



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

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## 1. IRAQ

- **Kubis: Secretary General of the United Nations Considers the Results Of Iraq's War Against Terrorism Very Impressive**

The representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Iraq, Jan Kubis, said the Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres confirmed that "The results of the war against terrorism in Iraq are very impressive." According to a Foreign Ministry statement "the Minister of the foreign affairs Ibrahim al-Jaafari discussed with Kubis the political process and security developments and the war against Daesh, and UN's support for Iraq."

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?l1KpgzZSzd1DKv5RGQJ9w%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?l1KpgzZSzd1DKv5RGQJ9w%253d%253d)

- **Security closes Baghdad roads as funerals planned for demos victims**

Iraqi security forces closed a number of vital roads and bridges on Tuesday as organizers of Saturday's demonstrations said they were going to march in the funerals of protesters killed during violence with police. Authorities blocked all roads and bridges leading to the central Tahrir arena and the heavily-fortified Green Zone in anticipation of possible protests coinciding with the funerals, DPA reported.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqnews.com/iraq-war/security-closes-baghdad-roads-funerals-planned-demos-victims/>

- **First IS Tank Attack Documented In Northern Iraq**

Islamic State (IS) militants used tanks in an attack against the government-backed Shi'ite militia Hashd al-Shaabi in northern Iraq near the border with Syria on Monday, the Hashd al-Shaabi said. The attack is believed to be the first one in which the IS extremists use tanks in an attack on the Hashd al-Shaabi.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/330186>

- **Germany, Iraq finalise 500 million euro credit to aid stabilisation**

Germany signed an agreement with Iraq on Monday to provide a 500 million euro (£424.2 million) credit facility to fund investments aimed at rebuilding Iraqi infrastructure damaged in the war with

Islamic State militants. The credit line, the biggest yet provided to Iraq, was promised by Chancellor Angela Merkel to Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi a year ago.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39735](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=39735)

- **ISIS media speaks out for first time about al-Baghdadi substitute**

A local source at Nineveh said on Tuesday that ISIS media spoke for the first time about a substitute for its leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, in the aftermath of aerial bombardment by the US-led coalition on his hideout. The source said in a press statement that rife rumors that ISIS leader might have been fallen dead by the coalition's bombardment have prompted fears among the organization's members.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/6042/ISIS-media-speaks-out-for-first-time-about-al-Baghdadi-substitute>

- **ISIS would-be suicide bomber destroyed in Mosul: video**

Iraqi forces stopped a would-be Islamic State (ISIS) suicide bomber dead in his tracks this past weekend, destroying his bulldozer fitted with explosives in Mosul. Filmed by China's CCTV operated, the video shows the Iraqi Armed Forces stopping the suicide bomber with a field fortification in Mosul's countryside this past weekend.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/isis-suicide-bomber-destroyed-mosul-video/>

- **Coping with wrack and ruin**

The name of the church in eastern Mosul is highly evocative. The Titanic Church is built like a ship. The church tower resembles the mast of a boat and the interior is reminiscent of the belly. During IS's two-and-a-half year rule, the Titanic Church literally sank. And although eastern Mosul has in the meantime been recaptured by the Iraqi army, the church is still a scene of total devastation. Everything has been looted from inside. All that remains is the concrete skeleton of the structure. A few children play in the ruins.

More Details:

<http://en.qantara.de/content/christians-in-iraq-coping-with-wrack-and-ruin>

- **Iraq's Turkmen mobilise for a post-ISIL future**

When fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS) group captured Kirkuk last October, hundreds of people poured onto the streets to help security forces fight back in the northern Iraqi city. Among them were dozens of fighters under the blue-and-white Turkmen banner, representing a rare occasion when Iraq's third-largest ethnic group united to defend the community.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/01/iraq-turkmen-mobilise-post-isil-future-170102075837918.html>

- **Iraq's Masoum lauds Iran's military support**

Iraqi president Fouad Masoum on Sunday hailed neighbouring Iran for its "effectual" support to Iraqi troops in the fight against terrorism, Iran's Tasnim News Agency reported. Speaking in an interview with Tasnim on Sunday, Masoum stressed on the importance of bilateral ties with Iran, describing it as of "historic nature" and that it have never been in collision with the Arab country's national interests.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170212-iraqs-masoum-lauds-irans-military-support/>

- **Daesh attacks kill 4 militiamen in Iraq's Tal Afar**

Four Shia militiamen and 13 militants were killed in Daesh attacks in Iraq's predominantly Turkmen city of Tal Afar late Sunday, according to a local police officer. Daesh militants attacked positions of the Hashd al-Shaabi militia in western Tal Afar in an attempt to break an army siege imposed around the city, police captain Saad Hadi told Anadolu Agency on Monday.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/daesh-attacks-kill-4-militiamen-in-iraq-s-tal-afar/749283>

