



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

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## 1. IRAQ

- **A decision to imprison the Former Governor of Nineveh, Athil Nujaifi, for 3 years**

Al-Rusafa Misdemeanor Court on Integrity, Money Laundering and Organized Crime has decided to imprison former Governor of Nineveh province Athil al-Nujaifi for three years and prevented him from traveling and detaining his money. An official letter issued by the Rusafa Misdemeanors Court said that the Rusafa Court of Misdemeanors for Integrity, Money Laundering and Economic Crime has sentenced Athil Nujaifi to three years' imprisonment under Article 329 of the Penal Code."

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?zggI05BYeobL7nc8xtaQ8w%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?zggI05BYeobL7nc8xtaQ8w%253d%253d)

- **Ethel al-Nujaifi: My trial in absentia is settling accounts and I will appeal against the verdict**

The former Governor of Nineveh Athil al-Nujaifi announced that he will appeal against his decision in absentia on charges of economic crimes, money laundering, for three-year imprisonment and the confiscation of his money. Al-Nujaifi said in a press statement that "the decision of the verdict issued by my right, is only the liquidation of political accounts behind the same bodies that accused me of helping in the fall of Mosul, however.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?s7njZeCi3sr22flmEiDQ6A%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?s7njZeCi3sr22flmEiDQ6A%253d%253d)

- **Abadi: Holding elections is a commitment to Iraq's constitution**

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, in an exclusive interview with Al Arabiya's General Manager Turki al-Dakhil, has rejected accusations by Iraqi parties and politicians about postponing the parliamentary elections and pointed out that he is "committed to the constitution". Abbadi said during the interview that the recent differences between the Dawa Party was because of the Nouri al-Maliki's refusal of Abadi running for elections on the party's list, resulting with the party being left of the list of those participating in the upcoming vote.

More Details:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2018/01/29/Abadi-tells-Al-Arabiya-Holding-elections-is-a-commitment-to-Iraq-s-constitution.html>

- **Hashd al-Shaabi Hopes to Bring Gorran, KIG into Electoral Coalition**

Al-Fatih bloc, a group of powerful Iraqi Shi'ite militias led by Hadi al-Ameri, are reportedly attempting to bring the Change Movement (Gorran) and Kurdistan Islamic Group (KIG) into an alliance for the upcoming elections in Iraq. According to a report published by al-Quds al-Arabia paper, Ameri is working to exploit the disputes between certain Shi'ite factions while the Sunnis are understood as having difficulties for the upcoming parliamentary elections.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/kurdistan/410543>

- **Troubled elections loom in Iraq**

When Iraqi Prime Minister Haidar Al-Abadi announced last week that he was entering into an electoral alliance with leaders of the country's Shia-led militias, many questioned the rationale behind the gambit. Many of Al-Abadi's supporters voiced concerns that the Shia prime minister had taken a miscalculated risk and one that could cost him the popularity he gained after declaring victory over the Islamic State (IS) terror group and the blocking of the Iraqi Kurds' bid for secession.

More Details:

<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/23608.aspx>

- **Deputy Secretary Sullivan Travels to Iraq**

Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan will travel to Iraq on January 27 to lead an interagency delegation to participate in the Higher Coordinating Committee meeting and reinforce our long-term partnership with Iraq and the Iraqi people. The Deputy Secretary will focus discussions on expanding US-Iraq economic ties and increasing foreign investment to facilitate Iraq's reconstruction.

More Details:

<https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2018/01/277728.htm>

- **Baghdad Objects to European Plans to Forcibly Repatriate Iraqis**

Iraqi Ivan Sahda Moshi has been hiding at a friend's house in Gothenburg, Sweden, since Dec. 1, 2017, as a decree has been issued by Sweden to forcibly return him to Iraq. "I hope that my case is looked over again this year," Moshi told Al-Monitor. Moshi, who fled Iraq in 2007 seeking asylum in Sweden, belongs to a Christian family, all of whom have fled Iraq to different countries. He fears going back, as militias threatened to kill him due to his work with US forces, not to mention that Christians are a threatened minority in Iraq.

More Details:

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180128180323.htm>

- **Iraq will take part in Syrian peace conference**

Iraq will participate in the Syrian National Dialogue Congress due in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi on January 29-30, Iraq's Ambassador in Moscow Haidar Mansour Hadi said in an interview with TASS. Baghdad shares Moscow's stance on Syria and hails Russian proposals aimed at resolving the Syria crisis.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/iraqi-will-take-part-syrian-peace-conference/>

- **Russia invited to international conference in Kuwait on Iraq — ambassador**

Russia has been invited to an international conference in Kuwait on Iraq's post-war reconstruction and is expected to send a high-level delegation, Iraq's Ambassador to Russia Haidar Mansour Hadi said in an interview with TASS. "There is an important conference coming up in Kuwait, in the middle of February," Hadi said. "Russia has received an official invitation and will be participating with, as far as I know, a high level delegation."

More Details:

<http://tass.com/world/987225>

- **Saudi Arabia sets "precondition" to take part in Kuwait conference on Iraq**

Speaking to the Russian Sputnik news agency, Anwar Eshki, a member of the Saudi Council of Ministers' advisory council, said the Kingdom expressed its readiness to take part in the international conference to be hosted by Kuwait on February 12-14 on the reconstruction of Iraq, but it asked Baghdad to fulfill a number of conditions first. Speaking about such preconditions, Eshki said the Saudi government wants Baghdad to prove that its decision is sovereign and does not subject to any pressure by Iran or any other country.

More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/24772b20-342b-4c85-954c-fa73ef1fe5fb](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/24772b20-342b-4c85-954c-fa73ef1fe5fb)

- **Czech chemical specialists leave for Iraq**

A team of Czech army chemical weapons specialists left Prague for Iraq on Saturday morning. The team of 12 specialists will spend six months training Iraqi counterparts in dealing with chemical weapons before their return. A team of air force advisors is also at the moment in Iraq helping their counterparts.

