



# MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

## GÜNLÜK ORTADOĞU BÜLTENİ

**Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries**

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

**The Restructuring Proces of Iraq**

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

**Energy Security**

Enerji Güvenliği

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**06 APRIL 2017**

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## 1. IRAQ

- **The Kurdistan Delegation Meets President Masum**

The delegation of Kurdistan, who arrived in Baghdad this morning, met with President Fuad Masum. The Kurdish delegation arrived in Baghdad this morning, and will discuss during his meetings with leaders and officials in Baghdad the subject of the referendum and independence of the Kurdistan region.

More Details:

[http://www.ninanews.com/News\\_Details.aspx?2%252bEv18%252f3Hxhf3RF20hHt6g%253d%253d](http://www.ninanews.com/News_Details.aspx?2%252bEv18%252f3Hxhf3RF20hHt6g%253d%253d)

- **CTS liberates Maghreb neighborhood in western Mosul**

'We Are Coming, Nineveh' Operations Command, on Wednesday, announced that Counter-Terrorism forces liberated al-Maghreb neighborhood, in western Mosul, and raised Iraqi flag over its buildings. Commander of operation, Major General Abdel Amir Yarallah, said in a press statement that forces from the Counter-Terrorism Service liberated al-Maghreb neighborhood, and raised Iraqi flag over its buildings.

More Details:

<http://www.iraqinews.com/iraq-war/cts-liberates-maghreb-neighborhood-western-mosul/>

- **Peaceful Settlement to Disputes over Kurdistan Flag in Kirkuk: Top Officials**

The President of Iraq, Fouad Masoum and the Prime Minister of the country, Haider Al-Abadi, agreed that the problem of raising the Kurdistan flag alongside the Iraqi flag in the city of Kirkuk should be resolved through dialogue and in accordance with the Iraqi constitution. The agreement came during a meeting between the two Iraqi officials on Wednesday, concurrently with a visit by a Kurdistan delegation to Baghdad, Kuwait News Agency reported.

More Details:

<http://www.basnews.com/index.php/en/news/iraq/341150>

- **Islamic State used Mosul museum as tax department**

After they seized Mosul two years ago and destroyed the priceless Mesopotamian artifacts in its museum, Islamic State militants found a practical use for the building - they turned it into a tax office. The outside world learned of the museum's initial fate from a video Islamic State released months later showing its fighters smashing Assyrian, Akkadian, Babylonian, Persian and Roman artifacts, many of them two millennia old or older.



More Details:

[http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En\\_NewsReader/6818a278-20ae-4b63-be60-0e0af9cdeaaa/Islamic-State-used-Mosul-museum-as-tax-department](http://www.shafaaq.com/en/En_NewsReader/6818a278-20ae-4b63-be60-0e0af9cdeaaa/Islamic-State-used-Mosul-museum-as-tax-department)

- **Salim Al-Jabouri convened with a Kurdish Delegation**

The Speaker of the House of Representatives Salim al-Jabouri, convened on Wednesday with the delegation of Kurdistan Regional Government to activate a dialogue to resolve all outstanding issues, including the files of the province of Kirkuk and the referendum of self-determination for the region. "The Kurds are an important and authentic component of the Iraqi people and they are active in all Iraqi issues.

More Details:

[http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN\\_Direje.aspx?Jimare=40141](http://www.pukmedia.com/EN/EN_Direje.aspx?Jimare=40141)

- **Security committee in Salahuddin province reveals reasons behind Tikrit bombing**

Security committee of Salahuddin province's council has blamed security officials for the infiltrations occurred at several districts of the city. One of the key reasons why these infiltrations take place is that there are no proper measures taken when it comes dealing with the bulk numbers of displaced people in the city, member of Salahuddin provincial council Khalid Jassam said in a press release.

More Details:

<http://www.thebaghdadpost.com/en/story/9017/Security-committee-in-Salahuddin-province-reveals-reasons-behind-Tikrit-bombing>

- **After Mosul, we will retake Kirkuk, Sinjar and Tal Afar from ISIS: US General**

General Joe Dunford, the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Marine Corps, said that after Mosul is liberated from ISIS, Tal Afar, Kirkuk countryside and the Sinjar region will be the next areas of focus. "It is not our judgment that the Iraqis will be self-sustaining and self-sufficient in the wake of Mosul," Dunford said.

More Details:

<https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/mosul-will-retake-kirkuk-sinjar-tal-afar-isis-us-general/>

- **Iraq completes NOC rebranding**

Iraq's largest NOC, South Oil Company (SOC), has completed its rebranding efforts, local media reported on Wednesday. Its name has now officially changed to Basra Oil Company. The rebranding

was formally announced on January 5, 2016, and coincided with the establishment of a fifth national oil company: Dhi-Qar Oil Company (DQOC).

