

# AFTER THE BREXIT, WHO WILL LOSE IN TERMS OF SECURITY BRITAIN OR THE EUROPEAN UNION?



After the Brexit, who will lose in terms of security, Britain, or the European Union?. (AFP) See page...02

## New evidence reveals the involvement of Turkey and Qatar in funding and supporting al-Qaeda in Syria



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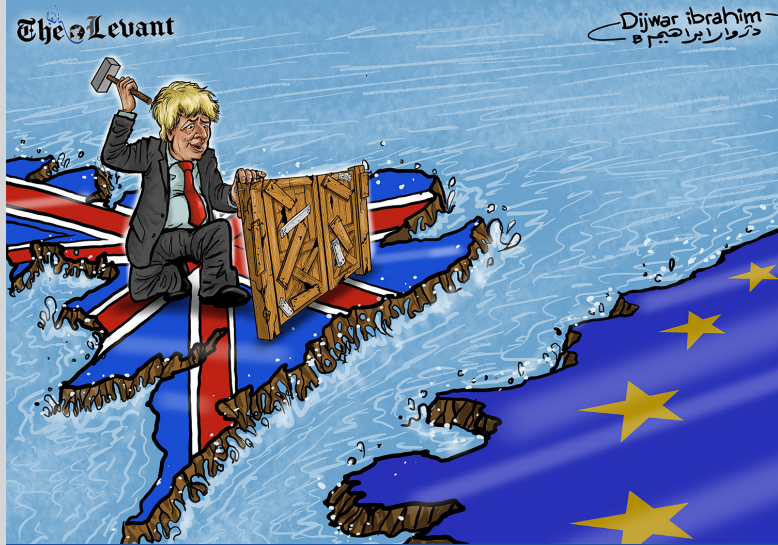
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## The New volunteers another concept of integration

At the end of November of each year, the Federal Charity Working Group (BAGFW) organizes a two-day event. The objective of this event is to celebrate what was accomplished during the year in the field of volunteering through the six German organizations represented by this group as a joint work platform, and to honour

the most important projects nationally representing the sixteen states. It is striking this year that Syrian presence on the platform of honour was overwhelming. Three of the five groups that were honoured were Syrian. As has been pointed out in such events repeatedly, the Syrian refugee stands out in ..

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## Is the focus shifting to Palestinian rights rather than a state?

On November 25 a US citizen called Omar Shakir was deported from Israel. Unusually, Shakir gave a press conference at Ben-Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv before boarding his flight to explain why he was leaving against his will and what the implications were for the future of the conflict between

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**Ian Black**



## Britain .. When the opponent wins by the ignorance of his opponent !

Perhaps British Prime Minister Boris Johnson should thank his opponent Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the opposition Labour Party because the latter directly contributed to the first obtaining an overwhelming parliamentary majority in last week's British general elections.

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**Mohammed Karkouti**



## Justice and Jihad in Europe

On 30 November, the just-released jihadist Usman Khan attending a "Learning Together" seminar in London, wearing a fake suicide vest, murdered two members of the organisation before running to London Bridge to stab more people.

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**Olivier Guitta**



## The long-ignored file on Trump's desk: The Muslim Brotherhood

The wide presence of political Islamists, especially members of the Muslim Brotherhood, all over media and decision-making bureaus in the United States, has become a disturbing issue. During his electoral campaign, four years ago,

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**Dalia Ziada**



## Yemen 2020

The year 2020 did not crawl on the Yemenis, but rather rushed, carrying a final solution to the long-running conflicts. The last five years, under the Houthi rebels 'coup and control of Sana'a, And the four years before it (2011-2015)

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**Noura Almoteari**



## Is Political Transition Possible in Syria?

Since the outbreak of the first spark of the Syrian armed conflict in 2012, the term "political transition" has become common and widely used by global, regional and local involved actors in the Syrian crisis. From 2012 until 2015, 13 resolutions had

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**Jwan Dibo**



# After the Brexit, who will lose in terms of security, Britain, or the European Union?

Britain's exit from the European Union has become inevitable, and the door is open to the UK's exit from the European Union on January 31, after British MPs gave initial support to the Brexit Agreement with 358 members and 234 op-

position, which Prime Minister Boris Johnson reached with Brussels. With security alerts in the face of terrorist crises around the world, it is not possible to think of any state's desire to exit any security or intelligence agreement that could provide it

with information about terrorist operations and fighters in extremist organizations, especially if these agreements are with important institutions like Europol, This puts Britain and the European Union in an evident crisis in front of this obstacle!

states launched a project known as the "Action Program to Counter-Terrorism," and the program aims to collaborate in modern technologies for countering terrorist operations, such as combating car bombs, reducing aircraft vulnerabilities in the face of air defense missiles Portable, and protecting ships against speedboats carrying explosives.

the Riga Summit, November 2006, which focused on unifying politics related to the threats of terrorist organizations and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as affirming the collective defense process of member states.

The situation continued until the current period, as demonstrated by the NATO Summit in London, December 2019, that the coalition

countries will continue to show solidarity and unity, with a clear view of the future, and plans to protect all members. In addition to the meeting of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, held in Vienna, December 2019, attended by 57 member states of the organization, which discussed mechanisms to address terrorist attacks through its counter-terrorism unit.

## Boris Johnson .. the man of the stage and the godfather of Brexit

Boris Johnson, the leader of the British Conservative Party, won an absolute majority in the country's parliament during the general elections, and his party achieved a landslide victory over its rivals, by winning 365 seats in the House of Commons out of 650, which allowed him to form a majority government and ensure support for any decision approved by his government to leave the European Union with or without an agreement!

In the agreement, which reached 535 pages, the dispute took place in negotiations on political and economic issues, such as the customs crisis in the province of Northern Ireland, and commitments to the multi-year budget, which was approved by Britain with the European Union in 2014 and will continue until 2020.

However, this agreement did not include any details about the security aspects, especially concerning European

cooperation on countering terrorist organizations around the world, such as ISIS, which the European Union countries participated in confronting within the international coalition forces led by the United States of America.

Nevertheless, this agreement will soon come to light, especially after MPs voted on it so that the UK could leave the European Union on January 31, 2020, after 47 years of turbulent partnership.



## Britain and the fate of the agreements concluded with the European partner

### European cooperation

The European Union is characterized by active collaboration and coordination among member states to confront the threats of terrorism, whether internal or external, at the intelligence and military levels; Where information about terrorist elements and organizations is readily exchanged between the countries of the Union, security strikes are carried out inside the

borders, and military attacks are carried out in the strongholds of these terrorist groups outside the border.