More Details:

<http://www.radio.cz/en/section/news/czech-chemical-specialists-leave-for-iraq>

- **Friendly fire kills 11 in Iraq air strike: Iraqi security sources**

Friendly fire from the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State killed 10 members of the Iraqi security forces and a local official in an air strike west of Baghdad on Saturday, Iraqi officials said. Early investigations indicated that Iraqi forces had called in an air strike against a local police force in the town of al-Baghdadi, 170 km (106 miles) north-west of Baghdad, assuming that they were militants, military and security officials said.

More Details:

[https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-security/friendly-fire-kills-11-in-iraq-air-strike-iraqi-security-sources-idUSKBN1FG0LJ?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&rpc=401](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-security/friendly-fire-kills-11-in-iraq-air-strike-iraqi-security-sources-idUSKBN1FG0LJ?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29&rpc=401)

- **Parliament's security committee urges PM Abadi to end 'US intervention' in Iraq after friendly strike incident**

The Head of the Security and Defense Committee in the Iraqi Parliament on Sunday called on Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to take "deterrent measures" against American troops in the country. Iskandar Wutwut, a leader of Iraq's Security and Defense Committee, urged the Iraqi Prime Minister to take a stand and end US "interference" in Iraq following a friendly fire incident which killed and injured 18 local police forces in the Anbar Province on Saturday.

More Details:

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/6bb4d18b-f164-491f-ae96-1afef242037d>

- **Local police to take control of security file in Mosul soon- source**

The local police forces are considering planes to take control of security file in Mosul city of Nineveh, Commander of Nineveh operations Gen. Najm al-Jabouri said on Sunday. Iran-backed militias will be deployed in neighbourhoods surrounding the city, Jabouri added.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/23060/Local-police-to-take-control-of-security-file-in-Mosul-soon-source>

- **'Islamic State' sleeper cells spread fear in Iraq's Hawija**

Last October, after weeks of bitter combat, some 1,400 "Islamic State" (IS) fighters turned themselves in, expediting Hawija's liberation. In a series of operations, the Iraqi army swept through the region to clear any remaining pockets of IS fighters. However, in its effort to speed up the process, it hasn't been as efficient as was hoped. The eastern part of Hawija remains unsafe and has attracted sleeper cells who are still active there, emerging at night to take food from civilians.

More Details:

<http://www.dw.com/en/islamic-state-sleeper-cells-spread-fear-in-iraqs-hawija/a-42313767>

- **There are 20 thousand ISIS prisoners in Iraqi prisons**

Number of ISIS prisoned and those who are prosecuted for being contact with them, have reached 20 thousand prisoners in Iraqi prisons. Iraqi Ministry of Justice in a statement revealed, till now investigations for the case of the prisoned ISIS terrorists and those who are prosecuted for being in contact with them have not ended, because of their high number and that needs a lot of time so that the investigation for all of the cases goes in a fair way.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=42629](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=42629)

- **IS nearly 100 percent uprooted from Iraq, Syria: Trump**

United States President Donald Trump said on Friday that US-backed coalition forces had won nearly all of the territories occupied by the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria. "The coalition to defeat ISIS has retaken almost 100 percent of the territory once held by these killers in Iraq and Syria," Trump said in a speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

More Details:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/is-nearly-100-percent-uprooted-from-iraq-syria-trump201801270331010001/>

- **Mass grave of ISIS victims found in Iraq's Kirkuk**

Iraqi forces found on Friday a new mass grave of people executed by Daesh (ISIS) militants in west of Kirkuk, a security source was quoted saying. National Iraqi News Agency (NINA) quoted the source saying that Popular Mobilization Forces ran into the grave in al-Riyad region. He said it contained the relics of citizens of southern and western Kirkuk executed by the militants during the occupation of Hawija, their former bastion southwest of the province.

More Details:

[http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/mass-grave-of-isis-victims-found-in-iraq%E2%80%99s-kirkuk\\_879394.html](http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/mass-grave-of-isis-victims-found-in-iraq%E2%80%99s-kirkuk_879394.html)

- **Tribal dispute leaves nine people killed, injured in Baghdad**

Nine people were killed and injured in a tribal dispute in southeastern Baghdad on Sunday, a security source was quoted as saying. Speaking to Baghdad Today, the source said, "Two people were killed and seven others injured in a fighting between two tribes in al-Nahrawan region, south west of Baghdad."

More Details:

<https://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/tribal-dispute-leaves-nine-people-killed-injured-baghdad/>

- **Gunmen kill local senior official in Iraq's Kirkuk**

Unidentified gunmen on Sunday shot dead a local senior official in the ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk, a local police source told Xinhua. Udai Salih al-Obeidi, a member of the town council of al-Rashad, some 30 km south of Kirkuk, was killed when gunmen opened fire at him in al-Khadraa district in the city of Kirkuk, the source said on condition of anonymity.

More Details:

[http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/29/c\\_136931853.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-01/29/c_136931853.htm)

- **France would intervene if French jihadist faced death penalty in Iraq or Syria - minister**

France would intervene if a French jihadist were condemned to death in Iraq or Syria, the country's justice minister Nicole Belloubet said on Sunday. The possibility of such an event has arisen after an Iraqi court this month sentenced to death a German woman of Moroccan origin for membership of Islamic State.

More Details:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-mideast-crisis-france/france-would-intervene-if-french-jihadist-faced-death-penalty-in-iraq-or-syria-minister-idUKKBN1FH0TV?rpc=401&>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Syria congress participants arriving in Russia's Sochi**

The bulk of the delegates to the Syrian National Dialogue Congress scheduled for January 30 will arrive in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi on Monday. The meeting in Russia will be a continuation of Moscow's efforts aimed at restoring civilian life in Syria and will bring together over

1,500 people. According to the forum's organizers, the first delegates from among internal opposition members from Damascus have already arrived in Sochi.

