individuals that finance Hezbollah, but will continue to work with other Lebanese institutions.

"We will continue to target and support individuals and entities involved in funding Hezbollah while working closely with the Central Bank of Lebanon and other Lebanese institutions that seek to maintain the integrity and stability of the Lebanese banking system," the State Department said.

The State Department's comment came after the US Treasury Department announced sanctions on Lebanon's Jammal Trust Bank for providing financial services to Hezbollah, and

on several financial intermediaries accused of transferring funds to the Palestinian Hamas movement.

The US Treasury Department announced that it had included Jammal Trust Bank on the sanctions list, as a major financial institution for Hezbollah. Sigal Mandelker, Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, said in a statement, that the "Treasury is targeting Jammal Trust Bank and its subsidiaries for brazenly enabling Hizballah's financial activities" including using accounts to funnel money to its representatives and their families.

The bank is accused of allowing Hezbollah to "hide its active banking relationship with

several organizations of the Martyrs Foundation," a US-proscribed institution that has been on the list since 2007. It is a semi-official Iranian entity that provides financial support to Hezbollah in particular.

Four insurance companies affiliated with Jammal Trust were also blacklisted.

"Corrupt financial institutions such as the Jammal Trust pose a direct threat to the integrity of the Lebanese financial system," Mandelker said. The Treasury Department said in a statement that it was urging the Lebanese government to mitigate the impact of these sanctions on "innocent bank account holders who do not know that Hezbollah is putting their savings at

risk." A US official said the pressure on Jammal Trust, a modest but favored institution of Hezbollah, should be seen as a warning. "Hezbollah and its

Iranian masters must remain outside Lebanon's financial institutions." "This strategy is to curb all funding opportunities," he said.



Beirut : a branch Jammal Trust Bank

Erdogan threatens to Flood Europe with Syrian refugees



caricature / Jawad Murad

It has become fashionable in recent months to say that the war in Syria is effectively over, that Bashar al-Assad has won and is staying put in Damascus. But hugely important issues remain to be resolved. The biggest is the fate of the Idlib area in the north-west. Another is the future of Syrians who fled their homeland since 2011 – especially the largest group of all in neighbouring Turkey.

In the early days President Recep Tayyip Erdogan wanted to see Assad go and supported or turned a blind eye to different groups of Syrian and other rebels seeking his overthrow. Eight years since the beginning of the bloodiest crisis of the Arab Spring 3.6 million Syrian refugees remain in Turkey – more than any other country in the world. Broadly speaking Erdogan welcomed them. For domestic and other reasons, that is now changing.

In the past few weeks hundreds of Syrians have been forced to leave Turkish cities on buses escorted by police vehicles to

border areas that are controlled by the United States and its Kurdish allies – in line with Ankara's demand for the creation of a buffer zone inside Syria. If that does not happen, Erdogan has started to threaten, then he will "open the gates" for millions of Syrians to be sent to Europe.

In March 2016 the European Union agreed to give Turkey 6 billion euros to help control the flow of migrants – action that was criticised as a grubby bribe designed to lessen the pressure felt by European governments from the rise of anti-immigrant movements. The German chancellor Angela Merkel's open-door policy caused a severe populist backlash. On September 11 Erdogan told Merkel that Turkey had so far spent \$40 billion supporting the refugees.

Now Turkish officials and commentators are warning that the migrant problem risks growing exponentially and that the EU must do far more to help. The situation in Idlib, where three million civilians, many of them

displaced women and children, are trapped between the Assad regime, backed by Russia, and Islamist and jihadi groups, threatens to make it not only worse – but uncontrollable.

Hostility to Syrians has grown amongst ordinary Turks, largely due to the weakness of the economy. With unemployment and inflation soaring, many blame the refugees. In July one poll showed that 82% of Turks wanted to send Syrians home. But the number of Syrians in Turkey increased by 10,466 between July and August alone. More than 430,000 Syrian babies have been born in Turkey since 2011. Most parents send their children to Turkish schools.

Arabic signs were recently banned in Istanbul, home to over 500,000 Syrians. In Gaziantep, close to the border, Syrians, many from Aleppo, make up 20% of the population. The defeats suffered by Erdogan's ruling AKP party in municipal elections earlier this year were widely blamed on rising discontent over their

presence. The fear of mass deportations is growing.

