



ORSAM

ORTADOĞU STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES
مركز الشرق الأوسط لدراسات الاستراتيجية

STRATEJİK BİLGİ YÖNETİMİ
ÖZGÜR DÜŞÜNCE ÜRETİMİ

STRATEGIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
AND INDEPENDENT THOUGHT PRODUCTION



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries	Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset
The Restructuring Procces of Iraq	Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci
Energy Security	Enerji Güvenliği
Economy News	Ekonomi Haberleri
Peace Process	Bariş Süreci
Ethnic and Secterian Groups	Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar
Non State Actors	Devlet-dışı Aktörler
Relations with the West	Batı'yla İlişkiler



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1. **IRAQ**Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.
2. **IRAN** 5
3. **ISRAEL - PALESTINE** 14
4. **AFRICA and EGYPT**..... 16
5. **JORDAN and LEBANON**Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.0
6. **SYRIA**.....Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.2
7. **ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA**.....Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.4
8. **AFGHANISTAN - PAKISTAN**.....Hata! Yer işareti tanımlanmamış.5

1. IRAQ

Hakeem stresses that the symbolic meeting of the country's leaders accomplish marvelous success.

Baghdad (NINA) – Leader of the Supreme Iraqi Islamic Council (SIIC), Ammar al-Hakeem, stressed that the symbolic meeting of the country's leaders, held recently, has achieved marvelous success.

In his speech during the festivity of the night of the Prophet's ascension, held on Saturday, June 8, Hakeem praised attending his invitation by all political leaders. He said that the meeting intended to break the political deadlock and break the ice, as well as provide positive environment for dialogue, clarifying that the meeting did not intend to solve all of Iraq's problems.

Hakeem called on the political forces to follow up the step of symbolic meeting with other steps by sitting around a table to realize national harmony; stressing the necessity to contain disagreements within the meetings' lobby and not take them to the media.

He expressed hope to keep up bilateral and three partite political meetings. Hakeem demanded the Executive Body to keep political leaders in the picture in the decision-making.

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=GIFILF

Yawar: Maliki-Barzani's meeting threatens Nineveh province

Mosul / NINA / The secretary general of the (Justice and Reform Movement), Abdullah al-Yawar described Maliki-Barzani's meeting as "a threat to Nineveh," rejecting the presence of Peshmerga in Nineveh.

Yawar said in a press statement: "The recent Arbil's meeting between Maliki and Barzani involves a threat to the unity of Nineveh and its wealth and territory, because it will lead to truncate large land from Nineveh"

He added: "We reject any census in the presence of occupation of many lands in Nineveh by Peshmerga forces, and we regret the silence of the MPs of Nineveh province, about this matter."

Yawar considered the census as "project to demarcating the border" urging MPs to stop it.

He called on the next province council to: "complete the successes achieved by the current council by refusal to deal with Article 140 in the institutes of the province and stop the census in the areas controlled by the Peshmerga forces," stressing that

"Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution is expired and applying it is a real threat to Nineveh and its wealth and will result in the loss of the province."

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki headed an ordinary session of the Council of Ministers in Erbil yesterday, and then met with the President of Kurdistan, Massoud Barzani.

Maliki said at a news conference after meeting with Barzani that the latest developments in the region had been discussed, as well as reviewing the files that were discussed during the visit of the President of the Kurdistan Regional Government to Baghdad, and it was agreed on Article 140, and we will complete other issues, including the activating of the census and determine the provincial boundaries.

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=GIFLGI

Khalil: Oil, Gas Law, Peshmerga rights, Article 140, issues that Maliki is to deal with in his visit to Kurdistan

Baghdad (NINA) – Kurdish Alliance welcomed the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to the Region to discuss issues agreed on by the Federal Government.

Kurdish Alliance's official, Mahma Khalil, told NINA on Saturday, June 8, that Maliki's visit to the Region is considered a step to bring points of view closer together and to discuss issues related to the Federal Government's practices, as well as implementing the Constitution and the principles of national partnership, in addition to other issues.

Khalil added that, "The Oil and Gas Law, the rights of the Peshmerga and Article 140 are among the most important issues to be discussed."

He added that the Kurdish demands are not new, they require coordination and consultation, they will remain until they are implemented.

It is worth mentioning that during his recent visit to Baghdad, Kurdistan Region's Prime Minister, Nechirvan Barzani, met with the Federal Cabinet, discussing with them the seven points of Erbil Agreement, they got initial agreement.

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=GIFIKL

Allawi: Iraq has become a ship without a captain and there are no sincere intentions to resolve crises.

Baghdad / NINA /--Head of the Iraqiya Slate coalition, Iyad Allawi, said in a statement today that Iraq has become a ship without a captain in a rough sea and there are no sincere intentions to resolve crises.

Allawi added : " Iraq actually is not ruled by any one , and the street in a state of chaos and serious uncontrollable worsening security., stressing that the Council of Ministers is dedicated to prosecute and indictment of national figures accuses them of terrorism.

He expressed his belief that the elections is not the solution to the crises in the country, noting that provincial elections that recently took place were not fair and in some how rigged , as well as his IS coalition suffered 18 martyrs of candidates for the recent elections, moreover the elections have been unfairly adjourned in the provinces, of Anbar and Nineveh.

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95 VQ=GIFMDL

Justice Minister: Iraqi government consider seriously the inclusion of Jordanian prisoners of special pardon.

Baghdad/ NINA /-- Minister of Justice Hassan Shammari discussed with the Jordanian ambassador to Iraq Mohammed Mustafa Goran, and his accompanying delegation, ways to strengthen relations between the two countries in all fields.