More Details:

<http://www.theoilandgasyear.com/news/iraq-completes-noc-rebranding/>

- **How the US destroyed Iraq: On Mosul's civilian deaths**

In October 2016, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) strategists and commanders were fully aware of the sheer number of Iraqi armed forces that were moving in to encircle Mosul. The operation to retake Iraq's second-largest city was officially launched last October, and in January its eastern half was declared "fully liberated". Mosul is ISIL's last major urban stronghold in Iraq.

More Details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/04/destroyed-iraq-mosul-civilian-deaths-170405072214906.html>

- **Why the Swedish government wants to send police to Iraq**

The hope is that it could mean more people who go there to engage in terrorism can be tried in Iraq and prevented from returning to Sweden, interior minister Anders Ygeman said. "It is in order to put more people who travel to commit terrorism on trial in Iraq, and therefore prevent them from returning to Sweden or Europe," he told the public broadcaster.

More Details:

<https://www.thelocal.se/20170406/why-the-swedish-government-wants-to-send-police-to-iraq>

- **Iraq urges west Mosul residents to shelter at home**

Iraq's military on Wednesday urged residents to shelter in their homes in jihadist-held areas of Mosul, where its bid to oust the Islamic State group has taken a heavy toll on civilians. Iraqi forces are battling to recapture west Mosul from IS, which has left hundreds of civilian casualties and pushed more than 200,000 to leave their homes.

More Details:

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/4/6/iraq-urges-west-mosul-residents-to-shelter-at-home>

- **Daesh suicide bombers kill 31 in Iraq**

Militants opened fire and later blew themselves up in the Iraqi city of Tikrit, killing at least 31 people in an attack claimed Wednesday by Daesh. Police and army officers said the attack, which began on Tuesday night, also wounded at least 42 people. A police lieutenant colonel said three militants shot dead three policemen in central Tikrit and then opened fire on civilians, before later blowing themselves up inside homes in the area.

More Details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1079896/middle-east>

- **Iranian Pilgrims' Cars Allowed Into Iraq**

Following an agreement with the government in Baghdad, cars registered in Iran can now legally enter Iraq without extra official processes or paperwork. The agreement will help hundreds and thousands of pilgrims from Iran who crosses the border annually to make the pilgrimage to the holy sites in Karbala Najaf.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/economy-auto/61855/iranian-pilgrims-cars-allowed-into-iraq>

- **Desert on fire**

Early in summer 2016, the so-called Islamic State set fire to one of Iraq's largest oil fields. It has taken Iraqi firefighters 10 months put the flames out. The smoke has poisoned the air, the land, and the water across a vast region of Northern Iraq.

More Details:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idd-sh/desert\\_on\\_fire](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idd-sh/desert_on_fire)

- **Number of foreign jihadists in Iraq and Syria unknown: US**

US intelligence agencies don't know the true number of foreign jihadists still fighting in Iraq and Syria, or the extent of the threat they pose to their home countries, a senior US military officer said Wednesday. Some 40,000 foreign jihadists have joined the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria from at least 120 countries in Europe, Africa and southeast Asia, General Michael Nagata said at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies think-tank.

More Details:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170405-number-foreign-jihadists-iraq-syria-unknown-us>



- **Kurdistan still separate from Iraq 26 years after No-Fly Zone was established**

Twenty-six years after the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 688, the United States in cooperation with the United Kingdom and France launched Operation Provide Comfort that established the No-Fly Zone over the 36th parallel and shielded much of what is now the Kurdistan Region from aerial strikes by the Iraqi air force. "This is [in Kurdistan] what we wanted to happen in Iraq," said US Ret. Lt. Gen. Jay Garner in the Kurdistan Region in December 2016.

More Details:

<http://www.rudaw.net/english/kurdistan/050420174>

- **Half century needed to clear mines in Iraq, Syria: UN**

"We are looking at decades of work for these countries to look like post-World War II Europe where we still find some unexploded ordnance here and there," said Agnes Marcaillou, director of the United Nations Mine Action Service, addressing a news conference to mark International Mine Awareness Day. She said her office, which also deals with IEDs and unexploded ordnance, is looking at a "ballpark figure" of between \$170 million to \$180 million a year to clean up the areas retaken from the ISIS terrorist group in Iraq.

More Details:

[http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/half-century-needed-to-clear-mines-in-iraq-syria-un\\_822139.html](http://en.abna24.com/news/middle-east/half-century-needed-to-clear-mines-in-iraq-syria-un_822139.html)

- **UN envoy for Iraq condemns suicide bombings in Tikrit**

The top United Nations official in Iraq has strongly condemned the multiple suicide attacks that took place yesterday in Tikrit, which resulted in many casualties. "Targeting civilians and inflicting maximum casualties among civilians is the hallmark of the terrorists' despicable tactics," said Mr. Kubiš, who is the Special Representative of the Secretary-general and head of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI).