The solution was meant to be the establishment of a safe zone in northern Syria, mainly east of the Euphrates, where Kurdish militias such as the People's Protection Units (YPG) are entrenched. The YPG has been a key part of the US-backed force fighting Islamic State (Daesh) but which Turkey regards as a terrorist organization linked to the PKK – which is also banned by the US and the EU.

The creation of the safe zone, as Erdogan saw it, would achieve two things simultaneously: the removal of Kurdish militias from the border with Syria and the relocation of one million refugees into that zone, providing the displaced Syrians with a new home in their own war-ravaged country.

"If Turkey were to crumble under the burden of refugees and the weight of security problems," wrote Hurriyet columnist Barcin Yinanc, "the negative consequences will be felt from Athens to London." Sabah pundit Ozan Ceyhun was even blunter: "For the citizens of the Republic of Turkey and the EU, the most correct solution would be to allow the refugees to live in the safe zone. Otherwise it will be chaos and calamity for everyone."

The difficulty is that there are significant differences between Ankara and Washington – as well as western allies like France and Britain. Erdogan wants the zone to be 20 miles deep and run for 300 miles along the Turkish-Syrian border. The Americans have so far limited Tur-

key's access to just a few miles. The result is that Turkey has angrily denounced "cosmetic" efforts by a "so-called ally who can't act independently of a terrorist organization." Syria, backed by Russia, has called the plan a violation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

It is all a bleak reminder that even though Assad still rules in Damascus after eight bloody years, the effects on Syria, its people, the wider Middle East, Turkey and Europe are far from over.



IAN BLACK

What does Turkey Want from the Kurds?

Turkey has threatened to launch a massive military operation against the US-backed ‘the Syrian Democratic Forces’, which are mainly made up of the Syrian Kurds despite its recent agreement with the United States regarding the “safe zone” in north and north-eastern Syria. This was announced repeatedly by the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan during his recent televised speeches and his shuttle tours in Turkey.

even within a new unified federal Syria. In this context, dozens of international reports indicated explicitly that Turkey has helped many extremist groups in Syria, including ISIL, in order to undermine the Kurdish self-administration in Rojava. In addition, Turkey has been applying a robust economic blockade against Kurdish regions in Syria. The recent Turkish communications with al-Assad regime under the Russian supervision were established based on the obsessions and rejection of both sides to an autonomous Kurdish region in Syria.

The rise of Kurdish influence in Syria since the eruption of the Syrian civil war in 2011 is a real concern for the Turkish state. Kurdish aspiration towards freedom and emancipation in Syria as well as everywhere is a red line for Turkey and a matter that impacts its national security according to Turkish interpretation and propaganda.

On this basis, Turkey strives to curb Kurdish attempts to accomplish their own goals in freedom almost everywhere in the Middle East. In this context, Turkey has been working hard on several fronts at the same time. Since 1984, Turkey has been waging a fierce war against the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) led by Abdullah Ocalan, who is sentenced to life imprisonment in the Turkish island of Imrali since 1999. For more than 20 months, Turkish authorities have arrested many Kurdish parliamentarians and the heads of the Democratic People’s Party on charges of communicating with PKK, which is classified as a terrorist group by the Turkish government. Last month, Turkish government ousted three Kurdish mayors from their post on sus-

picion of links to PKK, although they were democratically elected.

Furthermore, in September 2017, Turkey mobilized dozens of military vehicles and tanks and hundreds of soldiers on the border of the Kurdistan region in Iraq during the Kurdish referendum for independence. Moreover, Turkey threatened to invade and occupy the Iraqi Kurdistan in case the Kurds declare the independence and even to undermine its federalism enjoyed since 2003, if necessary.

On 20th January 2018, Turkish forces, with the help of Syrian Islamist militants, launched an air and ground war aimed at occupying the predominantly Kurdish region of Afrin in northwest Syria and expelling the Kurdish People’s Protection Units which forms the bulk of Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). On 18 March, Turkey and its allies succeeded to enter the city of Afrin, the move that

caused the displacement of dozens of thousands of its Kurdish habitants.

