



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

**Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries**

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**The Restructuring Procces of Iraq**

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**09 MARCH 2018**

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## 1. IRAQ

- **Pakistan Stresses Its Keeness To Develop Its Relations With Iraq In Various Fields**

Pakistan has stressed its keeness to develop its relations with Iraq in various fields. "The ambassador of the Republic of Iraq in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and Safia al-Suhail met with the new ambassador of Pakistan to the Kingdom in her office at the Iraqi embassy building," a foreign ministry statement said.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?pzbv35V6WUmY2QjR8sfTUQ%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?pzbv35V6WUmY2QjR8sfTUQ%253d%253d)

- **Nine Islamic State members, including suicide attacker, killed, west of Kirkuk**

Nine Islamic State militants, including a suicide attacker, have been killed in an operation, west of Kirkuk, the pro-government paramilitary troops announced. In a statement, the media service of al-Hashd al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilization Forces) said, "an ambush was set, depending on information from the intelligence, leaving nine IS members killed in Wadi al-Rahma, north of al-Zab town in Hawija. One of them was a suicide attacker."

More Details:

<https://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/nine-islamic-state-members-including-suicide-attacker-killed-west-kirkuk/>

- **Abadi Raises Salaries of Hashd al-Shaabi Members: Source**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has approved a ministerial order to increase the wages of Iranian-backed militias of Hashd al-Shaabi, a source from Abadi's office told the Iraqi media. According to the decision, the salaries of Hashd al-Shaabi members will be equal to the soldiers in the Iraqi army.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/421075>

- **Border crossings suffer 'unprecedented' corruption – MP**

Iraqi border crossings are suffering unprecedented corruption by the powerful political parties, MP Mohamed al-Sahiodud said on Friday. In a press statement, Sahiodud asserted that parties control over these border crossings have rendered them useless, calling for the Federal Government to retake them.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/24620/Border-crossings-suffer-unprecedented-corruption-MP>

- **Iraq's Ezidis resist PKK calls to support PYD in Afrin**

Cracks have appeared in the relationship between armed Ezidi groups and PKK terrorists in Iraq's northern Sinjar region after the latter demanded Ezidi support for the PYD -- the PKK's Syrian affiliate -- in Syria's Afrin, an Ezidi official said Thursday. Qasim Shasho, an Ezidi Peshmerga commander, told Anadolu Agency that Ezidis rejected the PKK's calls to send young Ezidis to conflict zones in Syria.

More Details:

<https://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/irags-ezidis-resist-pkk-calls-to-support-pyd-in-afrin/1083726>

- **Hashd al-Sha'abi formally inducted into Iraq security system**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi has issued a decree, ordering the formal inclusion of pro-government fighters from the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) in the Arab country's security forces. According to the decree announced on Thursday, the volunteer forces, better known by the Arabic name Hashd al-Sha'abi, will be granted many of the same rights as members of the military.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2018/03/09/554828/Hashd-alShaabi-Iraq-PMU-Abadi>

- **Iraq to launch new Basrah crude oil grade over quality concerns**

Iraq plans to launch a new Basrah Medium crude export grade in a bid to help stabilize the quality of its existing Basrah Heavy and Light export grades as more production is sourced from lower quality oil deposits. The new Basrah Medium grade will have an API gravity of 29-30 degrees and 2% sulfur, SOMO Deputy Director General Ali Nazar al-Shatari told S&P Global Platts.

More Details:

<https://www.platts.com/latest-news/oil/dubai/iraq-to-launch-new-basrah-crude-oil-grade-over-26906790>

- **UN Migration Agency in Iraq appeals for funding to assist IDPs and returnees**

The number of internally displaced Iraqis is currently more than 2.3 million, and those who have returned to their place of origin over 3.5 million. Responding to the needs of these vulnerable groups is a top priority for IOM, the UN Migration Agency in Iraq, as elaborated in the organization's 2018 Crisis Funding Appeal. The IOM appeal for USD 26.7 million highlights the urgent needs of more than 700,000 Iraqis across the country -- returnees, host community members, and internally displaced

persons (IDPs), especially those remaining in camps or informal settings, and those who may experience secondary displacement.