More Details:

[http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56505#.WOXvR2\\_yjcs](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56505#.WOXvR2_yjcs)

- **Airstrike kills 8 family members in Iraq's Mosul**

Eight members of the same family were killed in a U.S.-led coalition airstrike in western Mosul on Wednesday amid an ongoing offensive to oust Daesh terrorist group from the northern city. Iraqi Army Lieutenant Colonel Abdul-Salam al-Jabouri said coalition warplanes carried out massive airstrikes on Daesh positions in western Mosul.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/airstrike-kills-8-family-members-in-iraqs-mosul/789861>

## 2. SYRIA

- **Syria chemical attack was ‘direct order’ from Assad, Liberman says**

Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman accused Syrian President Bashar Assad of being directly responsible for a chemical attack this week that has left scores dead and spurred international outrage and calls for action against Damascus.

More Details:

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/syria-chemical-attack-was-direct-order-from-assad-liberman-says/>

- **Russia pledges to stand by Syria in anti-terror battles**

Russia has vowed to keep up support for the Syrian army in its fight against terrorism, calling for the establishment of a fact-finding mission to probe a reported chemical attack in the Arab country’s northwestern Idlib Province.

More Details:

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2017/04/06/516917/Russia-Syria-Idlib>

- **Poland announces multi-million euro aid package for Syria**

Polish Foreign Minister Witold Waszczykowski has announced that Poland will allocate a multi-million-euro aid package to families from war-torn Syria.

More Details:

<http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/301424,Poland-announces-multimillion-euro-aid-package-for-Syria>

- **Syrian Dam Threatened By Air Strikes Returns to Normal Operation**

A major dam on the Euphrates River that had been threatening to collapse after being hit by air strikes has returned to normal operation again.

More Details:

<http://www.rferl.org/a/syrian-dam-tabqa-threatened-air-strikes-collapse-returns-normal-operation/28413505.html>

- **International conference in Brussels: 1.73 billion euros for Syrians**

Countries pledged at least 1.73 billion euros (1.84 billion dollars) in new humanitarian aid for Syrians during an EU-hosted international conference on Wednesday, where they discussed prospects to end the conflict and begin reconstruction.

More Details:

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/international-conference-brussels-173-billion-euros-syrians-959412>

- **US will take action on Syrian chemical attacks if UN doesn't**

US Ambassador Nikki Haley warned Wednesday that the Trump administration will take action against chemical attacks in Syria that bear "all the hallmarks" of President Bashar Assad's government if the UN Security Council fails to act.

More Details:

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4945946,00.html>

- **Israel not considering any Military action in Syria**

Former Military Intelligence head Maj.-Gen. (res.) Amos Yadlin said on Tuesday that Israel should destroy the Syrian planes that dropped the chemical bombs in Idlib.

More Details:

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Israel-not-considering-any-military-action-in-Syria-486225>

- **US-led Coalition building large infrastructure north Syria to combat ISIS in Raqqa**

The U.S. military is expanding its presence and infrastructure in northern Syria in order to fight ISIS and support the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-led Raqqa campaign.

More Details:

<http://aranews.net/2017/04/us-led-coalition-building-large-infrastructure-north-syria-to-combat-isis-in-raqqa/>

- **Syria to Be Wiped Off Map If Gov't Abandon Counterterror War – Assad**

Syria will be "deleted from the map" until terrorism in Syria is defeated, Syrian President Bashar Assad told Croatian Vecernji List newspaper in an interview published on Thursday.

More Details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201704061052345505-syria-assad-war-terrorism/>

### 3. IRAN

- **India plans \$3bn investment in Iran gas field**

India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) plans to spend more than \$3 billion develop the giant Farzad B gas block in Iran, a top official was quoted as saying in media reports.

More Details:

[http://www.tradearabia.com/news/OGN\\_323000.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/OGN_323000.html)

- **Saudi-Iranian Rivalry Fuels Potential Nuclear Race – Analysis**

Saudi Arabia is developing nuclear energy and potentially a nuclear weapons capability.

More Details:

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/06042017-saudi-iranian-rivalry-fuels-potential-nuclear-race-analysis/>

- **Top Iran, Russia Diplomats Discuss Ties, Region**

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, discussed a range of issues in a telephone conversation, including expansion of bilateral ties and the latest developments in the region.

More Details:

<https://financialtribune.com/articles/national/61897/top-iran-russia-diplomats-discuss-ties-region>

- **Tehran rejects British PM's anti-Iran allegations**

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi said that arms sales to the aggressors who kill innocent people in the region, especially in the ongoing unequal war in Yemen, is not consistent with the claims recently made by British Prime Minister Theresa May.