Turkey has occupied the region of Afrin with the aim of severing the Kurdish areas in Syria from each other. In other words, separating the Western and Eastern areas of the Euphrates River from each other. Thus, the Syrian Kurds will not be able to reach the shores of the Mediterranean and declare the independent state according to Turkish allegations.

Nowadays, Turkey wants to repeat what it did in Afrin in the east of the Euphrates too. However, what prevents it from doing so is the U.S. military presence there. This military presence which was accompanied by unrivalled support for the Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) which forms the backbone of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). This support has strained U.S-Turkish relations throughout the Syrian crisis.

Turkey’s problem is not with PPK in Turkey or with the Democratic Union Party and the Kurdish People’s Protection Units in Syria or with Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraqi Kurdistan, but it is with Kurdish efforts and endeavours for freedom and rights irrespective of the formulations and forms. One sentence had been saying by the former Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit that summed up the Turkish policy on Kurdish attempts for freedom, rights, and independence over the course of a century

“We will fight against the establishment of a Kurdish state, even if it appears in South Africa”

Knowing that the Syrian Kurds struggle for their own rights within the framework of a new federal Syria and do not intend to secede.



Jwan Dibo

The Turkish President has stated “We will begin our operation to free the east of the Euphrates [river] from the separatist organization within a few weeks. Our target is not the American soldiers – it is the terror organizations that are active in the region.”

What made the relationship between Turkey and Kurds more tense and complex during last years is the capability of the Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria, the PKK strong ally in the Syrian Kurdistan to play an important role in the Syrian dilemma since 2012. Turkish government has announced distinctly that Turkey will not allow the Kurds in Syria to have their own independent status,



former Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit

This East is Killing us!



Rima Flihan

Women have never had equal status with men, neither as human beings nor as citizens, in our ailing East with distorted values and defective masculinity linking a man's social status to his control over women and his ability to control their actions and restrict their freedom, which is practically known as domestic violence.

domestic violence is defined as the desire to control, or by the abuser's control against the victim, it is not only linked to the violence of the husband against the wife but extends to violence against children and the elderly and generally vulnerable groups in society and in our Arab societies women and children are the most vulnerable, and they are the most exposed to violence.

This violence includes verbal, physical, emotional, social, sexual, economic and even legal violence, as a result of which many crimes are committed, including honour crimes committed by male family members against women without any deterrent

The crime of "lack of honour" may be committed for the most insignificant reasons, and is linked to that macho man's fear that his manhood and ability to control the women of the family and the tribe may be shaken before relatives and tribal soci-

ety, which leads our societies to this day, even though they try to appear otherwise, and certainly under the protection of laws that reduce the penalty for the murderer and kill the victim

This is not only about the mitigating laws against the murderer under the pretext of honour, but also that most of the laws of our east are devoid of laws that hold accountable and regulate cases of domestic violence. And the absence of social institutions to protect the victims and accompany children exposed to violence, as in the countries of the civilized world. In our East Minors are married, women's rights are violated, and raped women are forced to marry those who raped them. In this East, a man has the right to beat, divorce, insult, blackmail and take away custody. He is also entitled to marry and divorce the women he considers under his guardianship, with a dreadful legal and social blessing

All of this is fundamentally linked to the value and dignity of the individual in our countries, to the extent to which our sense of self as individuals grows more than our belief in the advice of the community whatever it is, its governance, its wishes, and its social constraints, whether it be a family, a sect, a tribe or an environ-

ment.

These groups do not realize that societies do not grow entirely if their members do not grow and achieve a high sense of their value as individuals, their dignity as human beings, and the freedom of their life choices,

But how can this be achieved in the absence of the value of freedom in our Arab countries because of the political, religious and cultural tyranny regimes that govern most of these countries and prevent their development and the growth of individuals and restrict their personal freedoms by unfair laws? With the presence of security or social repression bodies, once represented by the intelligence agent, once by the ruling party officials, and once by the judge, armed with ancient oppressive laws that do not conform to the International Bill of Human Rights, once by the cleric who entrenches fear and resignation to societies, and once by local figures who have power and influence in those societies.

All of these are united by the oppression of women, the pres-

ervation of the patriarchal societies and the power of the community over the individual, They constitute an impediment to personal freedoms and public freedoms, and this leads to the fact that all popular uprisings in the Arab world have had to prioritize these social freedoms in these countries.

