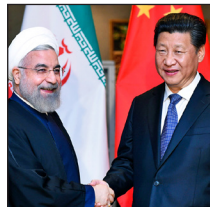




UAE Wants Peace Back through Dialogue

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New Powers in the UK to Kick out Spies from Hostile States

The Times said that the UK government will impose a new law calling those working on behalf* of foreign countries to be registered and not doing so will become a criminal offence. The newspaper said that Boris Johnson will use the Queen's Speech on May 11 to announce the bill. It will be to prosecute and deport foreign spies who threaten the UK national interests. The Official Secrets Act 1911, which is intended to protect the United Kingdom from espionage, will be updated so it can be used against anyone attempting to undermine Britain's interest from abroad.



Khairat el-Shater and Mohammed Badie on Egypt's Terrorist List

The Egyptian government put 46 people on the terrorist list including the Muslim Brotherhood leading members Khairat el-Shater and Mohammed Badie. The list is based on five-year-old requests and lawsuits. Khairat el-Shater is the Deputy Supreme Guide of the organisation in Egypt. He was the initial candidate of the movement's Freedom and Justice Party during the 2012 Egyptian presidential election before being disqualified by the election commission. He was arrested on 3 July 2013 and faced charges of incitement to murder. Mohammad Badie is the eighth Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. He has headed the Egyptian branch of the organization since 16 January 2010. He became the first elected Supreme Guide in the history of the organisation after elections held in 2010 and succeeded Mohammed Mahdi Akef who became the first ex-Supreme Guide who is still alive.

Zarif and Soleimani: The Sharpening Public Rivalries within Iran's Political Circles

Three hours out of seven leaked from an interview with the Iranian foreign minister have sparked widespread controversy in the Islamic Republic. The excerpts first appeared on a London-based channel. Zarif said that the slain commander Soleimani was directing foreign policy and attempting to sabotage the JCPOA; the Iran nuclear deal. Zarif also said that Iranian diplomacy had been undermined and overshadowed by the military's actions. Iran's government said that an investigation had been ordered into the leaked audio. Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh called the leak "illegal"

adding that there had been "a mutual commitment to maintaining its confidentiality." Zarif complained about the extent of the influence the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its assassinated commander Qassem Soleimani had in comparison, he said he had "zero" influence over Tehran's foreign policy. News agencies close to the (IRGC) attacked Zarif. "Everybody knows Zarif's differences with the IRGC's general policy but the recording made them now clearer," Fars News Agency said. "Was the leak a non-official plan to affect the upcoming presidential elections?" Tasnim News Agency asked.



Mohammad Javad Zarif

Ankara Temporarily Withdrew Support from the Muslim Brotherhood

After Turkey failed in Egypt, Syria, Libya, Sudan and other troubled countries that it had helped destabilise by instigating hatred with its sectarian and divisive discourse, exploiting the just aspirations of its peoples for civil rights and rule of law, it has started to abandon the organisations it had once used to infiltrate the local communities namely the Muslim Brotherhood, specifically in Egypt.

Ankara started to mend fences with Egypt which knew how to handle Turkey. Egypt chose to cooperate with Ankara's historical enemies Greece and Cyprus. To Turkey's disadvantage, France and other Arab countries, such as KSA and UAE joined in. Those countries are not against the Turkish people but they have been badly affected by Ankara's foreign policies which are based on expansionism using extremist militias. Turkey's foreign policies are inspired by the MB founder Hassan al-Banna's school of thought, which justifies spying for foreign States and uses religion to strengthen the bonds among the MB members at the expense of their national identity.

Curbing the MB Activities

Many Turkish officials, including the President, have issued statements on curbing the MB activities. Media reports said that Turkish authorities have ordered Istanbul-based TV channels affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood to stop airing criticism geared towards Egypt immediately. Sources familiar with the matter told Al Arabiya that Turkey issued an order for three Muslim Brotherhood channels (El Sharq TV, Watan TV, and Mekameleen) to immediately stop airing political shows critical of Egypt and to only air non-political programs and series. The authorities signed agreements with the MB leaders to follow the government orders and threatened that penalties will be imposed on those who defy the order; including expulsion and



The Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

permanently closing down the TV stations.

This drove MB media personalities to express their concerns over their uncertain future. MB journalist who works for el-Sharq TV, Sami Kamal el-Din, tweeted that the Turkish authorities gave official instructions to the employees of El Sharq TV, Watan TV and Mekameleen and warned them of potential penalties. Even before el-Sharq TV announced -without giving reasons- the cancellation of its main political show, the political activist Ghada Naguib, who was stripped of her Egyptian citizenship and who is married to Egyptian actor and dissident Hisham Abdullah who fled to Turkey, had confirmed that Turkish authorities ordered the MB TV channels to stop airing political shows because Turkey wants to make things right with Egypt.

Just the Beginning

On 20 March, Alarbiya TV channel stated that Turkey's National Intelligence Organisation (MIT) was reviewing all the files of the MB members who have entered Turkey since 2013. It also said that the number of residence permits given to MB members have declined and that the Turkish Intelligence met with MB members and ordered them to leave for London within 90 days while instructing others to leave for

Malaysia.

The MIT circulated the government decision to ban any Egyptian MB member, coming from Syria or Iraq who had fought with extremist and terrorist organisations, from entering or living in Turkey. The channel also revealed that MB leaders and businessmen who live in Turkey decided to transfer their money to other countries in the coming weeks. It added that some leaders who used to live in Turkey were involved in money laundering activities and made multi-million dollar deals on suspicious trade activities, illegal drug trade and arms trade.

Turkey has taken many steps to tighten the noose around the MB, including: cancelling the residency of those who were involved with terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Ansar Bait al-Maqdis or participated in terrorist activities whether in Egypt or abroad, coordinating with the Egyptian authorities to counter terrorism and prosecute high-risk Egyptian terrorists, withholding Turkish passports from MB members, although they were supposed to receive them after the necessary vetting by the security services. Moreover, the Turkish intelligence held consultations with the Egyptian intelligence to stop transferring Syrian and foreign mercenaries to Libya and Egypt stressed that this issue had

to be resolved in the coming few weeks.

A Genuine Move, or mere Maneuvering?

These announcements undoubtedly contributed to the stability of Egypt and maybe Libya and Syria if Cairo managed to force Ankara to withdraw from all the regions it is controlling in those countries whether through its army or militias i.e. Turkey's mercenaries.

On 19 March, The Egyptian State Minister of Media & Information, Osama Heikal, welcomed the Turkish decision to force anti-

Egypt channels to stick to media ethics and hailed the decision as "a good initiative to create a welcoming atmosphere to discuss the unresolved problems between the two countries." "Opening TV channels in a country to speak against another country is not acceptable in international relations. Every country has to look for its interests and its people's interests." He added

"Anti-Egypt"

Whether this a reflection Turkey's real desire to improve relations with other countries, its acknowledgement of its failure to implement its expansionism plans in the region or a maneuver it was forced to make, owing to the regional boycott, the economic losses and the currency devaluation, Turkey would not take this difficult decision, after years of propaganda and logistic support to its militias, unless it had no other choice.

Throughout the past years of conflict in the region, Turkey has always tried to find a way to interfere and expand; it talked about its Ottoman legacy, national security and pretended to protect a people from a political regime. Therefore, regional countries should not trust Turkey's current change of heart, rather stand together to put an end to Turkey's expansionism plans.