More Details:

<http://tass.com/politics/987290>

- **UN envoy will attend Russian-sponsored peace talks on Syria**

Plans to help start rebuilding Syria after seven years of civil war are to be discussed at a Russian-sponsored peace conference in Sochi on Monday and Tuesday. The event is being boycotted by the official Syrian opposition and the main Syrian Kurdish groups but will be attended by the UN special envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, who explained his reasons for taking part.

More Details:

[http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/28/un-envoy-will-attend-russian-sponsored-peace-talks-on-syria?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+euronews%2Fen%2Fnews+%28euronews+-+news+-+en%29](http://www.euronews.com/2018/01/28/un-envoy-will-attend-russian-sponsored-peace-talks-on-syria?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+euronews%2Fen%2Fnews+%28euronews+-+news+-+en%29)

- **Syria opposition to boycott Russian peace talks**

Syria's main opposition group on Friday said it would boycott Russian peace talks next week in a major blow to Moscow's diplomatic efforts toward resolving the brutal seven-year conflict. "Russia has not succeeded in promoting its conference," the opposition Syrian Negotiations Commission (SNC) said on its Twitter account.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1233921/middle-east>

- **Netanyahu to head to Moscow to discuss Iran, Syria with Putin**

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is headed to Moscow on Monday for a whirlwind trip, during which he is set to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin and visit an exhibition on the Holocaust. On the agenda of his meeting with Putin will be Iran's attempts to entrench itself militarily in Syria, since Moscow is one of the key allies of both Damascus and Tehran. Other issues likely to come up in their talks will be the future of the Iranian nuclear deal, of which Russia is one of the signatories, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

More Details:

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/netanyahu-heads-to-moscow-to-discuss-iran-syria-with-putin/>

- **Syria: Escalation on Eve of ‘Sochi’, Intense Shelling in Ghouta and Idlib**

Fierce clashes accompanied by large explosions and extensive airstrikes on eastern Ghouta and Idlib erupted on the eve of the Syrian National Dialogue Congress scheduled for Monday in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi. Local sources said that warplanes and helicopters have been pounding the city of Saraqeb in the countryside of Idlib since early Sunday, using missiles and explosive barrels.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1158221/syria-escalation-eve-%E2%80%98sochi%E2%80%99-intense-shelling-ghouta-and-idlib>

- **In Syria, Russia is keeping an eye on the big picture**

While practically all local and regional parties involved in the Syrian crisis say they believe conditions are not ripe for a political settlement, all world capitals interested in Syrian affairs are committed to the talks in Switzerland and Russia. Any laxity in dealing with the Syrian issue, they say, could jeopardise plans of helping redraw the political and economic maps of the entire region. Observers of the Syrian saga might have noted that Russia has toned down its discourse. The Russians’ ardour, it seems, has been reined in, at least formally, by the new policy in Syria as outlined by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, who is selling the US plans to Europe before discussing them with Moscow.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86970>

- **Tillerson insists Russia to blame for Syria chemical attacks**

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on Saturday said he stands by his claim that Russia bears responsibility for recent chemical attacks in Syria, despite strong denials from Moscow. "These are just unacceptable deployments of chemicals in ways that violate all conventions which Russia itself has signed up for. It violates agreements that Russia undertook to be responsible for identifying and eliminating the chemical weapons inside of Syria," Tillerson said during a visit to Warsaw.

More Details:

<https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/27/01/2018/Tillerson-insists-Russia-to-blame-for-Syria-chemical-attacks>

- **PYD/PKK rags hanged on Syria’s border gate**

Several rags, symbolizing the PYD/PKK terror group, were hanged on the border gate building in northern Syria. The rags, which can be seen from Turkish bordering region, are hanged on a border gate building in the town of Tal Abyad in city of Raqqah.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/pyd-pkk-rags-hanged-on-syria-s-border-gate/1045202>

- **Air strikes kill at least 14 in Syria's Idlib**

As Syrian regime air strikes kill at least 14 civilians in Syria's Idlib and the Turkish military's Operation Olive Branch makes gains on another front, in Afrin, yet another set of peace talks are expected to start in Sochi, Russia on Monday. Speaking to Anadolu Agency's reporter on the ground, White Helmets Director Mustafa Haj Yusuf said the air strikes in the de-escalation zone of Idlib were carried out by Russian and Syrian regime fighter jets. The official of the pro-opposition volunteers Syrian Civil Defense or White Helmets said the victims included children and 30 others were also injured.

More Details:

<https://www.trtworld.com/mea/air-strikes-kill-at-least-14-in-syria-s-idlib-14684>

### 3. IRAN

- **Iran's policy to help bring peace, stability, security in region**

In response to Jordan King Abdullah's anti-Iran claims, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said the principled, stable and unchanging policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has always been contributing to peace, stability and security in the region. Calling Jordan King Abdullah' claims at odds with realities and the demand of people and most countries in the region for the establishment of peace and sustainable security, Ghasemi said the Islamic Republic has always sought peace, stability and security in the region and takes advantage of every opportunity to promote dialogue aimed at solving regional problems.

More Details:

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/131700/Iran-s-policy-to-help-bring-peace-stability-security-in-region>

- **MP: Trump's attempt to demonize Iran 'beating the air'**

A senior Iranian lawmaker says US President Donald Trump's effort to demonize Iran by accusing the Islamic Republic of supplying ballistic missiles to Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah fighters is futile and an example of "beating the air." "Trump is making desperate efforts to portray a negative image of the Islamic Republic of Iran and I believe these measures are [like] beating the air," Chairman of the Iranian Parliament's Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy Alaeddin Boroujerdi told reporters on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2018/01/28/550475/Alaeddin-Boroujerdi-Ansarullah-missile-Trump-Haley>

- **One month after Iran protests: A climate of uncertainty**

A delegation of Iranian members of Parliament are expected to visit suspected anti-government protesters locked up in Tehran's Evin prison on Sunday. Their visit comes with the promise of investigating reports of detainees killed in police custody, an allegation government prosecutors have denied.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/blogs/middleeast/2018/01/month-iran-protests-climate-uncertainty-180127154345381.html>

- **Armed forces ordered to help in relief operations after heavy snowfall**

In an order issued on Sunday Major General Mohammad Baqeri, chief of the Iranian armed forces, called on security forces to join relief operations if needed after heavy snowfall caused disruption in some parts of the country. General Baqeri said armed forces are ready to help in efforts to open roads across the country, Tasnim reported. After sweeping western and northern Iran, a winter air mass lashed Tehran on Saturday night, grounding flights, shuttering schools, blocking highways, and above all surprising people to see heavy snowfall after ten years.