Because freedom is indivisible and those who seek the freedom of their homelands and political freedoms without paying attention to personal, social and individual freedoms cannot be truly aware of their uprising against injustice.

Either you are against injustice all injustice in general and with freedom all freedom in general with full awareness, or you would be a leech on those uprisings sucking their blood, sickening and maybe killing them unconsciously.

There is no longer any space in this era and this world to accommodate all those crimes against Arab women in the Arab world, once under the pretext of honor, once because of domestic violence, once because of social and legal injus-

tice, and once because of underdevelopment and outdated social customs

This means that each of these acts must be met with media pressure and social media campaigns, as well as legal and civil society action, if we want our societies to truly rise and develop to a stage where all their citizens feel protected and sense their value as individuals, not crushed by oppression, law, politicization of religion and society, and this does not contradict the process of demanding political freedoms but supports it.

The youth migration from these countries to escape war, oppression and poverty, lack of opportunities and underdevelopment of societies, and their intolerance to differences, is the best proof of the need to move these societies toward a more civilized, free, and democratic state where the law prevails and the dignity of the citizens is preserved and protected, Otherwise, do not blame all these young men and women who leave this East, this East is killing us!



Never Shake Hands with a War Criminal



Protesters visit Zarif

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met his Swedish counterpart on Aug 20, 2019, as part of a Scandinavian tour.

Iranian diaspora and supporters of the Iranian opposition group People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI/MEK), held a rally on Wednesday, August 21, protesting the visit by Javad Zarif.

Protesters held signs and chanted slogans: "Javad Zarif is a murderer, No one should negotiate with him," "Javad Zarif is the enemy of Iranians," "Javad Zarif is a charlatan, He's the enemy of the Iranian people." The protesters also held signs reading, "Zarif get lost!" "Expel Iranian regime operatives from Scandinavian countries" and "Expel Javad Zarif."

According to an NCRI statement, Javad Zarif, the foreign minister of the religious dictatorship ruling Iran, threatened Iranian protesters in Stockholm with death, brazenly boasting that the regime's agents and operatives would "eat them alive." In an interview with the state-run Press TV on August 21, he railed at Iranian protesters demanding his expulsion from Sweden. "Ask any of those individuals standing outside to attend any meetings with Iranians [meaning the regime's Rev-

olutionary Guards and agents] and then see whether they would survive. They would not stay alive for a minute... They cannot even stay in Iraq because the people of Iraq will eat them alive."

As such, Zarif reveals his own murderous nature and that of the mullahs' medieval regime, which has executed 120,000 dissidents on political charges in the past four decades.

When the mullahs' foreign minister threatens Iranian protesters to death in Stockholm, one can imagine what is happening in the regime's prisons and torture chambers and how dissidents and political prisoners are being treated.

Zarif's remarks show once again that receiving the mullahs' foreign minister emboldens the regime to engage in terrorism, murder, and warmongering, and clearly runs counter to the interests of the Iranian people, who are seeking the ruling theocracy's overthrow and the establishment of democracy and popular sovereignty in Iran.

In the meantime, the Swedish government is now facing strong criticism. One member

of the Swedish Parliament from the Conservative Party criticized Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven for confirming the Iranian regime's positions. Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallström held a press conference in regard to Zarif's visit.

"We did not invite Zarif. He came himself,"

she emphasized. The press conference was held without Zarif's presence and reporters began asking questions about strong protests held by Iranians in Sweden against Zarif's visit, demanding answers as to why such an individual was accepted in Sweden.

A reporter from Sweden's Express asked, "various parties protested against the visit and the meeting. There has been a demonstration outside of this building all afternoon. What is your response?" Another reporter asked, "The protesters are calling on Sweden to take a precise position and impose further pressure on the Iranian regime before any meetings with their officials."

Iranians in Finland had also held a rally protesting against

Zarif's scheduled visit to Scandinavian countries.

Al Arabiya cited Swedish media covering rallies held by PMOI/MEK supporters protesting the visit by the mullahs' top diplomat to Stockholm.

Sweden's SVT reported three injured protesters were transferred to hospitals and authorities intervened to distance 62 individuals after the situation became intense during Zarif's stay.