This cooperation can be inferred from various positions, such as the adherence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to the implementation of Article Five of the Washington Treaty, which relates to collective defense, after

less than 24 hours after the attacks of September 11, 2001, and the deployment of AWACS aircraft as part of the Eagle operation launched by the government. The United States of America at the time also deployed naval forces in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean, October 6, 2001.

In 2004, National Army weapon managers in NATO member

The European Union has many special security agreements to counter-terrorist organizations, which are always resorted to under the increase in terrorist threats to the European continent.

Britain is an active part of these agreements, as it is among the three who use the data of the Europol Organization

the most, especially in preserving security in Europe by providing information in the areas of combating major international crimes and terrorism and working to exchange it between member states.

London provides European countries with valuable information obtained through the "Five Eyes" agree-

ment, which includes the United States, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada, and aims to exchange intelligence.

The Brexit Agreement did not clarify what will be the future security and intelligence relationship between the parties. Still, we can infer it with several points, the most prominent of which are:

## The Conservative Party

Boris Johnson, the Tories leader, is a member of the British Right-wing Movement, which opposes the defense and security pledges that have been in place between European Union countries for years, even those related to terrorist organizations. The right-wing indicates that European defense initiatives weaken NATO's strength and aim to build a united European state, and this is what Johnson and his party are opposing. They also believe that the issues of security, defense, and NATO intervention abroad to confront extremist organizations have harmed the European economy. This was confirmed by the former leader of the Conservative Party, Theresa May, who indicated that in the event of Britain's withdrawal from the European Union, this would weaken cooperation in combating crime and terrorism, according to her office managers Nick Timo-

thy and Fiona Hill. With the controversy raised about these points, May indicated that the United Kingdom does not want to back down in matters of joint defense against all dangers, including terrorism, and considered it an unconditional issue, but the British extreme right believes that the internal defense process for England is not negotiable with the countries of the Union European. Johnson fears that British spending on European defense matters could affect the economy, especially in the post-Brexit period. The Conservative Party believes that an agreement with the United States of America can contribute to increasing its security force and exchanging information about various risks, including terrorist aspects, as indicated by the Government Information Office in London, in a report issued in November 2017.

## Opposing opinions

Despite the main decision of the Conservative Party in the field of defense, the research papers are against this trend, as a published research issued by the British government, November 28, 2018, in Forbes newspaper,

indicated that Britain may face security crises if it leaves without an agreement with the European Union, Noting that any cooperation between the European Union and the United Kingdom in the field of defense could stop,

and thus Britain would be unable to use the tools and mechanisms provided by European agreements, such as tracking the data and information of terrorist elements.

The report added that if Britain uses alternative mechanisms to obtain information about terrorist operations, it will not provide it with the same efficiency as previous mechanisms.

David Galbraith, lecturer in International Security at Bath University, believes that the European Union and the United Kingdom should not put security cooperation as part of

their negotiations, as each of them will lose if intelligence cooperation stops or reaches a minimum, especially since London is a link Between America and Europe in this area.



## Europol organization

Europol, the European Police Office, is one of the most prominent European organizations in the field of maintaining security within the European Union and works to coordinate and provide logistical and information support in the area of countering international and terrorist crimes affecting the European Union. It can be considered that the organization is at the heart of the Brex-

it agreement, as neither side wants to risk its relationship with the other, so there is a lot of talk about London's relationship with the European Organization in the event of a Brexit agreement. In his speech before the House of Commons Internal Affairs Committee, March 2017, European Police Chief Rob Wainwright stated that there is a desire within the European police services not to lose

British intelligence expertise. Returning to the official website of the organization, we find that non-member countries can benefit from the services of the organization, as the site indicates a decision by the Council of Justice and Internal Affairs on March 27, 2000, and amended on December 6, 2001, which gives the organization's officials the right to enter into negotiations with

countries from outside the Union and cooperating with it. The site indicates that there are two types of agreements allowed, the first relates to the exchange of technical information, that is, not associated with specific persons, and the second is related to the transfer of personal data about specific individuals or entities, the nature of their movements and intelligence information about them.

# New evidence reveals the involvement of Turkey and Qatar in funding and supporting al-Qaeda in Syria

After a series of leaks to Western press, the Nordic Monitor website revealed a secret document in mid-December 2019 about the involvement of Turkey and Qatar in providing support to the Syrian al-Qaeda group: “Al-Nusra Front,” as concluded by the US Military Intelligence Agency in 2016, and according

to the report, it is clear that Al-Nusra received logistic and material support from elements of the Turkish and Qatari governments.

## Al-Nusra Front and Turkish Intelligence

Since the outbreak of the conflict in Syria in 2011, Turkish intelligence has been successful in establishing the so-called former al-Nusra Front organization affiliated with al-Qaeda, which later became the “Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham” to be the protector of Turkish and Qatari interests in Syria and the region. Had it not been for the logistic support provided by the Turkish intelligence services and Qatari funding, through various means and aid organizations, al-Nusra Front would not have been able to lead the armed militias in Syria and bring them under their control, especially in the city of Idlib and

Idlib’s rural areas. Investigations from inside Syria revealed the complicity of Turkish intelligence through the deployment of former Turkish officers who were involved in various crimes. They were put in charge of training terrorists and sending them to join ISIS and Al-Nusra organizations in Syria.



## Qatari money

Qatar has worked to ensure the survival of the Headquarters of the Liberation of Al-Sham (formerly Al-Nusra Front), led by Abu Muhammad al-Julani, on Syrian soil which used

to serve its interests and a report published by Reuters in 2016 that included leaks about a secret meeting that brought together the Emir of Qatar and

al-Julani, where Prince Tamim ordered al-Qaeda leader in Syria to hold up during the battle of Aleppo, offering to support the organization with \$ 50 billion.

## Turkish intelligence: transfer of weapons and ammunition

Confidential documents published by the Turkish newspaper “Cumhuriyet” in early 2014 revealed the movement of trucks loaded with arms and ammunition dispatched by the Turkish intelligence which were destined for Syrian “jihadis”. The newspaper published pictures and a video footage of what it confirmed to be arms convoys sent to the Syrian Islamic armed opposition, which supports the allegations that have always been denied by Ankara.

