



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

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1. IRAQ

- **Jubouri reveals joining of 6 movements with Iraqiya Hurra Coalition (alliraqnews)**

Baghdad, Nov 06 (AIN) -The head of the Iraqiya Hurra Coalition, Qutaiba al-Jubouri, announced that next Saturday will witness holding the first constitutive conference for the Iraqiya Hurra coalition and the rest of blocs within the coalition which to announce the political program of the coalition.

Jubouri said that "The constitutive conference will announce officially the involvement of the Accord Movement for Change headed by Kamil al-Saafi to the IHC as well as the joining of each of Officers Movement, Shaabaniya Movement, Iraqi Youth Gathering, Tribes Gathering of Iraq, and the Iraqi National Gathering to the coalition."

"The conference will also announce the political program and its preparations to take part in the upcoming provincial elections in Iraq," he added.

http://www.alliraqnews.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22042

- **Harb: No legal value to law to limit PM's terms (alliraqnews)**

Baghdad, Nov 06 (AIN) –The Legal Expert, Tariq Harb, confirmed that "There is no legal value for the law of limiting the Premier's terms to two because the next parliament can cancel this law in its first session.

He stated to All Iraq News Agency (AIN) "Even if the parliament voted on this law draft, it will be practically useless because the next parliament have the right to cancel it."

"The constitution limits the President's terms to two and this could not be canceled but the other law over the PM's terms if endorsed could be canceled by another law," he assured.

http://www.alliraqnews.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22040

- **Kurdish Delegation Makes Headway in Visit to Baghdad (Rudaw)**

By HEVIDAR AHMED, 07/11/2012

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region – After eight months of sour relations between Erbil and Baghdad, a senior delegation from the Kurdistan Region visited Baghdad on Oct. 21.

Led by Barham Salih, deputy secretary of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), the delegation held 10 meetings in Baghdad, seven of which were with non-Kurdish parties.

Abubakir Haladni, a political bureau member of the Kurdistan Islamic Union (KIU), was among the delegation members, and described the “dangerous” period of tense relations between Kurdistan and the federal government.

“Many developments took place in this period,” Haladni said. “Maliki visited Russia and the Czech Republic to buy weapons. The Tigris Operations Command entered Kirkuk and the disputed regions. These developments made the Kurdish delegation visit Baghdad to say that this situation cannot be tolerated.”

Haladni told Rudaw that the visit to Baghdad was a Kurdish initiative and that the Kurdish delegation focused on three points before their departure: the national partnership, Iraq’s security system and its economic system.

According to Haladni, the delegation’s first meeting in Baghdad was with President Jalal Talabani. “Sit with all the parties and start your discussions in a friendly manner,” Haladni said Talabani told the delegation. “Keep away from tense language and convey your points in a diplomatic way. Let your grievances and proposals be national and not restricted to the Kurdistan Region.”

The Kurdish delegation was welcomed by members of the Iraqi National Alliance (INA) and their visit was described as positive. The INA, which is the biggest Shia bloc in Iraqi Parliament, told the Kurdish delegation that they would not accept any allies except the Kurds.

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurds/5392.html>

- **Shibibi assures having documents proving stability of Iraqi currency during his term (alliraqnews)**

Baghdad, Nov 06 (AIN) –The former Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq, Sinan al-Shibibi, assured possessing documents that prove the stability of the Iraqi currency during his term.

Speaking to All Iraqi News Agency (AIN), he said " The officials of the CBI have documents that show their success in fixing the ratio of the Iraqi currency and that they are not dealing with any businessmen through the private banks," noting that "I will return to Baghdad next Thursday to defend myself against the political charges against me."

"The problem of the CBI is that it lacks the required data base because we did not have the required allocations to employ the qualified persons who can make an accurate data base," he added, assuring that "The CBI did not deal with certain private banks, but it dealt equally with all the banks according to the conditions of the auction."

http://www.alliraqnews.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22055

- **Change leader announces his support for Kirkuk joining Kurdistan (Shafaq News)**

Shafaq News, Nov 06 / The leader of the Kurdish Change movement, Nawsherwan Mustafa announced on Tuesday that his movement supports joining Kirkuk to Kurdistan region in return for guaranteeing a special status to its population and stressed his support for the local government and welcomed the strengthening of the Iraqi army capacity without interfering it in political disputes.

Mustafa said in a news conference after a meeting today with the Governor of Kirkuk and senior officials, attended by "Shafaq News", that "the aim of his visit is to support and assist Gorran Change movement to Kirkuk governor and the decisions of the provincial council in Kirkuk.

"The movement is with strengthening the capacity of the Iraqi army and arming it," adding that "it doesn't endorse nor support pushing the Iraqi army to resolve political disputes".

For his part, Kirkuk governor , Najem al-Deen Kareem renewed in the conference his rejection from forming Dijla operations in Kirkuk, " adding that , " We confirm our support for the work of the security committee and its great coordination and our understanding with the leadership of squad 12. "

<http://www.shafaq.com/en/news/3993-change-leader-announces-his-support-for-kirkuk-joining-kurdistan-.html>

- **Nijaifi, head of Tunisian NCA discuss mutual relations (alliraqnews)**

Baghdad, Nov 06 (AIN) –The parliament Speaker, Osama al-Nijaifi, met the head of the Tunisian National Constituent Assembly, Mustafa Bin Jaafar in Tunis.

A statement by Nijaifi's office received by AIN on Tuesday cited "The two sides discussed the mutual relations and the means of exchanging the visits between the parliamentary committees of the two sides."

"The meeting was attending by some of the parliament MPs and the heads of the Tunisian political blocs," the statement added, noting that "The meeting was held in a good atmosphere where most of the discussed issues were positive."

http://www.alliraqnews.com/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=22058

- **Iraqi Minister: Riyadh Sends Arms to al-Qaeda Forces in Syria through Turkey (Fars News)**

TEHRAN, Nov 06 (FNA)- Iraqi Minister of Transportation Hadi al-Ameri said on Tuesday that Saudi Arabia supplies weapons to al-Qaeda elements in Syria through Turkey.

"The Saudis are sending arms to al-Qaeda elements in Syria through Turkey," al-Ameri said.

His remarks came while media reports disclosed in September that a huge arms cargo has been shipped to Turkey to be delivered to terrorists and armed groups in Syria.

"A Libyan ship carrying the largest consignment of weapons for Syria...has docked in Turkey," said The Times in an article published mid September.

Quoting a member of the 'Free Syrian Army' (FSA), who called himself Abu Mohammad, the article said the over-400-ton cargo included "SAM-7 surface-to-air anti-aircraft missiles and rocket-propelled grenades."