The United States imposed sanctions on Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, on Wednesday, July 31, 2019 targeting the country's top spokesman. "Javad Zarif implements the reckless agenda of Iran's Supreme Leader and is the regime's primary spokesperson around the world." Lars Rise, a Norwegian politician for the Christian Democratic Party wrote In his article Titled "Hold Zarif Accountable for Iran's Human Rights Violations:"

Since he became foreign minister in 2013, the regime has executed more than 3,500 people, including women and children. According to the Iranian opposition, more than 8,000 activists were arrested during early-2018 protests in more than 160 cities throughout the country and a number of them were tortured to death.

Zarif is no stranger to crimes against humanity. He was active as a senior career diplomat in the United Nations in 1988 while his government butchered over 30,000 political prisoners, members and supporters of the Mojahedin-e Khalq, the main opposition movement in Iran.

A diplomat from the Iranian embassy in Vienna has been charged with a plot to bomb a MEK rally in Paris on June

2018 and is awaiting trial in Belgium. The ambassador and first secretary from the Iranian embassy in Albania were expelled from that country last December on similar charges. Zarif is ultimately their boss.

In fact, the protesters in major cities of Iran denouncing both factions of the regime. They called for the downfall of the regime in its entirety chanting "reformers, hardliners, the game is over." And the world realized that Iranians did not want the ruling clerics.

However, critics in the European Union say sanctions are often poorly conceived and rarely successful in changing a target's conduct.

Many in the West, especially regime apologists, say that the U.S. sanctions hurt the people of Iran first and foremost.

It should not come as a surprise that Iranians think otherwise. Of course, regime supporters are portrayed on state-run TV as blaming the current state of the economy on the U.S., calling Trump their "enemy."

But ordinary Iranians, who are actually under the most economic pressure, were heard chanting, "Our enemy is right here, they lie when they say it's America," in recent protests



Perviz S. Khazai

A hundred years later, the Kurdish question is again at the gates of Europe!

These days marks the 99th anniversary of the Treaty of Sèvres (August 10, 1920), prescribing the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after World War I by European countries, which included the abandonment by the Ottoman Empire of “territories inhabited by non-Turkish peoples.”

For the first time in the history of world diplomacy, a document was born defining the “local autonomy” of the areas of continuous settlement of Kurds. This agreement gave birth to new political entities on the map of the Middle East, such as Syria, Iraq, Jordan. This agreement recognized in three paragraphs 62-63-64 similar rights for Kurds and allowed the creation of a Kurdish territorial entity. However, the real refusal by the Europeans of their obligations and the cunning of the diplomatic games of the new Turkey not only prevented the creation of a Kurdish national state, but also greatly complicated the Kurdish issue.

Three years later, under the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, Turkey refused to fulfil all its obligations with respect to the Kurdish problem. Worse, if the Kurdish territories until the 1920s were divided only between two countries (Iran and the Ottoman Empire), the Treaty of Sevres and subsequent treaties secured the control of new countries (Syria and Iraq) over parts of Kurdistan.

Although the new division dispersed the forces of the Kurdish movement and lost the centralization of forces, in reality, the Kurdish resistance did not stop in military and political aspects; but continued to demand its national rights and to be free to this day, both in new and old entities.

The history of the Kurdish people is a series of armed uprisings against the enslavers, a story reminiscent of the process of tempering iron, a story about refusing to give up.

It should be noted that at present, the Kurdish movement is active in all four countries that share the ethnic homeland of the Kurds, and it is growing at an unprecedented pace.

The merit and efforts of individual Kurdish forces in the fight against ISIS and Islamic extremism are invaluable. Kurds are united with the world community in the fight against international terrorism.

The position of the vast majority of civilized countries is expressed in supporting the legendary resistance of the Kurdish people. The liberation of the city of Kobani in 2014 from the occupation of the Islamic State (ISIS), laid the foundation for the recognition of the dominant role of the Kurds in the fight against terrorists. And the dedication and cohesion of the Kurds has become the basis of respect for the Kurds on the part of all mankind in all its senses.

It was a really rare epic about the cooperation of the entire civilized world against the forces of darkness and global terrorism, achieved by the united actions of Kurdish women and youth groups. Then, after Kobani, in March 2019 there was Bagoz, eastern Syria.

The whole world watched, as from television screens, tens of thousands of supporters of the Islamic state surrendered to Kurdish fighters.