- **Iraq forces 'foil IS attempt to flee to Syria'**

Iraq's pro-government forces have thwarted an attempt by around 200 militant fighters to flee their bastion of Tal Afar towards Syria, west of the city of Mosul, a security spokesman said on Monday. Forces from the Hashed al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilisation), a paramilitary organisation, said the Islamic State group used tanks in their bid to break out of Tal Afar.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/13/iraq-pro-government-forces-withdraw-after-violent-is-attacks>

- **Aided US in Iraq, detained at JFK**

I started working with the U.S. Army, Bravo Company 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Baghdad on March 1, 2003. I joined because of my complete faith that the U.S. had come to Iraq to give us our freedom and dignity back and remove injustice. Despite my decade of service to the U.S., when I finally got my visa and arrived in New York late last month, I was detained for more than 18 hours at the airport because of the ban President Donald Trump ordered on travel from Iraq and six other mostly Muslim nations.

More Details:

<https://www.stripes.com/opinion/aided-us-in-iraq-detained-at-jfk-1.453802>

- **Iran, Iraq agree on construction of industrial townships**

Tehran and Baghdad agreed on designing and building industrial townships in some Iraqi provinces. The agreement was reached in a meeting between Iranian Industry Minister Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh with his Iraqi counterpart Mohammad Shiya al-Sudani in Baghdad on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82429224/>

- **All Allegations Must Be Scrutinized': UK to Shut Down Iraq Abuse Investigation**

UK Defense Minister Michael Fallon has announced the Government's Iraq Historic Allegations Team is to be shut down in the wake of 'Shinergate' - although a human rights organization has told Sputnik the Ministry may be using the lawyer's disbarment as a smokescreen, to suppress investigations of genuine abuses.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/europe/201702131050637924-iraq-abuse-inquiry-uk/>

- **Iraq Reduces Exports from Basra Terminal**

Iraq will reduce the amount of crude oil it exports via its largest port terminal in Basra to 3.013 million bpd next month, according to loading data seen by Reuters. This is the lowest daily figure since last August. The Basra light blend will account for 2.21 million bpd of total Basra exports. This may be a signal that Iraq is working to improve its compliance with the November 30 production cut

agreement struck by OPEC's members in a bid to prop up crude prices. As of end-January, Iraq was still producing 130,000 bpd above its quota.

More Details:

<http://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/Iraq-Reduces-Exports-From-Basra-Terminal.html>

- **Iran chooses Quds Force stalwart for new ambassador to Iraq**

Iran has reportedly appointed Brig. Gen. Iraj Masjedi as its new ambassador to Baghdad, replacing Hassan Dana'i Fer, according to Iranian media reports on Jan. 15. Masjedi is a prominent leader of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and serves as an adviser to Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Iranian Quds Force. Masjedi confirmed the news himself in an official statement but did not say when he would officially assume his new position.

More Details:

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2017/02/iriji-masjedi-qods-force-iran-iraq.html>

- **Bombings rock east Mosul as Iraq prepares fresh offensive**

Twin blasts hit a busy market in the Mosul neighbourhood of Al-Zuhoor on Monday afternoon in signs that the Islamic State group's resistance is far from over in the city's liberated east. The blasts, caused by suicide bombers, came less than half an hour after Iraqi Intelligence Services, the NSS, conducted a raid in a restaurant in the middle of the market.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/14/bombings-rock-east-mosul-as-iraq-prepares-fresh-offensive>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Astana says Syria talks participants to discuss sanctions for ceasefire violations**

Participants in the next Astana meeting on Syria will discuss ceasefire monitoring and sanctions for ceasefire violations, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov told reporters on Tuesday. "In particular, a mechanism for recording ceasefire violations as well as sanctions against those who violate the ceasefire will be discussed," he said. Abdrakhmanov added that "Turkey will soon provide information about its delegation members" while the Kazakh Foreign Ministry "expects Turkey also to provide information about the delegation of the Syrian armed opposition."

More Details

<http://tass.com/world/930702>

- **Turkey to Update on Syrian Opposition's Participation at Talks - Kazakh FM**

Turkey is expected to provide information on the composition of its delegation and the armed Syrian opposition's participation at the latest round of ceasefire talks in Astana, the Kazakh foreign minister said Tuesday.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201702141050652334-turkey-kazakhstan-syria/>

- **Is the PLO helping or harming Palestinians in Syria?**

A Palestine Liberation Organisation delegation arrived in suits and keffiyehs last month to the Khan Eshieh Palestinian refugee camp to mark its return to the Syrian government's control. There was an air of celebration, as Fatah's Syrian representative, Samir al-Rifai, was carried on the shoulders of his colleagues. During the visit, the PLO announced that it would supply Khan Eshieh with a grant of 25m Syrian pounds (\$117,000) to bolster camp services and infrastructure, while the organisation's Syrian ambassador, Anwar Abdul Hadi, thanked Syrian authorities for the "return of security".

More Details

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/01/plo-helping-harming-palestinians-syria-170125093017460.html>

- **Former Cambridge MP Julian Huppert says there is a 'moral obligation' to help Syrian refugees**

Former Cambridge MP Julian Huppert has hit out at the government for abandoning plans to take in 3,000 refugee children, saying the UK has a "moral obligation" to help.