Abu Mohammad, who told The Times that he "helped to move the shipment from warehouses to the border", said "this is the largest single delivery of assistance" the gunmen have so far received.

The article said the Libyan ship, which is called (victory), was berthed at the Turkish port of Iskenderun and its captain, Omar Mousaeb had received the "papers stamped by the port authority" for the cargo.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9107117482>

- **DNO finds more oil in Iraqi Kurdistan (Reuters)**

OSLO, Nov 6 (Reuters) - Norwegian oil firm DNO has found more oil in the Benenan field in Iraq's Kurdistan region, more than doubling its proven and probable reserves in the field where it expects to hit full production in 2014.

The Benenan-3 well on the Erbil license encountered an additional 210 meter oil column, which is expected to lift the field's gross proven and probable oil-in-place volumes to an estimated 600-700 million barrels from 300 million barrels, DNO said on Tuesday.

"We're working on a joint plan for Benenan and Bastora and expect to complete the development in 2014," DNO spokesman Tom Bratlie said.

"We expect (production of) a few tens of thousands of barrels per day. We can't be more precise today," he added.

The company produced 41,545 barrels of oil equivalent per day (boepd) on a working interest basis in the second quarter and plans to increase output from its resource-rich Tawke field in Kurdistan to 100,000 boepd by the end of this year.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/2012/11/06/dno-iraq-idINL5E8M63GK20121106>

- **Twin bombing injures 6 Iraqi policemen near Kirkuk**

Six members of Iraq's security forces, including an officer, have been injured in a twin bombing that targeted their convoy northwest of the oil-rich city of Kirkuk.

Police sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the attack took place in



the town of Dibis, situated 50 kilometers (31 miles) northwest of Kirkuk, on Tuesday, the Aswat al-Iraq news agency reported.

They added that the force of the explosions badly damaged one of the vehicles in the convoy. Law enforcement agents promptly cordoned off the area and launched an investigation into the incident.

Bombings and shootings have recently increased across Iraq, and many believe that the attacks are being carried out to undermine the central government.

Official figures show that September was the bloodiest month in Iraq in almost two years, with attacks killing 365 people, the highest monthly death toll since August 2010.

The statistics, which were compiled by the health, interior, and defense ministries, show that 182 civilians, 88 police officers, and 95 soldiers were killed in attacks in September.

The violence reached a crescendo on September 8 and 9, when more than 30 attacks killed at least 88 people and injured more than 400.

September 30 was the second deadliest day of the month, with a death toll of 33 and 106 injured.

Violence has increased in Iraq since December 2011, when an arrest warrant was issued for fugitive Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi, who has been charged with running a death squad targeting Iraqi officials and Shia Muslims.

In response, the government has stepped up efforts to increase security across the country over the past few months.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/07/270839/twin-bombing-injures-6-iraqi-policemen/>

2. IRAN

- **Ahmadinejad heads to Indonesia for Bali Democracy Forum**

Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has headed to Indonesia's Bali to take part in the 5th Bali Democracy Forum.



Heading a high-ranking political delegation, President Ahmadinejad left Tehran for Bali on Wednesday.

Upon departure, the president told reporters at Tehran International Airport that he would present Iran's viewpoints regarding a new world order during the summit. He also said that would meet and hold talks with the heads of state participating in the conference to discuss bilateral ties and international issues.

Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi, Senior Advisor to President Mojtaba Samareh-Hashemi and Iran's Vice-President for Executive Affairs Hamid Baqaei will accompany the Iranian chief executive in his visit.

The 5th Bali Democracy Forum is scheduled to be held on November 8 and 9 and the representatives of about 70 countries will participate in the conference.

Among the major issues to be discussed at the meeting are security, peace, human rights and economic development.

Indonesia founded the high-level annual forum in 2008 with the aim of promoting democracy in the Asia-Pacific region.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/07/270881/iran-pres-to-join-bali-democracy-forum/>

- **Iran impounds Saudi fishing vessel in Iranian territorial waters**

The Islamic Republic of Iran has impounded a fishing vessel owned by Saudi Arabia in the southern waters of Iran off the coast of Bushehr Province.

According to Colonel Qalandar Lashkari, the commander of the coast guard of the province, the vessel was detained on Tuesday after it entered Iran’s territorial waters.

He said further details, including those on the vessel and its crew, will be released in the future.

Iran and Saudi Arabia both have a coastline on the Persian Gulf, with Iran covering most of the northern coast and Saudi Arabia most of the southern one.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/07/270868/iran-impounds-saudi-fishing-vessel/>

- **Iran against foreign intervention in Syria’s internal affairs: Cmdr.**

A senior Iranian military commander says Tehran is against any form of foreign intervention in Syria’s internal affairs, noting that Syrians also oppose foreign-backed insurgents.



“The strategic stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Syria is opposing intervention of foreign players in the internal affairs of this country,” Iran’s Armed Forces Deputy Chief of Staff Brigadier General Massoud Jazayeri said on Tuesday.

Jazayeri also renewed Iran’s call for a Syrian solution to the ongoing crisis in the country while ruling out “interventionist” proposals offered by foreign parties.

The general noted that the Syrian people increasingly feel that their country is being threatened by foreign governments and domestic groups affiliated to them.

“The people of Syria consider it more likely to achieve stability through the government, while the Syrian opposition’s potential to enter terrorist groups into Syria has diminished and the armed insurgents’ inability to topple the government has been clearly proven,” Jazayeri pointed out.

He added that there is evidence to prove that toppling the government of President Bashar al-Assad is still on the agenda of the opposition groups.

Syria has been the scene of unrest since March 2011 and many people, including large numbers of army and security personnel, have been killed in the turmoil.

The Syrian government says the chaos is being orchestrated from outside the country, and there are reports that a very large number of the insurgents are foreign nationals.

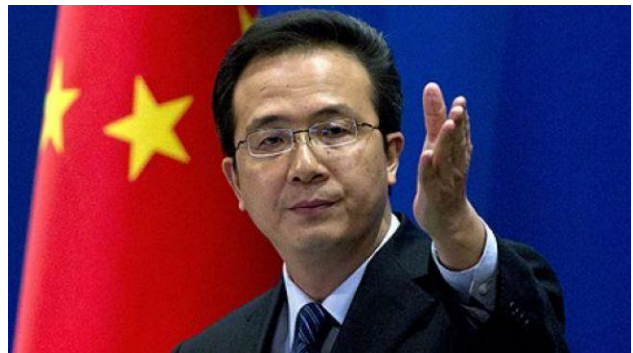
Syria blames Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey as well as some Western countries for fanning the flames of violence in the country.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/06/270800/iran-wants-foreign-players-out-of-syria/>

- **China stresses dialogue on Iran nuclear issue**

China has reiterated its call for dialogue with Iran over its peaceful nuclear energy program one day after the United Nations nuclear monitoring agency chief repeated his unfounded allegations against Iran.