More Details:

<https://reliefweb.int/report/iraq/un-migration-agency-iraq-appeals-funding-assist-idps-and-returnees>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Syrian civil war map: Who controls what?**

Since March 2011, fighting has killed an estimated 465,000 Syrians, wounded one million more and forced about 12 million people - or half the country's pre-war population - from their homes. Eastern Ghouta, an area east of Damascus, has been the focus of a fierce offensive by President Bashar al-Assad's forces, resulting in more than 700 deaths. About 400,000 people live in the rebel enclave, which has been besieged by government forces for almost five years now, resulting in few supplies reaching the desperate population.

More Details:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2015/05/syria-country-divided-150529144229467.html>

- **Syria war: UN aid convoy re-enters Eastern Ghouta amid 'calm'**

A UN aid convoy has managed to enter the rebel-held area of Eastern Ghouta in Syria which has been under intense bombardment, officials say. For the first time since Monday, food and medicine got into the town of Douma, the Red Cross said. It follows a pause in Syrian government air strikes overnight, with the situation in the besieged enclave on Friday described as "calm".

More Details:

[http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43343266?intlink\\_from\\_url=http://www.bbc.com/news/topics/cx1m7zg0w5zt/syria&link\\_location=live-reporting-story](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-43343266?intlink_from_url=http://www.bbc.com/news/topics/cx1m7zg0w5zt/syria&link_location=live-reporting-story)

- **Militants preventing 1500 civilians from fleeing E. Ghouta, some killed & injured – Russian military**

At least 1500 civilians trying to leave the Damascus suburb of Eastern Ghouta were prevented from doing so by militants, with several people who were trying to leave on Thursday killed or injured, the Russian military said.

More Details:

<https://www.rt.com/news/420824-syria-ghouta-militants-corridor/>

- **Syrian government forces poised to slice eastern Ghouta in two: commander**

Syria's army is poised to slice rebel-held eastern Ghouta in two as forces advancing from the east link up with troops at its western edge, a pro-Damascus commander said on Thursday.

More Details:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-ghouta/syrian-government-forces-poised-to-slice-eastern-ghouta-in-two-commander-idUSKCN1GK0NM>

- **Syrian forces resume Ghouta bombing as aid convoy moves in**

Syrian government forces restarted air attacks on Eastern Ghouta, as an emergency aid convoy crossed front lines into the besieged rebel enclave on Friday, Red Cross officials said. The Red Crescent said the aid convoy of 13 vehicles passed through front lines and was heading to the enclave's biggest town, Douma. The bombing soon restarted.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/syrian-forces-pause-ghouta-attacks-aid-convoy-prepares-move-1335454209>

- **Footage shows FSA combat terrorists in Jinderes**

Footage captured by Free Syrian Army (FSA) shows clashes in Jinderes, the last town center liberated from YPG/PKK terrorists in Afrin during Turkey's ongoing operation in northwestern Syria. A GoPro video, obtained by Anadolu Agency, shows FSA in close combat with the terrorists to clear the streets and buildings in the town center, located in southwestern Afrin.

More Details:

<https://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/footage-shows-fsa-combat-terrorists-in-jinderes/1084068>

- **UN tested with elusive Syria truce**

A ceasefire resolution for Syria has failed to take hold as Syrian forces, backed by Russia, make gains in Eastern Ghouta. The question is arising: What is the United Nations doing? French Ambassador Francois Delattre said the failure to stop the bloodshed in Syria could be "the graveyard of the United Nations", which was founded on the ashes of World War II.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=87598>

### 3. IRAN

- **Iran not to ask for US permission to be in own region**

Leader of Islamic Revolution said Thu. that Iran will not ask for US permission to have a presence in its own region, adding that Tehran would talk to Washington only if it ever wanted presence in US.

More details:

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/132691/Iran-not-to-ask-for-US-permission-to-be-in-own-region>

- **Iran ready to boost ties with post-Daesh Iraq: VP**

Iranian First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri, who is on a trip to Iraq, has assured Iraqi President Fuad Masum that Iran will help reconstruct Iraq just as it helped it defeat the Daesh Takfiri group because of the deep bonds between the two neighboring countries.

More details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2018/03/09/554823/Iran-Iraq-Jahangiri-Masum-Daesh>

- **Arab Quartet Statement on Iran Nuclear Deal 'Worthless'**

Iran has dismissed as “completely worthless” a recent statement by the Arab Ministerial Quartet Committee condemning the Islamic Republic’s missile program and questioning its adherence to the 2015 nuclear deal.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201803091062356099-iran-nuclear-deal-arab-quartet/>

- **Iran Ready to Help Afghanistan in Anti-Terror Fight: Defense Minister**

Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami highlighted the country’s support for peace and security in neighboring countries, Afghanistan in particular, saying Tehran is ready to help Kabul in its efforts to combat terrorism.