This human saga about the courage of Kurdish girls is confirmed by reliable photographs of their exploits and victories. The image of beautiful girls in modern military uniform makes ISIL women dressed in black shudder.

It is impossible not to say about the support and efforts of the international coalition in the fight against ISIS in the framework of protecting human values, but it cost the lives and blood of tens of thousands of young Kurds....

On various fronts against abso-

lute obscurantism, Kurdish blood was mixed with the blood of victims from the United States, Russia, France, Great Britain ... And this gives us understanding and hope that Europe, maybe this time, a hundred years later, after the “betrayal” of the Treaty of Sevres, will face the Kurds and not leave them alone in the trenches of the war against ISIS !.



Dr. Radwan Badini

It is undeniable that the Kurds remain hope for an objective understanding on the part of the world community, their modern role, their bold position of warriors in the face of obscurantism and the threat to Europe.

We heard such notes and gestures from the lips of the great politicians of our time and the first political players in the international arena. We have already heard encouraging statements from Trump – America, Putin – Russia, Macron – France, Johnson – Great Britain and Merkel – Germany. And with hope in our hearts, we believe that the lessons of the valiant Kurdish resistance can still be the key to gaining well-deserved freedom and respect. This is the key to the trust of the whole world in the Kurds, the perception of the Kurds as a reliable and full-fledged partner, heroic people. Understanding that the Kurds

finally need to decide their own destiny, even within the borders of the countries that divided the lands of their ancestors.

However, unfortunately, even this rare opportunity, which allowed shaping public opinion and recognizing the merits of the Kurds, accepting them as guardians of the recognized human values of the civilized world, did not increase recognition of their role as genuine partners among the influential states of the world. This new mission did not help enlist the support of superpowers in promoting Kurdish “self-government” based on the principles of peaceful coexistence and equal rights of all people, religions and faiths.

Unfortunately, most European countries are not seriously concerned about their own security, around the Kurdish issue, within their countries. Everyone considers it a priority to support the far-fetched “national security of Turkey.” Therefore, since in the last century Europe evaded its international obligations and did not assume historical responsibility for the separation of the Kurds, today, after almost a hundred years, it again refuses to support elementary rights for the Kurds, including the right to be recognized as such. And this is at a time when the real wounds of tens of thousands of Kurdish fighters in Syria and Iraq have not yet healed, and the grass has not yet grown on the graves of the new fallen, defending human dignity, the world for Europe and the whole world will seem ghostly...

The current reality is shown by the fact that most European countries are indifferent to the fate of 40 million Kurds, and only partially, when it comes to the waves of migration from the countries of the East to Europe, they are remembered. Today, the Kurdish population is almost three million people in various European countries,

and Kurdish migration has turned among other tributaries of migration into a real threat to the security and stability of European countries!

What can be expected from the West as a whole and the European Union and America in particular, joint agreements and alliances? This aspect of the issue is based on what exactly is happening these days that are witnessing the boil of the Kurdish region as a whole, and the Kurdish issue has become a priority in international politics! Do Europe and America admit their guilt in the human catastrophe that befell the Kurdish nation?

In short, the news coming from different parts of Kurdistan, which clogged up pages, sites and international channels, reads:

The Kurdish question is again at the gates of Europe, the great countries of our era are discussing the fate of the people at the negotiating table. At the beginning of the last century, Europe stood for the creation of fraudulent entities, often not justifying the conditions of existence; and stood behind the failures of the subsequent Kurdish movement until it became the biggest national problem in an unresolved era. Today, the political and military landscape is almost repeating, and only in names and numbers is very different from what it was a hundred years ago.

I would like to hope that after Kurdish blood was recently mixed with European blood in the legendary human epic in repelling the threat of terrorism from Europe and from all over the world, European nations will look Kurds in the eyes and recognize their right to life and existence. And they will not turn a blind eye to the repression against them from the countries of the Kurds who divide their homeland, even if the Kurds repelled the threat of ISIS from them for a while ...



Bruce Mabley photographed at Avesta Turkish-Kurdish restaurant in Montreal. June 20th 2016. (Photograph by Roger Lemoyne)

Dr. Bruce Mabley is a former Canadian diplomat having served in the Middle East and is the director of the Mackenzie-Papineau think tank in Montreal.