More Details:

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82483594/>

- **Geneva – UN European HQ: Condemning Executions in Iran**

Speakers at a conference held in the United Nations European Headquarters in Geneva by the international Radical Party condemned widespread human rights violations and increasing executions in Iran, and discussed the 1988 massacre of 30,000 political prisoners in Iran.

More Details:

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/iran-resistance/22483-geneva-un-european-hq-condemning-executions-in-iran>

- **Iran condemns chemical attack but won't blame Syrian ally Assad**

In its first official comment on the suspected chemical attack on rebel-held territory in Syria Tuesday that killed more than 100 people, Iran strongly condemned the strike but refused to blame its ally, Syrian President Bashar Assad.

More Details:

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/apr/5/iran-condemns-chemical-attack-wont-blame-assad/>

- **U.S. judge seeks details on Giuliani role in Iran sanctions case**

A U.S. judge on Wednesday ordered that he be given more detail about former New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani and another lawyer's representation of a Turkish gold trader charged with conspiring to violate U.S. sanctions against Iran.

More Details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-iran-zarrab-idUSKBN1772BO>

- **Iran's Naval Forces to Go to Atlantic Again: Commander**

Iran's Navy commander unveiled plans for the renewed presence of the country's naval forces in the Atlantic Ocean in the current Iranian year, which began on March 21.

More Details:

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2017/04/06/1371758/iran-s-naval-forces-to-go-to-atlantic-again-commander>



- **Iran calls for fighting against sponsors of terrorists**

Iran's top security official said brutal crimes committed by terrorist groups against innocent civilians show that effective and all-out confrontation with these anti-humane elements, their intellectual origins and their supporters should be high on the agenda of the international community.

More Details:

<http://iran-daily.com/News/190337.html>

- **Unwilling to run for presidency**

Tehran's mayor has said in a statement he is unwilling and unplanned to run for presidency in the upcoming May 19 elections.

More Details:

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/124597/Unwilling-to-run-for-presidency>

#### 4. ISRAEL – PALESTINE

- **Israeli Soldiers Abduct Three Palestinians in Bethlehem, One In Jenin**

Israeli soldiers abducted, on Thursday at dawn, three Palestinians in the West Bank governorate of Bethlehem, and one in Jenin, in the northern part of the occupied West Bank, after breaking into their homes, and violently searching them.

More Details

<http://imemc.org/article/israeli-soldiers-abduct-three-palestinians-in-bethlehem-one-in-jenin/>

- **People take to the streets over salary cuts in Gaza**

Anger erupted in the besieged Gaza Strip on Wednesday after employees of the Palestinian Authority (PA) received their March salaries on Tuesday with at least a 30 percent salary cut, sparking protests in the coastal enclave among already struggling PA employees.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/news/people-take-streets-over-salary-cuts-gaza-959420>

- **Do Palestinians Support a Two-State Solution?**

An extensive study examining whether Palestinian society supports a two-state solution for peace with Israel was published Monday in Mosaic Magazine. Data was used from some 400 publicly

available polls. “Polls of Israelis and Palestinians show that there is still strong support for the two-state solution – in theory,” wrote Daniel Polisar, author of the study and executive vice-president of Shalem College.

More Details

<http://www.thetower.org/4826-do-palestinians-support-a-two-state-solution/>

- **Hamas moves to soften charter, but won’t recognize Israel**

Hamas, the militant Palestinian movement that controls the Gaza Strip, may seek to project a more moderate image when its revised ideological charter is released. But that doesn’t extend to accepting Israel.

More Details

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2017/04/05/hamas-moves-soften-charter-but-won-recognize-israel/idMBLQYrzt2Jkf7o69HSN/story.html>

- **Israel approves controversial home demolition law**

Israel's parliament on Wednesday voted in favour of a controversial law against illegal constructions that detractors say will mostly target Palestinian homes built without required, but hard-to-get, permits. The law, which has the backing of Prime Minister's Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government, was passed with 43 votes for the bill and 33 against.

More Details

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2017/4/5/israel-approves-controversial-home-demolition-law>

- **Krauthammer’s Take: Sunni States Ready for Peace with Israel but ‘Hostage to the Palestinians’**

What is interesting about el-Sisi’s answer on that, he was essentially saying the Arab states, after 70 years, are ready for a deal. They really are tired of the Palestinians — he won’t say this, but this is the truth — and of course, the big threat is not Israel to the Sunni Arabs. It is Iran.