A statement by the Ministry quoted Shammari his confirmation during the meeting, "the importance to avoid any obstacle that harm the relations between the two countries," stressing "the desire of the Iraqi government and people to build a special relationship with Jordan, based on the principle of mutual respect of the sovereignty of both countries.

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95 VQ=GIFLME

Ministry of Tourism delegation participate in the Arab-Russian Business Council in St. Petersburg.

Baghdad/ NINA /-- A delegation from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities ended official visit to the Russian city of St.

Petersburg where participated in the work of the Arab-Russian Business Council.

A statement by the Ministry said : " The delegation's participation in the work of the Council included a meeting held with

Chairman of the Council where the most important issues that belong to the sectors of tourism and antiquities has been discussed as well as the means to serve the interests of the two countries.

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=GIFLMJ

PUK: Maliki-Barzani's meeting is positive step to calm the situation

BAGHDAD / NINA / A leader figure of the (PUK) and a former MP, Abdul Bari Zebari described yesterday's meeting between President of Kurdistan, Massoud Barzani and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki as a positive step to calm the situation. "

He told the National Iraqi News Agency / NINA / "The main goal of the meeting is to reach a common agreement, or at least to find a mechanism to implement the agreements concluded between the two parties in particular, or with other political parties in general."

Zebari added that "the meeting is technically a positive step to calm the situation, since it reached negative stages during the past period."

http://www.ninanews.com/english/News_Details.asp?ar95_VQ=GIFLEH

2. IRAN

Iran Launches New Modernized Destroyer

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iran on Tuesday launched its overhauled and modernized destroyer named Bayandor in the Southern waters of the country in the presence of Army Commander Major General Ataollah Salehi and Navy Commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari.

Army officials said the Iranian Navy's power of safeguarding the country's territorial waters as well as maintaining security in regional and international waters will increase after the launch of Bayandor.

Overhauling the main engines, heat exchangers and fuel and oil systems as well as optimizing the monitoring control systems are among the measures adopted before launching the destroyer.

Navy experts have also mounted a fire control system for the destroyer's weapons, a 76-mm and a 40-mm canons and a surface-to-surface Nour (Light) missile system on the destroyer.

In May, Sayyari had declared that Iran can use the destroyer to carry out missions in international waters in the future.

He said the destroyer is fitted with state-of-the-art equipment such as missile, torpedo, artillery, sonar and other information and communication systems.

In recent years, Iran has made great achievements in its defense sector and attained self-sufficiency in producing essential military equipment and systems.

Iran's first home-made destroyer, Jamaran, was launched in late February 2010. The Mowdge Class vessel has a displacement of around 14,000 tons and is equipped with modern radars and electronic warfare capabilities and is armed with a variety of anti-ship, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missiles.

Iranian defense ministry officials had said earlier that the third generation of the home-made vessel, Jamaran-3 destroyer, will come into operation by the end of the current Iranian year (March 21, 2013 - March 20, 2014).

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203181280>

Navy Commander: 3 Missile Systems Mounted on Overhauled Destroyer

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iran has mounted Nour (Light), Qader (Mighty) and long-range Qadr (Magnitude) missile systems on its newly overhauled and modernized destroyer named Bayandor, Navy Commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari announced on Tuesday.

Sayyari made the remarks in a ceremony to launch the newly overhauled destroyer in Iran's territorial waters in the Southern port of Bandar Abbas.

Anti-ship Nour and Qader cruise missile systems are ultra-advanced and self-relying systems which have remarkably improved in radar, satellite, precision, range and navigation terms compared to their predecessors.

Sayyari also elaborated on other optimization measures adopted to overhaul and modernize the destroyer, and said "mount of 76-mm and 46-mm artilleries and some other special systems are among the other measures taken to renovate and modernize the destroyer".

"The 40-mm cannon mounted on the destroyer is also among advanced artilleries in air defense," he stressed.

Sayyari also said the destroyer will possibly be sent to missions in the Pacific, Southern Indian or Atlantic Oceans in the next few days or months.

Tehran launched an arms development program during the 1980-88 Iraqi imposed war on Iran to compensate for a US weapons embargo. Since 1992, Iran has produced its own tanks, armored personnel carriers, missiles and fighter planes.

Yet, Iranian officials have always stressed that the country's military and arms programs serve defensive purposes and should not be perceived as a threat to any other country.

Iran's naval power has even been acknowledged by foes. In a Sep. 11, 2008 report, the Washington Institute for the Near East Policy said that in the two decades since the Iraqi imposed war on Iran, the Islamic Republic has excelled in naval capabilities and is able to wage unique asymmetric warfare against larger naval forces.

According to the report, Iran's Navy has been transformed into a highly motivated, well-equipped, and well-financed force and is

effectively in control of the world's oil lifeline, the Strait of Hormuz.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203181308>

Tehran to Send Delegation to Iraq to Discuss Security of Iranian Pilgrims

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Seyed Abbas Araqchi condemned the Friday terrorist attack in Iraq, which claimed the lives of 17 Iranian pilgrims and wounded 44 others, and said Tehran will soon send a delegation to Baghdad to discuss increasing security measures to protect the lives of Iranian pilgrims.

"In our contacts with Iraqi officials, we have laid emphasis on the establishment of security for the Iranian pilgrims and Mr. (Ali Akbar) Salehi (the Iranian foreign minister) in a phone conversation with his Iraqi counterpart (Hoshyar Zebari) stressed the Iraqi government's responsibility for ensuring the security of Iranian pilgrims," Araqchi told reporters in Tehran on Tuesday. "A delegation from different bodies was decided to be sent to Iraq soon to hold the needed negotiations with different sides in Iraq in order that, God willing, we can work out the security arrangements needed for the

100-percent security of the Iranian pilgrims," he added.