An exclusive interview with Canada's Rogue Diplomat (1) describing for the first time in some detail his efforts in opposing the Bashar al-Assad regime.

Levant: In what capacity were you involved in the early years of the Syrian revolution?

Mabley: I was posted to the Canadian Embassy in Ankara from 2010 to 2013 during which time I was tasked with reporting on events in Syria and Turkey to Ottawa and the Five Eyes network. I was part of a special group of officers sent to crisis zones around the world. My original intention and priority was to report on the situation of the Kurds in Turkey. The advent of the Syrian crisis changed all that.

I should mention that I was part of an elite group within the Foreign Affairs Ministry called Global Reporting Security Programme (GRSP), which was established after the events of September 11, 2001. Officers

are sent to crisis regions around the world and required to conduct one on one reporting of multiple foreign actors including those not normally part of the Political Section such as the MFA or NGOs. It was an innovative programme that only exists at the Canadian Foreign Ministry (although its existence is denied by the Ministry).

Levant: Did the diplomatic community think that Syria was to be another example of the Arab Spring?

Mabley: No one really saw the Arab uprising in 2010-11 before it happened. The European missions were lulled into a sense of apathy reinforced by their Turkish academic and government contacts. The only issue that made me hesitate were the reports I was sent about how the peaceful demon-

strators had no fear of authorities and their armed police and special squads.

This was new and this made me hesitate before judging the Arab Spring. Assad had plenty of thugs and police but activists had little or no apparent fear of them anymore. Fear is the major asset of thugs and dictators. If it is no longer effective, something profound was happening. Albert Camus' *The Rebel* is the best example I can think of to explain this.

Levant: Can you enumerate your activities with the Syrian activists.

Mabley: It was fairly wide ranging.

I organized the first public meeting of the Syrian National Congress with the diplomatic

community on Canadian soil at the Ankara Embassy. I assisted dissidents in the Cyber War to evade capture by Assad's henchmen. This was done in conjunction with the Citizen's Lab at the University of Toronto. (2) I helped some activists leave the crisis zone and protected the activists' families from the Turkish bureaucratic measures. At one point, I crossed over into Syria at Atme to observe refugee camps and report back to the Five Eyes.

Levant: Did you observe a polarization of the Syrian dissidents?

Mabley: Yes, regrettably and this was due to the apathy of the Western Powers. In my view, the democratic groups should have been armed and trained with Western assistance. In-

stead, the assistance was ineffective and had little impact. This apathy especially by the Obama administration left the way open for Saudis and Qataris to proselytize and encourage Islamic radicalism. Syrians are not Islamists by nature and constitute a highly Europeanized democratic polity. The state is sick but the limbs are functioning: that is the message of the Arab Spring.

Levant: Were the European countries, America and Canada wanting to change the Syrian regime?

Regime change was never really in the cards. In the United States, president Obama was distracted by the 2012 election and General Petraeus and Secretary of State Hilary Clinton were unable to convince him to arm the democratic factions of the Syrian rebellion. In Canada, foreign policy in the Arab world follows closely the American lead and the right-wing Conservative Government of Stephen Harper did little to dispel its Israel-only policy. The excuse given by the Western powers that they might be arming radical Islamist groups was misleading. They had diplomats on the ground like me telling them which groups could be trusted. The Western powers lied to their people about that fact and preferred to talk of 'leading from behind'.

Levant: We heard about thefts and money earmarked to support refugees from many countries, including Canada, money that went to suspicious organisations.?

Mobley: I cannot answer that. The only thing I can say is that the majority of Canadians have

opened their doors to the Syrian refugees and continue to have a positive view of the newcomers. Of course, everyone hopes that one day they will be able to return and live in peace in a new Syria without Bashar al-Assad and his criminal government. Unfortunately, the Canadian government does not have a Syria policy, which would have complemented the immigration effort.

Levant: Why did the Syrian opposition fail to unite the world opinion to confront the Assad regime?

Mobley: Excellent question. There is blame on both sides. The West has no interest in developing an enlightened Middle East policy and this reflects the Israel-only principle. On the Syrian opposition side, it would have been useful to have had an internationally recognized leader of the democratic opposition. In this regard, the Muslim Brotherhood with their cloak of secrecy and taste for political games did not help. Yet, it came down to a series of errors. The West must learn that Syrian activists are the sons and daughters of liberty in the same right as the American revolutionaries who battled British autocracy to gain freedom. Leaving political friends and allies in the field without the means to defend themselves is criminal and amounts to self-inflicted harm.