The newspaper “Cumhuriyet” published photos of mortars hidden under drugs on trucks officially leased to a humanitarian organization, which was intercepted by a Turkish

gendarmierie near the Syrian border in January 2014. It was not a slip of the tongue when, on December 28, 2018, one of the officials at the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham, described the relationship between his organization and the Turkish government as “alliance” as many people view it. It was an accurate description of the relationship between this terrorist organization and Turkey! In a conversation between The European Centre for Counterterrorism and Intelligence Studies and a group of activists and researchers from northern Syria, the group confirmed that more than 1500 members from

Al-Nusra whose had been transformed in appearance and had undergone training in Turkey in Adana and Urfa camps, were present on the fronts. ISIS and Al-Nusra members receive training and guidance in special camps in several cities such as Hatay, Entebbe, and Urfa. The data indicates an increase in intelligence financial allocations to cover the expenses of training and qualifying ISIS and Al-Nusra members, secure weapons, ammunition, and vehicles to transport them to Syria. An investigation carried out by the Syrian researcher and activist inside Syria, Hasaka, Lamar Arkandi, which was taken up



## Kurdish militant groups in northern Syria – SDF

The confessions of Turkish intelligence agents (Erhan Pakceten and Aiden Konel) revealed Turkey’s support for al-Nusra front and ISIS, by providing ammunition, weapons and logistic support to carry out military and suicide operations against its opponents in Syria and the Middle East and Europe. This information is confirmed by Erdogan’s threats to Europe to open Turkey’s gateway for foreign fighters to travel European countries in October 2019. In an exclusive interview with Sky News Arabia on December 18, 2019, the commander of the Syrian Democratic Forces, Mazloum Abdi, stated that the Turkish government seeks to occupy Syrian

lands, highlighting that Turkey’s primary goal in entering the Syrian territories is to carry out ethnic cleansing against the Kurds and forcibly displace them. He explained that Turkey is working to support ISIS, provide logistical support, and open its borders to join ISIS and other extremist organizations.

the European Centre for Counterterrorism and Intelligence Studies on its website on December 10, 2019, revealed several videos and pictures of battles published by “jihadist” factions including the “Nusra Front” on their accounts on Twitter. On the fronts of Tal Tamr, Tal Abyad, Ras Al-Ain, and Ain Issa.

The documents were presented to one of The European Centre for Counterterrorism and Intelligence Studies’ experts, Major General A.M.S, who confirmed that it was the American TOW armour-piercing missile with a range of 4 km owned by Anka-

vided them with during the “Spring of Peace” operation and during the occupation of the Kurdish city of “Afrin” as a result of operation “Olive Branch” and the “Euphrates Shield”, in addition to the faction militants and their leaders carrying American-made guns. (M16) (M4).

The expert did not exclude the provision of these weapons to the factions under the banner of the National Army, including “Ahrar al-Sharqiya, Al-Sham Front, the Hamzah Division, and the Sultan Murad Brigade”. In May 2019, Reuters International quot-

officials and militant sources as saying that Ankara provided a group of opposition fighters with new and high precision weapons to counter an attack by Russian-backed government forces.

According to Reuters, a Syrian opposition official revealed that Turkey had given them dozens of armoured vehicles, grad missile launchers, anti-tank guided missiles, and TOW missiles, which contributed to the annexation of land under the control of the Syrian army, including the strategic town of Kafr Nabouda.



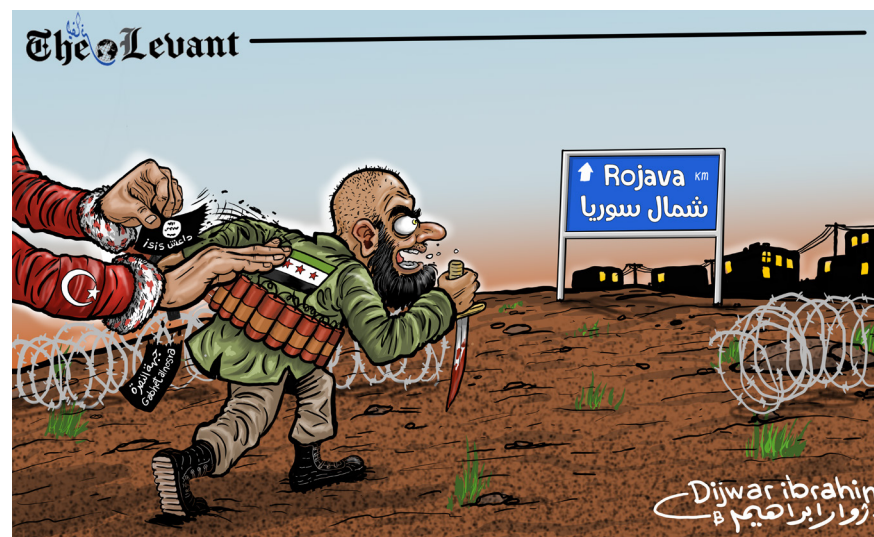
## European countries reveal Qatari financing and Turkish involvement with extremist organizations

In April 2018, Elizabeth Zegfield, a Dutch lawyer, asked Qatar to compensate the victims of Al-Nusra Front activities in Syria, stressing that Doha is responsible for the damage caused to her clients by the victims of the terrorist organization that it funds. The lawyer addressed a letter to the Emir of Qatar, “Tamim bin Hamad,” saying that his country is responsible for the damage

caused to her clients by Al-Nusra Front, noting that the terrorist organization would not have been able to rise and commit terrorist acts had it not been for the Qatari funding. A Dutch report in October 2017 revealed that three sums of money totalling € 257,000 were spent on logistic support, the purchase of advanced mobile phones and laptops for extremists, and trav-

el expenses, including travel expenses for people who travelled from the Netherlands to Turkey then crossed to Syrian territory.

Also, in September 2017, the head of the Belgian Parliamentary Committee for Countering Terrorism, Koen Metsu, warned that the fight against financing extremist groups in Europe would not be complete without discussing Qatari funds.