Region Torn by Wars...

UAE Wants Peace Back through Dialogue

Some Middle Eastern countries went through a decade of violent religious and ethnic conflicts. Foreign ME countries used stirring speeches and logistical support to escalate these conflicts for the sake of their interests. The ME peoples are now aware that these conflicts will not be in their interest and will destroy their future and that the only way to live in peace and have a promising future is to accept the others and acknowledge their rights.

The UAE Is Aware

It is clear that the UAE is aware of the power of peace to achieve prosperity in the region, thus, it has kept itself far from supporting these conflicts and stood against the tyrants and even gave them its advice (that tyrant in Syria knows this but he insisted to lead the country to downfall to satisfy his thirst for power and guard the interests of the countries that stand behind him).

The UAE chose the shortest and best way to establish peace; it is dialogue.* The UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs confirmed on January 18 that cooperation between the UNSC and the Arab League is necessary to resolve disputes and crises and strengthen the spirit of solidarity and unity and face the threats to peace and security. He stated, representing the Arab League, in the UN Security Council at a briefing entitled "Coordination between Security Council and Arab League": "The Arab world's problems cannot be resolved without key players on the regional and global scene."

"We are waiting for the day when stability returns to our region and the the UNSC programme does not include Arab crises," he added. The absence of effective solutions leads to the escalation in these ongoing crises and causes them to pose threats to regional and international peace and security," he noted. "Joint Arab Action is one of the most important goal for the UAE to strengthen security, stability and prosperity in the region," he tweeted



The UAE and Global Powers

The UAE does not only call the UNSC for the peaceful solution for the crises in the region, but also calls global powers especially the USA. Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, said on January 21 that: "The UAE is looking forward to working with the new American administration to strengthen relations between the two countries and ensure stability and peace in the Middle East."

He congratulated the new US President on his inauguration on Twitter: "We wish President Joe Biden the best of luck and wish him to bring the USA more prosperity. We are looking forward to strengthening relations with the new administration, furthering the interests of our countries and ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East."

With Arab Countries

Although some countries in the ME involved in conspiracies to divide the region into spheres of influence through Islamist organisations especially the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), the UAE tried to give these organisations and countries a chance to fix what they did. Anwar Gargash, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, noted this when he hoped

that the Arab gulf states would turn over a new leaf.

"From Kuwait to Muscat, through Riyadh, Manama, Doha and Abu Dhabi, we open a new page full of hope and optimism," Anwar Gargash tweeted. "We aspire to a stable and prosperous Arab Gulf, and look to the future with confidence, solid will and confident determination, this is how we feel about the UAE," he added. Those tweets came after the Gulf states had signed, at Al-Ola Summit on January 15, an agreement on regional "solidarity and stability" when the KSA, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt had agreed to resume diplomatic relations, trade ties and flights with Qatar.

The UAE did not only called its Arab countries and global powers for peace but it even called Israel. Therefore, the UAE is paving the way for a new phase which may end long years of conflicts in the Middle East. On September 15, 2020, the UAE signed a historic US-brokered peace deal at the White House and signed the establishment of reciprocal embassies.

On January 24, the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the opening of the Israel embassy in Abu Dhabi: "The Israeli embassy in Abu Dhabi has officially been opened, with the arrival of the mission head Eitan Naeh to Abu Dhabi." "The Israeli embassy in the United Arab

Emirates will promote the full range of relations between the two countries in all areas, and expand ties with the Emirati government, economic bodies and the private sector, academic institutions, the media and more," it added. "The Israeli embassy in the UAE's capital of Abu Dhabi is currently operating out of a temporary office until a permanent facility is located," it noted.

UAE and Strengthening the Human Fraternity

The UAE continued strengthening* fraternity not only between the ME countries but also between the nations. On February 4, Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, made two telephone calls with the Grand Imam of al-Azhar Ahmed el-Tayeb and Pope Francis. "I spoke on the phone with Dr. Ahmed el-Tayeb and His Holiness Pope Francis about strengthening the principles of the Document for Human Fraternity against the the crises the world faces today especially COVID-19," Al Nahyan tweeted

"My country will continue supporting the human solidarity because it believes it is the only way to have a good life and a promising future," he confirmed. AlBayan website says that the Pope and the grand Imam of al-Azhar appreciate the role of the Crown Prince "in building bridges of understanding and enhancing the message of human fraternity and peace." They cited in this respect Sheikh Mohamed's patronage of the signing of the Document of Human Fraternity in the second anniversary of signing the Document for Human Fraternity.

We cannot count the UAE huge efforts to establish peace in the world's most politically complicated region where the foreign regional countries and their militias have competing interests. That tells that the way the UAE went into to establish peace is still long and needs a lot of patience and hard work.

In Ukraine .. The Turkish Fire Gets Close to the Russian Wood

Ukraine knows that Biden's US foreign policy towards Russia will be different because the US will take advantage of the Russo-Ukrainian wars in Donbass and Crimea. Apparently, Turkey also wants to take advantage of these wars claiming to protect the Tatars; Turkic ethnicity in Crimea

Bilateral Turko-Ukrainian Military and Intelligence Cooperation

No one can figure out the Turkish motives behind supporting Ukraine against Russia because the bilateral cooperation is older than this. On September 11, CNN Türk said that the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MİT) arrested PKK member İsa Özer in the Ukrainian city of Odessa; the thing that proves the deep cooperation between the two countries.

On the military level, the Ukrainian government stated on 15 October 2020, that President Volodymyr Zelensky would visit Turkey to sign a military cooperation agreement between Ukraine and Turkey. The agreement to be signed would reflect a guarantee for security and peace in the Black Sea region. Moreover, to strengthen the relationship, the Ukrainian President awarded the Turkish President the Order of Prince Yaroslav the Wise for his outstanding personal contribution to strengthening Ukrainian-Turkish interstate cooperation, support for independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

"Turkey does not and never will recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea," Erdoğan said about the annexation of Crimea.

"Turkey sees Ukraine as a key country for ensuring stability, security, peace and prosperity in our region," he confirmed. The Turkish statements definitely did not satisfy Russia from which Turkey bought S-400 missile defence systems to strengthen its relationship with Russia as well.

The Turkish Weapons Reaches Ukraine

Ukrainian Naval Forces Commander Oleksiy Neizhpapa said on 4 January that: "Ukraine expects this year to receive the Turkish unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and corvettes for its navy." "We will use the drones both in sea and land operations," he noted. "Ukraine will reach a production capacity at NATO standards thanks to Ada-class corvettes jointly produced with Turkey," he added. Two months after Neizhpapa's announcement, the Turkish drones reached Ukraine. On March 28, The Ukrainian Air Force conducted drills over

the Black Sea using Turkish attack drones Bayraktar TB2.

Russian Covert Messages to Turkey

Everything made Russia skeptical about Turkey, which cannot be trusted. On 9 April, Putin had a telephone conversation with his Turkish counterpart in which they discussed steps to develop ties between Turkey and Russia along with regional issues. Putin also explained Moscow's approaches to resolving the domestic crisis in Ukraine.

In regards to the Istanbul canal, Putin told Erdoğan that the regime of the Straits in the black sea should be preserved according to the 1936 Montreux Convention to ensure the regional security and stability. This serves as a warning to Ankara if it will continue supporting Kiev in the wars of Donbass and Crimea.