“China has always considered that dialogue



and cooperation is the only right way to properly resolve the Iranian nuclear issue,” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hong Lei, was quoted by Xinhua news agency as saying on Tuesday.

On Monday, head of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukiya Amano claimed that Iran is not providing the necessary cooperation to “enable us to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities.”

Hong said the five world powers [the US, the UK, France, China, and Russia] plus Germany -- known as the P5+1 group -- as well as the IAEA should boost their cooperation with Iran on the nuclear issue.

“...If all parties concerned promote dialogue and cooperation in a flexible and practical way, a solution will be found,” said the Chinese official.

Iran and the P5+1 group have so far held several rounds of multifaceted talks mainly over the Iranian nuclear energy issue.

The United States, Israel and some of their allies have repeatedly accused Iran of pursuing non-civilian objectives in its nuclear energy program.

Iran argues that as a signatory to Non-Proliferation treaty and a member of IAEA it is entitled to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

The IAEA has conducted numerous inspections of Iran's nuclear energy facilities, but has never found any evidence showing that Iran's nuclear energy program has been diverted toward military objectives.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/06/270761/china-urges-dialogue-on-iran-nissue/>

3. SYRIA

- **British PM backs 'safe passage' for Assad**

David Cameron, the British prime minister, has said he will support granting President Bashar al-Assad a safe passage out of Syria to help end the civil war.

Cameron made the comments on Tuesday in a television interview while visiting the Gulf states of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

He said "anything" should be done to help "get the man out of the country and to have a safe transition in Syria".

"Of course I would favour him facing the full force of international law and justice for what he's done. I am certainly not offering him an exit plan to Britain, but if he wants to leave he could leave, that could be arranged," he said.

Cameron visited the United Arab Emirates on Monday before travelling on to Saudi Arabia on Tuesday.

The news came as the UN-Arab League envoy for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, warned the country could become another Somalia.

Meanwhile, gunmen killed the brother of Syria's parliament speaker while he drove to work in the capital Damascus, state-run news agency SANA reported.

Mohammed Osama Laham, brother of Jihad Laham, was killed in the Damascus neighbourhood of Midan on Tuesday, the agency said.

The attack was the latest in a wave of assassinations targeting Syrian officials, army officers and other prominent supporters of Assad's regime.

Four of the president's top security aides were killed in a bombing of state security headquarters in Damascus on July 18.

Deadly explosions also struck a Damascus district housing members of Assad's Alawite sect, news agencies reported.

The opposition said at least 100 more people were killed in the 19-month old revolt and the Syrian state media said at least 10 people were killed and 30 wounded by a deadly explosion in the Hai al-Wuroud district in the northwest of the capital.

The hilltop neighbourhood is situated near a barracks and housing for elite army units, and is home to members of Assad's Alawite sect, an offshoot of Shia Islam.

In comments that underlined the gravity of the situation in Syria, Brahimi said what is happening is a "big catastrophe".

He told the pan-Arab daily Al Hayat that international efforts now are focused on getting a "binding resolution by the [UN] Security Council" to start a political process that will lead to change.

"I don't want to go too far in pessimism, but the situation in Syria is very dangerous. The Syrian people are suffering a lot," Brahimi said.

"I believe that if the crisis is not solved in a right way, there will be the danger of Somalization. It will mean the fall of the state, rise of war lords and militias."

Also on Tuesday, Sergei Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, urged the Syrian opposition to abandon its precondition that al-Assad step down before any talks can be held on ending the conflict.

Speaking after meeting former Syrian Prime Minister Riad Hijab, who defected to Jordan last August, Lavrov accused the opposition of disregarding Syrian lives by demanding the immediate removal of Assad.

"The most important thing is stopping the violence immediately. If it is more important to the other side to change the Assad regime then they want to continue the bloodbath in Syria," Lavrov said in remarks translated from Russian.

Lavrov was rebuffed by Hijab, who said Assad's removal was "the only way out" for there to be a negotiated settlement to the 19-month-old conflict.

Doha meeting

After the meeting, Hijab told Al Jazeera: "We left the meeting in disagreement. There will be no negotiations while Bashar al-Assad and Syrian officials with blood on their hands are still in power."

The meeting with Russia happened while the opposition Syrian National Council, meeting in Qatar to broaden its membership, said on Tuesday that the "cornerstone" umbrella group should preserve its leading role in any revamp.

Abdel Basset Sayda, head of the SNC, also denounced the failure of the international community to act to end "massacres" being committed by forces loyal to Assad.

His remarks were made during a meeting of the SNC general assembly in Qatar's capital Doha, as the United States heaped pressure on the opposition to form a wider structure.

Sayda said the SNC would take part in a broad opposition meeting on Thursday called by host Qatar and the Arab League, but insisted on a leading role for the council.

"We will attend the meeting with an open heart and mind. But we would like to stress from the start the need to keep the SNC as the cornerstone of the Syrian opposition," said the SNC chairman.

"We think that any attempt to target the SNC, whether intentionally or not, will prolong the crisis," he added.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/2012116123042283427.html>

- **British officials planning talks with Syrian armed groups**

Downing Street says Britain is to begin talks with armed Syrian rebels in a bid to unite the opposition to the regime of President Bashar al-Assad.

The announcement came as David Cameron arrived in Jordan on the latest stage of his visit to the Middle East.

Mr Cameron will discuss the fighting in Syria with the King of Jordan and meet refugees from the conflict.

Downing Street said the talks between UK officials and Syrian rebels would take place in Jordan and Turkey.

A spokesman said Britain would not be arming the Syrian rebels, or giving them access to military advisers.

The UK is also to increase its humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees to more than £50m, making it the second largest donor after the United States.

Safe passage

The conflict has been high on the agenda in Mr Cameron's talks with the leaders of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates during his three-day trip to the Gulf.

He said on Tuesday that he was prepared to see President Assad allowed safe passage out of Syria if that would help ensure a peaceful power shift.

But Mr Cameron insisted that he would "favour him facing the full force of international law and justice for what he's done."

Number 10 said the talks with Syrian rebels would help the UK "better understand the actual situation and the relationship between political and armed opposition groups."