## Conclusion

Turkey and Qatar, followed by Iran are responsible for the chaos in various countries within the region, and the attempts to destabilize security in the Middle East and Europe. They constitute a triangle of “extremism and terrorism” that threatens regional and international security. Without a doubt, the presence and survival of the Headquarters for the Liberation of Al-Sham (formerly Al-Nusra Front) cannot continue without Qatari funding, which has varied from humanitarian aid and relief organizations to exchanging hostages and direct financing. The intelligence effort provided by Turkish intelligence, MIT, is another factor in the survival of this organization, including the geography of the borders, which secured

ease of transport and speed of movement in the areas controlled by the Turkish forces or the factions loyal to them. The Kurdish forces “SDF,” and other Kurdish groups, including the “Popular Defense Forces” (HPG), also revealed the capture of several Turkish intelligence agents, during the military operations, and documented their confessions. The intelligence is undoubtedly supporting the military forces inside Syria, as no military forces can fight without intelligence and information support, it is normal practice in military intelligence services. Yet, Turkish intelligence has gone beyond what is normal by embedding their elements within extremist organizations to lead them and determine

their course of action. Finally, the website “Nordic Monitor” revealed in mid-December 2019 the involvement of “Turkey and Qatar in providing support to the Syrian al-Qaeda group: Al-Nusra Front was not the first leak. Western press previously revealed a series of leaks about Qatar’s involvement in sponsoring and financing terrorism alongside Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood, including the report of the American New York Times on July 22, 2019, supplemented by publishing a leaked audio recording of security man Khalifa Kayed Al-Muhanna-di, who is close to the Emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad. This report comes in a series of leaks confirming the involvement of Turkey and Qatar in supporting terrorist groups

THR LEVANT NEWS INTERNATIONAL

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By Luna Watfa

# The New volunteers another concept of integration

At the end of November of each year, the Federal Charity Working Group (BAGFW) organizes a two-day event. The objective of this event is to celebrate what was accomplished during the year in the field of volunteering through the six German organizations represented by this group as a joint work platform, and to honour the most important projects nationally representing the sixteen states. It is striking this year that Syrian presence on the platform of honour was overwhelming. Three of the five groups that were honoured were Syrian. As has been pointed out in such events repeatedly, the Syrian refugee stands out in various ways, not only in regards to his ability to quickly adapt to the

language and prove his worth within the field of his work or study, but also when it comes to the concept of volunteering itself. And the ability of those coming from a culture that hardly recognizes the value of such work, not to mention the challenges that the refugee faces in his early years in Germany imposed by his legal status, housing, and language. These challenges did not constitute an impediment to those who found themselves able to devote something of their time and effort free of charge to help others, when they themselves, as a refugee, are in fact in need help from time to time.

Taher Kidarsh and two of his Syrian colleagues were honoured during this event. Taher is



Photo: Fevzi Kaplan

**‘It is striking this year that the Syrian presence on the platform of honour was overwhelming. Three of the five groups that were honoured were Syrians.’**

The Federal Charity Working Group (BAGFW)

project on the Red Cross site of Hessen County, entitled "Join the volunteers," and published short videos of all volunteers and their work within this organization. These videos went viral, which contributed to introducing us as a team to be honoured at this event."

When we asked him about the difficulties that the volunteer might face in this field, he answered: "Of course we always face difficult situations that we cannot act on, such as translation, for example, in very depressing humanitarian situations, or sometimes we are unable to provide any assis-

tance when the issue is related to documents that have not been presented to the party concerned or delayed for one reason or another. Some people think we can change that, but we are just volunteers, and this is what we sometimes try hard to explain to others."

Muhannad Al-Hashem, also a Syrian from Deir Ezzor, has sought refuge in Germany since 2015 and works as a volunteer with the German Diakonie organization in the state of Saarland.

"We work as a very large team of volunteers on a multi-department project. Our project was

funded and supported for a period of four and a half years by the German Diakonie organization, which funds the work of the project manager only - a German employee - as a part-time job. Our work in it is entirely voluntary.

The project consists of five teams: The first team focuses on Arab women who came to Germany by under family reunion schemes and thus did not have the opportunity to learn the language or integrate into German society, assisted by Arab women who previously came or German women.



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studying medicine in Frankfurt, Germany. He had travelled from his city of Idlib in Syria to Germany in 2015 and volunteered with the German Red Cross (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz). In an interview with The Levant, Taher talks about their volunteering project in the state of Hessen. He says: "We are a team of five Syrians. We do a

lot of activities with the Red Cross aimed at helping others learn the language, improving integration procedures within German society through translation, and working to communicate important ideas, within the framework of benefiting refugees and meeting their needs.

We later implemented a small

The second group focuses on the spoken German language and its teaching methods for refugees due to the big difference between the formal and spoken variations of the language, and the need of many to learn both of them.

The third team offers formal German lessons with focus on grammar and the basics. As for the fourth team, it is made up of a team that works with refugees to find practical training or vocational training opportunities for those who need help with choosing the right option for them from the various options available in Germany for studying, or to help with the certifications of the degrees obtained by graduates of Syrian universities or institutes.

The fifth team is responsible for helping with finding job opportunities for refugees. It is the department that I'd be very sorry to see close down,

if we do not find a new funding scheme for our project because it has helped many so far."

Sabah Omar, a Syrian from Aleppo, has also been a refugee since 2015 and works with AWO in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia

Sabah spoke about the project she is participating in as a volunteer, who was also honoured for her work in 2019, she said: "The project is for women, all they need is to learn German to participate in social activities, to find a house or an interpreter during official meetings, or psychological support. Through my work, I know that Syrian women are in constant need of support, especially from those who can speak their language and can understand their needs and problems, and this is what I am trying to offer as a guide for Syrian women and volunteers for three years."



Photo: Fevzi Kaplan

The culture of voluntary work, or as it is now called "social capital," is a culture well rooted in German society, through which it seeks to establish the principles of social solidarity and equality among all its segments.

According to the German Statistical Research Department, 31 million people work in the voluntary field, about 44% of German society, in the areas of caring for the elderly, firefighters, or in organizations such as the Red Cross.

Looking at the statistics over the past four years, we find that the number of workers in the voluntary field from 2015 to 2019 increased by 2.54 million people, a large part of those are refugees themselves who refused the idea of being aid recipients only but instead opted to enter the field voluntary work.

But there is a difference between a German citizen who lives in his home country, is settled in his work or study and place of residence, who makes a decision to enter the field of voluntary work as part of prevailing social cul-

ture, and a refugee who has been in Germany for no longer than five years, who is still learning the language, is trying hard to find an opportunity to work or study alongside the continuous paper work of renewing his temporary residency, who still decides to engage in several voluntary activities. We believe that the two cases are not equivalent. Why does a refugee want to work as a volunteer?

The motives for volunteering are, of course they are individual and personal, but humanitarian and moral reasons always come first.

A survey carried out by the Federal Ministry of the Family, Older Persons, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) in 2014 listed a number of recurring motives for volunteering in Germany. These include, but are not limited to, the enjoyment of the activity concerned itself, the opportunity to do something for the public good even on a small scale, as well as a chance to broaden horizons and learn new skills.

According to the survey,

young people, in particular, often feel the desire to try something new with others and possibly to enhance their expertise. While the elderly prefer to pass on their knowledge to others and pursue a meaningful task after work.