Araqchi said that Iran has decided to close the Khosravi border crossing with Iraq until new security arrangements are made.

17 Iranian nationals were killed Friday in a car-bomb attack in the Eastern Iraqi province of Diyala, police said.

The explosives-packed vehicle exploded near a bus full of Shiite Muslims on their way to a shrine.

The blast occurred as the bus, which was part of a convoy, sat at a police checkpoint in Al Maqdadiya, 45 kilometers (28 miles) Northeast of Baquba, the provincial capital. Members of the Iraqi security forces were also among the fatalities.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203181354>

Bahrain Using British Program to Spy on Citizens

TEHRAN (FNA)- The al-Khalifa regime is using a telecommunication program procured from a British company to spy on the Bahraini citizens' emails and cell phones.

Spy technology from a UK-based company was used to target a British citizen who became a leading light in Bahrain's Arab

spring, according to documents filed in the high court.

The witness statement of Dr Ala'a Shehabi is seen by human rights groups as crucial in their attempt to force the British government to examine the export of surveillance equipment.

They want to secure a judicial review of the government's alleged failure to provide them with information on what action it is taking to establish whether the sale of the technology to repressive regimes is in breach of export-license controls.

Shehabi, who studied at Imperial College London, and has both Bahraini and British citizenship, is one of the founding members of Bahrain Watch, set up following the country's security crackdown in February 2011. Her father is the leader of the Bahrain Freedom Movement. Following the crackdown her husband was arrested and jailed having been beaten. He was freed last year. Shehabi herself was arrested in April 2012, during the Formula One Grand Prix in Bahrain. She was later released.

According to her witness statement, a few weeks after her arrest Shehabi received a series of emails, the first purportedly from Kahil Marzou who was the deputy head of

Bahrain's main opposition party, including one containing a virus. Other emails that claimed to be from an Al Jazeera journalist were also infected. Research found that the emails contained a product called FinSpy, distributed by a British company, Gamma International.

The witness statement claims that when a person's computer is infected with FinSpy, "it allows access to emails, social media messaging, and Skype calls, as well as copying the files saved on the hard disk. These products also enable whoever is doing the targeting to commandeer and remotely operate microphones and cameras on computers and mobile phones."

Shehabi, who has been forced to relocate to Britain, stated, "I have real concerns about the Bahraini regime having effective unfettered access to my computer, reading my emails and monitoring my calls. Not only is this a gross invasion of my privacy, I am concerned that it could put in danger from the Bahraini authorities myself, my family members and other activists."

Last November, the campaign group Privacy International provided a dossier of evidence against Gamma International to HM Revenue and Customs, urging it to investigate whether

there had been any breach of the export control regime.

According to Privacy International, Gamma's technology has been deployed by secret police in 25 countries, many with a history of human rights abuses. The campaign group warns: "This is part of a growing global trend, where human rights defenders, political dissidents and other vulnerable groups around the world are being targeted by increasingly sophisticated state surveillance."

Gamma's managing director in Germany, Martin J Muench, did not respond to requests for comment. However, in the past, he has said that Gamma co-operates with UK, US and German export controls, adding, "It appears that during a demonstration one of our products was stolen and has been used elsewhere."

Shehabi's witness statement provides vivid testimony of the effects she claims the secret surveillance of her computer system has had on her mental health. "I found it very disturbing that an attempt was being made to spy on me through this medium," she explains.

"It upset me a lot, scared me and made me feel quite paranoid. I am very concerned that it appears that a product of a British company

is being exported in breach of export controls to be used to attempt to spy on pro-democracy activists such as myself."

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203181292>

Iran Able to Turn West's Sanctions into Opportunities

TEHRAN (FNA)- The US-led western sanctions against Iran have been ineffective so far, a senior Iranian official said, adding that Iranians have changed pressures and embargos into opportunities through unity and solidarity.

"Imposing sanctions against Iran is not something new, they have been around for the last 30 years and each time Iran adopted itself to conditions and circumstances," Iranian Oil Ministry's Director-General for Europe, the US and the Caspian Sea Littoral States, Hossein Esmayeeli Shahmirzadi.

Shahmirzadi noted that sanctions provide opportunities for domestic companies to take more active part in the country's developing energy sector.

Washington and its western allies accuse Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear program, while

they have never presented any corroborative evidence to substantiate their allegations. Iran denies the charges and insists that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only.

Tehran stresses that the country has always pursued a civilian path to provide power to the growing number of Iranian population, whose fossil fuel would eventually run dry.

Despite the rules enshrined in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entitling every member state, including Iran, to the right of uranium enrichment, Tehran is now under four rounds of UN Security Council sanctions and the western embargos for turning down West's calls to give up its right of uranium enrichment.

Tehran has dismissed West's demands as politically tainted and illogical, stressing that sanctions and pressures merely consolidate Iranians' national resolve to continue the path.

Tehran has repeatedly said that it considers its nuclear case closed as it has come clean of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s questions and suspicions about its past nuclear activities.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203181404>

Iranian Human Rights Activist Condemns US, West for Worldwide Injustice

TEHRAN (FNA)- Secretary-General of Habilian Association - a human rights NGO representing the families of 17,000 Iranian terror victims - blamed the US-led West for inequality and injustice across the world.