Apparently, Turkey was not impressed by the phone conversation. Thus, Turkey announced on 10 April that

the Turkish President would discuss with his Ukrainian counterpart many issues especially the war in Donbass. "The Presidents will discuss the living conditions of the Crimean Tatars who have ethnic links to Turks, it added. The Turkish President claimed in a joint press conference with his Ukrainian counterpart that the military cooperation between Turkey and Ukraine was not in any way a move against third countries. Erdoğan stated that Turkey supports Ukraine's initiative of the Crimean Platform, which will be held in August, to consolidate the international community around Crimea and achieve its de-occupation and return to Ukraine.

The Turkish Support the NATO Membershi The Mercenaries

Erdoğan confirmed in a statement that "The Republic of Turkey will continue to assist Ukraine in meeting the criteria for membership to the Alliance, as well as the

interoperability of the Armed Forces of Ukraine with NATO, including through appropriate joint military exercises." We can here say that Turkey is playing with fire because it knows how much sensitive Russia is to NATO which imposed sanctions on Russia and stands with Ukraine in its war against Russia.

Besides Nato membership, Turkey will provide Ukraine with another weapon; that is mercenary. On 1 April, the Syrian newspaper al-Watan said that sources close to the Turkish-backed Free Syrian Army in northern Syria told the newspaper that the MİT instructed the leaders of the so-called "National Army" mercenaries to prepare for the possibility of being sent to Ukraine. The MİT wants this military transportation to remain secret to avoid getting into serious problems with Russia, especially if it obtained evidence that Turkey will send Syrian mercenaries to Donbass and Crimea as it did in Libya, Armenia and elsewhere.



Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy visits Ukraine's armed forces near the frontline

Resuscitating Iran with Chinese Billions

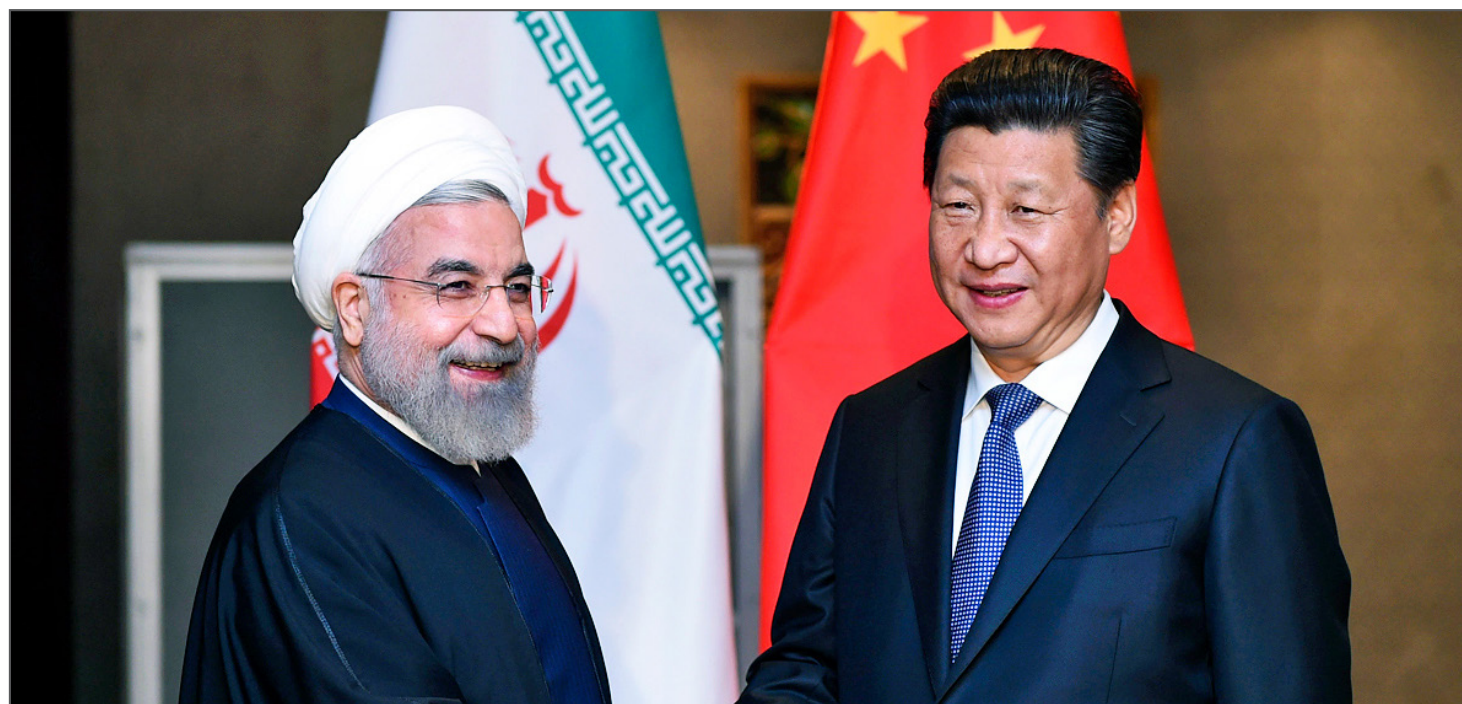
The economic hardship suffered by the Iranian people is mounting the pressure on the regime in Tehran forcing it to resort to alternative choices as it has realized that lifting the American sanctions will take a while, even if it was most probably bound to take place. Therefore, Iran decided that it might be wise to ally with America's biggest economic competitor which is aiming to overtake the U.S. as the world's No. 1 economy i.e. China.

China has Always Supported Iran

Russia and China have always been Iran's allies; they have constantly assisted and supported its nuclear program. On 30 November 2020, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the assassination of the high-ranking Iranian nuclear physicist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh and hoped that the incident would be thoroughly investigated. "Beijing was shocked by the murder of the renowned Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh and condemned this violent and criminal act and calls for an extensive investigation into the event," the spokesperson of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hua Chunying said.

On 5 January, China urged calm and restraint after Iran said it had resumed 20% uranium enrichment at Fordow underground nuclear facility. "China urges all sides to exercise calm and restraint, to stick to the commitments of the agreement and to refrain from taking actions that might escalate tensions, so as to make space for diplomatic efforts and a change in the situation," Hua Chunying told a daily news briefing in Beijing.

On 18 February, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed its support for Iran by stating that "Beijing always believes that the United States' return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is the only correct way to break the Iran nuclear deadlock. China supports the IAEA and Iran in handling safeguard issues through dialogue and consultation and hopes that all relevant parties can play a constructive role in this



The Iranian president (Left) and his Chinese counterparts

regard." "Iran should resume its full implementation of the JCPOA," it concluded by blaming Iran implicitly.

Washington Recognizes the Chinese Role

The Chinese statements made Beijing's influence over Tehran more obvious than ever to the USA, which has become almost equivalent to the Russian influence. This has driven the State Department to welcome the Chinese and Russian initiatives in the negotiations: "The United States hopes that its common interests with China and Russia will help the three countries to cooperate on the Iranian nuclear issue," "in the past, Russia and China during the JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] negotiations played a productive, constructive role because they didn't - they didn't have an interest in seeing Iran acquire a nuclear weapon and they didn't have an interest in seeing the conflict in the region," the spokesperson for the Department of State, Ned Price continued. The comments were in line with a previous announcement where the US expressed interest in resuming negotiations under the auspices of the European Union and the E3+3, including Beijing and Moscow. "The United States was ready to accept an invitation to attend a meeting with Russia, Germany, France, the

United Kingdom, China, and Iran to discuss the nuclear program," the spokesperson for the Department of State, Ned Price, said. "One would expect that those same interests are at play and that despite other serious differences we may have with them on other issues," he added.