As for refugees, or as I like to call them "new volunteers," in addition to the above, volunteering gives them an opportunity to reduce social exclusion, by affirming the self-image of the immigration community, And work to promote coexistence and social diversity by merging the different cultures with joint activities aimed at preserving the essence of the other culture, not seeking to dissolve it, and also trying to change the general perspective of the refugee as a recipient of assistance only, and facing the culture of hatred and fear of the other through initiative and interaction, and also provides them with an opportunity to obtain the appreciation They deserve as entrepreneurs, something they have maybe always dreamed of in their home countries.



# Yemen 2020



## Noura Almoteari

The year 2020 did not crawl on the Yemenis, but rather rushed, carrying a final solution to the long-running conflicts. The last five years, under the Houthi rebels' coup and control of Sana'a, and the four years before it (2011-2015), in which the sinister Arab Spring strife raged, so the Brotherhood took advantage of it and wreaked havoc in it, as well as the failed years of unity between the Yemen Arab Republic and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen in the year 1990.

The Riyadh Agreement represented on November 5, 2019, under the auspices of Saudi Arabia and the support of the Emirates, between the Yemeni legitimacy and the Southern Transitional Council, in the presence of the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Yemeni President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi and the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, and the President of the Southern Transitional Council, Commander Aidros Al-Zubaidi, The last glimmer of hope that may end several files, chief among them the conflict between the two halves of Yemen, North and South, and uniting ranks to stop the Iranian-backed Houthi

rebellion.

Observers are excluding the return of peace to Yemen, because the control of Yemeni figures, including the leaders and allies of the rampant Reform Party among the Yemeni government over the state, will make the implementation of the Riyadh agreement almost impossible. Since the failure of the unit that produced absurd policies in Yemen since the nineties of the last century It created social, economic, and political chaos, as it was a direct cause of divisions between the various Yemeni components.

This was evident by the conspiracy of Yemeni reform with the Houthi coup d'état in 2015, and Houthi turned against legitimacy and established a state within a state, as happened in Lebanon and Iraq, even though Houthi's greatest wish, during the reign of Ali Abdullah Saleh, was to obtain a ministerial or parliamentary chair, which encouraged Iran to divide the tribes and pass its sectarian project and infiltration into central Yemen and landed in Sana'a, due to the plotters, traitors, and agents.

The political map of Yemen before and after the Riyadh agreement is entirely different, the international community used to look at it before the Riyadh agreement and not understand, seeing a conflict between Yemeni legitimacy and the Houthi coup and seeing the resolve of the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia to support legitimacy. Still, it could not see the whole truth on the ground.

When the Operation Decisive Storm began, the southerners began to support this bold

storm to cut Iran's hand in Yemen and protect the borders of Saudi Arabia. They succeeded remarkably in liberating most of the southern governorates from the grip of the terrorist Houthi, which raised the suspicion of the Yemeni Reform Party, and some legitimate leaders, who have close ties with Houthi So, rapid action began, supported by Turkey, Iran, and Qatar, to dismantle the Arab alliance and to challenge the United Arab Emirates by all means.

Therefore, the internal attack was no longer heading north to end the coup, but rather south, under the pretext of "sacred unity" and that the southerners seek to disengage, so the Brotherhood allied with all the forces of darkness aimed their guns to the South, which contributed to misleading the international and Arab community and contributed to creating new incomprehensible chaos and disturbing the compass the war.

But that did not last long. When the Islah Party delivered the Houthi revolutionary militias all the liberated sites with weapons and military equipment, it revealed to everyone the Brotherhood machine that works with Iranian and Turkish funding creating the chaos and deliberately prolonging the war.

On that, the researchers returned to the recent files in Yemen, the archives of the past five years (2014-2019) that contributed to the transformation of the Houthi terrorist group into an independent political and military component, which has Iranian and Qatari support, that moves towards the fronts, threatens the securi-



ty of Saudi Arabia, occupies the capital, Sana'a, seizes ports and government institutions, sows mines, rapes women, recruits children, then sits at the global negotiating table, as happened in Stockholm under the auspices of the United Nations, negotiating the blood of Yemen's children and their stability and security!

It can be said that the Riyadh Agreement has redrawn and clarified the Yemeni map politically and geographically, so the Southern Transitional Council that was established two years ago emerged as a representative of all the sects of the South, and Yemeni legitimacy emerged, but also dissidents from the legitimacy emerged individually and groups, whether reform leaders or some ministers, such as Ahmed Al-Maisari, Minister of Interior, Saleh al-Jabwani, Minister of Transport, and some of the names that appeared in the Brussels Forum, which claimed to represent the South but in reality they represent the fifth column that works with legitimacy and Houthi, Iran, Turkey, and Qatar at the same time and with a

goal that everyone knows, which is breaking up the unity of the South and disturbing Riyadh Agreement, hoping to fail it. Of course, the delay in implementing some of the provisions of the Riyadh Agreement during the past two months, whether for logistical reasons from the coalition's viewpoint related to the repositioning of the security and military forces, or other purposes related to the recent Yemeni reform attempts to use the army to strike in the southern forces, and with the aim of challenging the intentions of the Transitional Council And to show the southerners violate the Riyadh agreement, has made despair leak to the Yemenis, especially the southerners, so they thought that the Riyadh agreement would fail, but that does not make any sense because the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia not only decided to make the agreement a success but decided to make the comprehensive peace project succeed in Yemen is peace or war. The year 2020 will see the achievement of this great goal with beautiful patience



# The long-ignored file on Trump's desk: The Muslim Brotherhood

The wide presence of political Islamists, especially members of the Muslim Brotherhood, all over media and decision-making bureaus in the United States, has become a disturbing issue. During his electoral campaign, four years ago, President Trump vowed to designate the Muslim Brotherhood as an international terrorist organization. This promise was highly applauded not only by American voters, but also by major Arab states that suffered hell on the hands of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Here we are, four years later, approaching the end of Trump's first term, while the Muslim Brotherhood has not been designated as a terrorist organization, yet. Rather, the radical Islamist group and its figures are gaining more power over decision-makers, being elected as lawmakers, leading American public opinion through media, bullying American Jewish students at university campuses with a ridiculous BDS campaign,

and leading women marches against Trump, nation-wide.

One can hardly blame the Trump administration for not fulfilling the promise of controlling the evil spelled by political Islamists on the world through the power of State Department's designation. Sadly, the main guilty party, in this messy situation, is the liberal democrats, who are unconditionally and widely opening their reputable media institutions, civil society organizations, think tanks, and even government and congress offices to the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Islamists rising influence over Washington, DC is mostly correlated to the blind war waged by liberal democrats against President Trump, more than it has to do with the unexplainable American leftists' tolerance with political Islamists' ideology, which dictates "jihad against non-Muslims" and "sabotaging the West from within" to build their own Islamic Caliphate system.