More Details

<http://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/former-cambridge-mp-julian-huppert-12599534>

- **Erdogan: Turkey, FSA close to capturing Syria's Al-Bab**

Turkish troops and Free Syrian Army fighters have "besieged" the Daesh-held town of Al-Bab in northern Syria and are now "on the verge of capturing it," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Sunday.

More Details

<http://aa.com.tr/en/politics/erdogan-turkey-fsa-close-to-capturing-syria-s-al-bab/748823>

- **Syrian Government to Probe Atrocities Committed by Militants in Aleppo**

The commission is expected to establish authenticity of some 10,000 pages of documents that could include evidence of support of terrorists and their activities by several foreign states, the Al-Watan newspaper reported Monday.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702141050649469-damascus-crimes-probe-militants-aleppo/>

- **Human Rights Watch accuses Syrian regime of eight chemical attacks**

A human rights group has accused the Syrian government of conducting at least eight chemical attacks using chlorine gas on opposition-controlled residential areas during the final months in the battle for Aleppo.

More Details

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/worldnews/2017/02/14/news/human-rights-watch-accuses-syrian-regime-of-eight-chemical-attacks-931177/>

- **Erdogan renews call for safe zone in northern Syria**

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday renewed his calls for the establishment of a "safe zone" in northern Syria where refugees could be housed. "Our objective here is (to establish) an area of at least 4,000, 5,000 square kilometres free from terrorism, to create a safe zone," Erdogan said in a televised speech in Bahrain, which he's visiting as part of a Gulf tour.

More Details

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/2/14/erdogan-renews-call-for-safe-zone-in-northern-syria>

- **Armenia sends 40 tons of humanitarian aid to Syria**

"This is the second time Armenia is sending aid to the friendly people of Syria upon the instruction of President Serzh Sargsyan," Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan told reporters at the airport. The cargo will be delivered in cooperation with Russia, the Minister said. "There was an offer from our Russian partners to combine efforts within the framework of the CSTO. Armenia responded to the proposal and initiated the delivery of this humanitarian aid," Minister Sargsyan said.

More Details:

<http://www.armradio.am/en/2017/02/14/armenia-sends-40-tons-of-humanitarian-aid-to-syria/>

- **Saving Syria's Cultural Heritage**

Activists in Idlib have established a centre to protect cultural heritage amidst a conflict which has seen the widespread destruction of many of Syria's archaeological treasures. Historic sites have been damaged in bombings and by vandalism, with numerous artefacts stolen to be sold off by private dealers.

More Details:

<https://iwpr.net/global-voices/saving-syrias-cultural-heritage>

### 3. IRAN

- **Likud Minister: the time has come to deal with Iran**

Minister Yuval Steinitz said in an interview with Channel 2 that the main goal of the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump was to deal with the Iranian threat.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/224953>

- **Trade between Iraq and Iran reached \$6 billion in 2016: ministry**

The trade exchange between Iraq and Iran has reached \$6 billion in the last two years, the Iraqi Ministry of Trade announced on Monday.

More Details

<http://ekurd.net/trade-iraq-iran-2016-2017-02-14>

- **Pres. Rouhani due in Oman, Kuwait Wed.**

Iranian president's deputy chief of staff for communications and information, Parviz Esmaeili, said President Hassan Rouhani will depart for Muscat Wednesday morning at the official invitation of the Sultan of Oman, Qaboos bin Said Al Said.

More Details

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/123547/Pres-Rouhani-due-in-Oman-Kuwait-Wed>

- **West must make amends for JCPOA implementation shortfalls: Iran**

A senior Iranian official says Western countries must make amends for their lost ground in the implementation of the landmark nuclear agreement signed between the Islamic Republic and six global powers in 2015.

More Details

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/02/13/510394/Iran-Luxembourg-Ali-Shamkhani-Mohammad-Javad-Zarif-Jean-Asselborn-JCPOA>

- **Tehran Conditions Substandard**

Iranian urban life in the modern era is aching for a revision of procedures and line of thinking, said the minister of roads and urban development. “It’s more than 100 years now that we are flirting with the concepts of modernity and industrialization, and have employed them in our policymaking. The entry of new technologies into Iran coincided with the country’s modern era. But the question is: Have these technologies increased people’s standards of living?” the Persian daily Shargh quoted Abbas Akhondi as saying.

More Details

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/domestic-economy/59537/tehran-conditions-substandard>

- **Moby thinks war with Iran is imminent, and that Trump is a Russian spy**

Musician and activist Moby took to social media on Monday to lay out a series of specific, left-field conspiracy theories involving President Trump. He thinks we're on the brink of war with Iran, and that Trump is a Russian puppet who enjoys being urinated on by prostitutes.