More Details

<http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/446479/israel-palestine-peace-egypt-other-arab-states-ready-deal>

- **Hamas blames 'Israeli agents' for death of top terrorist**

Hamas on Wednesday said that “agents” acting on behalf of Israel played a part in the death of senior terrorist Mazen Faqha. Iyad al-Bazam, a spokesman for the Gazan Interior Ministry, said in a statement that a comprehensive investigation into the murder revealed details about the role played by Israel's agents, though he refused to provide additional details except for the emphasis that the security forces in Gaza were working to deal with the problem of transferring information to Israel.

More Details

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/227830>

- **Normalization in the Name of Peace: How Israel Understands the Arab Peace Initiative**

Once more, the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002 is taking center stage. Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas insisted during his speech before the recently-concluded Arab League Summit in Jordan, that the Initiative is the only solution on the table; asserting that it will not be changed or even tweaked.

More Details

<http://original.antiwar.com/ramzy-baroud/2017/04/05/normalization-in-the-name-of-peace-how-israel-understands-the-arab-peace-initiative/>

- **Terrorism, Palestine, Syria at the Center of US-Jordan Summit**

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the latest chemical attack in Syria and terrorism prevailed over the meeting between US President Donald Trump and Jordan's King Abdullah II at the White House on Wednesday. During a joint press conference, Trump said that bilateral talks focused on efforts to eradicate the ISIS terrorist group and push Palestinian-Israeli peace efforts forward.

More Details

<http://english.aawsat.com/h-qudsi/news-middle-east/terrorism-palestine-syria-center-us-jordan-summit>

## 5. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **'No Logic' to West's Middle East Moves: Trump Talks Syria with Jordan's King**

The two leaders held a bilateral meeting at the White House on crucial Middle East issues, such as methods of defeating the Daesh terrorist group. But the geopolitical implications of the meeting are significant, journalist and political analyst Dmitry Babich told Radio Sputnik's Brian Becker.

More Details

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201704061052342151-us-jordan-meeting-middle-east/>

- **Jordan shifts to renewables, slashes energy bill by \$3.5B: Minister**

The total volume of Arab and foreign investments attracted by Jordan in the field of energy stands at about \$5 billion, Prime Minister Hani Mulki said on Sunday, as he stressed the government's support for investments in the field.

More Details

<http://www.albawaba.com/business/jordan-shifts-renewables-slashes-energy-bill-35b-minister-959454>

- **British embassy: UK reiterates from Brussels ongoing support to Lebanon as it continues to host large numbers of refugees**

In a press release by the British Embassy in Beirut, it said: "One year on from the London conference for 'Supporting Syria and the Region', Lebanon continues to be the focus of international attention in Brussels.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/77652/British-Embassy-UK-reiterates-from-Brussels-ongoing-support-to-Lebanon-as-it-continues-to-host-large-numbers-of-refugees>

- **Hariri Calls on Int'l Community to 'Invest in Peace and Support Our Stability'**

Prime Minister Saad Hariri on Wednesday urged the international community to invest in Lebanon and to launch programs for the Syrian refugees aimed at creating a stable future while warning that the current situation in Lebanon is like a "ticking time bomb." Explaining Lebanon's burden of hosting around two million Syrian and Palestinian refugees, Hariri said: "It is as if 500 million European Union citizens suddenly woke up to an increase of 250 million people overnight!"

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/228038-hariri-calls-on-int-l-community-to-invest-in-peace-and-support-our-stability>

- **Explosions heard at Hezbollah compound near Damascus**

A series of explosions were heard at a military compound belonging to Lebanese terror group Hezbollah near the Syrian capital of Damascus, local media reported in the early morning hours of Thursday.

More Details

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/explosions-heard-at-hezbollah-compound-near-damascus-report/>

- **Sarraf, interlocutors tackle overall situation**

National Defense Minister Yacoub Sarraf received on Wednesday former Deputy PM and Defense Minister Samir Moqbel, whereby they discussed the overall situation on the local arena.

More Details

<http://nna-leb.gov.lb/en/show-news/77654/Sarraf-interlocutors-tackle-overall-situation>

- **UK Says Lebanon Continues to be the Focus of International Attention**

One year on from the London conference for “Supporting Syria and the Region”, Lebanon continues to be the “focus of international attention” in Brussels, the British Embassy in Lebanon said on Wednesday.

More Details

<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/228064-uk-says-lebanon-continues-to-be-the-focus-of-international-attention>

## 6. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Korea to cooperate on Vision 2030, bolster industrial ties with Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia and South Korea agreed to work closely on joint industrial projects including Vision 2030 that aims to make the Kingdom a pioneering global model of excellence.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1079921/saudi-arabia>

- **An Oil Giant Is Still Burning Through Its Cash Pile**

It was meant to be a given that a rebound in oil prices would slow the depletion of Saudi Arabia's foreign-currency reserves. That hasn't happened yet, and economists are wondering why.