A spokesman said: "The government will make absolutely clear to these groups that they must respect human rights and humanitarian law standards.

"We will also call on them to work with aid agencies to facilitate vital humanitarian access."

More than 30,000 people have been killed in the violence in Syria which began last year.

Defence partnership

An estimated 2.5m people in the country need humanitarian assistance, and the number of refugees in the surrounding region is predicted to almost double to 710,000 by the end of December.

It is thought that Mr Cameron is the first leader of a G20 country to visit Syrian refugees in Jordan and see for himself the conditions they face.

On Tuesday Britain and the United Arab Emirates announced a joint defence partnership, following Mr Cameron's two-day visit to the country.

Downing Street said the deal would involve "close collaboration" on the Typhoon jet - although the UAE has not agreed to buy the fighter.

Britain is looking to sell Typhoon jets to Dubai and Saudi Arabia, despite allegations of human rights abuses.

It is Mr Cameron's second visit to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia as prime minister.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-20232491>

- **Foreign Ministry: Terrorist Acts Supported by Some UNSC Members Uncover Truth of What is Happening in Syria and Those Responsible for Terrorism**

DAMASCUS, (SANA) – In identical letters directed to the Chairman of the UN Security Council, Chairman of the UN General Assembly and the UN Secretary General, the Syrian Foreign and Expatriates Ministry on Tuesday said that since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, a number of permanent and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council have been giving misleading images of the forces that helped put Syria on the path of violence, killing and destruction with the goal of promoting their own policies and destroy Syria as a country and as a people.

In the letters which focused on the recent terrorist bombings in Syria and the support of some western and regional countries to terrorists, the Ministry said that within the past few days, blind terrorism, Al Qaeda and other criminal militants struck in many areas in Syria, martyring and wounding hundreds of Syrian citizens, including women and children.

The Ministry said that the terrorist acts committed by armed terrorist groups which are supported by some permanent and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council, in addition to their open collusion, blatant funding and public arming of terrorists including providing them with Stinger missiles uncover the truth of what is happening in Syria and the sides responsible for terrorism.

"Countries like France, Turkey and specifically Qatar, in addition to Libya which has become an incubator hatching terrorists, issued stances that adopt the acts of terrorist organization and express commitment to facilitate their movement, which contradicts relevant Security Council

resolutions on counter-terrorism," the letters said, adding that this is accompanied by mobilizing a misleading media machine to rally the global public opinion against Syria.

The Ministry pointed out that one in a series of terrorist bombings which took place in Syria recently was the terrorist bombing which took place in al-Mazzeah 86 area in Damascus on November 5th, 2012, which claimed the lives of tens and injured tens, in addition to blowing up a civilian bus in al-Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp, which martyred five citizens including women and children and an attack on the same camp with Mortar rounds which also claimed lives.

The letters noted that some media outlets uncovered one of the many war crimes committed by the so-called opposition in the town of Selkin, as a video was published showing terrorists murdering a number of unarmed Syrian Arab Army soldiers and civilians, torturing them then shooting them without mercy.

The Ministry said that other Syrian cities witnessed dozens of incidents which were reported to the Security Council officially, but it didn't receive an objective response from the Council, adding that terrorist gangs are now besieging citizens and starving them, driving them to the edge of disaster and depriving them from the humanitarian aid which the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent have been attempting to deliver to the towns of Harem and Selkin for over two months, adding that this didn't cause any reaction from those who call themselves custodians of human rights and defenders of international law and humanitarian law.

The letters said that according to international law, countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Libya, Turkey, Britain, France and the United States who provide terrorist groups with funds and weapons are accessories in the crimes committed in Syria, and that countries that claim falsely to combat terrorism continue to protect these crimes and cancel the Security Council's role in taking the simplest procedures to condemn them, noting that this was done by the United States, Germany and Britain recently.

The Ministry reiterated Syria's demands that the Security Council play its role in condemning international terrorism and forcing certain countries to cease their arming, funding and harboring of terrorist groups, warning against the repercussions of continuing along this path as it violates

Security Council resolutions on counter-terrorism, international humanitarian laws, human rights laws, and threatens security and peace in the region and the world.

The letters concluded by saying that instead of supporting and protecting terrorism, these countries should encourage Syrian opposition sides to engage in national dialogue to resolve the crisis through negotiations among Syrians and led by Syria.

<http://sana.sy/eng/21/2012/11/06/451066.htm>

- **Romney favorite candidate of Free Syrian Army members**

With less than a day away until a president is picked to lead America through the next four years, a bloodbath continues to spread throughout Syria, with the opposition tying scarce hope to America's new episode.

Unlike in the past U.S. election, where President Barack Obama promised his nation change, the international community may be increasingly doubting that perceptual change on the foreign affairs front will come from any party.

But while many Arab Americans and Middle Eastern onlookers support the Obama administration, members of the main armed Syrian opposition are cheering the other team.

Members of the FSA say they are expecting support from Romney but are not counting on "failed American promises," such as previous U.S. inaction.

Yasir al-Ahmed, a spokesman for the FSA in Aleppo, expressed his disappointment in the approach the U.S. government took since the Syrian revolution started 20 months ago. He said Obama has not shown much action past his words. "We are learning towards Romney as he clearly stated to provide us with armors. Where on the other hand, we did not receive any support from Obama."

Ahmed said he considers America to be “the strongest country in the world” and is capable of “removing and solving any worldwide issues,” however, it decided to take a freeze stand in the Syrian conflict.

“The FSA no longer aligns its goals and anticipations with the American government or any country, as they decided to sit put and watch the overflowing bloodbath, when they could’ve contributed to put an end to this massacre,” Ahmed added.

Throughout their campaigns, both Romney and Obama made clear stands regarding the aid each administration will provide to the FSA. The Obama administration publicly argued against arming the opposition whereas Romney stated clearly “the United States should work with partners to organize and arm Syrian opposition groups” to make the process more aggressive.

Opposition group contradict FSA

But a Syrian activist group has voiced support for neither candidate. A member of the Local Coordination Committees (LCC) told Al Arabiya English the group is not expecting any transformation in the way the U.S. government will handle the Syrian conflict.

Members of the LCC, which organizes protests and reports on the crisis which has left at least 36,000 dead since March 2011, say the U.S. presidential candidates are playing the Syria card; voicing supposed solutions to the crisis, but to no real result.

“It does not matter if Romney wins, or if Obama stays,” spokesman for the LCC group Omar Idilbi said, speaking from Germany. But Idilbi offered a new take on future American action on Syria.