More Details

<http://www.dailydot.com/upstream/moby-trump-war-iran/>

- **Government increases electricity import from Iran for Gwadar**

Pakistan has increased electricity import from Iran to 100 megawatts from earlier 70MW to feed Gwadar and is also planning to increase the import to 1000MW, as Islamabad is in negotiations with Tehran in this respect.

More Details

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/186198-Government-increases-electricity-import-from-Iran-for-Gwadar>

- **Heightened tensions between Iran's supreme leader and the US**

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the senior cadre of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) undoubtedly knew that US President Donald Trump was not going to be the same as his predecessor Barack Obama regarding Iran and the Middle East.

More Details

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1053826>

- **US invited to Astana talks despite Iran's objections**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Monday that the U.S. has been invited to the Syrian peace talks that are expected to be held from Feb. 15 to Feb. 16. Iran has previously expressed strong objections regarding the U.S.'s presence in the talks. Speaking to Russian NTV television, Lavrov reiterated that the U.S. attended the previous talks in the Kazakh capital as an observer and announced that Washington is invited to the upcoming talks.

More Details

<https://www.dailysabah.com/diplomacy/2017/02/14/us-invited-to-astana-talks-despite-irans-objections>

- **Iran, Luxembourg sign agreement on encouraging investment**

Speaking to reporters after signing the deal in Tehran, Tayyebnia said that Iran's general policy is to improve ties with European countries, Luxembourg in particular, and signing the agreement is an indication of the two countries' good intention and interest to promote economic relations.

More Details

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82429325/>

## 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **The AG's war to protect Israeli democracy**

Analysis: The Regulation Law has created one of the most serious constitutional crises the State of Israel has ever experienced. Attorney General Mandelblit, who strongly opposed the law, sees himself as being at the forefront of the battle against the attempt to change basic principles in the state's democracy and in the independence of its elected institutions.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4921810,00.html>

- **Israel's Right Demands Netanyahu, Trump Discuss West Bank Annexation**

A dozen Likud ministers and MKs and dozens of activists called upon Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Monday to use his meeting with US President Donald Trump Wednesday to achieve support for construction and annexation in Judea and Samaria.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Israels-Right-demands-Netanyahu-Trump-discuss-West-Bank-annexation-481432>

- **Yahya Sinwar elected as new head of Hamas politburo in Gaza**

The Hamas movement elected Yahya Sinwar as the new head of its politburo in Gaza to replace Ismail Haniyeh on Monday.

More Details:

<http://www.maannews.com/Content.aspx?id=775451>

- **Legal center accuses Israeli minister of incitement to racism**

The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel demanded a criminal investigation into Israeli Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan for incitement to racism against Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel, according to a press release.

More Details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=nN4Wqna52383533367anN4Wqn>

- **Israeli PM seeks 'no gaps' with Trump ahead of White House talks**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, preparing for his first meeting with President Donald Trump at the White House, will work with advisers on Tuesday to align Israeli and U.S. thinking on the Middle East and ensure "no gaps" remain.

More Details:

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/israeli-pm-seeks-no-gaps-with-trump-ahead-of-white-house-talks-20170214-00030>

- **Palestinians in East Jerusalem battle for their homes**

Ahmad Sub Laban gently peeled back the blinds covering a window in his home, revealing the golden Dome of the Rock in Al-Aqsa Mosque compound.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/02/palestinians-east-jerusalem-battle-homes-170206090342735.html>

- **EU Globalists Resent Israel's Nationalism**

Typical of the European Union (EU) practice, condemning Israel takes precedence over major developments elsewhere, including Iran's dangerous testing of ballistic missiles that can carry nuclear warheads. The latest episode eliciting EU condemnation was Israel's "regularization law."

More Details:

[www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/265772/eu-globalists-resent-israels-nationalism-joseph-puder](http://www.frontpagemag.com/fpm/265772/eu-globalists-resent-israels-nationalism-joseph-puder)

- **Netanyahu opposes Palestinian state: Aide**

Benjamin Netanyahu opposes a Palestinian state, a senior Israeli Cabinet member said on Monday, but left it unclear whether the prime minister would say that publicly in talks with US President Donald Trump in Washington this week.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1053831/middle-east>

- **Recognising Palestine is 'the least we can do', Hawke tells Turnbull**

The Turnbull government should grant diplomatic recognition to the state of Palestine ahead of an historic visit by Israeli prime minister, Bob Hawke believes. The former Labor prime minister - a long-time supporter of Israel - has criticised the Israeli parliament's decision to approve a law retrospectively legalising 4000 settler homes built on privately-owned Palestinian land.

More Details:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2017/02/14/recognising-palestine-least-we-can-do-hawke-tells-turnbull>

- **The Economic Exploitation of Palestinian Political Prisoners**

Israeli prisons serve both as an instrument of political persecution and economic exploitation, says Addameer: Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association in a new report.