More details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-06/an-oil-giant-is-still-burning-through-its-cash-pile>



- **Britain to help reform Saudi economy**

Britain said Wednesday it would help Saudi Arabia to diversify its oil-dependent economy as British Prime Minister Theresa May visited the Gulf kingdom.

More details:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20170405-britain-help-reform-saudi-economy>

- **Bahrain condemns attack in Syria**

Bahrain has condemned the heinous attack that took place in the province of Idlib in Syria on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://www.newsofbahrain.com/viewNews.php?ppId=32032&TYPE=Posts&pid=21&MNU=2&SUB=2>

- **Chinese investors considering methanol projects in Oman**

Investors from China are considering plans to develop a pair of methanol projects in the Special Economic Zone (Sezad) at Duqm in Oman, said a report.

More details:

[http://www.tradearabia.com/news/IND\\_323005.html](http://www.tradearabia.com/news/IND_323005.html)

- **ExxonMobil, Qatar Petroleum team up for Cyprus venture**

Qatar Petroleum chief executive Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi said: "This agreement expands our international upstream footprint into the eastern Mediterranean for what we hope is one of the most promising opportunities in the area.

More details:

<https://www.energyvoice.com/oilandgas/europe/135805/exxonmobil-qatar-petroleum-team-cyprus-venture/>

- **Kuwait to borrow more from int'l market**

Kuwait will increase its borrowing on international markets to plug a budget deficit resulting from low oil prices, the finance minister said on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://nation.com.pk/business/05-Apr-2017/kuwait-to-borrow-more-from-int-l-market>

- **The Hydrocarbon Pivot Of Qatar And The United Arab Emirates**

The oil price crash, precipitated by booming U.S. shale oil production and OPEC's November 2014 decision to sustain high output, has stressed countries heavily dependent on oil export revenues and forced them to rethink current policymaking. The UAE and Qatar, which rely on the export revenues derived from oil sales to fund government programs and support economic development, are making efforts toward the twin goals of reducing expensive fuel subsidy programs and diversifying exports through larger natural gas volumes.

More details:

<http://energyfuse.org/hydrocarbon-pivot-qatar-united-arab-emirates/>

## 7. EGYPT

- **Mattis, Egypt's president Sisi express desire to cooperate on counterterrorism**

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi held talks with Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis at the Pentagon on Wednesday where they expressed hopes to collaborate on counterterror measures, the Defense Department said in a press release, Sputnik reported.

More details:

<http://en.trend.az/world/other/2739041.html>

- **Chinese textile sector investors invest in Egypt**

Investors from the Chinese textile industry have committed to investing in Egypt's Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone). This was announced by Ahmed Darwish, head of the Suez Canal Economic Zone (SCZone) at the Belt and Road Industrial and Commercial Conference. Among the many Chinese investors is Jushi, a major Chinese producer of fibre glass.

More details:

[http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/chinese-textile-sector-investors-in-egypt-205089-newsdetails.htm?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+fibre2fashion+%28Daily+Textile+and+Fashion+Industry+News+-+Fibre2fashion%29](http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/chinese-textile-sector-investors-invest-in-egypt-205089-newsdetails.htm?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+fibre2fashion+%28Daily+Textile+and+Fashion+Industry+News+-+Fibre2fashion%29)

- **Americans Persecuted By Egypt Regime Watch As Trump Embraces It**

When 29-year-old Egyptian-American Mohamed Soltan tells his story, he says Egyptian authorities first shot him in the arm, and then beat him with batons and belts. Locking him in a windowless

room, they encouraged him to commit suicide, occasionally slipping razor blades inside his cell. The authoritarian Arab government still has at least seven other Americans in their prisons, he says.

More details:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/americans-persecuted-by-egypt-regime-watch-as-trump-embraces-it\\_us\\_58e5511ce4b0fe4ce087e3ca?section=us\\_politics](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/americans-persecuted-by-egypt-regime-watch-as-trump-embraces-it_us_58e5511ce4b0fe4ce087e3ca?section=us_politics)

- **Egypt receives 3rd batch of Rafale jets from France**

Egypt received three more Rafale fighter jets from France as the third batch of a deal signed in February 2015, said the Egyptian Defense Ministry in a statement on Wednesday, Xinhua reported

More details:

<http://en.trend.az/world/other/2739017.html>

- **Senior British imam urges pope to speak out about plight of Persecuted Christians on Egypt visit**

Pope Francis should speak out about the plight of persecuted Christians when he visits Egypt, according to an Imam who visited the pontiff in the Vatican today. Imam Ibrahim Mogra, an alumnus of Al-Azhar University and Assistant Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain, was among four UK Muslim leaders who on Wednesday met with Francis, an event which came exactly a fortnight after the Westminster terror attack.