More details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2018/03/08/1675609/iran-ready-to-help-afghanistan-in-anti-terror-fight-defense-minister>

- **Iran gas recovery from South Pars to increase 56 mcm/d: CEO**

The managing director of Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) said Iran's rich sour gas recovery from the supergiant South Pars Gas Field will increase by 56 million cubic meters per day next calendar year (which begins on March 21).

More details:

<https://theiranproject.com/blog/2018/03/09/iran-gas-recovery-south-pars-increase-56-mcm-d-ceo/>

- **Saudi Arabia, Israel exchanged letters on Iran, deal of the century**

Saudi Arabia and Israel have been coordinating on a range of regional issues, including Iran and the Palestinian cause, Israel Hayom newspaper revealed yesterday. The paper quoted an unnamed Egyptian source as saying that Riyadh and Tel Aviv exchanged letters through Egypt during Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammed Bin Salman's recent visit to Cairo.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180309-report-saudi-arabia-israel-exchanged-letters-on-iran-deal-of-the-century/>

- **Iran's fight against terrorism in Middle East vital: Russian official**

A member of Russian Council of Ethnic Groups and Nationalities Affairs described Iran's counter-terrorism campaign in the Middle East as essential and vital, saying that it is fighting terrorists fiercely as per its valuable approach. In an interview with IRNA on Thursday, Esmaeil Shabanov added that in the Middle East, only two countries in the region are fighting terrorism, noting that no other country fights terrorism as seriously as Iran and Russia.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82856360>

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **How Netanyahu's coalition crisis might end**

Ever since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu left the country in the middle of a political crisis, there has been constant speculation about what he wants. Would his criminal probes make him want to expedite elections, or to keep his current coalition intact for as long as possible? Why has he not taken a more active role in ending the crisis? And what is his actual opinion on the matter at hand: haredi (ultra-Orthodox) conscription?

More details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/How-Netanyahus-coalition-crisis-might-end-544656>

- **Israeli settlers attack Palestinians, cut down olive trees in Nablus-area village**

A group of Israeli settlers cut down dozens of olive trees and attacked Palestinian farmers on Thursday, preventing them from reaching their lands in the al-Sawiya village in the northern occupied West Bank district of Nablus.

More details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=779915>

- **Israeli Army Crushes Women March at Qalandia Checkpoint**

Israeli soldiers stationed at Qalandia checkpoint between Ramallah and Jerusalem attacked on Wednesday a march organized by Palestinian women organizations on the occasion of International Women's Day, according to witnesses.

More details:

<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/israeli-army-crushes-women-march-qalandia-checkpoint/>

- **Arab League chief urges Guatemala to cancel its decision on Jerusalem**

Arab League Secretary-General, Ahmed Aboul-Gheit, urged on Thursday Guatemala to cancel its decision to relocate its embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Spokesman for the Secretary-General, Mahmoud Afifi, said in a statement that Aboul-Gheit sent an urgent letter to Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales expressing dissatisfaction with Morales' intention to move the Guatemalan embassy to Jerusalem.

More details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=6EtXZ3a96806604642a6EtXZ3>

- **US Anti-boycott Bill Threatens First Amendment**

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) announced that it maintains its opposition to the revisions made in the "Anti-BDS" that was presented by the US Congress over a year ago. In addition to their opposition, Ben Wizner, director of the ACLU Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project stated that "the revised bill continues to penalize participants in political boycotts in violation of the First Amendment." The ACLU also stated that should the bill pass, they would challenge the bill in the U.S. Supreme Court.

More details:

<http://imemc.org/article/us-anti-boycott-bill-threatens-first-amendment/>

- **Hamas gets one step ahead of ‘deal of the century’ with five-point strategy**

Palestinian sources said that the Chief of the Political Bureau of Hamas movement, Ismail Haniyeh, outlined a five pronged strategy to counter the US-led ‘deal of the century’, in a meeting of various Palestinian factions in Cairo. The first principle of this strategy is to take on the ‘deal of the century’ by holding all Palestinian factions together – including Fatah movement – to a unified position.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180309-hamas-gets-one-step-ahead-of-deal-of-the-century-with-five-point-strategy/>

- **US, Israel in major joint air defence drill**

US and Israeli commanders overseeing a major joint air defence exercise spoke Thursday of preparing for evolving threats in the Middle East during the month-long drill. The Juniper Cobra exercise, held every two years since 2001, comes as Israel is increasingly concerned by what it says is a growing Iranian military presence in neighbouring Syria and Lebanon.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=87596>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **'Women and Men are Equal in their Rights and Duties': Lebanon Pres. Aoun**

To lessen the disparity between men and women, the idea of gender equality must be ingrained within society as well as being enshrined in legislation, President Michel Aoun said Wednesday.