China responded two weeks later blaming Washington and Iran but blaming Washington more, saying that it believes it has to make the first step. On 7 March, The Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi said that he hoped the US would lift sanctions on Iran and that Iran needed to take on responsibility in the process too, in the hope that the United States would subsequently lift what he called "unjustified sanctions" on Iran.

Economic Cooperation Breaks the Sanctions

Beijing and Tehran did not waste more time; they took advantage of the US implicit to lift the sanctions, even though it was not put into action yet. The decided to provoke Washington and undermine the sanctions. They increased economic cooperation which will boost Iran's ailing economy through increasing oil imports from Iran. On 19 March, the Wall Street Journal stated that: "China has sharply increased its imports of oil from Iran and Venezuela according to commodities-data company Kpler.

China is expected to import 918,000 barrels a day from Iran in March, which would be the highest volume since a full U.S. oil embargo was imposed against Tehran two years ago."

Multi-Billion Dollar Agreements

The Sino-Iranian cooperation culminated in signing a 25-year cooperation agreement on 27 March; something the US administration might not have expected. The Iranian state media said the agreement, dubbed the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, addresses economic issues amid crippling US sanctions on Tehran. It covers a variety of economic activity from oil and mining to promoting industrial activity in Iran, as well as transportation and agricultural collaborations.

Political Analysts, close to Tehran, said that China extends its influence through Belt and Road Initiative which will include 130 countries. Under the agreement, China is to invest \$400 billion in Iran's economy. The fund will be used to develop infrastructure, technology, harbours among other sectors. The question now is how will Washington and regional countries deal with the new player i.e. China, which will provide Iran with lifeline to revive its ailing economy and political regime?

Abdul-Khaleq Abdulla Talks to Levant news about the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and the Future of the Gulf States

Hajar al-Desouki

The Arab world was a conflict zone in the last decade. However, there is an important change which the Gulf States and Egypt are making as they are easing tensions and establishing peace in the region.

Based on this vision, the author of "the Gulf Moment in Contemporary Arab History" and the professor of political science Abdulkhaleq Abdulla talked in an exclusive interview with Levantnews

Abdulkhaleq Abdulla demonstrated examples of what he calls "the tendency to reconcile" in the region especially the normalisation of Turko-Egyptian relations. He set out 3 conditions for Ankara to begin dialogue and reconciliation.

He noted that coordination between Cairo, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi is necessary to face the unexpected changes in the Turkish President's positions.

"The train of reconciliation has begun and is about to reach its final destination despite its variable speed between the Arab countries," he said about the Gulf reconciliation. "There is no way to return to the boycott," he confirmed.

"The MB is dispersing, defeating and about to lose the support of Turkey and Qatar," he said about the current situation of the MB. "The MB is no longer a strategic threat but it will not come to end soon," he noted.*

"The Yemen peace initiative the KSA announced confirms that Riyadh wants this war to end. On the other hand, the Houthi militia is the one which takes advantage the most of this crisis in Yemen," he said about the Yemen crisis. Here is the interview script:*

■ We saw in the last months how Cairo was friendly to Turkey especially in the last days.. What do you think of the developments* of the normalisation of the Turko-Egyptian



Abdul-Khaleq Abdulla

relations?

Egypt and the KSA have to beware of the Turkish reconciliation initiatives because it is in the interests of all ME countries to end wars and conflicts, ease tensions, establish peace and look to the future. All ME countries are going this way and this is good and has to be encouraged and reinforced. Everybody had been consumed enough with those wars and conflicts.

■ Some think that the Turkish attempts to reconcile may not meet the demands of the Arab countries especially the KSA, the UAE and Egypt and that they are not enough to win the trust of the Arab countries, what do you think?

If Turkey was honest in this reconciliation and proved it with actions such as giving up its attempts to destabilise Egypt, withdrawing its mercenaries from Libya and withdrawing its political and media support for the MB, then it is* time to take a preliminary step to start dialogue and reconciliation but we have to be careful of the Turkish President's unexpected change of mind.

■ How do you see the MB after the reconciliation between the Gulf States and the normalisation of the Turko-Egyptian relations?

The MB now is the weakest it has ever been since it has been founded; people are more and more rejecting

it, it was defeated in some countries' elections, its members are dispersing, it is about to lose the Turkish and Qatari support and some European countries have been rough on it especially France. Thus, it is no longer a security threat as it was a decade ago.

■ Do you mean the MB will come to end soon?

The MB danger must not be underestimated because every time its political role is about to end it comes back to play a destructive opportunist role. It is a desperate organisation, it has stood in the way of the Arab political life* for centuries and it is not likely to go out of the political life completely soon.

Egypt and the KSA have to beware of the Turkish reconciliation initiatives because it is in the interests of all ME countries to end wars and conflicts

■ Is the USA at a crossroads in its relations with the Gulf States after Biden assumed office?

There are many developments in US-Gulf relations. The new administration is reviewing the US relations with the ME countries especially the Gulf States. Washington has not yet carried out this review the thing that raises many questions; What does Washington want from the Gulf States? Is it planning to withdraw from the region? Why was it aggressive in the decisions it has taken against its allies in the Gulf like it has paused arms sales to the Gulf States especially the F-35 aircraft deal which had all political and institutional approvals? However, most importantly, why this stupid tendency to make things right with Tehran?

■ In the last few years, the UAE stole the global scene many times and discovered conspiracies that would plunge the region into an abyss. Do you think there will be a change in the balance of power in the ME and the World?

The UAE achieved great clear success abroad and locally in 50 years. Its developmental and scientific success is inspiring the countries in the region. After 50 years, the UAE cannot be considered a small state, it is a rising regional power and one of the 33 middle powers in the world. It cannot be said that the UAE is a rentier state or its economy is based on oil. The UAE economy is the second in the Arab world after the KSA and the 27th worldwide. The UAE economy developed greatly as it has many sources of revenue and it is no longer excessively dependent on oil. As well, the UAE is no longer a very conservative society, it is a modern, pluralistic, globalised and open-minded society.

Most importantly, the UAE believes in itself and look forward to the future and know where it wants to be in 2030 and afterwards. Self-confidence is what makes UAE special in the 21st century and took it to Mars and made it the first Arab country to produce nuclear energy for peaceful uses.

The Syrian election and who should rule



Amir Darwish

What has been happening in Syria since March 2011 is a civil war and not a revolution. The Syrian election

The people have long misunderstood words such as, 'freedom', 'liberty', and 'rights', and therefore the violence has been unleashed and is not stopping. A similar condition was present in England between 1642 to 1651, when the country went into civil war. At that time, the situation prompted the English poet, translator, physician, and philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, to write the most important work of his life (the Leviathan) to rescue his country from bloody civil war.