More details:

<http://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/6947/0/senior-british-imam-urges-pope-to-speak-out-about-plight-of-persecuted-christians-on-egypt-visit>

- **Saudi ACWA Power signs MoU to renew concessions for Egypt solar plant**

Saudi Arabia's power and water project developer ACWA Power has signed Wednesday a memorandum of understanding to extend a concession to build a solar power plant in Binban near Aswan.

More details:

<http://en.amwalalghad.com/investment-news/industry-trade/56127-saudi-acwa-power-signs-mou-to-renew-concessions-for-egypt-solar-plant.html>

- **Egypt strongly condemns 'indiscriminate bombardment' in Syria's Idlib**

Egypt has strongly condemned what it described as the "indiscriminate bombardment" of Khan Sheikhoun town in Syria's northwestern Idlib province, which resulted in the death and injury of hundreds on Tuesday.

More details:

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/262349/-.aspx>

- **World Bank officials to visit Egypt to discuss new development projects**

A meeting between Hafez Ghanem, the World Bank vice president for the Middle East, and Egyptian Minister of Investment and International Cooperation Sahar Nasr took place on Wednesday in the US capital, Washington.

More details:

<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2017/04/05/world-bank-officials-visit-egypt-discuss-new-development-projects/>

- **El-Sisi: Obama Left Vacuum for Russia, Middle East Now "Paying the Price"**

In an interview with FOX News Channel's Bret Baier Egyptian president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi praised President Trump and talked about the ongoing crisis in Syria. The Egyptian leader said he fully trusts "the capability" of the U.S. president

More details:

[http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2017/04/06/el-sisi\\_obama\\_left\\_vacuum\\_for\\_russia\\_middle\\_east\\_now\\_paying\\_the\\_price.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2017/04/06/el-sisi_obama_left_vacuum_for_russia_middle_east_now_paying_the_price.html)

- **Foreigners Bought \$1 Billion in Egyptian Debt Since Mid-March**

Foreign holdings in Egypt debt grew by more than \$1 billion in less than a month, a sign that investor confidence isn't waning five months after authorities floated the pound and secured an IMF loan.

More details:

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-05/foreigners-bought-1-billion-in-egyptian-debt-since-mid-march>

## 8. NORTH AFRICA

- **French Prime Minister starts two-day working visit to Algeria**

French Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve started Wednesday, a two-day working visit to Algeria, which is part of the regular consultations between the two countries.

More details:

<http://en.aps.dz/algeria/17629-french-prime-minister-starts-two-day-working-visit-to-algeria>

- **East Libyan forces target rivals' air base in central desert region**

East Libyan forces said on Wednesday they had carried out air strikes and a ground attack on an air base controlled by rivals from the western city of Misrata, prompting a pledge of retaliation from the government in Tripoli.

More details:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-idUSKBN1772P4>

- **New Moroccan Government of 39 Members, Including 9 Women**

Rabat- Morocco's King Mohammad VI named a new government on Wednesday ending a six-month political deadlock that followed October's elections.

More details:

<http://english.aawsat.com/hatimbetioui/news-middle-east/new-moroccan-government-39-members-including-9-women>

- **Moroccan king appoints new gov't to end political deadlock**

Morocco's King Mohammed VI appointed on Wednesday the members of the new Islamist-led government, marking an end to six months of political deadlock.

More details:

[http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-04/06/content\\_40565681.htm](http://www.china.org.cn/world/2017-04/06/content_40565681.htm)

- **Interests of Moroccans Are Above All Consideration: Othmani**

Morocco's Head of Government, Saad Eddine Othmani, said in a press conference Wednesday that the newly formed government will put "the interest of the people above all considerations."

More details:



<https://www.moroccoworldnews.com/2017/04/213154/interests-moroccans-consideration-othmani/>

- **Morocco's king names new coalition government**

Appointments come after new prime minister agreed to form government with five parties, ending a political deadlock.

More details:

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/04/morocco-king-names-coalition-government-170405185201695.html>

- **Arab interior ministers meet in Tunis to discuss security**

Arab interior ministers on Wednesday met for their 34th session in Tunis, Tunisia, under the patronage of President Beji Caid Essebsi.

More details:

<http://www.arabnews.com/node/1079926/saudi-arabia>

- **Tunisian President receives Saudi Crown Prince**

The President of Republic of Tunisia Beji Caid Essebsi received at Carthage Palace here today Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Premier, Minister of Interior, Honorary President of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers, and Head of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's delegation participating in the 34th session of the Council of Arab Interior Ministers.

More details:

<http://sites.alriyadh.com/en/article/1157730/Tunisian-President-receives-Saudi-Crown-Prince>

- **EU aid to Tunisia 'having impact but poorly managed'**

Procurement reforms in Tunisia have helped ease concerns among European Union (EU) members over how aid to the North African country is being spent, following a critical audit.