More Details:

<http://imemc.org/article/the-economic-exploitation-of-palestinian-political-prisoners/>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **VP receives Jordanian Senate President**

Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum received on Monday at Jumeirah Al Naseem Hotel, Faisal al-Fayez, President of Jordan's Senate, who handed him a letter to President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan from King Abdullah II of Jordan.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302597482>

- **Min. lauds Kuwait's support for Jordan**

Jordanian Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Imad Fakhoury has commended Kuwait's support for his country to address burdens arising from a massive influx of Syrian refugees.

More Details:

<http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2591865&Language=en>

- **Jordan's ambassador to Sudan presents credentials**

Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir on Monday, accepted the credentials of Jordan's new appointed ambassador to Sudan Mahmoud Al Khaza'leh.

More Details:

<http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=34150#.WKKyb9SLSmU>

- **Jordan received 60pct of London conference's pledges, says Minister**

Jordan has received about 60 per cent of the total value of pledges donors made during a 2016 conference in London to support the Jordan Response Plan designed to address burdens arising from a massive influx of Syrian refugees, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Imad Fakhoury, said on Monday.

More Details:

[http://www.petra.gov.jo/public\\_news/Nws\\_NewsDetails.aspx?Menu\\_ID=&Site\\_Id=2&lang=2&NewsID=289164&CatID=13](http://www.petra.gov.jo/public_news/Nws_NewsDetails.aspx?Menu_ID=&Site_Id=2&lang=2&NewsID=289164&CatID=13)

- **Lebanon: Aoun in Egypt after Praise for Hezbollah**

Lebanon's newly elected President Michel Aoun arrived in Egypt yesterday — a day after defending Hezbollah in a TV interview.

More Details:

<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/a-686e-Lebanon-Aoun-in-Egypt-after-praise-for-Hezbollah#.WKKzc9SLSmU>

- **Report: LF Says Failure on Election Law Brings on Parliament Vote or Vacuum**

The Lebanese forces warned on Tuesday that shall efforts fail to agree on a consensual electoral law for the upcoming parliamentary polls, the political parties would be compelled to either run a parliament vote on the available electoral law proposals, or enter into a parliamentary vacuum, al-Joumhouria daily reported.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/225420-report-lf-says-failure-on-election-law-brings-on-parliament-vote-or-vacuum>

- **Lebanese president: 'Hezbollah' needed to counter Israel**

Lebanon's recently elected president Michel Aoun on Sunday blamed Israel for the need to support the Iranian-backed Shiite terror group Hezbollah in "a complementary role to the Lebanese army."

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/lebanon-needs-hezbollah-to-counter-israel-aoun/>

- **Egypt Ready to Support Efficiency of Lebanese Army**

Cairo is prepared to show support to strengthen the efficiency of the Lebanese army and security services, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Sisi said on Monday.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702131050634257-egypt-lebanon-army-sisi/>

- **Lebanon President defends Hezbollah weapons**

Lebanese President Michel Aoun has defended Hezbollah weapons, saying the arms of the Shia group are an essential part in defending Lebanon.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/lebanon-president-defends-hezbollah-weapons-937158>

- **Hezbollah Terror Chief Nasrallah: Trump Exposed the ‘Racist’ Face of America**

Ynetnews reports: Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah stated Sunday that he is unperturbed by US President Donald Trump’s political positions, stating that he has merely “exposed the true face of the American government, the ugly, oppressive, and racist one.”

More Details:

<http://www.breitbart.com/jerusalem/2017/02/13/hezbollah-terror-chief-nasrallah-trump-exposed-racist-face-america/>

- **Civilians injured as Hezbollah strikes Damascus**

Tens of civilians were wounded after shelling by Hezbollah hit several areas in the northwest regions around Damascus on Sunday, local sources told The New Arab.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/civilians-injured-hezbollah-strikes-damascus-936864>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **HM King greeted on NAC anniversary**

Information Affairs Minister, Chairman of Bahrain Institute for Political Development, Ali bin Mohammed Al-Romaihi, has extended greeting to HM the King, HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, and the people of Bahrain on the 16th anniversary of the National Action Charter and the inauguration of the constitutional monarchy based on justice, equality in rights and duties and without discrimination on the grounds of religion, creed, ethnicity or gender.

More details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=30421&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=1>

- **Turkey, Bahrain sign 4 agreements to seal cooperation**

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit to Bahrain on Feb. 12-13 strengthened relations between Turkey and Bahrain in a multitude of areas, including diplomacy, education and defense.

More details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/economy/2017/02/14/turkey-bahrain-sign-4-agreements-to-seal-cooperation>

- **Return Permit must to enter Qatar if RP lost**

Expatriates holding a Qatari Residency Permit (RP) require a Return Permit to reenter the country if they lose their Qatari ID card while abroad, the Ministry of Interior said yesterday.

More details:

<http://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/14/02/2017/Return-Permit-must-to-enter-Qatar-if-RP-lost>

- **Islamophobia fuelling terrorism, says UN chief**

Islamophobia in parts of the world is fuelling terrorism as anti-immigrant sentiment rises in some countries, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres observed during a visit to Saudi Arabia on Sunday.