Understandably, Trump's victory in 2016 elections, threatened the democrats to the core. It was not only threatening to the liberal values they believe in, but also to their supremacy in the American political system. It seemed like surrendering their long-held seats to the "obnoxious" tide of populism. In an attempt to handle the new reality, the American leftists, who control most of media and civil society in the United States, started to act in a completely illogical manner.

For example, big part of why the American leftists hate the Egyptian President El-Sisi and tend to neglect or lower-tone his positive achievements in Egypt and the Middle East, is that President Trump likes him and calls him "a friend!" That, perhaps, explains why the American leftists are opening their large and prestigious media stations for members of the Muslim Brotherhood to falsely represent themselves as Egyptian or Arab political opposition

groups, and thus speaking against, not only Arab leaders that the leftists dislike because they are friends with President Trump, but also against the Trump administration, too!

This illogical behavior by liberal democrats, coupled with generous donations from Qatar to their media outlets and think tanks, created a deep system of polarization in Washington, DC, over years. That disturbing state deeply threatens the well-being of the exemplary American domestic political system and the effectiveness of American foreign policy.

Nevertheless, the biggest harm the democrats, mostly blinded by hate towards Trump, are causing to their country and the entire world is their insistence to stand in the way of Trump's administration's attempts to designate the Muslim Brotherhood as an international terrorist organization. Every time a step is taken by the administration in that direction, the democrats



**Dalia Ziada**

rise against Trump accusing him of being "Islam-phobic" or "recklessly destroying" US affairs with other countries, like Qatar and Turkey.

Despite that opposing force by the democrats in favor of the Muslim Brotherhood, the US State Department managed to designate a number of armed factions of the Muslim Brotherhood as terrorist organizations; e.g.

Hamas in Gaza, and Hasm and Liwa Al-Thawra in Egypt. However, one can merely consider these designations as soothing pills given by the tied hands of the Trump administration to its Arab allies interested in fighting political Islamism, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates.

As the end of Trump's first term is approaching, amidst an endless congressional debate on impeachment, followed by brutal battle over the presidential elections in 2020, it has become unclear whether the Trump administration is willing or is still capable of taking a stride towards fulfilling the electoral promise of designating the Muslim Brotherhood as an international terrorist organization. One can only hope this may happen, although "hope is the privilege of the weak!"



# Is the focus shifting to Palestinian rights rather than a state?

On November 25 a US citizen called Omar Shakir was deported from Israel. Unusually, Shakir gave a press conference at Ben-Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv before boarding his flight to explain why he was leaving against his will and what the implications were for the future of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.

Shakir was the Israel-Palestine director for the NGO Human Rights Watch. His lawyers had failed to convince Israel's High Court to overturn the ruling of a lower court ordering his removal on the basis that he supported BDS, the international movement promoting boycott, disinvestment and sanctions against Israel.

Shakir had previously been deported from Egypt for highlighting concerns about human rights abuses during the Arab Spring. He was also refused entry to Syria and Bahrain. Israeli officials said his expulsion was the first under a 2017 law allowing the deportation of foreigners who back BDS. He will now

relocate to Amman to carry on his work.

The drama of his expulsion, however, masked a far more significant development in terms of evolving attitudes to the world's most intractable conflict. That was contained in a landmark report published by HRW in mid-December. It called for equal rights for Palestinians living under Israeli rule in the West Bank – and was a serious blow to the familiar idea that a “peace process” of any kind was likely to end Israel's occupation 52 years since the Six Days War of June 1967.

“Israel's efforts to justify depriving Palestinians of basic civil rights protections for more than half a century based on the exigencies of its forever military occupation just don't fly anymore,” said Sarah Lea Whitson, HRW director for the Middle East. “Given Israel's long-term control over Palestinians, it should at minimum allow them to exercise the same rights it grants its own citizens, regardless of the

political arrangement in place.”

The report reflects growing frustration with the maintenance of the status quo as the majority of governments across the world remain committed to the idea of a two-state solution to the conflict – even as the chances of that happening have all but disappeared.



Ian Black

The combination of a decade of rule by Binyamin Netanyahu, the relentless growth of Jewish settlements and the debilitating split between the PLO and Hamas are all factors. Donald Trump, with his open bias towards Israel and hostility to the Palestinians, has been another.

“Suspending rights for a short period may temporarily disrupt public life, but long-term, indefinite suspension cripples a community's social, political, and intellectual life,” HRW said. “The longer an occupation, the more military rule should resemble an ordinary govern-

ing system that respects the standards of international human rights law that apply at all times. In cases of indefinite occupation, such as Israel's, the rights granted to an occupied population should be at least equal to the rights afforded the occupier's citizens.”

Governments have been reluctant to adopt such an approach – however pessimistic they really are about the chances of achieving two states. Part of the problem is that the Palestinian Authority remains committed to securing an independent state. Formally adopting a rights-based approach would signal that prospects for that are diminishing.

“International reluctance to discuss alternatives..... is less a refusal to recognize the trends that have undermined it and more a fear of abetting those trends,” as Nathan Brown and Marwan Muasher have argued. “Open embrace of an alternative approach threatens to legitimate Israeli settlement activity, acquiesce in the Israeli annexation of Jerusalem and perhaps parts of the West Bank, abandon the tremendous international investment in the PA, and encourage rejectionist actors (including Hamas) on the Palestinian side.”

Another sign of changing attitudes was the December 20 announcement of the prosecutor of International Court of Justice in The Hague that there is a basis to investigate

Israel for war crimes in the West Bank and Gaza. But Fatou Bensouda has requested that the Court decide whether its jurisdiction extends to the Palestinian territories. Netanyahu responded by saying that the prosecutor had turned the ICC “into a political tool to delegitimize the State of Israel.”

Israel views the BDS movement as a strategic threat and accuses it of anti-Semitism — a claim activists strongly deny. Supporters compare it to the economic isolation that helped bring down apartheid South Africa. HRW insisted that neither it nor Shakir, as its representative, had ever called for a boycott of Israel. Both, however, had urged businesses – Airbnb for example – to stop operating in illegal settlements as part of their duty to avoid complicity in human rights abuses.

It has become increasingly fashionable, especially abroad, to talk about the need to create one democratic state with equal rights for the two peoples who live between the Mediterranean and the River Jordan. But that will require Israelis to give up their hard-fought – and internationally-recognized – right to self-determination, and Palestinians the right to their own sovereign state. Given the history of the conflict, it is hard to imagine either side accepting that is the price they will have to pay for peace and co-existence.