Levant: How do you see the Turkish and Qatari role and how did it reflect negatively on the destruction of the Syrian revolution?

Mobley: Myself, and most of my diplomatic colleagues, understood in the early years of the Syrian rebellion the need to arm and assist the democratic

factions. That message was relayed to the highest political levels in each of the Five Eyes countries. The message was clear: assist the opposition or be prepared to see a sharp Islamist 'virage' instigated by Saudi and Qatari agents. The latter did have arms and required pious declarations from local commanders in order to provide access to the aid. In the absence of Western support, the rebellion moved towards a narrower Islamist form. That suited the Turks who sought to impede Western aid to the Syrian refugees. That was the message I sought to relay by crossing into Syria at Atme and touring the Olive Tree camp. My report hit the Five Eyes like a stick of dynamite. It had a positive impact in as much as the Western powers forced their way into the refugee aid scene. Within months though, foreign policy bureaucrats covered up the truth and the West returned to its self-contented slumber while Russia and Iran ramped up their support for Bashar al-Assad.

Levant: How do you see the Muslim Brotherhood, which controlled the elements of the Syrian opposition and its organisations?

Mobley: I already mentioned the MB role. It has not always been helpful and too often is vulnerable to the aims and objectives of Turkish intelligence. Moreover, one of the fatal weaknesses of the Syrian uprising is the lack of unity of its constituent parts.

Levant: You worked with a group of young Syrian opposition to support the Syrian people since 2011. Where are they today? Why were they neutralised from the Syrian

opposition formations?

Mobley: I still admire the bravery and spirit of those young Syrian dissidents. In Canada, and elsewhere, I have communicated this and how their belief in freedom make them natural allies for the West. I will never abandon them. The ones who I helped save from the clutches of the Assad regime will, one day, take power and govern a new free Syria. They will have families, live in freedom and enjoy life. That is my dream for you and your fellow activists. I can assure you that many of us are waiting for signs from the democratic opposition to raise our voices further in your support. The road ahead will be tough and that is why you must organize along the lines of democratic centralism in order to prepare for taking power. The advantage: Bashar and his Iranian and Russian allies are paper tigers. Your lack of unity and outreach to situational and natural allies inside Syria and abroad is empowering these forces of reaction and hate.

Levant: Are you optimistic about the future of Syria?

Mobley: I will always be optimistic because I saw in the eyes of the Syrian activists the same flame of freedom and thirst for liberty that exists in resilient people around the world. In the 1950s, Castro and Che disembarked in Cuba with one hundred supporters. Several years later, Cuba was free and the corrupt Batista dictatorship propped up by the Americans was dead in the water. Syrian rebels need to a) promote the ideal of freedom and democracy inside Syria while at the same time organising themselves like Lenin suggested in his 1905 What is to be Done? b)


promote a public and military wing much like the MB organisation itself only without the games, c) strike at the Russian and Iranian assets inside Syria in hit and run attacks, d) organize bold surprise attacks against Air Force Intelligence wherever it may implant itself in order to build morale and inspire confidence, e) organize an international effort to fund and arm the democratic factions of the Syrian opposition and to augment its visibility and influence abroad and f) nominate as soon as possible a multi-lingual leader to represent the democratic movement inside Syria and faire a prodigious programme of ethnic, tribal and linguistic outreach.

Levant: What do you expect the Syrian state to look like as it was or to become a decentralised state?

Mobley: Syria's borders were established after the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Colonial powers established them having consulted little with the people or even geo-political regional experts. Do not ask me to validate those borders. However, a federal Syria with a central government in Damascus might not be a bad idea. Federalism is one of the better solutions to bind together groups with very diverse ethnic, linguistic and tribal differences. Federalism is not a panacea but it maps out a process, the same one that the Syrian opposition ought to follow in order to be victorious over Bashar al-Assad. A federal Syria would allow the Kurds the autonomy they need in order to function and be a people. Federalism does not work and could never work with a Bashar al-Assad in power in charge of a unitary state.

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