More details:

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1314674/islamophobia-fuelling-terrorism-says-un-chief>

- **Saudi turning to solar in effort to save oil for export**

The nation most identified with its massive oil reserves is turning to wind and solar to generate power at home and help extend the life of its crucial crude franchise.

More details:

<https://www.energyvoice.com/otherenergy/131580/saudi-turning-solar-effort-save-oil-export/>

- **Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed receives UN Secretary-General**

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, on Monday received Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, at Al Bahr Palace.

More details:

<http://www.thenational.ae/uae/government/sheikh-mohammed-bin-zayed-receives-un-secretary-general>

- **Yemen Sends Note to Washington Questioning US Raid, UN Envoy Says**

Yemen has sent a note to the US administration questioning part of the US military operation against al-Qaeda militants in Yemen carried in the end of January which killed civilians and a Navy SEAL, while the investigation is underway, Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations Khaled Hussein Alyemany told Sputnik.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702141050651436-yemen-us-note-raid/>

- **Coalition's priority is to protect Yemen civilians**

The Saudi Arabia-led Arab coalition supporting the legitimacy in Yemen has made the protection of civilians its top priority and is taking all measures to minimize losses.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1054006/saudi-arabia>

- **French foreign ministry official in Oman to meet regional ambassadors**

The head of the French foreign ministry's Middle East and North Africa department, Jerome Bonnafont is in Oman as part of a two-day summit of French regional ambassadors.

More details:

<http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/French-foreign-ministry-official-in-Oman-to-meet-regional-ambassadors-4y4c#ixzz4Ydy3J7Tt>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Cyber spies target American-Egyptian writer**

American-Egyptian author Mona Eltahawy is one of many activists and human rights advocates targeted in a sweeping cyberespionage campaign blamed on Egypt's government, The Associated Press has found.

More details:

<http://www.islandpacket.com/entertainment/celebrities/article132567064.html#storylink=cpy>

- **Haftar and Serraj arrive in Cairo for historic meeting**

Both Presidency Council (PC) leader Faiez Serraj and Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar arrived in Cairo today for joint talks hosted by the Egyptian government.

More details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/02/13/hafter-and-serraj-arrive-in-cairo-for-historic-meeting/>

- **Egypt cabinet reshuffle to include at least 8 ministers**

The expected cabinet reshuffle will involve eight ministers, including those responsible for investment and agriculture, parliamentary sources told Reuters on Monday.

More details:

<http://en.aswatmasriya.com/news/details/18462>

- **Mashnouq discusses bilateral cooperation with Egyptian counterpart**

Interior Minister Nohad Mashnouq held talks on Monday with his Egyptian counterpart, General Majdi Abdel Ghaffar, at the Interior Ministry in Cairo.

More details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/75296/Mashnouq-discusses-bilateral-cooperation-with-Egyptian-counterpart>

- **Egypt turns a corner**

Foreign investors have given Egypt's package of economic reforms the thumbs-up. The country is celebrating a successful eurobond issuance after its government headed to international debt markets for the first time since 2015, in a bid to attract investors and support its finances.

More details:

<http://www.businesslive.co.za/fm/features/africa/2017-02-13-egypt-turns-a-corner/>

- **Egypt's parliament's ethics committee recommends 'insulting' MP Agina to be stripped of membership**

Egyptian parliament's ethics committee recommended on Monday that MP Ilhami Agina, known for his contentious remarks on women, be stripped of his parliamentary membership over insulting the House of Representatives.

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/258140/-.aspx>

- **Egypt's Nubians fight for ancestral land earmarked for mega-project**

A strip of desert near Aswan city is one of the last remaining areas of the once thriving Nubian empire in southern Egypt, but its descendants are banned from setting foot there. When a group of 150 protesters tried, in November, to reach the area, the closest they came to it was a sit-in on a road outside the city.

More details:

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/feb/13/egypt-nubians-fight-for-ancestral-land-earmarked-for-mega-project>

- **UK's 'biggest trade delegation to date' heads to Cairo**

UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy Sir Jeffrey Donaldson and over 40 delegates from British companies arrived to Egypt this week "to assess new trade and investment opportunities and identify potential Egyptian partners."

More details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/ukeypt-uk%E2%80%99s-%27biggest-trade-delegation-to-date%27-heads-to-cairo-937168>

- **Arab parliamentary officials in Egypt to meet with Al-Sisi and Abdul Aal**

On Sunday, Parliament Speaker Ali Abdul Aal met with the vice president of the Omani State Council, Khattab bin Ghalib Al-Hinai. Meanwhile, President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi met with Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/02/13/arab-parliamentary-officials-egypt-meet-al-sisi-abdul-aal/>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Cooperation in field of worship evoked by religious affairs minister, Macron**

Minister of Religious Affairs and Waqf, Mohamed Aïssa, and candidate to the French presidential elections Emmanuel Macron discussed on Monday in Algiers the Algerian-French relations, notably the cooperation in the field of worship. "We have discussed the Algerian-French relations, with

regard to the field of worship. We have shared common reflections on the best manner to organize the questions relating to Islam in France," Macron told the press following the audience.