THR LEVANT NEWS INTERNATIONAL

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# Britain .. When the opponent wins by the ignorance of his opponent !

Perhaps British Prime Minister Boris Johnson should thank his opponent Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the opposition Labour Party because the latter directly contributed to the first obtaining an overwhelming parliamentary majority in last week's British general elections.

This majority has not been seen by conservatives since the late Margaret Thatcher, their late leader. A majority sought by Johnson since his accession to the party leadership to achieve the first goal for him and the whole country, which is to complete Britain's secession from the European Union "Brexit" as soon as possible.

The current Conservative leadership raised a wide and

frightening slogan at the same time, which is the completion of "Brexit" in any possible way, even if the matter leads to withdrawal without an agreement, and all economic circles in Britain and Europe fear it.

What is essential on the UK domestic scene is that Johnson was not only able to defeat the Labour Party, but also practically destroyed it, after he managed to control electoral constituencies that had been workers since the founding of the Labour Party itself.

Not only that, but the conservatives have used socially calculated electoral districts for the sub-middle and poor sectors, which usually give their votes to the Labour Party, and in some cases, the

Liberal

true that "Brexit" was the first topic of this election, but it is also true that the leaders of the competing parties have had the most significant role in the voters' attitudes. This does not mean that the voter loved this leadership and did not like the other, but rather it entirely means that he did not like to lead workers specifically.

The current Labour leadership is the most unsuccessful at all, not after the results of its stunning elections, but before the elections themselves. This leadership of Jeremy Corbyn operates under the control of the country's trade union federation.

This union set the party's policy accepted by Corbyn with full openness, while previous Labour leaderships did not take it and resisted it. And because it did so, it's no wonder that a Labour leader like Tony Blair topped the list of the most successful prime ministers in the country's history and a party leader with the most numbers of parliament seats.

There are many other Labour governments that passed the British scene, and entered history from this angle, albeit at a lower level than the Blair governments that formed and won three electoral cycles. From here, we can say, that the traditional voters of the Labour Party did not vote for the Conservative Party of love for Johnson, the latter had many enemies even within his party, but rather a hatred for Jeremy Corbyn.

The latter openly declares his grief at the end of the Cold War and defends any dictator ruler around the world. He is simply a Stalin-

ist who wants to return everything to state control and seeks to govern the country with as much government control as possible.

He himself stands with "Brexit". He cannot be described as a supporter of the continuation of his country in the European Union, and his position, which he did not explicitly announce, contributed to the departure of a group of Labour leaders known for its moderation, including his former deputy, Tom Watson, who found that the party is not moving solidly towards the left. Rather, he broke the remaining barrier since Corbyn reached his leadership.

At this point, Johnson should thank Corbyn because it did not take the first of his efforts to defeat the second. The tools of workers' defeat were the work of its leadership, and this defeat is so severe that the chances of this party returning to power in the future are close to zero.

And with Stalinist thinking, you cannot raise your case even if it is entirely fair. With this thinking, you cannot bring institutions and companies in Britain to you, and with the ideas mentioned, no one can trust you as president.

One of the reasons that the leader of the Labour Party relies on his hatred of the European Union is that the latter is a capitalist entity that must be resisted. Because he is Stalinist - more than Joseph himself - he forgot that this European bloc provides a strong impetus to his country.



**Mohammed Karkouti**

One of the candidates for the Labour Party, Caroline Flint, who lost her seat in this election, says that whenever she reached a door in Britain during her campaign, she would hear a shocking question, do you guarantee that if we elected you, Jeremy Corbyn wouldn't become prime minister ?! His name alone was an important, pivotal, and fundamental reason for striking a secured party on the British stage.

It is extremism that kills the extremist first. Added to that is ignorance. Did Joseph Stalin ever ask, "How many tanks does the Pope of the Vatican own?!!" The UK general elections in 2019 have already changed the political map of the whole country.

There will be many years before the emergence of another map and these years may witness the most dangerous situation, which is related to Scotland's attempt to secede from Britain, not to mention the permanent Irish prejudice.



Democratic Party that was also subjected to a hideous defeat in the aforementioned general elections. Here lies the issue of electoral transformation on the British scene. It is

# Justice and Jihad in Europe



**Olivier Guitta**

On 30 November, the just-released jihadist Usman Khan attending a “Learning Together” seminar in London, wearing a fake suicide vest, murdered two members of the organisation before running to London Bridge to stab more people.

He was subsequently killed and when details of his case emerged, the public was rightfully so outraged. Khan had been convicted for trying to attack the London Stock Exchange and was sentenced to 16 years in jail. After serving half of his sentence, he was automatically released. The judicial system in Britain had miserably failed but this is happening throughout Europe when it comes to dealing with terrorism cases.

Ironically, the London Bridge attacker was heralded as a success story of the rehabilitation initiative that he went on to attack. How could he be considered a reformed model prisoner while he was upgraded to a “high risk” prisoner after making threats to senior prison staff and despite the judge warning that he remained “an ongoing danger to the public.”? A source quoted by The Telegraph said: “It

looks to me that he has played the system, giving the impression that he is reformed and rehabilitated but, like a sleeper cell, waited for the opportunity to grab a headline for the jihadis.”

Usman Khan was far from an exception: in the UK, 187 of the 264 Islamist terrorists jailed up to 2015 were eligible for early release. 180 have so far been freed under licence with a further seven still in prison, of which three are due to be released within the next three months. Among them one of Britain’s top al-Qaeda terror master is Rangzieb Ahmed who got life in 2008 for plotting carnage across the UK and was linked to the 7/7 London bombers who killed 52. Because of the scandal, 40 Islamist terrorists freed after serving half their jail terms will go back to prison, after the review of 74 cases. In the UK, ten convicted jihadis were chucked back in their cells after breaching their licence conditions last year – marking the highest ever total.

Also a poll after the London Bridge attack revealed that: 82% of Brits are favourable to a ban on early release for terrorists; 66% think that it would significantly reduce terror attacks; 57% think that longer prison sentences would have a similar impact in reducing the terror risk; 77% think increased surveillance of terrorists would help.

The London Bridge Terror Attack is the second in recent memory where the jihadist was wearing an electronic tag. The first one took place in July 2016 when a French priest was savagely murdered

near Rouen by two Islamic State jihadists.

One of the terrorists had been released from jail against the advice of the State prosecutor because the judge believed the young radical had a change of heart.

Not only have major loopholes in the judicial system made it easier for terrorists but also the light sentencing of terrorists is at the core of the issue. In the UK, the average jail sentence for terrorists behind life-threatening acts of

women had been staying illegally in Belgium and had been ordered twice to leave but the system failed...