“We are confident that the policy of ‘no action’ will change after the elections and we hope that the change will be towards serious and active engagement by the U.S. administration in providing the needed support,” added Idilbi.

“Regardless of the election’s outcome, we believe America has a set an agenda on Syria, that will take effect following the elections,” said Kareem Lailah, an activist at the LCC. Lailah said

although Romney stated his support to arm the opposition, however, many activists believe this is a case of “propaganda talk” that could possibly win the Republican party more votes.

Lailah said she doesn’t believe the FSA is dependent on the American government for armored support. “The U.S. government won’t help in taking down the Syrian regime, as we have witnessed fighters on the frontier have already struck down many jets and are capable to fight alone.”

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/20121116123042283427.html>

- **At least 15 people killed as attacks near an Alawite-populated district**

Bomb explosions killed at least 15 people and wounded dozens on Tuesday in a Damascus district populated mostly by members of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s Alawite sect, opposition activists said.

Syrian state media said the “terrorist explosion” hit the district of Hai al-Wuroud, in the northwest of the capital, causing an unspecified number of deaths and injuries.

Activists said three bomb explosions were heard and smoke was seen rising from the area in the latest tit-for-tat attack. The hilltop neighborhood is situated near a barracks and housing for elite army units.

A bomb attack on Monday in the western “Mezzeh 86” district of Damascus killed 11 people and wounded dozens more, Syrian state media reported.

Seif al-Sham, an Islamist rebel unit, claimed responsibility for that attack, which targeted what it described as a meeting point for the army and police, as well as the shabbiha militia loyal to Assad.

Damascus has several hilltop enclaves mostly inhabited by members of the Alawite minority, a sect of Shi’ite Islam that has dominated Syria, which has a Sunni Muslim majority, since the 1960s.

“After bomb attacks and constant ground aerial bombardment on Sunni districts, it seems Alawite areas are now considered fair game,” Nawara al-Soueid, an opposition activist in the capital, said.

Last month several bombs exploded during the Muslim Eid holiday near mosques in Sunni districts and the Damascus suburbs, killing or injuring dozens of people, activists said.

Beset by rebels, Assad regime digs in to key areas

Bowled over by an increasingly daring rebellion, al-Assad’s regime is reducing its territorial ambitions to focus on Damascus, central Syria and Alawite bastions, as it digs in for a long war, analysts said.

As rebel fighters make significant gains, especially in Syria’s northwest, the regime’s goal is to entrench in key positions, such as the country’s capital, to fight off further advances and hold out for an opportune time to negotiate, experts said.

“(The regime) is aware that it will never regain control of all the territory, it even knows that it will have to abandon Aleppo,” the northern commercial hub where fighting has raged since mid-July, said Thomas Pierret, a Syria expert at the University of Edinburgh’s Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies department.

“I think the goal of the Assad clan is to hole up in Damascus and Homs,” Pierret said.

Nearly 20 months after the launch of the uprising against Assad and amid increasing violence, the regime has seen the territory it controls shrink away.

<http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/11/06/248062.html>

- **Bombs, air strikes rattle Syria**

DAMASCUS, (AFP) — Fresh bombings and air strikes shook Syria on Tuesday, a day after nearly 250 people died in the country's worst violence in weeks and rebels launched one of their deadliest attacks yet.

As the opposition met in Qatar under pressure to form a truly representative government-in-exile, the Syrian regime was reeling from a wave of rebel car bombs and attacks that killed nearly 100 soldiers and pro-government fighters on Monday.

Another car bomb struck early Tuesday, causing injuries and significant damage in the city of Mudamiya near the capital, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Fighting and military shelling also hit the area, said the Britain-based Observatory, which relies on a countrywide network of activists and medics in civilian and military hospitals.

The regime also renewed a campaign of air strikes pounding rebel positions, with fighter jets dropping at least two bombs in the heart of the town of Douma, 13 kilometres (eight miles) northeast of the capital, the Observatory said.

Air raids also hit the northern town of Al-Bab near the Turkish border and in the central Homs province, it said.

The rebels have scored significant gains in recent weeks and hold swathes of territory in the north, but have come under intense bombardment from the air as President Bashar al-Assad's regime seeks to reverse its losses.

The Observatory said the army was shelling areas in the western Latakia region, in Homs and in Quneitra, near the Golan Heights, where the Israeli army said Monday that gunfire from the Syrian side had hit an Israeli military vehicle.

The Observatory said 247 people were killed on Monday, including 93 soldiers and pro-regime fighters, in the deadliest day in Syria since an attempt to impose a ceasefire for the October 26-29 Eid al-Adha Muslim holiday collapsed.

In one of the most devastating attacks on Assad's forces since the start of the Syrian uprising, a rebel car bomb killed 50 pro-regime fighters at a military post in the central province of Hama on Monday.

Fighting was raging Tuesday in northern commercial hub Aleppo and around Damascus, where residents said heavy explosions could be frequently heard while warplanes and helicopters flew over the city.

A Syrian security source told AFP that regime forces had over the past two days repelled a major rebel attack on the capital.

"During the last 48 hours rebels carried out a massive offensive to move into Damascus, which failed.... They were repelled," the source said, adding that about 4,000 opposition fighters had been involved on different fronts.

Pro-government daily Al-Watan also reported "heavy clashes between the Syrian army and armed bands" in Damascus over the previous 48 hours.

"More than 120 terrorists were killed by the Syrian army, without significant losses registered within its ranks," the newspaper wrote, citing security sources.

Syrian state television said Tuesday that Mohammad al-Laham, brother of parliament speaker Jihad al-Laham, was "assassinated by terrorists" in Damascus, but provided no other details.

In the Qatari capital Doha, members of the opposition Syrian National Council were to hold talks Tuesday on a proposal to create a new political body to represent the opposition, folding in the SNC and other anti-regime groups.

After repeatedly expressing frustration with the SNC for failing to unite Syria's fractured regime opponents, Washington is pushing for a new body that would be more reflective of the country's diverse make-up and better represent on-the-ground activists and fighters.

In a bid to counteract such criticism, on Monday SNC members approved a restructuring that will see the organisation add 200 new members representing 13 different political groups.

The Observatory says more than 36,000 people have died since the uprising against Assad's rule broke out, first as a protest movement inspired by the Arab Spring and then as an armed rebellion.

<http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=31704>

- **Syria shuts Hamas offices in break with group**

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — A spokesman for Hamas says the Syrian government has sealed its offices in Damascus, finalizing the break between the Islamic militant group and its former patron.

Spokesman Ayman Taha said on Tuesday that the move had been expected after Hamas openly switched sides to support the armed rebellion against the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Taha says Monday's move by Damascus was "a result of our siding with the Syrian people in their just struggle." Taha spoke from Cairo.