More Details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/16679-cooperation-in-field-of-worship-evoked-by-religious-affairs-minister.-macron>

- **LIA now run jointly by two chairmen who never meet, reflecting Libya's chaos**

Sources at the Libyan Investment Authority's (LIA) Tripoli Tower headquarters have confirmed that the sovereign fund entity is now run by both contending chairmen, Abdulmajid Breish and Ali Mohamed Hassan. It will be recalled that Breish returned to reclaim the chairmanship of the LIA on 5 February after a Libyan court decision overturned the Faiez Serraj-led Presidency Council/Government of National Accord's appointment of a "Temporary Committee" and its chairman Ali Mohamed Hassan.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2017/02/13/lia-now-run-jointly-by-two-chairmen-who-never-meet-reflecting-libyas-chaos/>

- **GPM Denounces Hamid Chabat's Rumors about Akhannouch**

Petroleum group of Morocco (GPM) came together on Monday to object to Istiqlal Party (IP) Secretary General Hamid Chabat's recent accusations against Aziz Akhannouch, Minister of Agriculture, in what they called a "blatant ignorance of Morocco's price standards." GPM's meeting on Monday rejected Chabat's comments on the State subsidy for butane gas, saying that he intended "to spread false information and mislead public opinion."

More Details:

<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/02/208130/gpm-denounces-hamid-chabats-rumors-about-akhannouch/>

- **"Tunisian authorities have made no mistake in case of Anis Amri, perpetrator of Berlin attack," affirms Chahed to German Tabloid Bild**

"The Tunisian authorities have made no mistake in the case of Tunisian Anis Amri, perpetrator of the Berlin attack," said Prime Minister Youssef Chahed, in reference to the accusations brought by Germany against Tunisia for delaying his repatriation. "The Tunisian authorities were in constant contact with Germany and did the right thing in this regard," he pointed out in an interview given to the German tabloid "Bild" and published on Tuesday, the first day of his visit to Germany.

More Details:

<http://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/8711848--tunisian>

- **Tunisia can't host refugee camps says prime minister**

Tunisian Prime Minister Youssef Chahed said Tunisia can't host refugee camps for asylum seekers in the country, in an interview with German newspaper Bild. "Our democracy is too young and I don't believe this can work or that there are the capabilities for setting up refugee camps," Chahed said.

More Details:

[http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2017/02/14/tunisia-cant-host-refugee-camps-says-prime-minister\\_392f663a-4162-49cc-a027-15ce5952ac9b.html](http://www.ansamed.info/ansamed/en/news/sections/politics/2017/02/14/tunisia-cant-host-refugee-camps-says-prime-minister_392f663a-4162-49cc-a027-15ce5952ac9b.html)

- **Ahead of Berlin visit, Tunisia premier rejects truck attack blame**

Tunisian Prime Minister Youssef Chahed has categorically rejected any responsibility on his country's part for a terrorist attack on a Christmas market in Berlin ahead of his visit to the German capital on Tuesday. The truck attack on December 19 was carried out by Anis Amri, a Tunisian national who had come to Germany as an asylum seeker.

More Details:

<https://eblnews.com/news/europe/ahead-berlin-visit-tunisia-premier-rejects-truck-attack-blame-56112>

- **Tunisia PM, in Germany, dismisses criticism over asylum deportations**

Tunisia's prime minister, in Germany for talks with Chancellor Angela Merkel, rejected criticism on Tuesday that his country had been slow to take back failed asylum seekers from Europe, including Berlin Christmas market attacker Anis Amri. Youssef Chahed also rejected the idea of Tunisia setting up its own asylum centres to ease the burden on Europe.

More Details:

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-europe-migrants-germany-idUKKBN15T16K?rpc=401&>

- **Unity government in Libya blasts formation of rival National Guard**

Libya's UN-backed unity government yesterday condemned the creation of a "National Guard" by armed groups to rival its own presidential guard in the capital Tripoli. The Government of National Accord stated that the creation of the "Libyan National Guard" was "an attempt to form a parallel body." Describing the groups and those supporting them as outlaws, the GNA said that they will be treated as such by the security and judiciary bodies. "The formation of a rival guard will lead the capital into bloody armed conflict," it warned.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20170213-unity-government-in-libya-blasts-formation-of-rival-national-guard/>

- **Russian Sailors Detained in Libya Provided With Lawyers to Prepare for Trial**

Three Russian sailors detained in Libya and suspected of oil smuggling are provided with lawyers in the run-up to a court hearing, Sevastopol human rights commissioner Pavel Butsai told Sputnik on Tuesday. "The Russian sailors in Libya are provided with an opportunity to talk to our lawyers," Butsai said.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201702141050658806-russia-libya-temeteron-sailors/>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **PM vows to take war against terror to its logical conclusion**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday chaired a high level meeting to review over all law and order situation after suicide attack outside Punjab Assembly the previous day. The higher security officials briefed the Prime Minister over security situation.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/186260-PM-vows-to-take-war-against-terror-to-its-logical-conclusion>

- **Goal should be winning the war in Afghanistan: Mohib**

The goal of the international community in particular the United States led by the President Donald Trump should be to win the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and not how not to lose in the country, a top Afghan diplomat based in the US told a Washington audience on Monday. "We need to shift the mentality from not losing in Afghanistan to winning there. We must win," the Afghan Ambassador to the US Hamdullah Mohib told a Washington audience at an event organized by the New America Foundation, a top US think-tank.