More details:

<https://www.cips.org/en-ME/supply-management/news/2017/april/eu-aid-to-tunisia-having-impact-but-poorly-managed/>

## 9. AFGHANISTAN – PAKISTAN

- **Pak calls for politically negotiated settlement for lasting peace in Afghanistan**

Asserting that there is no military solution to the Afghan conflict, Adviser to the Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz has called for a politically negotiated settlement for lasting peace in Afghanistan.

More details:

<http://www.aninews.in/newsdetail-NA/MzA3NzI2/pak-calls-for-politically-negotiated-settlement-for-lasting-peace-in-afghanistan.html>

- **Afghan Forces Seize Some \$2Mln in Forged Banknotes During 2016**

Afghanistan's security forces seized about \$2 million in counterfeit currency during 2016 as part of efforts to curb forged notes' circulation, local media reported Thursday, citing an Interior Ministry spokesman.

More details:

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201704061052345366-afghanistan-counterfeit-currency/>

- **Afghanistan dangles Lithium wealth to win Trump Support**

The Afghan government is trying to grab the attention of President Donald Trump and gain greater U.S. support by dangling its massive and untouched wealth of minerals, including lithium, the silvery metal used in mobile phone and computer batteries that is considered essential to modern life.

More details:

[http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS\\_AFGHANISTAN\\_LITHIUM?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-04-06-02-35-32](http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_AFGHANISTAN_LITHIUM?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-04-06-02-35-32)

- **Indonesia-Afghanistan Cooperation to Focus on Reconciliation, Capacity Building, Trade**

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo and President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani agreed to strengthen bilateral relations between Indonesia and Afghanistan during a state meeting in Jakarta on Wednesday.

More details:

<http://jakartaglobe.id/news/indonesia-afghanistan-cooperation-focus-reconciliation-capacity-building-trade/>

- **Durand is a redline for Afghanistan: Afghan govt is ready to defend the country sovereignty, if Pak continue violation along Durand line**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Wednesday condemned Pakistan violations along de-facto Durand Line as a 'unilateral and illogical move. It said that security and defense forces of Afghanistan are ready to defend the country's sovereignty, if Pakistan action continue along de-facto Durand line.

More details:

<http://afghanistantimes.af/durand-is-a-redline-for-afghanistan-afghan-govt-is-ready-to-defend-the-country-sovereignty-if-pak-continue-violation-along-durand-line/>

- **JUI-F offers 'launch pad' for Taliban**

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) General Secretary Abdul Ghafoor Haideri on Wednesday invited Taliban terrorists to join his party.

More details:

<http://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan/06-Apr-17/jui-f-offers-launch-pad-for-taliban>

- **Afghan Prisoners Sew Lips to Protest Government Policy**

Almost 20 Afghan inmates in the Pul-i-Charkhi prison, on the outskirts of the capital, Kabul, have sewn their lips shut to protest government policies.

More details:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/afghan-prisoners-sew-lips-to-protest-government-policy/3797106.html>

- **Afghanistan Tries to Win Trump Support With Lithium**

The Afghan government is trying to grab the attention of President Donald Trump and gain greater U.S. support by dangling its massive and untouched wealth of minerals, including lithium, the silvery metal used in mobile phone and computer batteries that is considered essential to modern life.

More details:

<http://www.voanews.com/a/afghanistan-trump-mining-lithium/3798585.html>

- **Pakistan Army aircraft crash-lands near Peshawar**

Pakistan Army's Mushshak aircraft crash-landed in Painsa Khan village of Mattani on the outskirts of Peshawar on Thursday.

More details:

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1375967/pakistan-army-aircraft-crash-lands-near-peshawar/>

- **Importers Still Paying the Price for Pakistan's Gate Closures**

Thousands of containers are still stranded in Pakistan despite the reopening of the Torkham and Chaman gates two weeks ago.

More details:

<http://www.toloneews.com/business/importers-still-paying-price-pakistan%E2%80%99s-gate-closures>

## 10.TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

- **Turkey invites WHO to join Syria chemical attack probe**

Health Minister Recep Akdag has said he invited the World Health Organization (WHO) to send its officials and experts to jointly probe the recent reports of a deadly chemical attack in Syria.

More Details:

<http://aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-invites-who-to-join-syria-chemical-attack-probe/789911>

- **Erdogan blasts world's 'silence' over Syria attack**

Turkey's president Wednesday blasted the Assad regime for a chemical weapons attack in Idlib, Syria that killed some 100 civilians, but also the international community for being silent in the face of the atrocity. "How will you be able to recover from the curse from this?" Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in Turkey's northwestern Bursa province, branding Syrian regime leader Bashar al-Assad a "murderer".

More Details:

<http://www.worldbulletin.net/turkey/187425/turkeys-borsa-istanbul-down-at-opening>

*\*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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