Hamas, an armed group sworn to Israel's destruction, moved its headquarters to Syria in the late 1990s. But relations have soured since Syria's violent suppression of the uprising that began in March 2011.

Hamas leaders are now based in Qatar, Egypt and the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip.

<http://www.asharq-e.com/news.asp?section=1&id=31706>

- **Multiple explosions rock district in Damascus**

Multiple explosions have rocked an area near the presidential palace in the Syrian capital of Damascus, with no immediate reports of casualties or damages.

The blasts on Wednesday were reportedly caused by mortar shells fired at the al-Mazzeah district, and were reportedly followed by sporadic gunfire.

On Monday, foreign-backed insurgents detonated several explosive devices in the same district, killing 11 people and injuring several others.

Fifteen civilians were also killed in blasts at the al-Worod neighborhood in the western Damascus suburb of Qudsaya on Tuesday. Scores of others were injured.

The Syrian state television reported on the same day that the brother of Syria's parliament speaker was assassinated by armed men in the capital.

Syria has been experiencing unrest since March 2011. Many people, including large numbers of security forces, have been killed in the violence.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/07/270871/multiple-blasts-rock-syrian-capital/>

- **Syrian troops kill dozens of insurgents in mop-up operations**

Syrian Army soldiers have killed dozens of foreign-backed insurgents fighting government forces during nationwide mop-up operations.



A number of armed men were killed during intense clashes with Syrian troops in the

flashpoint northwestern city of Aleppo, located about 114 kilometers (70 miles) south of Damascus, on Tuesday, the SANA news agency reported.

The Syrian Army also destroyed several cars loaded with weapons and munitions and used by terrorists in the Kfar Hamra area of Aleppo.

Separately, Syrian soldiers shot dead a number of armed men near al-Bawari factory in the Kfar Naha district.

In addition, Syrian troops raided a terrorist hideout in the Dir Hafer neighborhood of Aleppo, and shot dead all the insurgents at the site. They also destroyed a pickup truck equipped with Dushka machinegun in the battle.

Syrian forces also attacked insurgents in the al-Lermon, al-Kalasa, and Sheikh Said neighborhoods of Aleppo, killing a large number of them.

Meanwhile, Syrian soldiers found and defused a car bomb in the al-Tadamon neighborhood of Damascus on Tuesday as they were patrolling the area.

Several insurgents were also killed during clashes with Syrian troops in Harasta city, located about 25 kilometers (15 miles) northeast of Damascus.

And, Syrian Army soldiers clashed with gunmen in the al-Mouazafin neighborhood of Deir al-Zour city, situated about 420 kilometers (262 miles) northeast of Damascus, and killed dozens of them in the process.

Syria has been experiencing unrest since March 2011.

The Syrian government says that the chaos is being orchestrated from outside the country, and there are reports that a very large number of the insurgents are foreign nationals.
<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/07/270833/dozens-of-insurgents-slain-across-syria/>

- **Three explosions hit Damascus suburb of Qudsaya, killing 10**

At least ten Syrian civilians have been killed after three explosions hit al-Worod neighborhood in the western Damascus suburb of Qudsaya, SANA reports.



Scores of others were also injured in the explosions caused by two booby trapped vehicles and an explosive device on Tuesday. Some of the injured are reported to be in critical condition.

Local media blamed terrorist groups fighting against the government of President Bashar al-Assad for the blasts, which came a day after 11 people were killed in a bombing in the capitals' al-Mazzeh district.

Earlier on Tuesday state television reported that the brother of Syria's parliament speaker had been assassinated by armed men in the capital, the latest victim in a campaign against supporters of the Syrian government.

Syria has been experiencing unrest since mid-March 2011. Many people, including large numbers of security forces, have been killed in the violence.

Syria accuses Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey as well as some Western countries of fanning the flames violence in the country.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/06/270805/ten-killed-in-damascus-suburb-blasts/>

- **Russian FM says Syria insurgents have 50 Stinger missiles**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says insurgent groups fighting against the Syrian government have obtained 50 Stinger shoulder-launched missiles.



Lavrov said in the Jordanian capital, Amman, on Tuesday that Moscow knows that Syria's insurgents have obtained the lethal weapons from outside to hit (government) fighter jets.

He made the remarks after meeting former Syrian Prime Minister Riad Hijab, who defected from the government and escaped to Jordan after he was sacked from his post in August.

"Those who are supplying arms to the opposition are delivering systems that are not intended for defense. There is confirmed information that on Syrian territory there are over 50 Stingers," Russia's Interfax news agency quoted Lavrov as saying.

"You know perfectly well what stingers are intended for, all the more so that the leaders of the (terrorist) Free Syrian Army have repeatedly said that civilian planes will be a legitimate target."

In October, Russian chief of staff General Nikolai Makarov said Syrian insurgents had obtained shoulder-launched missile systems, including Stingers, made by the United States, but added it was not clear who had delivered the weapons. Some reports say Stingers, also known as MANPADS (man-portable air-defense systems), are delivered to insurgents via Turkey.

Lavrov, who is on a two-day visit to Jordan, also met with King Abdullah II, Jordanian Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh and acting Palestinian Authority Chief Mahmud Abbas.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/06/270796/syria-insurgents-have-50-stingers-lavrov/>

4. ISRAEL-PALESTINE

- **Tel Aviv regime main importer of Azerbaijan oil: Israeli ambassador**

The Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan says the Tel Aviv regime has become one of the major importers of Azerbaijan's oil.

According to Azeri media reports on Tuesday, Rafael Harpaz stated that Tel Aviv has "close and long-standing relations" with Baku.

The Israeli ambassador added that Azerbaijan is an ideal country for business.



“We have Israeli companies that are investing and doing business in Azerbaijan, and we have Azeri private sector doing business in Israel.”

The Israeli regime plans to expand cooperation with Azerbaijan in certain sectors, including technology and energy, Harpaz stated.

“We identify several areas that we would like to develop even further.”

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/07/270884/israel-main-importer-of-azerbaijan-oil/>

- **'9 Israeli officers injured' during Shufat arrest raid**

BETHLEHEM (Ma'an) -- Nine Israeli border police officers were injured during an arrest operation in Jerusalem's Shufat neighborhood on Tuesday, Israeli police said.

Israeli police spokesman Mickey Rosenfeld told Ma'an that one officer was stabbed in the back and eight others injured by rocks, during an arrest operation in Shufat.

A 17-year-old boy was arrested in relation to the stabbing incident, Rosenfeld added.