"World is plagued by injustice, and in spite of the stringent laws and regulations, the discriminatory structure of the UNSC and the lack of preventive mechanisms to deter World Powers' invasion of other nations has multiplied the pain of this injustice," wrote a human rights activist in an article published in the Persian-language Rah-Nama Magazine.

Secretary-General of Habilian Association Seyed Mohammad Javad Hasheminejad added, "In this day and age people are suffering from terrorism more than ever, while the research institutes are involved with defining the word "terrorism" and the international supervisory bodies are adopting interesting resolutions aimed at combating terrorism and some governments, such as the United States, are talking about an endless fight against terrorism."

He further touched upon the situation in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, and Africa, saying, "Since the occupation of Iraq in 2003, some 100000 Iraqis have been killed. Each month lots of Afghan people are falling victim to the acts of terror and war. Five thousand Syrians are being killed every month during the terrorist acts. Women and children in Pakistan are facing death while they are asleep by remotely piloted iron birds. People in Africa are witnessing the devastation of their homes and cities and the loss of their loved ones."

Hasheminejad described the wars waged by US and Europe as "unequal wars" which they are trying to justify by labeling it as the "War on Terror".

"International peace and security institutions did not hesitate to follow this ideological warfare," he added. "The bitterest humor in the history was created when the UN Security Council added fuel to the fire and authorized use of force against Iraq after three months of US invasion of the country."

He also made a reference to the US plan of a Greater Middle East and changing the governments of the region and said the souvenirs of the US victories were imprisonment and torture.

"Meanwhile the storm of propaganda, inequalities in the international system, unilateral and corrupted interpretation of international law, and ambiguity in the definition of terrorism has changed the reality of this war so that it seems that these nations are doomed to be the defenseless victims of anti-humanitarian and violent policies of the United States."

The Secretary General of Habilian Association added that "the world is now plagued by injustice, and in spite of the quite strict laws and regulations, the inefficient and discriminatory structure of the UNSC and the lack of preventive mechanisms to deter World Powers' invasion to other nations has multiplied the pain of this injustice."

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203181346>

Haddad Adel Quits Presidential Race

TEHRAN (FNA)- Presidential hopeful Gholam Ali Haddad Adel on Monday announced his withdrawal from the presidential race.

In his statement, Haddad Adel reminded that his prime objective has always been the victory of the Principlist camp in the

upcoming presidential election, and added, "On the very same basis I am bound to avoid any move which would directly or indirectly lead to the defeat of the Principlists in this election."

He further reminded that he had joined Supreme Leader's Top Advisor Ali Akbar Velayati and Tehran Mayor Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf to form the Coalition 2+1 to help prevent the failure of the Principlist Camp in the election due to tough rivalry among the Camp nominees.

Haddad Adel mentioned that since the beginning all the three Coalition members had vowed to give up the race in favor of the one nominee who could win most public support in opinion polls prior to the election.

"And now I stay on my word and declare that I quit the Islamic Republic of Iran's presidential election race to contribute my share to the victory of the Principlists in this election," he said in his statement.

He further expressed the hope that other Principlist nominees would comply with their duty at this sensitive juncture.

Haddad Adel also asked the people to trust the Principlist Camp and give its nominees a chance to win the election in the first round

or give such a wide support to the Camp nominees that "if the election would go to a run off voting, both candidates in the second round would come from the Principlist Camp.

Members of the Coalition 2+1 have repeatedly announced that only one of the members of 2+1 Coalition will run in the June presidential election too.

Gholam Ali Haddad-Adel, born in 1945 in Tehran, is a philosopher and politician.

He is a former speaker of the Iranian Parliament. He was the first non-cleric in the post since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

He received his Phd in philosophy from the University of Tehran in 1975, and also, holds a BSc and an MSc in Physics from the University of Tehran and University of Shiraz, respectively.

He is currently a member of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, the High Council of Cultural Revolution, and the Expediency Council.

Iranian voters will go to over 66,000 polling stations inside and outside the country on June 14 to elect their next president.

Campaigning for the June 14 presidential election kicked off in Iran on May 22 after the Guardian Council released the list of 8 qualified candidates.

The eight qualified candidates represent a wide range of political streams from Principlists to reformers.

There are now 7 candidates left in the race. They include Qalibaf, Velayati, Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Secretary and chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili, former SNSC Secretary and chief nuclear negotiator Hassan Rouhani, former Oil and Telecommunication minister Seyed Mohammad Qarazi, former Vice-President under Khatami Mohammad Reza Aref, former Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and Secretary of the Expediency Council Mohsen Rezayee.

Campaigning will continue up to June 13, that is 24 hours before the start of the election.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?n=9203180868>

3 ISRAEL-PALESTINE

Special rapporteur attacks Israel's actions in Gaza, calls for investigatory c'tee into treatment of Palestinian prisoners.

UN investigator Richard Falk. Photo: Reuters

The European Union took a strong stand against United Nations Human Rights Council special rapporteur Richard Falk, denouncing as inaccurate and biased a report against Israel which he delivered to the body in Geneva on Monday.

“The EU continues to regret the unbalanced mandate of the Special Rapporteur and is also concerned that parts of the report include political considerations.

In the past, the EU emphasized that future reports should be based on a more factual and legal analysis, and we regret to see no genuine progress in that direction,” it said.

“The council needs to be provided with accurate, factual information and solid allegations to fulfill its role and address the human rights situation in occupied Palestinian territory,” the EU said.

Many of the country representatives who spoke at the session thanked Falk for his work and attacked Israel for refusing to cooperate with him as he examined its actions beyond the pre-1967 lines. In his report he attacked Israel's actions in Gaza and called for a special investigatory committee into its treatment of Palestinian prisoners.