More Details:

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/420794/Armed-forces-ordered-to-help-in-relief-operations-after-heavy>

- **Senior MP Hails IRGC's Success in Foiling ISIL's Terrorist Attacks in Western Iran**

A prominent Iranian lawmaker lauded the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) for its successful confrontation with the terrorist groups, specially the ISIL, in the Western parts of the country. "So far, the IRGC personnel, intelligence ministry agents, and border guards have succeeded to prevent the terrorists from entering Iran," Chairman of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi said on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://en.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13961109000450>

- **Bogus Israeli regime at its weakest: Amir-Abdollahian**

A senior Iranian official says the "bogus and illegitimate" regime of Israel is currently at its "weakest" position, stressing that Tel Aviv will not be allowed to trifle with the security of Iran and the Middle East. "Despite Daesh's major assistance to Zionists in weakening and destroying a part of Muslim countries, undoubtedly, Tel Aviv is today at its weakest," Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the Iranian parliament speaker's special adviser on international affairs, said on Saturday.

More Details:

[http://parstoday.com/en/news/iran-i74677-bogus\\_israeli\\_regime\\_at\\_its\\_weakest\\_amir\\_abdollahian](http://parstoday.com/en/news/iran-i74677-bogus_israeli_regime_at_its_weakest_amir_abdollahian)

- **Iran Parliament Rejects Framework of Rouhani's Proposed Budget**

A total of 120 lawmakers voted against while 83 were in favour of the budget proposed by the government, whose figures had been revised by the Parliament's Budget Commission. Nine MPs also abstained, according to a report by IRNA. Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said the budget commission has 72 hours to revise the bill and present it to the chamber.

More Details:

<http://ifpnews.com/coverage/iran-parliament-rejects-framework-rouhanis-proposed-budget/>

- **UAE Press: Al Houthi missiles will expose Iran's role**

Today, ambassadors sitting on the United Nations Security Council, UNSC, will be in Riyadh to inspect first hand debris from missiles fired by Al Houthi rebels at civilian targets in Saudi Arabia, a UAE newspaper has said. "But it is not Al Houthis who the UNSC envoys are interested in, but in who supplied these weapons," said Gulf News in an editorial on Monday.

More Details:

<http://wam.ae/en/details/1395302663255>

- **Austrian delegation in northeast Iran to forge economic ties**

An Austrian delegation is in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province, to discuss expansion of economic, scientific and trade relations between Iran and Austria, said a local official on Sunday. The delegation, which is co-headed by Austrian Ambassador to Iran Stefan Scholz and the country's Deputy Economy Minister Josef Mayer, arrived in Mashhad on Saturday, said the caretaker of Mashhad Municipality's public and international relations directorate, Hossein Keshiri, IRNA reported.

More Details:

<http://www.iran-daily.com/News/208976.html>

#### 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Abbas:'Oslo Accords are dead'**

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, speaking with Meretz party leader Zehava Galon, said that the Palestinian authority didn't drop the negotiations options although "the Oslo Accords are dead." "We are prepared for negotiations, and we never intended to leave the talks, but regrettably no one is offering us talks, especially not the Americans, who now wish to punish us," he added.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1157361/abbas-oslo-accords-are-dead>

- **Abbas Calls on African States to Join Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Discussions**

Palestinian Authority chief Mahmoud Abbas called on African states to join a multilateral mechanism to discuss the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, after spurning any U.S. role in such negotiations. "Pursuing peace efforts requires the establishment of a multilateral mechanism under the umbrella of the United Nations. We call on the African Union and its member states to have representatives in this mechanism," he told an African Union meeting in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa on Sunday.

More Details

<https://www.albawaba.com/news/abbas-calls-african-states-join-israeli-palestinian-conflict-discussions-1081180>

- **Palestine to ask UN Security Council to consider its full membership – foreign minister**

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Riyad Malki said on Monday that the leadership will approach the United Nations Security Council in February to demand international protection to the people of Palestine under Israeli occupation as well to reconsider Palestine's application for full membership in the UN, which was first submitted in 2011. It will also call on the Security Council members to renew their commitment to the implementation of resolution 2334 of December 2016 on Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory.

More Details:

<http://english.wafa.ps/page.aspx?id=3k0dF4a96235552842a3k0dF4>

- **Jewish Groups Bully New Orleans into Rescinding BDS Resolution**

Just weeks after passing a resolution backed by the pro-Palestinian Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions, BDS, movement, the New Orleans city council rescinded the resolution after it came under heavy fire from Jewish and pro-Israeli groups. While the resolution had made no mention of Israel, it called for investigating and blacklisting corporations and companies that do work with states or groups that violate human rights in line with BDS principles. The resolution was in fact drafted by the Palestinian Solidarity Committee branch in the city, a member organization of the BDS movement.

More Details:

<http://www.palestinechronicle.com/jewish-groups-bully-new-orleans-rescinding-bds-resolution/>

- **Israeli security warns of consequences of tightened siege on Gaza**

In the wake of a sharp reduction in the number of commercial shipments being allowed to enter the Gaza Strip, Israeli security agencies have warned of the deteriorating security situation that might lead to a major offensive, Arab48.com reported on Sunday. Official statistics show that just 350 truckloads of goods are allowed into Gaza daily, compared with 800 previously. The security agencies called on the politicians to refrain from reducing the amount of goods going into Gaza in order not to aggravate the economic and social crises which are hitting the besieged enclave.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180129-israeli-security-warns-of-consequences-of-tightened-siege-on-gaza/>

- **International League of Peoples' Struggles joins global campaign to free Ahed Tamimi and Palestinian prisoners**

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) is an anti-imperialist and democratic formation that promotes, supports and develops the anti-imperialist and democratic struggles of the peoples of the world against imperialism and all reaction. It brings together organizations in struggle from around the world to build mutual solidarity and joint struggle. Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network is an ILPS member organization and Mohammed Khatib, Samidoun's Europe coordinator, is a member of its International Coordinating Committee.