In December 2011, Israeli authorities officially inaugurated a new military checkpoint at the main entrance to the Shufat refugee camp in north Jerusalem.

Residents protested against the construction of a checkpoint which they say will cut the 45,000-strong community from the rest of the city and control their movements.

The Palestinian Center for Human Rights slammed the encirclement of Shufat.

"This crossing, deep in Palestinian territory, is part of Israeli policies aimed at cutting Jerusalem off from the West Bank, and perpetuating Israel's annexation of the city in violation of international humanitarian law," a press statement said.

Shufat is the only Palestinian refugee camp within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem and is administered by the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, or UNRWA.

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=534708>

5. AFRICA and EGYPT

- **Egypt to increase gas exports to Jordan**

The Petroleum Ministry on Tuesday said it is studying an increase in the gas supplies to Jordan as of mid-November.

The ministry's statement came after a meeting in Cairo between Petroleum Minister Osama Kamal and his Jordanian counterpart.

The Jordanian authorities said imports of Egyptian natural gas have declined to 16 percent of the 240 million cubic feet a day Egypt is under contract to provide.

A government source told Al-Masry Al-Youm that gas supplies to Jordan have been sporadic because of the explosions targeting the pipeline that runs through Sinai.

The pipeline was last blown up on 22 July, the 15th time it was attacked since the start of the uprising in early 2011 that toppled President Hosni Mubarak.

A government official said export quantities were reduced to 87 million cubic feet per day in 2011, or 40 percent of the contract signed in 2004, then to less than 40 million cubic feet per day due to the repeated bombing of the pipeline.

The agreement signed between Egypt and Jordan in 2004 stipulates that Egypt exports the total of 240 million cubic feet a day to Jordan for 15 years. This amount is sufficient to fuel 80 percent of Jordan's electricity.

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/egypt-increase-gas-exports-jordan>

- **Former Brotherhood member says group tried to kill him**

The former editor of the Muslim Brotherhood's website accused the group Tuesday of attempting to assassinate him.

Anonymous gunmen fired at Abdel Gelil al-Sharnouby's car on Monday night on the ring road near Qalyubiya.

Sharnouby resigned from the Muslim Brotherhood news website Ikhwan Online in May 2011 after group leaders criticized the site's coverage of a demonstration against pardoning ousted President Hosni Mubarak.

The group did not participate in the demonstration, which other revolutionary forces had called for. Sharnouby said at that time he sided with the group at the expense of objectivity and professionalism.

Sharnouby told the public prosecution Tuesday that he held the group responsible for the shooting, which he described as "deliberate." Sharnouby said the assassination attempt came because of his opposition to the current rulers' views.

Sharnouby said the Muslim Brotherhood is the only group he has a dispute with, after his resignation from the group and the website last year.

He added he spent nearly 29 years as member of the Muslim Brotherhood and seven years as editor of Ikhwan Online and a spokesperson for the group.

Mahmoud Hussein, secretary general of the Muslim Brotherhood, said Sharnouby's accusation was baseless, assuring that Sharnouby himself knows his claims are false.

Hussein added, in a statement to state-run Al-Ahram, "Assassinations are not the way of the Muslim Brotherhood, and Sharnouby himself knows that."

"If assassination was the Brotherhood method, [former Interior Minister] Habib al-Adly and his men who tortured group members would have been more deserving of such an act [than Sharnouby]," Hussein added.

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/former-brotherhood-member-says-group-tried-kill-him>

- **Nour Party holds rallies to boost popularity**

The Salafi Dawah led a number of rallies featuring notable Salafi preachers across Egypt seeking to boost the Nour Party's popularity ahead of the parliamentary elections.

A source close to the Salafi Dawah said the preachers, including Yasser Borhamy, Saeed Abdel Azeem, Ahmed Fareed, and Ahmed Abu Hotaiba, decided to participate in the rallies in different governorates to restore the party's reputation after the actions of some former MPs and internal disputes affected it.

Salafi Dawah preachers would also lead public conferences on the application of Sharia law, emphasizing the Nour Party's commitment to including Sharia in the new constitution as well as its stance on women's rights.

Nour Party supreme body member Tarek al-Sehry said the party has made several decisions including ordering former People's Assembly members and current Shura Council members to communicate with citizens and attempt to solve their problems.

He added that the Nour Party coordinates with the Salafi Dawah to hold rallies, stressing that the party continues to be popular, which would be strongly reflected in the parliamentary elections.

Sheikh Hosny al-Masry, a member of the board of directors of the Salafi Dawah, said the organization prepared a program of events nationwide to counter political forces who oppose the inclusion of Sharia in the constitution.

The Nour Party has a clear position rejecting both the first and the second drafts of the constitution because they do not include what had been agreed upon with regard to the application of Sharia, Masry said.

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/nour-party-holds-rallies-boost-popularity>

- **Military planners prepare for war in Mali**

Military experts from Africa, the United Nations and Europe have drawn up preliminary plans to recapture northern Mali from Al-Qaeda-linked rebels, African officials said on Tuesday.

A source with knowledge of the plan said it will involve a force of more than 4,000 personnel, mostly from West African countries.

"Every military option will be used — ground and air," the source said, asking not to be named.

The crisis in Mali has become a security concern for Western governments worried its vast desert could turn into a training ground for militants.

Once an example of African democracy, it fell into chaos after a coup in March in the capital Bamako that toppled the president and paved the way for the rebel takeover of the north.

International military experts drew up the plan at a week-long meeting in Bamako and submitted it to the West African regional bloc ECOWAS for approval on Tuesday. The blueprint will then be reviewed by the United Nations Security Council in mid-November, setting the stage for action.

"We need to respond in detail to the Security Council on the logistics, timing, size and funding for the deployment of this mission," Desire Ouedraogo, president of the ECOWAS Commission, told military planners at a ceremony on Tuesday.

"So your conclusions will be crucial in the next step, of getting the United Nations Security Council to adopt a new resolution authorizing deployment."

The Security Council gave African leaders 45 days from 12 October to draw up a plan for military intervention to retake control of the north. Diplomats say that any such operation is months away, however.

While regional and international efforts to deal with the situation have been hobbled by division over how far to proceed with negotiations with the rebels, a consensus is building that an intervention is inevitable.

Representatives from the Islamist rebel group Ansar Dine are pursuing talks with regional mediator Blaise Compaore, the president of Burkina Faso. Ansar Dine has also sent delegates for talks with regional power Algeria in an apparent effort to head off an intervention.

The official present at the planning meetings said a military headquarters for the mission would be set up in Koulikoro, about 60 km from Bamako.