Liberty and freedom can be dangerous when put together. Freedom, taken to its extreme, can result in anarchy, and some in the pursuit of freedom engage in actions that include taking others' lives, as we have seen over the last ten years in Syria. Similarly, liberty has included the allowance of man to hurt others.

Hobbes believed the wrong understanding of liberty caused much of the trouble at the time where freedom was seen, as a matter of living independently off arbitrary power under free states as free men and opposed to monarchy.

The definition of 'free man' was fashionable in England's 1640s, as is the case in present-day Syria. Often it was connected to the Magna Charta and other liberal definitions, such as the right to free trial, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and political rights. Likewise, the definition of freedom is fashionable in Syria and connected to freedom of speech and expression, political rights, and indeed freedom from arbitrary arrest.

By stating 'every man has a right to every thing; even to one another's body', Hobbes pointed out very clearly that all men have the right to take each other's when they are in a state of war and nothing restrains them. Hobbes also insinuates that this entitlement to each other's bodies leads to violence, and violence leads



An Assad election campaign poster in Damascus

to a constant state of war. This state is man's pre-political condition and shows human beings are generally not yet mature enough to enter the world of politics. Everyone in the state of nature begrudges, distrusts, and eventually fights one another, as is the case currently in Syria. That is when life, as Hobbes put and, as it is now in Syria, becomes 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.' This is avoidable by having one absolute sovereign who is able to act firmly against those who let their human nature take over them and start to kill others for possessions, political interests, or other forms of gain. To avoid the state of nature, the pre-political condition, and the state of war, the people in Syria have to enter into a contract with a ruler.

Additionally, this absolute sovereign serves as a divine, unbreakable law to keep everyone safe.

Men then can renounce the state of nature by promising obedience to the Leviathan who spares their lives from the cruel state of nature in Syria. That way also people enter into society in a more civilised way than they are doing now in Syria. This is done as the Leviathan is the only sovereign absolute ruler who has no others to compete with and cause conflicts as in the state of nature.

Noteworthy, just as the Leviathan was, the sovereign in Syria will be a creation of their own people in order

to restrain man's nature and avoid war in the state of nature.

Hobbes reinforces the point that people made the sovereign, 'This is more than Consent, or Concord; it is a real unity of them all, in one and the same Person, made by Covenant of every man with every man'.

This means the ruler and the ruled are one, automatically; neither of them can dominate the other, as man in his nature (according to Hobbes) does not like to be dominated.

Hobbes gave people the power to end the sovereign whenever they wanted, and the Syrian people can do the same. When the Leviathan stops protecting them, that's when they can collectively decide to remove him or replace him.

If anything, Hobbes' words limit, undermine, and prevent the abuse of sovereign power. This makes the sovereign an absolute protector who provides safety; the subjects, on the other hand, have the absolute right to end the sovereign when safety ends. It is worthy to note here, as the sovereign is the people, she has identical rights to the people, which means an attack on her is an attack on a member of the public. This way, if individuals in Syria decide to attack the sovereign, at that time the sovereign shall retaliate, as that is an attack on all Syrians.

When such a contract is achieved, life will become rich; Hobbes's

reference to 'Contentments of life', without the fear of losing safety, is to state that man has the freedom and liberty beyond the physical meaning of impediment. It is the allowance of humanity to prosper as safety gives birth to knowledge, and then science into economic success, and so forth. That way, man's obedience in Syria will be exchanged for peace, safety, property protection, and an overall physical shield from other subjects. In turn, this will cause the society and its economy to flourish.

As man's right to violence is abandoned, but not his right to defend himself; in other words, when someone attacks him, he will retaliate back, but he should not initiate the violence. The Syrian election

The Leviathan in this way became an absolutist proposal, where the people of Syria would make the ruler. This allows man to decide his fate and provides him with true freedom. Hobbes's proposal guaranteed safety, protection of subjects, liberty, protection of property, protection of rights, entitlement to make laws, and overall freedom to change the sovereign when inadequate. Yes, the Leviathan is an absolutist in providing all these, but above all, the Leviathan is not an absolutist in the negative authoritarian connotation of the word. Hobbes could not make it any clearer when referred to the Leviathan as 'covenants without the sword'. When man ends the sovereign, at that time his rights, freedom, and liberty to be violent again will come back and the war will start again. This is not a recipe for dictatorship or despotism, but rather a recipe for living life safely without thinking, 'Can I leave the house and come back to it safely?' It is a recipe to save lives.

It does not matter who rules Syria as long as they show proper governance and the ability to restrain the violence, giving people the right to live again without fear of being killed, as that's the most important 'right' of all. Whether the ruler is called Bashar, Peter, Paul, or whatever—it is security and safety the people of Syria need and not just free speech or freedom of expression.

Playing with fire



Ian Black

Iran's deputy foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, announced dramatically on April 13 that Tehran was ramping up its enrichment of uranium to 60% – its highest level ever- and a big step closer to the 90% that is required for weapons-grade material. Iran was responding to the “evil” act of Israeli sabotage of the Natanz nuclear reactor in Isfahan province.

The timing of the decision – and of the attack – really mattered: two days later indirect negotiations defined as “proximity talks” re-started in Vienna with the aim of reviving the 2015 nuclear agreement between the Islamic Republic, the US, Russia, China, and the E3 – comprising France, Britain and Germany.

The JCPoA, as that deal is known, was the outstanding foreign policy achievement of Barack Obama's eight-year term. Donald Trump, his Republican successor, abandoned the agreement in 2018, re-imposing unilateral US sanctions on Iran and heralding his campaign of “maximum pressure.” President Joe Biden has vowed to return to it, invoking his belief in multilateral diplomacy.

The operation was not denied by the government of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu; indeed news of the attack, and the involvement of the Mossad intelligence agency, were leaked to Israeli media, which are normally subject to strict military censorship on national security issues. One sympathetic American commentator even jokingly dubbed the Israeli leader “Natanzyahu.”

The attack was clearly intended as a signal to the US and Iran and the other parties trying to revive the 2015 deal, that Israel – the only (albeit undeclared) nuclear power in the Middle East – remained opposed to it and would stop at nothing to achieve its goal.

Iran's foreign minister, Javad Zarif, pledged that the 60% enrichment would be reversed, as would previous



Iran's deputy foreign minister Abbas Araghchi

breaches, if the US lifted sanctions. He called the Israeli action a “very bad gamble” that would strengthen Tehran's hand. Iran officially denies any ambitions to build nuclear weapons.

Natanz came in the wake of mounting evidence of Israeli attacks on Iranian forces and proxies in Syria and Iraq, as well as on Iranian tankers smuggling oil to Syria. Israel has also targeted Iranian ships in the Persian Gulf including the Saviz, reportedly used by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which western intelligence officials claim was a command-and-control vessel used to support the Houthis in Yemen's war.

In Vienna the sides are negotiating (albeit from separate hotels) whether the US must lift all sanctions imposed or a selective group that is specifically linked to the nuclear deal. Iran has insisted it will only return to full compliance when the US lifts all sanctions that have throttled its economy, compounding the devastating effect of the covid pandemic. The US says some of these are not related to the nuclear deal but to other issues – such as terrorism, human rights, Iran's ballistic missile programme or money-laundering. But this challenging question is not

just about tense and high-stakes international negotiations. Domestic issues are relevant too – in at least three countries. In Iran presidential elections are due on 18 June and the incumbent, Hassan Rouhani – deemed a moderate in western eyes – will hand over to the new government around 5 August. All the signs are that he will be replaced by a hardliner linked to the IRGC. Given their past objections to the JCPoA, that is assumed to make it far harder to resolve the nuclear issue.