More Details:

<http://samidoun.net/2018/01/international-league-of-peoples-struggles-joins-global-campaign-to-free-ahed-tamimi-and-palestinian-prisoners/>

- **Israel Threatens Lebanon over Iran ahead of Netanyahu's Trip to Moscow**

On the eve of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's trip to Moscow on Monday, the government and Israeli army spokespersons launched on Sunday an unprecedented campaign in which they warned of Iran's influence in Lebanon and Syria. Netanyahu will meet in Russia with President Vladimir Putin and discuss Iran's influence.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1158226/israel-threatens-lebanon-over-iran-ahead-netanyahu%E2%80%99s-trip-moscow>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan King, German President Discuss Palestinian File**

Jordan's King Abdullah II held talks on Sunday with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the Husseinia Palace in Amman, focusing on the strategic partnership between the two countries, regional and international developments and the Palestinian file. The two leaders discussed means to develop cooperation between the two countries, especially at the economic, investment, tourism, development, military and security levels.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1158296/jordan-king-german-president-discuss-palestinian-file>

- **Jordan's King 'Amman is paying attention to Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem'**

King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein, King of Jordan, reiterated his country's insistence on playing a role in the preservation of holy sites under the Hashemite trusteeship of Islamic and Christian holy sites in the occupied city of Jerusalem. The King's statement came during his meeting with the head of the Scottish Church, Archbishop Derek Browning, at Al Husseinia Palace in the capital Amman on Sunday, according to a statement by the Royal Jordanian Court Anadolu News Agency obtained a copy of.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180129-jordans-king-amman-is-paying-attention-to-muslim-and-christian-holy-sites-in-jerusalem/>

- **Jordan gets US Black Hawk helicopters to bolster defenses**

The United States delivered eight Black Hawk helicopters to Jordan on Thursday to help its regional ally defend itself against the threat of ISIS militants, Jordanian and US officials said. They said another eight Black Hawks would begin arriving next year under a military aid deal worth about \$200 million.

More Details:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2018/01/29/Jordan-gets-US-Black-Hawk-helicopters-to-bolster-defenses.html>

- **World inventors help refugees improve their living conditions**

A global competition aimed at finding innovative, long-term solutions to address the challenges faced by refugees in the fields of healthcare, food, housing and education, among others, on Sunday announced the five winning teams who will receive a \$20,000 prize to develop their project.

More Details:

<http://jordantimes.com/news/local/world-inventors-help-refugees-improve-their-living-conditions>

- **Gov't to continue granting medical exemptions to citizens**

Health Minister Mahmoud Al Shayyab stressed the government's keenness to continue granting medical exemptions to Jordanians in a more regulated fashion. He said in a press statement on Sunday that the government has allocated within the 2018 general budget, JD100 million for medical exemptions.

More Details:

[http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=37075#.Wm8PcK5l\\_cs](http://en.ammonnews.net/article.aspx?articleNO=37075#.Wm8PcK5l_cs)

- **Hariri Meets Aoun: Lebanon Can't Bear More Tension, I'll Exert Efforts to Appease**

Prime Minister Saad Hariri stressed on Monday that strenuous efforts will be exerted on his part to calm the political rhetoric in the country, the National News Agency said. "Lebanon does not need more escalation, I will do everything in my capacity to appease the situation," said Hariri after meeting President Michel Aoun at the Presidential Palace in Baabda.

More Details:

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/241485-hariri-meets-aoun-lebanon-can-t-bear-more-tension-i-ll-exert-efforts-to-appease>

- **Berri's 'Reproach' of Hariri Threatens Chances of Electoral Alliance**

Lebanon's Prime Minister Saad Hariri has not succeeded in maintaining neutrality in the escalating dispute between President Michel Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, which broke out on the background of the 1994 Seniority Decree, which Berri insists is unconstitutional because it does not hold the signature of the finance minister. Unlike Hezbollah, which has kept silence over the matter - refusing to take a public stance in the conflict between its allies - Hariri was forced to line up with Aoun after signing the decree, which strained his relations with Berri.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1157296/berri%E2%80%99s-reproach-hariri-threatens-chances-electoral-alliance>

- **Fayyad: to keep disputes within political frame**

MP Ali Fayyad on Monday highlighted the obligation to keep feuds among parties within the frame of politics, warning of sectarian tension that only threatens home stability. "Disputes must remain within the political frame, because disagreement in the political life and the political forces' efforts to improve their presence inside the Parliament and the state institutions are a normal thing," the Loyalty to the Resistance parliamentary bloc's member said during a memorial ceremony in the Nabatiyeh town of Mhaibib.

More Details:

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/87658/Fayyad-To-keep-disputes-within-political-frame>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Yemen PM accuses separatists of coup attempt after HQ takeover**

Yemen's Prime Minister Ahmed bin Dagher on Sunday accused southern separatists of attempting a coup in the interim capital of Aden after they took over the government headquarters. The premier called on the Saudi-led coalition fighting Iran-backed Huthi rebels to intervene after fierce clashes.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86971>

- **Aden gripped by fresh fighting as Yemen rivals battle for control**

Fresh fighting erupted around Yemeni government facilities in Aden on Monday, witnesses said, as rival factions battled for a second day for control of the southern port city where the internationally-recognised administration is based. Clashes between southern separatists allied to the United Arab

Emirates (UAE) and forces loyal to Saudi-based President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi risk crippling their once united campaign against the Iran-aligned Houthi movement in Yemen's north.