The United States and Canada did not speak during the session.

On Friday, the US called for Falk's removal after he allotted a portion of his report to an attack on the Geneva-based non-governmental organization UN Watch.

Falk lashed out at UN Watch after it repeatedly called for his resignation in response to Falk's controversial opinions, including one he wrote in the online Foreign Policy Journal in April in which he appeared to blame American global dominance for the Boston Marathon attack. In a blog post, Falk has explained that he had not meant for readers to make that link.

In the report he delivered to the UNHRC on Monday, Falk charged that UN Watch was a "pro-Israel lobbying organization" that has carried out a smear campaign against him and contacted UN officials and the secretary-general to have him removed.

UN Watch should be investigated to see if it qualifies as an independent organization and "is not indirectly sponsored by the Government of Israel and/or other "pro-Israel lobbying groups," Falk wrote in his report.

Such "character assassination," he said, is detrimental to his work because it diverts attention from the message to the messenger.

He also called on the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UNHRC to establish a mechanism to support special rapporteurs who are subject to defamatory attacks.

The United States Ambassador to the UNHRC Eileen Donahoe called on Friday for Falk's resignation.

Falk's attack on UN Watch threatens the independent voice of civil society at the UN, Donahoe said. NGO work is particularly important in the field of human rights, she added.

"Mr. Falk's most recent statement – which he dramatically and recklessly included in an official UN document – is characteristic of previous reprehensible comments and actions he has made during his tenure as a special rapporteur," Donahoe said.

"His views and behavior, both official and unofficial, are offensive and provocative and do nothing to advance peace in the Middle East or to further the protection and promotion of human rights. We again call for his resignation," she added.

At the UNHRC debate on Falk's report on Monday in Geneva, UN Watch executive director Hillel Neuer defended his

organization, which he said was accurately reporting on Falk's views.

He held up as an "Exhibit" a copy of a book by David Ray and referred to it as a "bible for those who blame America, instead of al-Qaida, for the 9/11 attacks.

"Do you deny that this is your name on the front cover, praising the author's 'fortitude,' 'courage,' and 'intelligence'?" Neuer inquired of Falk.

Neuer asked Falk whether he understood why UN Secretary- General Ban Ki-moon had said that his remarks on 9/11 were "preposterous" and an "affront" to the 3,000 victims of the attack.

He explained that the British Foreign Office has accused Falk of racism, and noted that according to Wikileaks, a Palestinian delegate to the council had called for Falk to step down.

<http://www.jpost.com/Diplomacy-and-Politics/EU-slams-Falks-Israel-report-as-biased-at-UNHRC-session-316090>

Israeli forces issue 8 demolition orders in Silwan

JERUSALEM (Ma'an) -- Israeli forces on Monday handed down eight demolition orders to homes and commercial properties in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Silwan, a local community center said.

Director of the Wadi Hilweh Information Center, Jawad Siyam, told Ma'an that a total of eight demolition orders were affixed to homes belonging to the Sarafandi, al-Bana and Siyam families, as well as a car wash.

The municipality staff were accompanied by Israeli police.

The residential properties handed demolition orders are home to dozens of people, Siyam added.

According to the UN, 33 percent of all Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem lack Israeli-issued building permits, potentially placing at least 93,100 residents at risk of displacement.

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=603586>

4 AFRICA AND EGYPT

Qatar emir to cede crown to son within month: UK Press

Oil-rich Gulf state's crown prince Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad is poised to succeed 61-year-old father Khalifa Al Thani, UK's Daily Telegraph reports; Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasem set to relinquish premiership
Qatar urges Arab peace offer review, brands Quartet failure
Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad, 33, is poised to succeed his 61-year-old father, the current emir Khalifa Al Thani.

The UK's Daily Telegraph has reported that key foreign states have been briefed about Qatar's succession plans, which will see power transferred from the hands of the current Qatari emir to his son.

The US and Iran have both known about the oil-rich state's succession plans for at least one year, the Telegraph reported.

The power transition is expected within one month, pending a decision by Qatar's royal court.

The move will also reportedly see Qatar's high-profile prime minister, Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasem, leave his post.

According to Al-Ahram's Arabic-language news website, Bin Jasem will stay on with the

Qatar Investment Authority, while also continuing his involvement with UK retail giant Harrods.

Emir Al Thani has reportedly been suffering health problems recently. He has been in power since 1995 when he took over from his father in a bloodless coup.

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/73644/World/Region/Qatar-emir-to-cede-crown-to-son-within-month-UK-pr.aspx>

Family visits Nelson Mandela in hospital: South Africa

Nelson Mandela received visits from family members on Sunday at a hospital where the former president and anti-apartheid leader was being treated for a recurring lung infection, while South Africans expressed their appreciation for a man widely regarded as the father of the nation.

There was no official update on 94-year-old Mandela after his second night in the hospital. His condition was described as "serious but stable" on Saturday.

The office of President Jacob Zuma had said that Mandela was taken to a Pretoria hospital

after his condition deteriorated at around 1:30 a.m. on Saturday.

The anti-apartheid leader has now been taken to a hospital four times since December, with the last discharge coming on April 6 after doctors diagnosed him with pneumonia and drained fluid from his lung area.

Members of Mandela's family on Sunday were seen visiting the Pretoria hospital where he is believed to be staying. They included Makaziwe Mandela, the eldest of the ex-leader's three surviving children, and Ndileka Mandela, one of his 17 grandchildren.