Domestic politics are also part of the story in Israel. Netanyahu is considered to be “weaponizing” Iran's purported nuclear ambitions in his own interests following last month's inconclusive general election – the fourth in less than two years. Critics accuse him of seeking to avoid corruption charges – the first ever faced by a serving prime minister – in order to cajole hesitant coalition partners from joining his Likud-led government by manufacturing a national security crisis. “His judgment is liable to lead Israel into war,” as the Haaretz newspaper put it.

And in the US too the nuclear issue remains highly controversial for Biden, who has repeatedly signaled his commitment to rejoining the

JCPoA. But he faces an uphill task in trying to undo the reputational and very real damage caused by his disruptive predecessor in the Oval Office.

Congressional objections to the Democrat's nominees and demands that they expand the original deal to include Iran's regional activities and ballistic missile program are unlikely to go down well in Tehran. Analysts have begun talking about crafting a “JCPoA plus”. Opponents see Biden as just another version of Obama when it comes to Iran: by reviving the nuclear agreement he will recognize its regional ambitions at the expense of both Israel and the Gulf states, they argue.

Another factor in weakening America's economic leverage is the signing of 25-year strategic accord with China, in which Beijing has promised to invest \$400bn in Iran in exchange for cheap oil. The IMF is predicting that Iran's economy is on its way to recovery

On paper, Washington remains committed to diplomacy, but the succession of escalatory decisions in recent times suggests that both Israel and Iran, having chosen the path of confrontation, are now playing with fire.

Britain's Historic Crossroads



James Denselow

Too often it is a cliché to describe a country at a crossroads or major point in its history but increasingly it seems that Great Britain is in exactly that place. The death of the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Philip, just shy of his 100th birthday, has reminded the country that some of its seemingly most permanent figures exit the stage. His death follows a fraught year for the Royal Family who have had to batten down the hatches due to Covid as well as weather the storm from the departure of Harry and Megan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, from being working royals.

A crisis of sorts within the royal family is just one of the factors that brings Britain to this historic crossroads. Although Brexit and the departure from the EU has got 'done', its legacy continues to shape the country. Such a divisive referendum split the country into two camps whose identities continues to shape politics today.

More dramatically the shockwaves of Brexit are being felt in Northern Ireland and Scotland leading to serious challenges for the maintenance of the Union itself. Indeed, Scottish elections in May are projected to be dominated by the Scottish Nationalist Party who are all primed to push for another Independence Referendum that their vote share would be it difficult to deny.

Number 10 has denied that it would be bounced into granting another vote and put out a statement that "calling for a referendum in this way in the middle of a pandemic is not right." However, the pandemic won't last forever and indeed the success of the UK's vaccine campaign may be a uniting factor in any future argument for keeping Great Britain together. Nevertheless, it seems that the discord generated by Brexit will force the question of Scotland's splitting from the Union to be put to

the vote in some form or other in the years to follow.

Meanwhile in Northern Ireland successive nights of violence have seen over 55 police officers injured in a level of unrest "not seen in years". The triggers of these events are myriad and linked to Republican leaders flouting Covid regulations to attend a funeral and feelings of being over policed, but the single biggest context change to what has been a period of peace in Northern Ireland, has been Brexit and the introduction of a border in the Irish Sea as part of the agreement made with the EU. Whilst Wales remains the least likely to succeed from the United Kingdom, record-breaking numbers of people in Wales are in favour of independence, a new poll suggests. Conducted for ITV News Tonight by Savanta ComRes, the new survey found just under 40 per cent of Welsh citizens to be in favour of separating

from the UK, representing the highest levels of support for Welsh independence ever recorded.

The 2019 UK election, won by Boris Johnson's Conservatives, promised the 'levelling up' of northern areas of the country previous dominated by the Labour Party. However, Covid and the massive amount of Government spending on the health service and furloughing the economy has meant that serious questions remain as to whether those promises can be kept in the post-Covid period, meaning that another large chunk of the country may feel that their expectations have been badly managed.

The mantra of the original Brexit advocates was that people should vote to 'take back control', it would seem that the nations of the UK, as well as the regions too, are increasingly feeling that way towards their own political future that may not involve

the Union. However, that the Royal Family, the rock of so much of the country's identity, is now mourning the loss of the Duke of Edinburgh may be a catalyst towards a greater shared collective identity.

This would be moving against the headwinds described earlier in this article and sadly for those advocates of the Union the current Covid restrictions mean that there will not be a huge public turnout around the Duke's funeral which will be a small family affair. Yet the polling in favour of Scottish independence declined recently supposedly linked to scandals within the Scottish Nationalist Party as well as the success of the Covid vaccination programme, a reminder that the depth of feeling towards these issues is perhaps somewhat shallow and open to influence meaning that the crossroads the country is facing is all to play for



10 Downing Street

Iraq's Kurds mark 30th anniversary of UN resolution 688



Jawad Qadir

The Kurds ought to continue efforts to develop their institutions in accordance with human rights and the rule of law, including those rights and laws pertaining to freedom of the press and the highest standards of journalism.

This week, Iraq's Kurds celebrate the 30th anniversary of the United Nations' Security Council resolution 688, which many in the Kurdistan Region still regard as a pivotal international decision that swung the tide of battle in Iraq in favor of the Kurds. The resolution was passed on April 5, 1991, in the aftermath of the Gulf War amid Iraqi army's anticipated onslaught against the rebellion in the northern Kurdish and southern Shiite populated regions of the country.

The UN resolution was passed after Iraqi army's defeat and withdrawal from the neighboring Kuwait. Fearing retaliation for their rebellion against the Iraqi regime under former dictator Saddam Hussein, millions of Kurds left their homes in Kurdistan and took refuge in neighboring Turkey and Iran. The resolution was passed after pressure by France, the United States and Great Britain, as millions of Kurds were trapped in the border mountains trying to escape the Iraqi army.

The UN resolution, shortly, led to the establishment of the so-called No Fly Zone in both south and Kurdish north, which effectively protected the local populations, especially in the north, from Saddam's vengeance. Soon after, Kurdish political factions took the charge in their areas and held their first elections in 1992. More than a decade later, in 2003, the Iraq War, led by the US against the regime, toppled Saddam and paved the way for the creation of today's Kurdistan Region of Iraq, with its own constitutionally lawful government, parliament and judiciary system.



Heads of state and their representatives at a meeting of the United Nations Security Council in New York

The resolution 688 has since been heralded by most international law scholars as a major action carried out by the United Nations to lawfully intervene in conflicts within the borders of sovereign states. In both former Yugoslavia and Libya, the resolution 688 was employed as a precedence to impose new No Fly Zones in those war-torn regions. For the Kurds of Iraq, however, the resolution was a testament to the world community's humanitarian interference and support for their national cause. It was a response to the atrocities, including genocide and chemical attacks, committed against the Kurdish population of Iraq at the hands of successive regimes in Baghdad. But the Kurds also needed to demonstrate that the support of the world community would foster democracy and respect for human rights in the Kurdistan Region; that the Kurdish rule would fundamentally be different from Saddam Hussein's brutal treatment of dissent. After all, the Kurdistan Region is itself a product of resilience and defiance against suppression,

which in the end won the support of the free world; it could not reproduce the same suppressive system of governance which it had suffered from and bravely fought against.