More Details:

<https://www.albawaba.com/news/women-and-men-are-equal-their-rights-and-duties-lebanon-pres-aoun-1099068>

- **Frequent meetings lower border tensions**

Frequent tripartite talks between Lebanon and Israel, mediated by U.N. peacekeepers at the southern border, have decreased tensions after a recent flare-up, the force’s spokesperson said Thursday.

More Details:

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2018/Mar-09/440825-frequent-meetings-lower-border-tensions.ashx>

- **Talk It Out: UN Says Israeli and Lebanese Diplomats Meet ‘Almost Every Day’**

Relations between Israel and Lebanon have bottomed out in recent months, with both nations openly discussing war - but according to the United Nations, diplomatic talks to resolve their myriad points of tension are taking place almost every day.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201803091062358333-lebanon-israel-daily-diplomatic-meetings/>

- **Lebanon: Mustaqbal-LF Alliance Not Final as Both Sides Might Have ‘Friendly Separation’**

The Mustaqbal Movement and the Lebanese Forces are unlikely to strike a deal for the May parliamentary polls despite their insistence to consolidate their political and strategic alliance that dates back to 2005. Observers are talking about a “friendly separation” after the two parties decided to form separate lists in most of Lebanon’s electoral districts.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1199386/lebanon-mustaqbal-lf-alliance-not-final-both-sides-might-have-%E2%80%98friendly>

- **King, Queen to begin official visit to Netherlands 19th, March**

His Majesty King Abdullah II and Queen Rania Al Abdullah will begin an official visit to the Netherlands on the 19th of this month at the invitation of His Majesty King Willem-Alexander.

More Details:

[http://petra.gov.jo/Public\\_News/Nws\\_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site\\_id=1&NewsID=343699&CatID=13](http://petra.gov.jo/Public_News/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?lang=2&site_id=1&NewsID=343699&CatID=13)

- **PM said to push funneling Palestinian refugee aid via Jordan**

Netanyahu also suggests routing funds through UNHCR, but UN head says doing so would mean advocating for Palestinians to return to original homes.

More Details:

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/pm-said-to-push-funneling-palestinian-refugee-aid-via-jordan/>

- **Lands for Israel gas pipeline acquired'**

The government has officially acquired lands in the northern region for the purpose of building a pipeline to bring Israeli gas to Jordan, a senior official said on Thursday.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/local/lands-israel-gas-pipeline-acquired%E2%80%99>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Raytheon to net nearly \$500M in proposed sales to UAE, Qatar amid Gulf crisis**

The U.S. State Department has approved a \$270.4 million sale to the United Arab Emirates that includes more than 300 Sidewinder missiles, and a \$197 million upgrade of Qatar's air operations center. Raytheon will be the prime contractor for each.

More details:

<https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2018/03/08/raytheon-to-net-nearly-500m-in-proposed-sales-to-uae-qatar-amid-gulf-crisis/>

- **Qatar to Saudi Arabia: There are big states with small minds**

There are big states with small minds and narrow horizons, the Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said yesterday, responding to Saudi Arabia's remarks on Qatar. On Tuesday, Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammad Bin Salman, told Egyptian media that the issue of the Qatar blockade is "very trivial" and that "the entire population of Qatar was smaller than a Cairo street."

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180309-qatar-to-saudi-arabia-there-are-big-states-with-small-minds/>

- **Saudi Arabia wants more UK trade deals, say crown prince's team**

The UK should turn to Saudi Arabia for new trade and investment opportunities after Brexit and not a backward-looking Commonwealth, Saudi ministers said on the second day of a controversial visit to the UK by the country's crown prince.

