



Middle-East New-Media • A Weekly Coverage • Editor: Orit Perlov

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Future

Muftah

Grassroots Mobilization, Social Entrepreneurship, & the Future of Egypt

*"While many aspects of Egypt's revolutionary trajectory remain bleak, those Egyptians inside and outside the country whose willpower remains unhindered by institutional and bureaucratic obstacles will hold the keys to a better future for Egypt. **Social mobilization and entrepreneurship will be at the center of this positive change as well as Egypt's long-term development.** Whether this mobilization comes in the form of a protest or a video campaign, or a social enterprise to improve Egypt's industry or its theatres, each of these initiatives contributes to the creation of a dynamic society of active citizens who will determine the future prospects of their country"*

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Louisa Loveluck

Tackling Elite Corruption

"Efforts to tackle elite corruption will benefit from engaging those operating outside the formal political arena, since these groups are unlikely to be impeded by the obstacles facing those inside the system. Effectively addressing corruption will not be an easy process, but the passage of a freedom of information bill would represent an important step on the road to a more transparent future"

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Mahmoud Salem

A New Blog Post by Mahmoud Salem: For the light to come back

"The deterioration that is taking place in all the sectors might not be our fault, but it has to be our responsibility, if not for the love of our country, then for our own self-interest. The nights might be becoming gloomier by the minute, but if we don't do something about it, well, the light might never come back"

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Constitution



Mohamed Abdelfattah

What to follow in Egypt's upcoming constitutional debate

"This blog post seeks to highlight the potential topics of heated debate in the upcoming Constitution drafting process"

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The Presidential Race



Nervana Mahmoud

New Blog Post by Nervana Mahmoud: **Dear Future President, what Sharia does mean to you?**

"If our Presidential candidates really want to Islamize society, before they start to preach to the public how wonderful is their Islamic project is, they should articulate which Islam they are after and why. Sadly, even the so-called "moderate" Abou el-Fotouh has recently raised his religious rhetoric in order to gain popularity"

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Coptic Nationalism

Anwar Al-Sadat, the First Islamist Ruler in Egypt's Modern History

"The only type of state in Egypt which will keep all Egyptians together is a secular state that pays no attention to one's religion, and treats all Egyptians, whether Coptic or Muslim, as equal under the law. An Islamic state in Egypt leads only to its partition"

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Salama Moussa

A New Blog Post by Salama Moussa: **The Copts' case for supporting Aboul Fotouh**

"There are reliable reports of several high level Coptic bishops who argued for supporting the presidential candidacy of Aboul Fotouh. On the face of it this seems a paradoxical position for those advocating a secular state. He is hardly a paragon of secularism. On a closer look that might be a difficult yet responsible position" [Read More](#)

A New Blog Post by Salama Moussa: **Numbers (Aboul Fotouh Again!)**

"A very successful American politician once remarked that all of politics is about coalitions and numbers. Egypt is still finding its way through open popular politics. But it is useful to remember this adage, especially for liberals, secularists and Copts who feel overwhelmed by the MB/Salafi Juggernaut. The numbers are simple. Twice in one year it was shown clearly that the MB/Salafi grouping has 75% of the popular vote, while 25% belongs to a combination of liberal Muslims and Copts. We simply need to accept that as a fact"

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Arabist

New Post on The Arabist: Why Khairat al-Shater is running

"Shater's candidacy is something that has been envisaged for six months at least — since the beginning of the end of the entente cordiale between the MB and SCAF. The decision to go for it was probably made by the top leadership (the "gang of six" led by Shater) in recent weeks, but not sold to the broader leadership in the Shura Council until Saturday — and then barely so if the reports that the Shura Council approved the decision by a margin of only two votes is true. I would argue that this decision was made because of several overlapping concerns, which we might conceptualize as four concentric circles of variables"

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Bassem Sabry

There's a gigantic difference. A liberal Aboul-Fotouh would be a tremendous victory for Egypt. Moussa can be a balancing act for some Islamists, but he doesn't seem to have the courage to fight a strong ideological fight, and is losing ground support. I want to choose Abul-Fotouh, but his background worries me a bit.



Zeinobia

New Blog Post by Zeinobia: And Abu El Fotoh Shows off in front of the Muslim brotherhood

"Abu El Fotoh is being positioned as the Revolution's candidate thanks to that big number of prominent figures in the society"



from politicians to artists to Christian priests even ex-Muslim brotherhood figures"

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THE MAJALLA

Their Chosen One: Khairat Al-Shater, the Man who Would be President

"In an official statement on Saturday, the Muslim Brotherhood announced it had reversed its decision not to nominate a presidential candidate. The news caught many by surprise. The chosen one was Khairat Al-Shater, the group's key financier"



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POMED

Rethinking U.S. Relations with a Changing Egypt by Michele Dunne

*"The United States should pause military assistance while it carries out a policy review at home and consultations in Egypt—with parliamentarians, businesspeople, leaders of political movements, labor activists, etc—to build a broad basis for a new U.S.-Egyptian relationship. **Reaching a new understanding based on U.S. support for Egyptian democratization and economic development might not be easy to do, but keeping the relationship on auto pilot is not viable in a context of seismic political change.** And Egypt is far too important to give up on just one year into its transition from authoritarianism"*

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Melhoshy

New Blog by Mostafa El-Hoshy: New Arab Opinion Poll: Failed pasts and optimistic futures

"The survey in question was conducted during 2011 in 12 Arab countries: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza), Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen. It was carried out via multi-staged cluster samples representative of the societies included, with a margin of error not exceeding 3.5 percent. Overall, some 16,173 respondents were interviewed, with the assistance of several Arab research centers"

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The Majalla

Assad and his opponents: No, after you. Who will be the first to lay down arms in Syria?