More Details:

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-security-clashes/aden-gripped-by-fresh-fighting-as-yemen-rivals-battle-for-control-idUKKBN1F11BF?rpc=401&>

- **Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed freed**

Saudi Arabia's internationally known billionaire businessman, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, was released from his luxury hotel detention in the nation's capital on Saturday, family sources told multiple media outlets. Alwaleed reportedly reached a financial settlement with the government before returning to his home, according to Reuters.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180128-billionaire-saudi-prince-freed-from-weeks-long-ritz-detention/>

- **Saudi Arabia's economy depends more on policy than oil - S&P analyst**

In a wide-ranging interview with Saudi paper Arab News, S&P's global chief rating officer Moritz Kraemer said that political reform will determine the future of the country – not the price of oil. "If oil went to \$100 per barrel again there would be a risk of undermining the reform momentum, and helping those campaigning to maintain the previous status quo," he told the paper. "So, we don't think the oil price will determine the fate of the country. The policies that are chosen will determine future economic stability."

More Details:

<http://www.arabianbusiness.com/politics-economics/388569-saudi-arabias-economy-depends-more-on-policy-than-oil-sp-analyst>

- **Activists say Bahrain human rights deteriorate as world looks away**

Human rights in Bahrain have deteriorated significantly in the past year because international pressure on the Gulf Arab kingdom has weakened, activists said on Thursday. "Bahrain is now clearly sliding in a new and very dangerous direction with 37 people arrested yesterday alone," said Brian Dooley of U.S.-based Human Rights First.

More Details:

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bahrain-rights/activists-say-bahrain-human-rights-deteriorate-as-world-looks-away-idUSKBN1FG0JB?rpc=401&>

- **Qatar signs MoU with Oman amid Gulf crisis**

Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding with Oman on the development of bilateral investment and trade Sunday, nearly eight months into a crisis between the emirate and its Arab neighbors. The Omani news agency ONA said the agreement signed in Muscat covers a wide range of cooperation sectors including the production and export of food products from the sultanate to Qatar.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/economy/2018/01/28/qatar-signs-mou-with-oman-amid-gulf-crisis>

- **Dozens killed in clashes between Saudi Arabia, UAE over Yemen**

The worst clashes yet between UAE-backed southern separatists and forces loyal to Saudi Arabia and fugitive Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi risk crippling their once united war effort against the impoverished Arab country. Gunmen were deployed throughout most districts of Aden on Sunday and there was heavy automatic gunfire and explosions in the southern port city, according to Reuters witnesses.

More Details:

[http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/dozens-killed-in-clashes-between-saudi-arabia-uae-over-yemen\\_879708.html](http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/dozens-killed-in-clashes-between-saudi-arabia-uae-over-yemen_879708.html)

- **UAE-backed separatists launch 'coup' in southern Yemen**

Yemen's prime minister has accused southern separatist forces backed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) of staging a "coup" after they seized several government offices during deadly clashes in the port city of Aden. "In Aden, legitimacy is being overturned," Prime Minister Ahmed bin Dagher said in a statement on Sunday.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/separatists-government-headquarters-aden-180128073439998.html>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Meet the man who aims to run against Egypt's Sisi in the presidential elections**

The higher committee of Egypt's el-Ghad party has officially nominated its chairman Moussa Mostafa Moussa to run against President Abdelfattah el-Sisi in the upcoming presidential elections. The party

announced that Moussa was able to get signatures from 20 members of parliament supporting his election.

More Details:

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2018/01/29/El-Ghad-party-chairman-to-run-against-Egypt-s-Sisi-in-upcoming-presidential-elections.html>

- **Egyptian opposition call for presidential poll boycott**

Several leading opposition figures called on Sunday for a boycott of Egypt's March election, citing a wave of repression that has cleared the field of challengers to President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. A string of candidates have withdrawn from the election on concerns over intimidation and the arrest of Sisi's leading challenger, leaving the former general the sole contender only a day before the 29 January nomination deadline.

More Details:

<http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/several-high-profile-egyptians-call-presidential-election-boycott-1120156509>

- **Egypt Wafd party decides not to field presidential candidate**

One of Egypt's oldest political parties has decided not to field a candidate to challenge President Abdel-fattah el-Sissi in March elections, ending days of intense speculations. The Wafd party has come under pressure from segments of the pro-government media to field a candidate to prevent a race in which el-Sissi, who is virtually certain to win, is the only candidate.

More Details:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-5320271/Egypt-Wafd-party-decides-not-field-presidential-candidate.html>

- **Egypt's presidential hopeful Anan held in military jail**

The former Egyptian chief-of-staff, who recently announced his bid to run for presidential elections, is being held at a military prison, according to his lawyer. Lawyer Nasser Amin said on Saturday that he was able to visit General Sami Anan, who was arrested last week.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/egypt-presidential-hopeful-anan-held-military-jail-180128080551843.html>

- **Egyptian political figures say presidential elections lost legitimacy**

A number of Egyptian political figures on Sunday issued a statement condemning the upcoming presidential elections, saying that they have lost their legitimacy following recent repressive practices imposed by the government. Signatories of the statement included former presidential candidate Abdel Moniem Aboul Fotoh, Head of Egypt's Reform and Development Party Mohamed Anwar al-Sadat, Hazim Hosni, who was chosen by former Chief of Staff and presidential hopeful Sami Anan as his deputy, Hisham Genena, who was also chosen by Anan as his deputy in case he runs in the elections, in addition to Essam Heggy.

More Details:

<http://www.egyptindependent.com/egyptian-political-figures-say-presidential-elections-lost-legitimacy/>

- **Egypt to chair upcoming African Union Summit**

The African Union (AU) announced Sunday that Egypt would head the AU Summit's upcoming round in 2019, following the closing meeting of African leaders, according to a statement from presidency spokesman Bassam Rady. During his participation in the 30th AU Summit in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi praised the efforts exerted by Guinean President Alpha Condé, head of the current round of the AU Summit, on the issue of institutional reformation.