US-based risk consultancy Stratfor said an intervention would likely drive Al-Qaeda-linked fighters out of their strongholds — Timbuktu, Gao, and Kidal — and into the mountain ranges of Mali and Niger where their influence could be contained.

Former colonial power France has been a vocal backer of military action. The United States, which spent years working with the Malian army against Al-Qaeda's Sahara wing, has called for a more cautious approach, seeking elections first to strengthen the political leadership.

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/military-planners-prepare-war-mali>

6. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Two Israeli jets violate Lebanese airspace**

Israeli military aircraft have entered Lebanese airspace and flown over areas of the country in blatant violation of a UN Security Council resolution.



Two Israeli fighter jets crossed into Lebanese airspace over the southern border village of Kfar Kila, located 96

kilometers (59 miles) south of Beirut, at 10:50 a.m. local time (0750 GMT) on Tuesday, according to a statement issued by the Lebanese military.

The warplanes flew over several areas of the country before they left Lebanese airspace at 11:30 a.m. local time (0830 GMT) while flying over the southern border town of Alma al-Shaab.

Israel violates Lebanon's airspace on an almost daily basis, claiming the flights serve surveillance purposes.

Lebanon's government, the Hezbollah resistance movement, and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, known as UNIFIL, have repeatedly condemned the overflights, saying they are in clear violation of UN Resolution 1701 and the country's sovereignty.

UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which brokered a ceasefire in the war of aggression Israel launched against Lebanon in 2006, calls on Israel to respect Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

In 2009, Lebanon filed a complaint with the United Nations, presenting over 7,000 documents pertaining to Israeli violations of Lebanese territory.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/11/06/270811/israeli-jets-violate-lebanese-airspace/>

- **PSP, Hezbollah hold coordination meeting**

BEIRUT: A coordination meeting was held overnight Tuesday between officials from the Progressive Socialist Party and Hezbollah to discuss recent developments and bilateral ties, Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV reported.



The four-hour meeting, held at the residence of Public Works and Transport Minister Ghazi Aridi, was attended by Hezbollah Ministers Mohammad Fneish and Hussein Hajj Hasan, MP Hasan Fadlallah and Wafiq Safa, the head of Hezbollah's Liaison and Coordination Committee.

Ministers Ghazi Aridi and Alaeddine Terro and MP Akram Shehayyeb represented the PSP during the meeting.

"We agreed on some points and disagreed on others ... we agreed to manage the dispute over Syria and confirm the disassociation policy from the crisis in the neighboring country," Aridi told Al-Manar following the meeting.

Aridi said the gathering also agreed on keeping up the government's work and discussed ways to confront the risks of sectarian strife in the country.

"We also addressed the Cabinet issue, the living conditions of citizens and combating corruption and theft," Aridi added.

According to Al-Manar, similar meetings between the two groups will be held again to discuss developments and to discuss means to address them.

The television station said both parties also agreed on the need to preserve stability in Lebanon and to deal rationally with developments in a way that serves the national interest.

Al-Manar also said the gathering agreed on the need to reduce the political rhetoric between Lebanon's rivals and to resort to dialogue as the only means to address all problems.

PSP Leader MP Walid Jumblatt has been a stout supporter of the Syrian uprising while Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah supports the government of President Bashar Assad against the rebels.

The PSP insists it is a centrist and independent party and refuses to be affiliated within the March 14 or the March 8 coalitions, Lebanon's two major rival political groups.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Politics/2012/Nov-07/194231-ppsp-hezbollah-hold-coordination-meeting.ashx#axzz2BWpZUR33>

7. AFGHANISTAN - PAKISTAN

- **UN adds Haqqani network to blacklist**

Security Council's Taliban sanctions committee adds Pakistan-based group over deadly attacks inside Afghanistan.

The UN Security Council's Taliban sanctions committee has added the Pakistan-based Haqqani network, accused of several major attacks in Afghanistan, to a UN blacklist, US officials say.



The Security Council committee's move on Monday also singled out Qari Zakir, an operational commander involved in many of the group's highest-profile suicide attacks, Susan Rice, US ambassador to the UN, said in a statement.

"These sanctions oblige all UN member states to implement an asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo against Zakir and the Haqqani Network," she said.

New additions to the Taliban sanctions list are relatively rare, since such moves are usually agreed upon unanimously.

Council diplomats said it was especially significant that Pakistan, a member of the 15-nation council until the end of 2013, did not stand in the way of the move.

Al Jazeera's Kamal Hyder, reporting from Islamabad, said that the move by the UN to blacklist the Haqqani network "won't make a lot of difference" because it operates over such a vast area.

"The Haqqani network operates inside of Afghanistan even though there are allegations that they are using Pakistan as a base," he said, adding that there has been no immediate reaction to the sanctions by the Pakistani government.

The UN blacklist now contains 131 individuals, including Zakir, and three entities, one of which is the Haqqani group.

The US designated the Haqqani network as a terrorist organisation in September, a move the group's commanders said proved that the US was not sincere about peace efforts in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's denial

US officials have long accused Pakistan of supporting the network, an allegation the country denies.

The Haqqanis, who are allied with the Afghan Taliban, are some of the most experienced fighters in Afghanistan and have carried out several high-profile attacks on Western targets.

"Today's action by the Security Council expands upon these [UN] sanctions and confirms the international community's resolve to end the Haqqani Network's ability to execute violent attacks in Afghanistan," Rice said in her statement.

"It also reflects the Security Council's commitment to use and enforce sanctions against those who threaten peace in Afghanistan, in conjunction with a strong commitment to support Afghan-led peace and reconciliation."

Rice said that as well as organising suicide attacks, Zakir had trained fighters to use small and heavy weapons and improvised explosive devices.

The US state department said separately on Monday that it added Zakir to the US list of specially designated terrorists, a move aimed at freezing any property he might have under US jurisdiction and prohibiting any US transactions with him.

"He has been involved in many of the Haqqani Network's high-profile suicide attacks and is partially responsible for making some of the final determinations on whether or not to proceed with large-scale attacks planned by local district-level commanders," the state department said in a statement.

It said attacks using personnel selected and trained by Zakir included the 2010 attacks on bases of Western forces in Afghanistan, the June 2011 attack on the Intercontinental Hotel, and the September 2011 attack on the US embassy in Kabul, which killed 16 Afghans, including at least six children.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2012/11/20121166251166331.html>

This media summary is prepared by **ORSAM Middle East Research Assistant Sercan DOĞAN and **ORSAM Assistant Ebru DEMİR**. 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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