Worshippers at a Sunday church service in the Johannesburg township of Soweto prayed for the recovery of Mandela, who was freed in 1990 after 27 years as a prisoner of white racist rule and won election to the presidency in all-race elections in 1994. He retired from public life years ago and had received medical care at his Johannesburg home until his latest transfer to a hospital.

At the Regina Mundi church in Soweto, Father Sebastian Rousso said Mandela, seen by many as a symbol of reconciliation for his peacemaking efforts, played a key role "not only for ourselves as South Africans, but for the world."

There is a stained glass image of Mandela with arms raised in the Catholic church, a center of protests and funeral services for activists during the apartheid years.

"We still need him in our lives because he did so much for us," said Mantsho Moralo, a receptionist who was in the congregation. Siyabonga Nyembe, a student, described Mandela as a "pillar of strength" for South Africans.

A stream of tourists visited Mandela's former home, now a museum, on Vilakazi Street in Soweto. Visitors and vendors wished a quick recovery for the man whose sacrifices in the fight against apartheid made their lives better, even if South Africa today is struggling today with high unemployment and other severe challenges.

"He's like one in a million. I don't think we're ever going to get a leader like him. We're living the life that we have because of him and for that we wish him well," said Seponono Kekana, who toured the brick, one-storey house.

On April 29, state television broadcast footage of a visit by Zuma and other leaders of the ruling African National Congress to Mandela's home. Zuma said at the time that Mandela was in good shape, but the footage - the first

public images of Mandela in nearly a year - showed him silent and unresponsive, even when Zuma tried to hold his hand.

The Nobel Peace Prize laureate has been particularly vulnerable to respiratory problems since contracting tuberculosis during his long imprisonment. The bulk of that period was spent on Robben Island, an outpost off the coast of Cape Town where Mandela and other prisoners spent part of the time toiling in a stone quarry.

The Sunday Times, a South African newspaper, quoted Andrew Mlangeni, an old friend of Mandela, as saying he wished the former president would get better but noted his infirmity had become a drawn-out process. He said Mandela had been taken to the hospital "too many times" and that there was a possibility he would not be well again.

"The family must release him so that God may have his own way. They must release him spiritually and put their faith in the hands of God," said Mlangeni, a co-defendant of Mandela in the 1960s trial on sabotage charges that led to a sentence of life imprisonment for them and other anti-apartheid leaders.

"Once the family releases him, the people of South Africa will follow. We will say thank

you, God, you have given us this man, and we will release him too," Mlangeni told the newspaper.

Nhlanhla Ngcobobo, a street vendor who works a few steps from the Mandela Family Restaurant next to the former leader's old home, said the ailing Mandela was a kind of psychological anchor for his compatriots. South Africa has held peaceful elections since 1994 and remains an economic powerhouse on the continent, but many worry that the sense of promise that Mandela represented in the early years of democracy is in peril.

"There's a lot of corruption and when Mandela dies, people will start feeling they can do what they like and corruption will be worse than it is," Ngcobobo said. "By him being alive, there's a lot more order."

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/9/73587/World/International/Family-visits-Nelson-Mandela-in-hospital-South-Afr.aspx>

Egypt's Shura Council moves forward with army's right to vote

The legislative committee of the Shura Council, the upper house of parliament which currently holds legislative powers, approved on Tuesday the reservations of the High Constitutional Court (HCC) on a draft law regulating political rights.

The court had found several of the articles of the law unconstitutional, including a provision that members of the police and the armed forces are not given the right to vote.

The court also objected to the fact that the Supreme Electoral Commission, the body tasked with supervising elections, is not given the right to monitor the use of private media in election campaigning.

The legislative and constitutional affairs committee of the Shura Council had agreed last week to grant Egyptian military and police personnel the right to vote in elections by July 2020.

Deputy defence minister for Legal Affairs Major Mamdouh Shahin had asked committee members to postpone including army and police personnel in upcoming election voter lists, raising doubts about whether the state could manage the upcoming parliamentary elections without the security services of the army, if army personnel were eligible to vote.

Poll stations are typically secured by the military during elections. Shahin also submitted an amendment to the Shura Council which proposes exempting army and police personnel from automatic updates of

voter registries. The amendment would establish a different system for adding their information to voting lists – to be agreed upon by the armed forces and police authorities – which takes into account the information's confidential nature.

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/73720/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-Shura-Council-moves-forward-with-armys-righ.aspx>

5. JORDAN AND LEBANON

The Lebanese Civil Coalition condemned Tuesday the killing this weekend of an anti-Hezbollah protester and warned against attempts to intimidate independent Shiites in Lebanon.

Salman, 28, who headed the student committee of the Lebanese Option Party, a fierce Hezbollah critic, was shot and killed Sunday at a rally outside the Iranian embassy while protesting the resistance group's military involvement in the Syrian conflict.

BEIRUT: The Lebanese Civil Coalition condemned Tuesday the killing this weekend of an anti-Hezbollah protester and warned against attempts to intimidate independent Shiites in Lebanon.

“The Lebanese Civil Coalition condemned the assassination of martyr Hashem Salman while

... [he was] protesting peacefully over the Iranian decision to drag the Shiite sect in Syria's battles," an LCC statement said.

Salman, 28, who headed the student committee of the Lebanese Option Party, a fierce Hezbollah critic, was shot and killed Sunday at a rally outside the Iranian embassy while protesting the resistance group's military involvement in the Syrian conflict.

The LCC also warned that "this crime could be the beginning of a stage in which Iran and its apparatuses in Lebanon resort to silencing every free voice within the Shiite community and all over Lebanon."