More Details:

<https://dailynewsegypt.com/2018/01/28/egypt-chair-upcoming-african-union-summit/>

- **Egypt-Ethiopia-Sudan Summit to Discuss Stalled 'Renaissance Dam' Negotiations**

Sudan's Ambassador to Egypt Abdel Mahmoud Abdel Halim expected to return to Cairo soon to resume his mission, after he was summoned for consultations on Jan. 4. "After the end of the African Union summit (currently held in Ethiopia), the date of the return will be set," Abdel Halim said, in reference to the improvement of relations between the two countries.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1158281/egypt-ethiopia-sudan-summit-discuss%C2%A0stalled-%E2%80%98renaissance-dam%E2%80%99-negotiations>

- **'The interests of Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia are one,' President Sisi says after tripartite summit in Addis Ababa**

Following a tripartite summit between the leaders of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan in the Ethiopian capital on Monday to discuss differences over the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, Egypt's

president told reporters, "People should be assured. None of [us three] countries – Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia – will be harmed."

More Details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/288980/Egypt/Politics-/The-interests-of-Egypt,-Sudan-and-Ethiopia-are-one.aspx>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **Rabat denounces HRW report on human rights situation in Morocco**

The Moroccan government on Thursday denounced the Human Rights Watch's annual report on the human rights situation in the world. A statement issued by the human rights ministerial commission said on Thursday that the Moroccan authorities expressed their rejection of the false accusations contained in the New York-based rights group HRW's annual report on the human rights situation in the world.

More Details:

<http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=86957>

- **Morocco's FM: Joining AU's Peace and Security Council Is Chance to Block Exploitation**

The African Union's Peace and Security Council on Friday named Morocco to become one of its official members. Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita described the Peace and Security Council as a pivotal organ of the African Union. After returning to the AU a year ago, joining the council was one of the major objectives of Moroccan diplomacy, Bourita told Asharq Al-Awsat on Friday.

More Details:

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1156356/morocco%E2%80%99s-fm-joining-au%E2%80%99s-peace-and-security-council-chance-block-exploitation>

- **Morocco Reaffirms Support for Rwandan AU Reform Agenda**

Morocco has expressed support for the reform agenda proposed by Rwanda's President Paul Kagame to revamp the African Union and boost its financial independence. In an interview with Moroccan news website, le360.ma, Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita said that the North African Kingdom adheres to the reforms put forward by President Kagame, who is taking the Chairmanship of the AU at the current African summit, succeeding to his Guinean peer Alpha Condé.

More Details:

<http://northafricapost.com/21955-morocco-reaffirms-support-rwanda-au-reform-agenda.html>

- **Initiative for unification of left wing called "Tunisia Ahead Movement"**

Participants in the national conference on the unification of the left wing agreed to call this initiative "Tunisia Ahead Movement," said Unionist and former minister Abid Briki on Monday. The latter specified in a statement to TAP, that the composition of the constituent committee had been discussed during the two-day meeting in Hammamet.

More Details:

<https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Politics/9804229-initiative-for>

- **United Nations alliance of civilisations organises peaceapp workshop in Tunis**

The United Nations Alliance of Civilisations (UNAOC) will organise Sunday a three-day PEACEapp workshop in Tunis, in partnership with civil society organisation ADO+ and in collaboration with the National Centre of Computer Science Training for Children (French: CNIPE), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the UN Refugee Agency and the Tunisian Red Crescent. 'Around 30 young participants will be trained in computational thinking and digital literacy while developing video games through MIT Media Lab gaming platform SCRATCH,' reads a press release. Participants include Tunisian youth and young migrants and refugees notably from Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Somalia.

More Details:

<http://tdailynews.net/story-z9743930>

- **Algeria prohibits 'immigration' of doctors**

The National Council of the Deanship of Algerian Doctors issued instructions prohibiting all hospitals and health institutions from issuing work and good conduct certificates to immigrants. These instructions coincided with the new facilities announced by France to Algerian doctors and the recognition of their certificates that will enable them to work abroad.

More Details:

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180129-algeria-prohibits-immigration-of-doctors/>

- **IS terrorists still maintain strong presence in Libya, report says**

The Cipher Brief website reported on Friday that IS still maintains a strong presence in Libya and remains a potent regional threat, despite domestic and international efforts to oust the group from its stronghold. The US-based website indicated that after losing their former base of operations along

the Libyan coast in the city of Sirte, IS (also known as ISIS and ISIL) fighters have regrouped and established training centers and operational headquarters in the central and southern parts of the country.

More Details:

<http://www.libyanexpress.com/is-terrorists-still-maintain-strong-presence-in-libya-report-says/>

- **UNSMIL seeks US\$313 to help one million Libyans**

UNSMIL has launched an appeal for US\$313 from donors as part of its 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan to support some one million Libyans in urgent need of aid. Working with 21 international and national organisations and NGO's, the plan made up of 71 projects is focused on three key objectives; protecting people's human rights, supporting access to basic services for the most vulnerable and strengthening the humanitarian response.

More Details:

<https://www.libyaherald.com/2018/01/28/unsmil-seeks-us313-to-help-one-million-libyans/>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **ECP sets March 3 for Senate elections**

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has set the date of March 3 for Senate elections. According to ECP, the candidates can file their nomination papers before the returning officers from February 2 to 6. Scrutiny of papers will be held on February 9 while the list of candidates will be issued on Feb 15.

More Details:

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/274514-ecp-sets-march-3-for-senate-elections>

- **Sharif, Tareen asked to appear before SC on Tuesday**

The Supreme Court on Sunday issued notices to former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's former secretary general Jahangir Tareen to appear in the court in person or through their counsel on Tuesday (tomorrow) during the hearing of appeals involving, among other constitutional questions, interpretation of Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution under which they both had been disqualified. The interpretation will help end the controversy about the period of punishment by determining whether disqualification of a number of lawmakers is for life or time-specific.