More details:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/mar/08/saudi-arabia-wants-more-uk-trade-deals-say-crown-princes-team>

- **Kuwait, Sweden role in 'ceasefire' lauded**

The President of the European Union's Middle East-Gulf (MOG) Working Party Roberto Storaci said on Thursday that the neutrality and credibility of the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Sweden in Security Council was behind the adoption of Resolution No. 2401 on the humanitarian situation in Syria.

More details:

<http://www.arabtimesonline.com/news/kuwait-sweden-role-in-ceasefire-lauded/>

- **US to sell Qatar \$197m in air force upgrades**

Qatar and the United States have agreed to a \$197m sale in upgrades and other equipment for the Gulf nation's air force. The deal announced by the US Department of State on Thursday is subject to approval from the US Congress.

More details:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/sell-qatar-197m-air-force-upgrades-180308172934805.html>

- **Banning any Public Funeral, Houthis Offer to Hand over Saleh's Body**

Houthis proposed on Thursday to General People's Congress leaders handing over late ex-President Ali Abdullah Saleh's body, along with those of other supporters, under the condition that no official funeral ceremony is held during the burial. The Houthi offer to return Saleh's body is an effort led by the coup's self-proclaimed governing council head Saleh al-Sammad to reconcile with political leaders, military officials and tribal heads loyal to the Congress, Sanaa-based party sources told Asharq Al-Awsat.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1199406/banning-any-public-funeral-houthis-offer-hand-over-saleh%E2%80%99s-body>

- **No light at end of tunnel for Yemen's economy**

Hassan walks about one mile each day to get to his new job as a private security guard, to save on transportation costs. He barely makes \$100 each month. The 42-year-old used to be a departmental

director in the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, but the war has led to massive power outages in the country and he lost his job after much of the ministry's work was halted.

More Details:

<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/03/yemen-war-houthis-economy-central-bank-salaries-government.html>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Egyptian President affirms keenness to ensure Gulf security**

President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt has affirmed his country's keenness to guarantee the security and stability of the Gulf region as it is an integral part of Egypt's national security.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302673195>

- **Egyptian President praises Bahrain's stance**

Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa yesterday met Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi and delivered a message from His Majesty King Hamad. The King praised ever-growing historic relations between the two brotherly countries and appreciated the vital role being played by Egypt to consolidate peace and security in the region. President Sisi commended Bahrain's supportive stances towards Egypt in all circumstances, which, he said, reflected the depth of firm fraternal relations.

More Details:

<http://www.gdnonline.com/Details/321478/Egyptian-President-praises-Bahrain%E2%80%99s-stance>

- **105 terrorists killed in Egypt's 'Operation Sinai 2018'**

Egyptian soldiers and police personnel operating in the Sinai Peninsula have killed 105 terrorists since the start of an operation in February, a spokesman for the Egyptian army said Thursday, according to the Al-Ahram newspaper.

More Details:

<https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/242923>

- **Egypt signs \$15 billion gas deal with Israel**

On Feb. 19, Israeli company Delek Drilling signed a deal with the Egyptian company Dolphinus Holdings to provide Egypt with gas over the course of the next ten years.

More Details:

<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/details.php?id=lig69ja17414ysxk8tx2kb>

- **Egypt Prosecutors Seek Death Penalty for Photojournalist Who Reported on Massacre**

Egyptian prosecutors requested the death sentence for Mahmoud Abou Zeid, also known as Shawkan, an Egyptian photojournalist who covered the Rabaa massacre of 2013 during which almost 1,000 people were killed by Egypt's military government, led by current President Abd al-Fattah al-Sisi.

More Details:

<https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Egypt-Prosecutors-Seek-Death-Penalty-for-Photojournalist-Who-Reported-on-Massacre-20180308-0015.html>

- **Egypt slams UN human rights chief's remarks**

Egypt's Foreign Ministry has strongly condemned the UN human rights chief's critical statements about the country. The ministry said in a statement late on Wednesday that the UN report includes "baseless allegations" that reflect "deep disregard" for Egypt's efforts to promote for human rights.

More Details:

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/33a87c72-1e40-48bc-b723-531f63f26705.aspx>

- **No polling, no opinions, no point? Egyptian journalists face election crackdown**

More than 2,000 journalists are set to cover Egypt's presidential elections later this month, but many believe that even a state-issued permit will not guarantee them immunity against a widening crackdown. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi is to contest the presidential election virtually unopposed, facing one other candidate - the leader of a pro-Sisi party who has already expressed support for the incumbent to continue in his job.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/egypt-journalists-fear-their-safety-media-crackdown-intensifies-970679936>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Will Morocco's new law protect women from violence?**

A new law in Morocco criminalising violence towards women has divided opinion, with some observers applauding the legislation as progress while critics claim some women would still be left at risk. Until recently, women were vulnerable to various types of violence in private and public spheres, including rape, sexual harassment and domestic abuse.