The movement also hailed President Michel Sleiman's stance over the incident. Sleiman condemned the killing and urged both Hezbollah and Iran to assist in the probe into Salman's death.

However, the LCC denounced the statement issued by the Lebanese Army following the attack outside Tehran's embassy, saying it had "aimed at distorting facts and at keeping the assailants unidentified."

The LCC, a movement of intellectuals, journalists and lawyers calling for the "rule of law" was established in October 2011 to promote interaction and unity within the

society and transcend the "hegemony of sects," according to the group's manifesto.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Local-News/2013/Jun-11/220035-lebanese-civil-coalition-condemns-killing-of-protester.ashx#axzz2Vu5x3pP8>

Bekaa bombing believed aimed at Hezbollah fighters

TAANAYEL, Lebanon: A roadside bomb exploded in the Bekaa Valley Monday morning and targeted two vans, which some security sources said were transporting Hezbollah fighters into Syria. Some leaders of Syria's armed opposition have vowed to retaliate against Hezbollah on Lebanese soil after the group fought openly alongside embattled President Bashar Assad's forces to retake the Syrian town of Qusair.

The explosion occurred at 9:40 a.m., causing light damage to a passing van and car.

Both vehicles were heading east through Taanayel, but the van aroused suspicion when, rather than stopping, it kept driving even though the bumper, with a license plate bearing the number 372 414, had been blown off and lay by the side of the road.

The car was a BMW belonging to Jerjes Bashalani, a resident of nearby Mraijat.

Bashalani, who was uninjured, said he was there by coincidence.

Information provided by security sources suggested both vans passed into Syria without being stopped.

Lebanese Army Intelligence, detectives, members of the police's Internal Security Forces and State Security promptly arrived at the scene of the explosion and immediately erected a security cordon.

Military experts said the bomb, which weighed 300 grams and left a hole in the road 30 cm deep and 40 cm wide, was likely detonated remotely.

In the last two months Hezbollah has buried dozens of fighters who fought alongside Assad forces in the region of Qusair and other parts of war-torn Syria.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb>

6. SYRIA

Bombs kill 14 in central Damascus - Syrian TV

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Two bombs killed 14 people in central Damascus on Tuesday, state media said, in an attack which appeared to target a police station.

Syrian television said the bombs exploded close to the police post in the central Marjeh Square, while the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said one bomb was detonated by a suicide attacker inside the police station.

A view shows the site after bombs exploded close to a police post in the central Marjeh Square in Damascus June 11, 2013, in this handout photograph distributed by Syria's national news agency SANA. REUTERS/SANA/Handout via Reuters

The Observatory, which monitors violence across Syria through a network of medical and security sources, put the death toll at 15 and said most of the casualties were police.

State media had earlier said the bombs had been left outside shops in Marjeh Square, located in the heart of the Syrian capital, which has been rocked several times by bombings during the two-year-old uprising against President Bashar al-Assad.

A bomb attack in the same square six weeks ago killed 13 people. Since then, Assad's forces have retaken rebel-held areas to the east of the capital and also driven rebels from their stronghold in the town of Qusair, close to the Lebanese border.

<http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2013/6/11/worldupdates/bombs-kill-14-in-central-damascus-syrian-tv&sec=Worldupdates>

Syrian group urges foreign fighters to leave

A Syrian opposition group has urged all foreign fighters involved in the country's conflict to leave, regardless of whether they are pro- or anti-government.

The move came as rebels claimed Lebanese Hezbollah fighters have arrived in Aleppo to fight alongside forces loyal to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Hezbollah were also instrumental in the recent take-over of the city of Qusayr by government forces.

There were also reports that Kurdish fighters have joined the Free Syrian Army in some areas of the northern city.

"The coordination body calls on all non-Syrian parties that are taking part in the fighting on Syrian territory, no matter what party they are fighting beside, to leave the country immediately," said Hassan Abdul Azim, head of the National Coordination Body for Democratic Change, at a news conference in Damascus.

Abdul Azim added that the coalition would seek United Nations condemnation of foreign fighters' involvement.

"The body considers every non-Syrian who kills in Syria as an aggressor," he said.

The National Coordination Body for Democratic Change is a coalition of non-armed opposition groups and figures based in Syria.

The Gulf Cooperation Council has also condemned the interference of Hezbollah in the Syrian conflict in a statement on Monday.

Fierce fighting is continuing in Aleppo as Syrian rebels make fresh advances in their battle to seize the Minnigh airbase.

"Opposition fighters have seized the radar tower in the Minnigh airbase," Syrian Observatory for Human Rights director Rami Abdel Rahman said.

"Fierce clashes have raged in the airbase since dawn Sunday," he added.

State news agency SANA said the rebel assault had been repulsed.

"Troops from our heroic army stopped terrorist groups from assaulting the Minnigh army airbase," it said.

Government troops "stopped terrorists from assaulting the airbase through its eastern and western sides" and captured a rocket launcher and heavy machineguns, the report added.

Rebel fighters have been trying to capture Minnigh for months, as part of a strategy to deny the regime the use of air power across Aleppo province.

The UN estimates at least 94,000 people have died in the Syrian conflict since March, 2011.

The issue of foreign fighters in Syria has been thrown into sharp relief recently with the execution of a Syrian teenager by three foreign rebels who accused him of blasphemy.

Mohammad Kattaa was using a phrase common with Syrians when men speaking classical Arabic picked him up and shot him dead.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/06/2013610174816597559.html>

7. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

Mursi warns Ethiopia over Nile dam

Cairo: Egyptian President Mohammad Mursi, facing growing discontent at home, has warned “all options are open” for his country in dealing with a threat posed to its water sufficiency by a controversial Ethiopian dam.