France is not much better, handing time and again ridiculously lenient sentences to terrorists. For instance, after having been jailed the first time around for six months for trying to join a jihadist group in Syria, a woman received a four-year jail sentence with 18-month suspended period for planning a knife attack on soldiers in Nice.

that was accused of planning a terror attack in Lyon and sending men to fight in Syria and Iraq.

There are other mind-boggling non-sensical facts, such as that in the UK, someone viewing terror propaganda only once can be sentenced up to 15 years in jail but a jihadist returnee that had joined and fought for Islamic State in Syria/Iraq risks only 10 years. The UK-based preacher who influenced the Sousse (Tunisia) beach attack in 2015 gets £123,000 of legal aid to fight deportation and lives in a £1Million house.

One of the most pressing concerns for European security services specifically stems from the weak judicial system. Indeed, about 500 hardcore jihadists- 254 in France alone- are to be freed from European jails in the next two years. What needs to happen really is to not allow for terrorists/jihadists to be freed before serving their full sentence.

European law-enforcement need to focus on monitoring radicalised multiple offenders that may have a higher probability to carry out a terror attack. The British MI5 is taking that matter seriously now: for proof it has just increased the number of behavioural scientists it uses by 50% to improve the agency’s chances of catching former jihadists who re-engage with planning attacks.

A ray of hope: in the latest landmark terrorism trial in France, the two main Islamic State female plotters of the Notre Dame foiled attack got 30 and 25 years in jail respectively.



violence is 9.4 years for those causing explosions endangering lives, while those convicted of “preparing terrorist acts” were jailed for 8.4 years on average. Ridiculously lenient. The UK is not the only country in Europe with a failing judicial apparatus regarding terrorists: Belgium is another example. The jihadist behind the terror attack in Liege in 2018, Benjamin Herman, that killed three, was a radicalised inmate that was freed just the day before he carried out his act. It was the 14th time since his detention that he was granted temporary leave despite being on the national terror watchlist. The Algerian behind the attack in Charleroi in 2016 that killed two police-

Even more serious, the case of Larossi Abballa, the Moroccan jihadist sentenced in 2013 to three years in jail for recruiting jihadists to go to Afghanistan and Pakistan and that carried out in 2016, in the name of the Islamic State, the horrible murder in Magnanville of a couple, that were both police officers.

The leniency of the judicial system coupled with naivete allowed for example an Algerian jihadist from the GIA terror group that was sentenced to ten years in jail in 2006 for planning attacks in Paris, to be freed in 2011. He was under house arrest before he vanished. In another case, in France, a judge forgot to extend the detention of a jihadist

# Is Political Transition Possible in Syria?



**Jwan Dibo**

Since the outbreak of the first spark of the Syrian armed conflict in 2012, the term “political transition” has become common and widely used by global, regional and local involved actors in the Syrian crisis. From 2012 until 2015, 13 resolutions had been issued by the UN Security Council regarding different aspects of the Syrian dilemma including 2254 which was about the process of a political transition, but without any outcomes. On the contrary, since then, the posture in Syria is getting worse and more complicated and the prospects of a political transition have waned.

A political transition can be defined as an act or process of changing from a form of totalitarian rule to a democratic or quasi-democratic rule that believes in human rights and the rule of law. This initial definition indicates that political transition is associated with democracy and constitutes a vital part of the process of democratisation. This, in turn, suggests that the concept and process of political transition can live and succeed only in a democratic or semi-democratic environment. Put different-

ly, a political transition can only be accomplished if conflicting parties believe in democracy in its minimum levels.

Any successful political transition in the countries that have been experiencing armed conflicts, like Syria, requires a set of conditions to be achieved. On the one hand, some of these stipulations are objective and linked to international and regional players embroiled in this stalemate. On the other hand, the rest of these requirements are subjective and related to Syrian local warring parties. These fighting groups, in turn, reflect the Syrian society in terms of culture and the extent of its acceptance of democracy and the principle of a political settlement to this bloody dispute. The external players engaged in the Syrian dilemma have no consensus yet about the necessity of the solution of a political transition in Syria. On the contrary, these global and regional actors have practically worked for the opposite side, namely, the prolongation of the strife in Syria in harmony with their interests at the expense of Syrian people. Every single country participating in the Syrian calamity has goals and agendas that contradict the principle of a settlement based on a political transition.

Russia, which has been the major participant in the Syrian catastrophe, has aimed to protect and maintain al-Assad’s regime. This has been at the expense of the devastating of more than half of Syria, killing about one million people, and displacing more than ten million internally and ex-

ternally. In other words, Russia has aimed to safeguard and sustain the Al-Alawite regime. Turkey, the primary incubator of the political and armed Syrian opposition, has had sectarian objectives represented in supporting the Sunni’s dissenters and establishing an Islamic rule in Damascus led by the Muslim Brotherhood in the general framework of Erdogan’s plan to retrieve the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, Turkey has aided Islamic terrorist and extremist groups including ISIS and Al-Nusra. Especially, when Turkey’s interests have intersected with ISIS and other extremist groups in fighting Kurdish aspirations in Syria. Iran’s role in Syria resembles Turkey’s role because Iran has had sectarian agendas like Turkey, but in the favour of the idea of spreading Shiism across the Middle East. Based on this basis, Iran has been

supporting al-Assad’s regime with money, militias, and weapons.

The Syrian warring parties do not believe in the idea of a political transition because it is a democratic process and the two conflicting parties, i.e., the regime and the opposition, are inveterate enemies of democracy. Each party of them, particularly, the regime has already decided to eliminate the other. At the time of talking about the idea of political transition, the regime has strived to tighten the screws on Idlib, the last stronghold of the Islamist extremist opposition backed by Turkey. In return, the armed Syrian opposition has cooperated with Turkey to occupy more Syrian lands and undermine Kurdish-led Self-administration in north and northeast Syria.

Based on the aforementioned, the prospects for the success of political transition in Syria

are almost non-existent. The most important factors for the success of any political transition in Syria are completely absent. There are no neutral international forces on the ground to impose any political compromise built on a political transition. On the opposite of that, there are biased global and regional forces to defend either the regime or the opposition. Likewise, the warring local parties have no willingness about the need for a political transition. Similarly, there is no unanimity among international and regional powers involved in the Syrian impasse over the significance of the ultimate compromise and peaceful political transition. All the conditions mentioned above are not in existence in the case of Syria. Hence, it is very difficult to talk at present about any fruitful political transition project in Syria.



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