More Details:

<http://marocgazette.com/story-z2961435>

- **Algerian women to assume more responsibilities at local, central levels**

Minister of Interior, Local Authorities and National Planning Nouredine Bedoui affirmed Thursday, in Algiers, that Algerian women will assume, in the future, more responsibilities within his ministerial department, at the central and local levels, as they are “skilled” and able to face difficulties.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/23208-algerian-women-to-assume-more-responsibilities-at-local-central-levels>

- **Regional polarization driving Libyans apart, marginalizing UN-led efforts: UN Libya Experts Panel report**

On the regional impact and regional political dynamics, the 157-page UN Experts Panel report noted that “despite overt international and regional support to the SRSG’s efforts to overcome the political stalemate in Libya, regional polarization has been further driving Libyan actors apart. State-sponsored parallel negotiation tracks and privileged relations between some regional States or organizations and local actors have sometimes marginalized the UN-led efforts.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2018/03/09/regional-polarization-driving-libyans-apart-marginalizing-un-led-efforts-un-libya-experts-panel-report/>

- **Cabinet meeting commends gradual resumption of production and transport, decides holding regional council in Gafsa**

The cabinet meeting, held on Thursday, commended the gradual return of phosphate production and transport in the mining basin, "which marks a resumption of the company's activities," said a statement of the Prime Ministry. The meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Youssef Chahed in Dar

Dhiafa in Carthage, reaffirmed the government's determination to fulfill its commitments to the governorate of Gafsa, concerning the acceleration of the pace of economic, social and employment development, with an approach based on positive discrimination and the establishment of a new relationship between the company and its social environment, the statement said.

More Details:

<https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/9940216-phosphate-cabinet>

- **Belgium: 10 billion euros of frozen Libya assets disappeared from Euroclear Bank**

Authorities in Belgium have discovered the disappearance of 10 billion euros of frozen Libyan assets kept in the Euroclear Bank during the period 2013 to 2017, according to the Le Vif magazine. Le Vif magazine said these funds were controlled by the inner circle of ousted and killed Muammar Gaddafi.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/belgium-10-billion-euros-of-frozen-libya-assets-disappeared-from-euroclear-bank/>

- **Arbitrary militia rule on both sides has led to more radicalization and polarization: UN Libya Experts Panel report**

In its section on security developments, the 157-page UN Experts Panel report said that “overall, in 2017 the frontlines have become more entrenched, although the security situation in Tripoli has improved as the armed groups affiliated with the Government of National Accord (GNA) increased their control over the capital. In the east, the Libyan National Army (LNA) has been able to impose its control over most of Benghazi.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2018/03/09/arbitrary-militia-rule-on-both-sides-has-led-to-more-radicalization-and-polarization-un-libya-experts-panel-report/>

- **Morocco FM says talks with UN envoy on Western Sahara “fruitful”**

Morocco’s Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita said Tuesday talks with US special envoy to Western Sahara with Horst Köhler in Lisbon were “rich” and “fruitful.” Bourita, who chaired the Morocco delegation during the meeting with Köhler, said that Morocco “remains on its positions as to the possibility of a resumption of negotiations with the Polisario Front,” demanding Algeria take part in the talks.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=87584>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Women’s rights not to be compromised for peace: CEO**

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah has once again asked the armed insurgents to renounce violence, cut ties with international terrorist groups and introduce themselves as legitimate political entities. Addressing a gathering marking Women’s International Day, Abdullah said women should have a prominent role in the peace process.

More details:

<https://www.pajhwok.com/en/2018/03/08/women’s-rights-not-be-compromised-peace-ceo>

- **Senate chairman’s slot: Make or break at peak**

The chances of a consensus candidate for the slot of Senate chairman has diminished as make-or-break has reached in the final stages for the important post. The independent senators from Balochistan gave their hands of cooperation to Pakistan People’s Party and granted powers to Asif Ali Zardari to nominate the candidates for the Senate Chairman and Deputy Chairman. On the other hand, chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf also extended his party support to independent senators from Balochistan.