"The situation is therefore a standoff: neither side in Syria is willing to make the first move, and neither side will accept the other's preconditions, and both will continue to struggle for the upper hand"

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Friends of Syria – Istanbul



Obeida Nahas

Dr Ghalioun asked #FriendsofSyria to support FSA, a buffer zone and safe corridors in Syria.

"Friends of Syria" conference's final statement

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Tariq Alhomayed

A Friends of Syria conference without lies

"From here it becomes clear that the Istanbul summit is taking place after the al-Assad regime has exhausted all its lies and tricks to buy time, and which have now become exposed to everybody. Therefore the advantage – and dilemma – of the Istanbul conference is that it has no room to grant the tyrant of Damascus more time and opportunities, particularly as the death toll in Syria is approaching the 10,000 mark" [...] ***"Therefore, now is the time for buffer zones to be imposed in Syria and for the FSA to be provided with arms, for doing otherwise would mean granting the tyrant of Damascus a new opportunity to kill more innocent Syrians"***

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EA World View

Syria Document: Beginner's Guide to the 27 Points of the "Friends of Syria" Meeting

"The 27-point summary by the more than 70 national delegations at today's "Friends of Syria" gathering in Istanbul - the condensed version of the narrative.... "[...]"The representatives called for a political transition (Point

5) and implementation of the "peace plan" of United Nations envoy Kofi Annan (6), while regretting regime actions, such as the support of violence that appeared to defy that plan (7)"

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NOW Syria

New Blog Post by Ana Maria Luca: What really happened in Istanbul?

"The world is not united, the Arab countries are not united, and the Syrian opposition is not united (In fact this is not a bad thing and it shows they are democratic, and they're allowing disagreements and different views, unlike the iron fist they're struggling against. But the world supporting democracy surprisingly takes it as lack of cohesion.) The only body keeping its position is the Assad government. And that is why after a year this government is still in power"

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I-AM

In Syria, Some Assad Loyalists Waver

"They are not calling for his downfall, they are not proclaiming any allegiance to the opposition, they have not decided what they stand for – yet – but they have started asking brave, new, subversive questions. They have started doubting, started recognizing failures and frustrations, and they have started looking beyond Assad's ever-looming shadow for other visions of the future"

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Colum Lynch

A copy of an identical letter dated 30 March 2012 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations

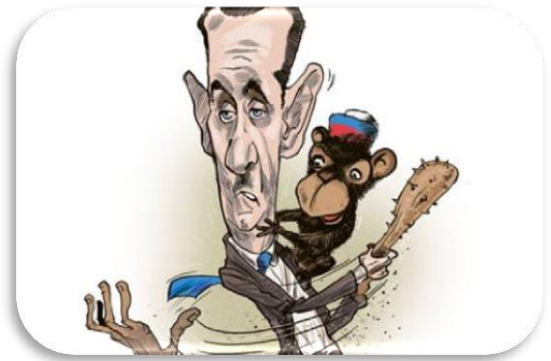
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Abdulkhaleq Abdulla (Professor of Political Science – Dubai)

The Syrians are saying 'Get the Russian Money off Our Back': **No intervention in Syria amounts to bad intervention**

*"The international community should work with the Arab League. That is the good intervention needed at the moment. It simply implies providing moral solidarity for the Syrians, political support for the opposition and helping them to unite, and finally logistical support of all kind to the Free Syrian Army. **Russia should not get away with the 'no-intervention' nonsense. As the uprising approaches the last 30 minutes of the hour, this is certainly not the time for the international community to turn its back on Syria**"*



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Yemen



The Majalla

Yemen after Saleh - What Next for Yemen?