“We will never allow Egypt’s water security to be infringed,” Mursi told a televised gathering in Cairo Monday night. “All options are open for us to deal with this. If a single drop of the Nile water is lost, our blood will be the alternative,” he added, drawing a standing ovation from the audience, mainly his Islamist allies.

Egyptians have been increasingly worried since last month when Ethiopia started diverting the Nile to build the Grand Renaissance Dam, which experts say will

seriously endanger Egypt’s water share and electricity generation. The Nile supplies Egypt, a country of 85 million people, of more than 80 per cent of its water needs.

“We are not propagators of war, but we will not allow our water security threatened,” said Mursi.

<http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/mursi-warns-ethiopia-over-nile-dam-1.1195550>

US President Barack Obama urges ‘meaningful reform’ in Bahrain

US pledges continued support for kingdom’s stability and security

Gulf News Report Published: 12:56 June 6, 2013

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President Obama and Prince Salman.

Dubai: US President Barack Obama called for “meaningful reform” and respect for universal rights in Bahrain on Wednesday, during talks with Crown Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa at the White House.

Obama dropped by US deputy national security adviser Tony Blinken’s meeting with Prince Salman, and stressed the importance of the US partnership in Bahrain and reiterated Washington’s support for the kingdom’s stability and security.

The US president voiced “firm support” for the ongoing national dialogue in Bahrain and added that he would continue to encourage

all sides to “engage constructively” to achieve progress.

Prince Salman, in Washington following an official visit to Canada, said that the national dialogue reflected a keen interest in achieving positive results for the nation despite major challenges, including continued street violence. Prince Salman was recently named Bahrain’s first deputy prime minister.

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/bahrain/us-president-barack-obama-urges-meaningful-reform-in-bahrain-1.1193513>

GCC condemns Hezbollah action in Syria

Riyadh: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) strongly condemned the blatant interference of Lebanese Hezbollah in Syria, considering it a “partner in crimes” of the overwhelming killings of innocent Syrians.

The GCC said in a statement that involvement of Hezbollah reveals its true nature and real goals which go beyond Lebanese borders and Arab world.

The GCC countries added that Hezbollah interference is illegitimate and heinous practices by its militias in Syria will damage their interests in GCC countries, noting that the GCC council has decided to take measures against Hezbollah’s members in GCC countries, whether it was their living status, financial or commerce conditions inside GCC countries.

The GCC also called on the Lebanese government to bear responsibility for Hezbollah’s “unlawful and inhuman” practices in Syria and in the region. Meanwhile, the

Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaikh Hamad Bin Jasem Bin Jabr Al Thani and Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal reviewed yesterday bilateral relations. According to Qatar News Agency (QNA), they also discussed the latest developments in the region, particularly the situation in Syria during a telephone conversation.

<http://gulfnews.com/news/region/syria/gcc-condemns-hezbollah-action-in-syria-1.1195564>

Saudi Arabia to build a pilgrims’ city in Madinah

Manama: Saudi Arabia is to build a pilgrims’ city in the vicinity of Al Masjid Al Nabawi, the Prophet’s Mosque, in Madinah.

The city over 1.6 million square metres will be able to accommodate up to 200,000 people and will feature hotels, a hospital, offices, a bus station and a train station, Prince Faisal Bin Salman Bin Abdul Aziz, the Governor of Madinah, said, quoted by news site Sabq on Monday.

The hospital will have 400 beds.

Madinah, known as the Radiant Madinah, is the second most sacred city for Muslims after Makkah and although it is not part of the Umrah or Haj (pilgrimage) tour, it is visited by millions of Muslims every year.

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/saudi-arabia/saudi-arabia-to-build-a-pilgrims-city-in-madinah-1.1195704>

8. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

Internal Divisions Weigh on Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood

Cairo – Division and unrest are the defining features of Egypt today. It seems that the ruling Muslim Brotherhood has failed to develop mechanisms to confront many of the country's current challenges.

The Nile crisis continues to rear its head from the south as all information indicates that the construction of the Ethiopian Nahda Dam would mean a 17 billion m3 reduction in Egypt's 55 billion m3 water share. Electricity production would be adversely affected as the Aswan High Dam's capacity would decline by 15 to 20 percent.

Last Monday's meeting between President Mohamed Morsi and Egyptian politicians to discuss the Ethiopian crisis added insult to injury. The meeting ended in a tragic farce as participants discussed covert ways in which Egypt can stop the building of the dam, unaware that the cameras were live-broadcasting.

Sources in the Egyptian foreign ministry told Al-Akhbar that "the Ethiopian government is moving toward prosecuting Egypt in the International Criminal Court, as it accuses it of inciting factions inside Ethiopia and antagonizing neighboring countries."

On a different front, the situation in the Sinai seems outside the regime's control. Two days ago, protests broke out in North

Sinai after army forces expelled citizens from land alleged to be owned by the armed forces though residents' deeds confirmed otherwise.

The opposition has called for protests to topple the Brotherhood regime on June 30. The campaign, "Tamarrud" or Rebellion, seeks to gather 9 million signatures to oust Morsi from power by calling for early elections. May Wehbe, spokesperson of the campaign, said that "all the movement's central leadership will participate in the week of rebellion."

To counter the opposition's actions, the Brotherhood's Central Guidance Office is organizing street-level events to quell the growing tensions.

This article is an edited translation from the Arabic Edition.

<http://english.al-akhbar.com/content/internal-divisions-weigh-egypt%E2%80%99s-muslim-brotherhood>