More details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/289986-senate-chairman-s-slotmake-or-break-at-peak>

- **All Plans in Place For TAPI: Ministry Of Mines**

Although work has started on the pipeline, economists have called for government to draw up solid management and monitoring programs. The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) on Thursday said all necessary arrangements have been made to start work on the Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India (TAPI) gas pipeline project in Afghanistan. Plans have been made to utilize gas from the project and currently there are no problems in rolling out the project, said Abdul Qadeer Mutfi, a spokesman for the ministry of mines and petroleum. “There are no challenges in the way of implementing this project. We have our technical teams in this respect,” said Mutfi.

More details:

<https://www.tolonews.com/business/all-plans-place-tapi-ministry-mines>

- **Suicide Attacker Detained by Afghan Security Force**

A suicide attack along with his suicide vest was arrested by Afghan security forces in eastern Nangarhar province the other day. Shir Aqa Faqiri spokesman of 201 Sylab army corps told BNA reporter, the attacker was arrested during a military operation led by Afghan National Army in Mohmand Dara district of the province.

More details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/security/item/32293-suicide-attacker-detained-by-afghan-security-forces.html>

- **Afghan military confirm deadly airstrike on TTP militants in Kunar**

The Afghan military has confirmed the deadly airstrike on militants in eastern Kunar province of Afghanistan amid reports the son of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan Chief Mullah Fazlullah has also been killed. The 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan Military in the East said the airstrike was carried out in Chogam and Chinar Banda areas of Shiltan district. Without disclosing further information regarding the identities of the militants killed in the airstrike, the Silab Corps confirmed the deaths of at least fifteen militants were killed.

More details:

<https://www.khaama.com/afghan-military-confirm-deadly-airstrike-on-ttp-militants-in-kunar-04605/>

- **Afghan official: Taliban assault outpost, kill 10 policemen**

An Afghan official says the Taliban launched a deadly assault on an army outpost in a remote region of northern Takhar province, killing 10 local policemen and wounding nine. Provincial police spokesman Khali Aseir said on Friday that a large number of Taliban fighters assaulted the outpost overnight. He says the members of the local police were ambushed and killed while on their way to the outpost to assist the Afghan soldiers in the remote district of Khwaja Ghar.

More details:

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia\\_pacific/afghan-official-taliban-assault-outpost-kill-10-policemen/2018/03/09/af990566-2366-11e8-946c-9420060cb7bd\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.edccf39d1c10](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/afghan-official-taliban-assault-outpost-kill-10-policemen/2018/03/09/af990566-2366-11e8-946c-9420060cb7bd_story.html?utm_term=.edccf39d1c10)

- **Iran FM to visit Pakistan next week**

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will start a three-day visit to neighboring country Pakistan on Sunday, Iran's ambassador to Pakistan told reporters on Friday. Mehdi Honardoost, the Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan, told Iranian media that Mohammad Javad Zarif will visit Pakistan in exchange for recent Pakistani Minister for Foreign Affairs Khawaja Muhammad Asif's visit to Iran. He

added that Iran's foreign minister will arrive in the capital of Pakistan Islamabad on Sunday, March 11.

More details:

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/132696/Iran-FM-to-visit-Pakistan-next-week>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Iran, Turkey Vow to Do Their Best to Save Syrian Lives in Eastern Ghouta**

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, in a telephone call with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, said the two countries are obliged to save the lives of Syrian people, particularly those who are under the siege of terrorists in Eastern Ghouta.

More details:

<http://ifpnews.com/wired/iran-turkey-vow-best-save-syrian-lives-eastern-ghouta/>

- **Turkey in cooperation with Iraq against Daesh, PKK: PM**

Turkey is in close cooperation with Iraq in the fight against Daesh and PKK terrorist groups in northern Iraq through cross-border cooperation, Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said on Friday. Speaking to reporters in the capital Ankara, Yildirim said: "Whenever the need arises, [cross-border] operations are always held in northern Iraq. "We are in close contact with the Iraqi government [...] with regard to both eradicating Daesh from the region completely and wiping out PKK."

More Details:

<https://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-in-cooperation-with-iraq-against-daesh-pkk-pm/1084300>

*\*This media summary is prepared by **ORSAM Middle East Research Assistant Firuze Yağmur Gökler**. It covers news and commentaries as reported by the national media sources publishing in the Middle Eastern countries. The views expressed are not those of ORSAM and their inclusion does not imply factual accuracy.*

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