"Should the reform of the Yemeni political system fail to materialize, the country would become a failed state and civil war and secession would be a strong possibility. Furthermore, Iran has been offering its support—financial and political—to any dissident Yemeni forces willing to accept it. This is the time to prevent this from happening, by supporting a new and reformed political order that represents a clean break from the rule of Saleh and his rivals"

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Saudi Arabia



Jadaliyya

The Draft of Anti-Terrorism Law in Saudi Arabia: legalizing the Abrogation of Civil Liberties

"The Anti-Terror Law provides both for the need to deal with terrorism within a legal framework, and for the protection of the "legitimate rights of

suspects.” What has been neglected in this exchange between officials and critics is that the unapplied 2002 Law of Criminal Procedure (LCP) already exists to ensure a speedy, fair, and inexpensive trial, while guaranteeing basic rights. While the LCP is not without its flaws, unlike the proposed Anti-Terrorism Law, it limits the discretionary power of the Ministry of Interior and provides a foundation for a broader set of legal reforms”

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Iran



E Sadeghi-Boroujerdi

New Blog Post by Essi Khan: **Iran - Edalat, CASMII and the Anti-war Movement**

"Many like myself who strongly believe there is no military solution to the Iranian nuclear deadlock, also do not want to see the waters muddied with respect to the militarization of Iranian politics, the brutal treatment of political activists and bloggers, the on-going house arrest of the opposition leaders, Mehdi Karroubi and Mir-Hossein Moussavi, and the suffocation of legitimate dissent for the promotion of the Iranian people's legitimate democratic aspirations"

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Tehran Bureau

Iran's Nuclear Program: Still No Breaking Point in Sight by Hossein Afshar

"As the international community struggles to find a way out of the Iranian nuclear tangle, it finds itself more in need of sophisticated pressure mechanisms. In Tehran, meanwhile, all the effort provides further evidence to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that the very survival of his Islamic Republic is at stake. He grows more uncompromising while the region grows more volatile"

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Muftah

Understanding the Logic of Iran's Nuclear Program by Reza Sanati & Mohammad Homayounvash

"The impasse over the Iranian nuclear program is fundamentally embedded in the malignant nature of the Iran-U.S. relationship. This standoff can only be resolved if the nuclear issue is explicitly delinked from regime change. This will require the United States to publicly commit to giving Tehran security guarantees. While this is a hugely complicated task, the cases of China and Vietnam, post-revolutionary and post-war governments that when fully integrated into the global political economy normalized their international behaviors, provide useful templates about the expected outcome with Iran"

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Teheran Bureau

Uneasy Reliance: Iran Frets about Turkey by Alex Vatanka

"The simple fact is that Tehran needs Ankara -- probably more than vice versa. Turkey has become a key trading partner for Iran" [...] "And from the Iranian perspective, Ankara plays an important role in backing its right to a nuclear program, by far the most important diplomatic challenge Tehran faces. This is a theme whose importance Erdogan recognizes, and he returned to it again and again during his visit, speaking out strongly against any military strike against Iran. The Iranian side recognizes that Turkish diplomatic support for Iran's nuclear program is self-serving, conditional, and finite but thanks to Iran's self-created isolation, the authorities in Tehran need to hang on to any token of support they can find on the international stage, regardless of how fickle"

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Shashank Joshi



A New Blog Post by Shashank Joshi: **Iranian retaliation and Arab oil**

*"The research indicates that threats to regional oil production are overblown. By implication, the United States may be able to reduce its military commitment to the region ... in sum, **oil is a lucrative target, but it is not universally vulnerable**"*

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Jordan



Qantara.de

The Nuclear Plans of King Abdallah II Provoke Discontent

*"The actual unemployment figure in Jordan hovers around 30 percent and there are too few opportunities for young, often well-educated Jordanians. Rising rents and the cost of fuel only add to this explosive mix. **The tiny anti-nuclear movement is also a sign that young people in particular are demanding a greater participation in the decision-making***

***process.** The protest against a dubious mega-project is an expression of this demand and the authorities will not be able to simply nip it in the bud"*



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Storyful

'March to Jerusalem' marks Land Day

A Global March to Jerusalem took place on Friday in Israel, the occupied Palestinian territories and the neighboring countries to protest land injustice and to mark Land Day. The annual event commemorates unprecedented strikes and demonstrations by Palestinians in 1976. Those protests, triggered by plans to expropriate swathes of land in the Galilee region, saw six Palestinians shot dead by the army and police. Our lead video is the official promotion for Friday's protest.

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Occupied Palestine

#LandDay – #GM2J – March 30, 2012 – Photos & Video

Photography - An impression of today's marches and demos – More footage is being updated today

[For More Photos & Video](#)



Steve Hynd

Jerusalem is Encircled by Violence as Another Land Day Comes and Goes under Occupation

"What I saw in Jerusalem was an unnecessary and disproportionate use of violence against an overwhelmingly peaceful protest. This event however is not unique; it remains the impossible reality for those who are attempting to oppose the occupation through non-violent means"

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The Majalla

Remembering Arafat - What happened to the Cause?

"Palestinians have not fully transitioned out of the shadow of one-man rule and the many complications and failures involved in having the fate of a people tied to the personality of a single leader. Today's reality is in many ways the reflection of the decision-making of Arafat. Although he secured the right for his people to make their own decisions, he did not always make the right ones himself. The legacy of Yasser Arafat will continue to reflect this fateful dynamic and the deep complexities of the Palestinian struggle which he embodied"

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Annie Robbins

Marwan Barghout calls for popular uprising for statehood. Israel puts him in solitary confinement

"Marking the tenth anniversary of his imprisonment, this is the first time Marwan Barghouti has called for a complete halt in 'peace negotiations"

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