More Details:

<http://www.pajhwok.com/en/2017/02/14/goal-should-be-winning-war-afghanistan-mohib>

- **Seeking greater transparency, Senate committee approves Right to Information Bill**

Members of a Senate select committee on Tuesday unanimously adopted a bill that seeks to codify citizens' right to information. During the meeting, members of the senate committee reviewed the bill clause-by-clause and unanimously adopted all amendments and recommendations.

More Details:

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1314749/seeking-greater-transparency-senate-committee-approves-right-to-information-bill>

- **CCTV footage surfaces of Quetta roadside blast**

CCTV footage of a roadside blast in Quetta has surfaced detailing moments before the explosion that had left two Bomb Disposal Squad personnel on Monday. The CCTV video shows a man on a bicycle, placing a bag roadside near Saryab Bridge in Quetta.

More Details:

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/131105-CCTV-footage-surfaces-of-Quetta-roadside-blast>

- **20 militants killed in airstrikes in southern Uruzgan province**

At least 20 militants were killed in a series of airstrikes conducted in southern Uruzgan province of Afghanistan. According to the local security officials, the militants were targeted in the vicinity of Tarinkot city, the provincial capital of Uruzgan.

More Details:

<http://www.khaama.com/20-militants-killed-in-airstrikes-in-southern-uruzgan-province-02881>

- **Efforts Underway to Sort out Differences with Kabul: Sartaj Aziz**

Islamabad is making sincere efforts to resolve all its differences with Kabul, Pakistan's top diplomat has said. Foreign Policy Advisor to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz recalled contacts at high levels between the neighbors. Speaking in Karachi on Saturday, he referred to the Pakistan-brokered peace talks between Afghan government and Taliban representatives.

More Details:

<http://www.bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics.html>

- **Ghani Calls On Jihadi Leaders To Stand By Security Forces**

President Ashraf Ghani on Tuesday addressed guests attending the 28th anniversary ceremony to mark the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and said "yesterday was about freedom,

today is about development." Ghani also called on all Jihadi leaders to maintain their support for the security forces, "who are today's Mujahideen."

More Details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/28th-anniversary-soviet-withdrawal-afghanistan-marked>

- **Afghanistan Sees Increase in Conflict Related Civilian Casualties**

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan's (UNAMA) 2016 report shows an increase in conflict related civilian casualties to the highest recorded number since 2009. According to the UNAMA annual report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, civilian casualties in Afghanistan increased by 3.7% last year, comprising 11,418 conflict-related civilian casualties with 3,498 killed and 7,920 injured. Since 2009 the conflict in Afghanistan has claimed the lives of 24,841 civilians and injured 45,347.

More Details:

[http://feminist.org/blog/index.php/2017/02/13/afghanistan-sees-increase-in-conflict-related-civilian-casualties/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+FeministDailyNews+%28Feminist+Daily+News%29](http://feminist.org/blog/index.php/2017/02/13/afghanistan-sees-increase-in-conflict-related-civilian-casualties/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+FeministDailyNews+%28Feminist+Daily+News%29)

- **Afghanistan in transition: Will history repeat itself?**

It is easy to think history is repeating itself in Afghanistan: the Russians are exerting their influence, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar is back in Kabul, and the Afghan Taliban is gaining in strength. But history repeats itself as farce, and there is nothing comedic about the mounting challenges in Afghanistan. Despite the semblance of repetition, the situation is evolving rapidly, driven by new dynamics and motivations. For Pakistan, this represents a major challenge but also an opportunity for a foreign policy rethinks.

More Details:

<http://www.asianage.com/opinion/columnists/140217/afghanistan-in-transition-will-history-repeat-itself.html>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey condemns terror attack in Pakistan**

Turkey's Foreign Ministry condemned on Tuesday a terror attack in Pakistan's northeastern city of Lahore, which killed 13 people. On Monday evening, some 13 people, including six policemen, were

killed and over 80 injured when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives-laden vest at a busy protest.

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/184768/turkish-defense-minister-heads-to-nato-summit>

- **President Erdogan receives formal reception in Riyadh**

Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud on Tuesday welcomed Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at an official reception in Saudi capital Riyadh. The reception ceremony took place in Riyadh's Al-Yamamah Palace, where King Salman formally received Erdogan after which the two leaders reportedly spoke over lunch.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/president-erdogan-receives-formal-reception-in-riyadh/750193>

*\*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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