But how have Kurds in Iraq managed to establish and develop a political system that corresponds to the basic human rights and political freedoms promoted by the free world?

The answer to that question, indeed, is not straightforward. The Kurds fought a four-year civil war in the 1990s, but they also managed to end the war and establish peace, which has been in place since. The Kurds have allowed press freedom and cherished freedom of expression, but still, there are worrying reports about people harassed and their freedoms taken because of their dissent and critique of the Kurdish establishment.

These observations need to be heeded seriously by the Kurdish parties and the political community in the country. The Kurdistan Region needs to maintain the political system that works for the preservation of hard-won freedoms and respect for

human integrity, by which it will continue to ensure the unwavering support of world community.

The Kurds ought to continue efforts to develop their institutions in accordance with human rights and the rule of law, including those rights and laws pertaining to freedom of the press and the highest standards of journalism.

These efforts over decades to provide for personal security and political stability, so that citizens in the Kurdistan Region can live peaceful lives and pursue their futures, have been successful. Security has been fundamental to the Kurdish existence and its effectiveness largely a result of Kurdistan Region's own policies and procedures.

But the Kurdistan Region must promote human rights to be fully preserved for all and adhered to by all, in accordance with the full independence of the justice system, principles of human rights, and respect for the rule of law. It is by doing so that the Kurdistan Region can preserve its hard-won freedoms and continue to secure the support of the world.

Where will the Muslim Brotherhood go if Turkish-Egyptian problems are settled?



Sami Moubayed

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) of Egypt is confused—with due right. They do not really know what to make of the rapprochement in-the-making between their home country, Egypt, and host country, Turkey. For the past month there has been plenty of talk about Ankara abandoning the MB, peddled mainly by the Saudi al-Arabiya TV. Among other things, al-Arabiya said that Turkey was reviewing the residency permits of Egyptian members of the MB while investigating their bank accounts and financial dealings.

The reports said that some members of the MB had been arrested and others were earmarked for deportation to Egypt. That of course was in addition to asking three Egyptian opposition channels based in Turkey to tone down their criticism of President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi. The three channels, El-Sharq, Watan TV, and Mekameleen, were threatened with fines if they defied orders of the Turkish government.

That put the MB on high alert, fearing a sudden abandonment by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The Turkish leader has done it before, after all, giving them plenty of reason to worry. He sold out his Syrian proxies in Aleppo back in the summer of 2016, in order to march on the cities of Jarablus, Azaz, and al-Bab. He did it again in mid-2018, abandoning the Turkish-backed groups in East Ghouta in exchange for sending his proxies to overrun the city of Afrin. If full normalization with Egypt was now on the table, there was no reason why he wouldn't give serious consideration to abandoning the

Egyptian MB, who leaders have been living in Turkey since coup against President Mohammad Morsi eight years ago.

Assurances by Turkey

The Acting Guide of the Egyptian MB Ibrahim Munir came out to assure his followers on 20 March 2021, via the Doha-based al-Jazeera TV. He said that Turkey had no intention of withdrawing support or asking the MB to leave Turkish territory, asking his men to trust President Erdogan. When that statement did not sooth their worries, Erdogan's adviser Yasin Aktay appeared on same television channel, denying reports of any divorce between his boss and the MB. This week, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu went a step further, issuing a third assurance, saying that his country did not approve of Egypt's labeling of the MB as a terrorist organization. "We were against the coup in Egypt" he said, in reference to the 2003 toppling of Morsi, "not because it was the Muslim Brotherhood." The Turkish minister added: "If Sisi was in office that day and somebody else had carried out a coup, we would shown the same principled stance."

Despite all the above, the Egyptian MB realizes that its fate remains on the negotiating table between Turkey

and Egypt just like it was on the Saudi-Qatari one. The Emir of Qatar Tamim Bin Hamad had famously refused distancing his country from the MB, sustaining three years of boycott by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Their condition for lifting the siege was to expel members of the MB from Doha (including members of its Palestinian branch Hamas), stop supporting Islamic groups across the region, and moderate the editorial policy of al-Jazeera. That did not work, however, and Qatar returned to the family of Gulf nations last year, without having to fulfil any of those demands. Turkey is not Qatar, however, and has none of the financial means that allow its leader to defy the world for the sake of the MB. Its only strength is the ideological affiliation between Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the MB, with the Turkish leader himself being a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood.

One blow after another

Last April the MB suffered a heavy blow when their ally in Sudan, President Omar al-Bashir, was overthrown by popular revolution. Two months later, Saudi Arabia used its heavyweight influence to convince King Abdullah II into closing the main branch of the MB in Jordan. That was a major setback for the MB,

who had relied heavily on Jordan for their Middle East network, given that the Hashemite Kingdom was the one country where MB activities were legalized by the state and in which they were active both within the state apparatus and throughout civil society. The MB had been eying Amman as a Plan B, when and if they were asked to leave Qatar or Turkey. In December 2019, they scrambled to host a conference on the Dead Sea, showering King Abdullah with praise. That was just weeks after The Wall Street Journal broke the story of an unannounced visit by Qatari Foreign Minister Mohammad Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani to Riyadh, discussing ways to improve Qatari-Saudi relations, at the expense of the MB.

Jordan is now obviously not an option for the MB. Everywhere else in the region, they are regarded as outcasts and outlaws, from Syria and Saudi Arabia to the UAE and Bahrain. They have zero chance of succeeding in a country like Lebanon, due to the towering presence of secular Sunnis like Saad al-Hariri and powerful Shiites like Hasan Nasrallah. That leaves them with Gaza, which they have ruled, via Hamas, since 2007. But that fiefdom might soon end, however, as Palestinians go to the polls to elect a new parliament and president. The Deal of the Century

forced Hamas to temporarily reconcile with Fateh, which might lead to a power-sharing formula and eventually, and end the separation of Gaza. If that happens, then it would leave the MB with no options to turn to but Qatar and Turkey—their traditional safe havens since 2011. It would make the group increasingly reliant on Erdogan willing—perhaps more than ever—to answer to his beck and call.





Refugees in Turkey

Europe Is between Two Fires: Islamism and Refugees



Fadi Eed

The refugee crisis was the most powerful card* played by the Turkish President to harm the EU economies, while political Islam (Islamism) was the most powerful card to threaten the EU stability. To know more, let us read some chapters of recent history* specifically in April 2019 after Viktor Orbán, the President of the Fidesz party, was re-elected for a third term as the Prime Minister of Hungary. He always confirmed in his campaign that: "If I was defeated there would be a mess in the immigration and our enemies who want us to lose our land would win."

Before Orbán who became a far-right hero, Hungarian President János Áder was singing the same tune when he said that: "Vienna became a nasty place because of immigrants and foreigners," the thing that angered* many Austrian politicians including the young chancellor of Austria Sebastian Kurz.