More Details:

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1385955/sharif-tareen-asked-to-appear-before-sc-on-tuesday>

- **Anchormperson is a pawn, there are other powers behind him: Sanaullah**

Punjab Law Minister Rana Sanaullah on Monday said that some media personnel are considered to be credible, however, sources of some media personalities need to be questioned. The Punjab Law Minister was addressing a press conference outside the Punjab Assembly, where he made the statements about an anchormperson who had claimed that Imran Ali, the main suspect in Zainab murder case, has 37 accounts.

More Details:

<https://www.geo.tv/latest/179289-sources-of-some-journalists-should-be-questioned-rana-sanaullah>

- **11 soldiers killed, 16 injured in military academy attack**

Eleven Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers and four suicide bombers were killed during rebels' armed attack on Marshal Fahim Military Academy in Kabul early on Monday, an official said. Ministry of Defense spokesman Gen. Dawlat Waziri told Pajhwok Afghan New four suicide attackers stormed the 111th military corps unit at around 5:00am in the Gargha a locality of Kabul.

More Details:

<https://www.pajhwok.com/en/2018/01/29/11-soldiers-killed-16-injured-military-academy-attack>

- **US, UK Continue Support, Cooperation with Afghanistan**

Strongly condemning terror attacks on Hotel Intercontinental Kabul and save the children in Jalalabad, the US and UK reassured their support and cooperation with Afghan government. The US State Department authorities said that all the world people have the same opinion before Afghanistan and trying to annihilate terrorism. These attacks improve US determination on ANSF support. At the same time UK ambassador in Kabul Nicholas Kay said, the countries who support terror groups, should give up support as quick as possible. We want Afghanistan and Pakistan to jointly work in war on terror and we would never allow Afghanistan to be recharged to a safe haven for terrorists and we will remain by Afghanistan as a global ally and continue our support and cooperation with this country.

More Details:

<http://bakhtarnews.com.af/eng/politics/item/31824-us-uk-continue-support-cooperation-with-afghanistan.html>

- **Taliban Must Choose Between Islam and Terrorism: Ghani**

Addressing a joint press conference with his Indonesian counterpart, the president said the Taliban must separate itself from barbarism. In his first public appearance since the Intercontinental Hotel attack just over a week ago, President Ashraf Ghani came out in support of the country's security forces who are fighting insurgency on the battlefields and in the cities.

More Details:

<http://www.tolonews.com/afghanistan/taliban-must-choose-between-islam-and-terrorism-ghani>

- **Afghanistan and World Bank sign MoU for \$100 million aid package**

The Afghan government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a new aid package to Afghanistan worth \$100 million, the Office of the President, ARG Palace said. According to an official statement, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Minister of Finance Eklil Hakimi and the World Bank Country Director for Afghanistan Shubham Chaudhry.

More Details:

<https://www.khaama.com/afghanistan-and-world-bank-sign-mou-for-100-million-aid-package-04378>

## 10. TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey's operation on Syrian border to extend as far as Iraq, Erdoğan says**

Turkey's Operation Olive Branch will continue until all PKK and affiliated terror groups are cleared from Turkey's southern borders, all the way to Iraq, President Erdoğan said Friday. "We will continue Operation Olive Branch until all targets are achieved. After that, Manbij will also be cleared of terrorists, as it was promised to us. No one should be bothered by that because the actual owners of Manbij are not the terrorists there, but rather the owners are our Arab brothers there. And after that, we will continue our struggle until all terrorists are eliminated," the president said in Ankara.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2018/01/27/turkeys-operation-on-syrian-border-to-extend-as-far-as-iraq-erdogan-says>

- **Turkish military kills over 550 terrorists in Syria in 8 days**

Turkish military has said that it has killed over 550 terrorists in the past eight days in the northwestern Afrin region of Syria, Anadolu news agency reported on Sunday. The country's military has killed a total of 557 Kurdish militants and IS terrorists since the beginning of Operation Olive

Branch on January 20, according to the news agency, which sourced the figure from a statement issued by Turkish General Staff yesterday.

More Details:

<https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/turkish-military-kills-over-550-terrorists-in-syria-in-8-days201801290429110001/>

- **Turkey cannot 'overlook' terror state bid on border**

It is irrational to expect Turkey to overlook attempt to build a terror state on its border, deputy prime minister said as he reiterated the stance that ongoing operation in Afrin was not against Kurds. Speaking at the Jerusalem Meeting in Istanbul Monday, Bekir Bozdag, who is also the Turkish government's spokesman, said: "Our Kurdish brothers are not the target of Turkey's Operation Olive Branch in northwestern Syria."

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/politics/turkey-cannot-overlook-terror-state-bid-on-border/1045589>

- **11 PKK targets destroyed in anti-terror operations in northern Iraq**

Eleven PKK targets have been destroyed in airstrikes as part of anti-terror operations in northern Iraq, the Turkish military said Monday. According to a statement released by the General Staff, the airstrikes targeted shelters and weapon emplacements of the terrorist group in the Qandil and Asos regions.

More Details:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/war-on-terror/2018/01/29/11-pkk-targets-destroyed-in-anti-terror-operations-in-northern-iraq>

- **Syrian Kurdish families pray for victory of op in Afrin**

The PYD/PKK supporters on Sunday vandalized the building of Union of European Turkish Democrats (UETD) in the Swedish capital Stockholm and painted pro-PKK slogans on the wall of the building. The initial police report revealed the attackers wrote "Biji YPG [meaning Long Live YPG]", "Apo", "PYD", "PKK" and "Afrin."

More Details:

<http://www.aneews.com.tr/turkey/2018/01/29/syrian-kurdish-families-pray-for-victory-of-op-in-afrin>

- **Orthodox leader voices support for Turkey's Afrin op**

The top Orthodox Christian leader based in Istanbul has expressed support for Turkey's military operation against terrorist groups in Syria's Afrin region. In a letter to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Fener Greek Patriarch Bartholomew said he hopes Operation Olive Branch in Syria "brings an end to the terror problem which has occupied our country for decades and claimed thousands of lives, and that it brings peace to Syria."

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/198277/orthodox-leader-voices-support-for-turkeys-afrin-op>

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

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