Here we have to shed light not on the

Hungarian elections because they were predictable but on Hungary's* decision makers' policy which reflects what is really happening in Europe and the threats, the challenges and the pressure it is facing from the UK which separated from the EU, the USA which takes the lion's share in the Middle East, Russia which pressurises Europe by taking advantage of the need of the European markets for its gas and Turkey which incubates** terrorists in camps in the east of the country and uses refugees as the new Janissaries who will extend Neo-Ottomanism to further than Istanbul. Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary* László Kövér delivered a speech in April 2019 to the forum of Sopron (a city in western Hungary) saying that: "500 churches have closed in London since 2001 while 423 new mosques have opened. The practising Muslims and Christians have become between 800 and 900 thousand but more than 50% of practising Muslims are below 25 years old. If the UK cultural and demographic composition became like this, would Hungary want to have the same thing or avoid it?"

Orbán said agreeing with Kövér about

the future demography of Europe because of Arab and Muslim refugees in Europe: "Most refugees in Europe come from Muslim countries, thus, if this goes on like this Muslims will be the largest population in the EU major cities."

"If that is what is going on in Europe, our question is what kind of Islam will be in Europe?" Kövér asks. What kind of Islam we will have in Europe as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) wormed its way into it and controlled almost all Islamic (foundations, charities, institutions ... etc) if not all. Austria, Zurich, Rome, Paris and before them London are now safer and quieter havens for the Turkish MB members and Europe is now threatened by political Islam. What happened to Europe especially its biggest two nations France and Germany is difficult to deal with since they are the most affected by the refugee crisis. Moreover, the penetration of the Turkish intelligence organisation (MIT) severely affected them as the number of terrorist attacks in France and Germany proves this; they were the world's most regions subjected to terrorist attacks although Britain was

supposed to be much more targeted because of its major role in 2003 invasion of Iraq and the war on Syria, Yemen and Libya.

This was not a surprise for the deep state in France. We remember what the retired French Naval Officer and Admiral Édouard Guillaud said in 2012 to the political weekly *Le Point* about the danger that threatens the future of Europe: "The jihadists and extremists who are trained in camps in eastern Turkey will come crawling to us sooner or later after their mission is over in the Middle East."

To sum up, with the continuation of immigration from the Middle East and Africa to Europe and the effect of the ISIS ideology upon the European Muslims who lived and were born in the European societies (according to reports from those countries) as we saw, in Syria and Iraq, ISIS leaders of European nationalities, and with the transformation of Turkey from a transit country for extremists to an HQ country for them as Erdoğan sees these extremists as the new Janissaries who will extend his country's influence outside Turkey. Now it is clear what kind of Islam Europe will have in the near future.

The clashes in Qamishli Northeast Syria: Another attempt by Russia and Assad's regime



Zara Saleh

The tensions between the Kurdish security forces known as Asayish and the pro-Syrian government militias known as mercenaries of the National Defence forces have been increased in last few days. In Qamishli known as the Kurdish "political capital" northeast Syria, the clashes broke out in the neighborhood of Al-Tayy south Qamishli following a pro-Assad's regime forces attacks on the checkpoint of the Kurdish security forces. As a result, an Asayish officer has been killed on the first day of the pro-government attacks. Then, the clashes continue till now despite the temporary cease-fire that has been reached by the Russian mediation. According to the Kurdish sources, the violent clashes continued today as well, and the Kurdish forces have been advancing to control

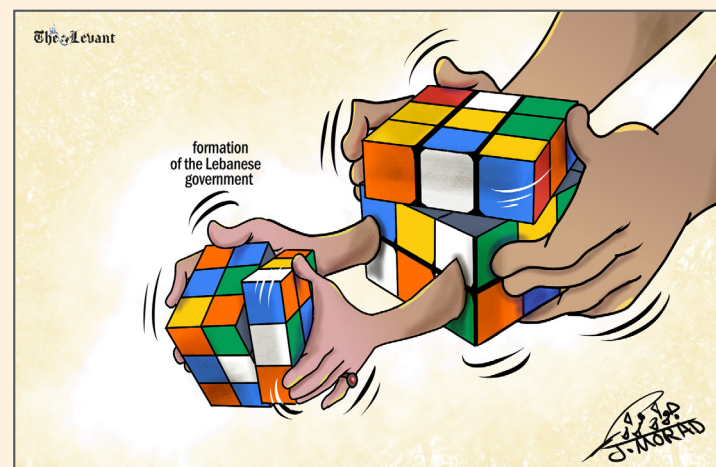
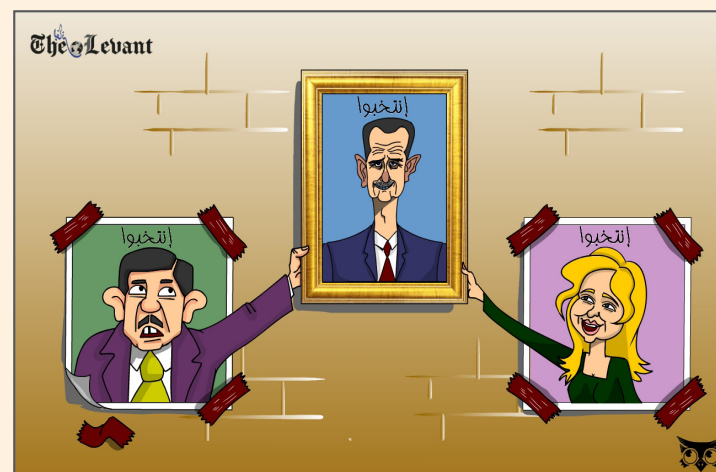
the neighborhood of Tayy aiming to clean it completely from pro-government mercenaries. Russia, on the one hand, has been involved in the recent incident trying to play a mediating role between the two sides, whereas the Syrian regime has no comment regarding the clashes. From the Kurdish point of view, however, Russia and Assad's regime have repeatedly trying to create chaos in the region with the purpose to reclaim control of the Kurdish-led administration areas. Simultaneously with that, the Russian forces have been briefly withdrawn from two military bases in Tal Rifaat northern countryside of Aleppo as a Russian plan to leave the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in frontlines with the Turkish army and its mercenaries of the Syrian National Army. Therefore, Moscow's aims in such as plan are again to use Turkish threats as a pressure card against the US and its ally of the SDF to the advantage of the Syrian regime. Consequently, Russia has been failed

to play and neutral mediation role in the recent extreme tensions between the Kurdish forces and the pro-Assad militias as Russia itself always been on the Syrian regime's side. The autonomous administration in northeast Syria led by the Kurdish authorities with the participation of other Syrian components such as Arab and Syriac as well has always been a subject to such military attacks by pro-government militia groups under the Russian observation. Furthermore, the nowadays clashes in Qamishli, arguably, the likelihood considered as a Russian plan against the Kurdish administration and to re-take control under the city with the Assad's regime at the expense of the US military presence. In the last few hours, the Kurdish security forces have continued the advance towards controlling the neighbourhood of Tayy and defeating the so-called National Defence forces. The neighbourhood of Tayy is known as a "Baghouz or Al-Hul camp" due to the nature of the NDF militia that has



no different from other ideological and extremist groups such as ISIS, Al-Nusra front, and Baathist forces. As a result of such a Russian negative role in the region that considered the first as a message to the American presence in northeast Syria. So, the Kurds now are expecting more practical political and military actions from the US to protect their allies as it is a common interest for both parties and as an appropriate strategy for the American presence in the Syrian conflict in general especially there is a talk about the participation of Hezbollah militia in last attacks on Kurds in Qamishli according to some local sources.

The Levant CARICATURE



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