

Selected articles (September 14, 2019)

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1a)

How Syria Defeated the 2012-2019 Invasion by US & Al-Qaeda

By Eric Zuesse

September 4, 2019

<https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2019/09/04/how-syria-defeated-the-2012-2019-invasion-by-us-al-Qaeda/>

1b)

US preparing to send 150 troops to join border patrol in northeast Syria: Report

September 13, 2019

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2019/09/13/606062/US-preparing-to-send-150-troops-to-join-border-patrol-in-northeast-Syria-Report>

1c)

Briefing by Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova, Moscow, September 12, 2019

http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3785174

“[...] Hotbeds of tension remain in areas that are not controlled by the Syrian Government, specifically, Idlib and northeastern Syria.

Terrorists from the Nusra-controlled Hayat Tahrir al-Sham alliance continue to shell Syrian government forces’ positions and to attack the Russian Khmeimim air base with attack drones despite the “silence regime” introduced around the Idlib de-escalation zone on August 31. In the first 10 days of September alone, the militants initiated over 300 attacks and made another attempt to attack Khmeimim on September 3 using two unmanned aerial vehicles. Such aggressive raids by the terrorists have led to civilian casualties in nearby towns and among Syrian troops. So, about 150 Syrian troops have been killed and over 470 people have been injured in Idlib over the past month alone. About 50 civilians have died and over 100 were injured as a result of the shelling by terrorists.

Against this background, an arbitrary US airstrike against the presumed location of terrorists in the vicinity of Idlib on August 31, which led to numerous casualties, including children, and destruction, came as an alarming signal. In addition, this unilateral US military action actually threatened the moratorium on hostilities introduced on the same day. We believe that

such strikes will not resolve the problem of the massive terrorist presence in Idlib, but may well undermine efforts to stabilise the situation.

Currently, the Idlib de-escalation zone is controlled by about 50,000 well-armed and experienced terrorists. They, in fact, are holding hostage and terrorising 3 million civilians. The terrorists brutally suppress peace demonstrations in towns such as Maaret-Nouman, Ariha, Harim, Kafr-Takharim, Salqin and Saraqib, during which protesters demand that the militants leave the territories they occupy. The terrorists are using firearms to disperse demonstrations thus causing numerous casualties.

For our part, we are convinced that long-term stabilisation and security in Idlib are possible only through a return to full compliance with the Sochi Memorandum of September 17, 2018. This primarily concerns creating a demilitarised space along the internal perimeter of the de-escalation zone and neutralising the terrorist threat.

The situation remains volatile in northeastern Syria which is illegally controlled by the United States. The terrorist underground and the so-called ISIS sleeper cells have stepped up their activities as well. A particularly disturbing situation has developed in the Al-Hawl camp for internally displaced persons. Despite the efforts of international humanitarian workers, the camp residents are in need of emergency help, and the situation in the camp continues to degrade. ISIS terrorists who infiltrated Al-Hawl under the guise of refugees are taking advantage of this situation, spreading radical ideology and getting away with crimes. On September 5, Kurdish guards were attacked in the camp, with two people killed and two more wounded. The delay in resolving the Al-Hawl problem is fraught not only with the disastrous deterioration of the humanitarian situation there, but also with the flight of ISIS members from this camp to other parts of Syria and beyond.

In this regard, we note the efforts of the Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights, Anna Kuznetsova, to evacuate and return four Russian children from Al-Hawl to Russia.

Clashes between Kurdish units and Sunni Arabs, which protest against the authoritarian rule of Kurdish administrations, in particular, the mandatory service in the Syrian Democratic Forces, continue unabated. Over 60 such clashes have occurred in August alone, leaving about 60 Kurds dead and about 70 wounded.

At the same time, Russian military experts, in coordination with the Syrian authorities and representatives of the UN and the Syrian Red Crescent Society, continue to work on resolving the IDP camp Rukban problem. Humanitarian aid was delivered to the camp in early September, and the evacuation of civilians was planned for mid-September. Thus, we expect that civilians will leave Rukban by late September, and the camp itself will be disbanded and cleaned up.

Overall, despite individual hotbeds of tension, normal peaceful life is gradually returning to Syria. Holding the 61st annual Damascus International Fair was of great importance for restoring the economy and infrastructure destroyed as a result of the attacks by international terrorism. Despite active opposition by a number of Western countries, delegations from about 40 countries in the Middle East and other regions took part in the event. A number of agreements on investing in the Syrian economy were signed, and joint energy, agriculture, education and information projects were agreed upon. It should also be noted that the tradition of holding annual fairs in Damascus resumed in 2017 with the active assistance of

Russia. This year, 16 Russian companies took part in the fair, and the 3rd Russian-Syrian business forum was held.

Regular visits by various delegations to Damascus are indicative of the gradual normalisation of the situation in Syria and the end of the country's international isolation. A group of European Parliament deputies from France visited the Syrian capital in late August-early September and held talks with President Assad. The visit was organised as part of an initiative by French politicians to resume bilateral contacts and establish practical cooperation on matters of mutual interest, such as fighting terrorism and having refugees return home. [...]"

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2a)

Yemen: Another Shameful US Defeat Looms

By Finian Cunningham

September 9, 2019

<https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2019/09/09/yemen-another-shameful-us-defeat-looms/>

"[...] When the American Congress is united in calling for a ban on US arms to Saudi Arabia because of the atrocities in Yemen, then we should know that the PR war has been lost. President Trump overruled Congress earlier this year to continue arming the Saudis in Yemen. But even Trump must at last be realizing his government's culpability for aiding and abetting genocide is no longer excusable, even for the most credulous consumers of American propaganda.[...]"

"[...] The defeat is further complicated by the open conflict which has broken out over recent weeks between rival militants sponsored by the Saudis and Emiratis in the southern port city of Aden. There are reports of UAE warplanes attacking Saudi-backed militants and of Saudi force build-up. A war of words has erupted between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi. There is strong possibility that the rival factions could blow up into a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, supposed coalition allies.[...]"

2b)

THE ANGRY ARAB: Hying the Arab-Iran Conflict

By As'ad AbuKhalil

September 11, 2019

<https://consortiumnews.com/2019/09/11/the-angry-arab-hying-the-arab-iran-conflict/>

"Western media has for many years created the impression that the Arab conflict with Iran dominates the region and dwarfs all other conflicts. But this paradigm is largely a polemical propaganda ploy

intended to minimize or obscure the Arab-Israeli conflict and others that pose challenges to the U.S. and Israel. [...]"

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3a)

BRICS Needs a Unified Front Against US Intervention in Venezuela

By Ramona Wadi

September 7, 2019

<https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2019/09/07/brics-needs-a-unified-front-against-us-intervention-in-venezuela/>

3b)

Iran Together with a “Club of Countries Subjected to Sanctions”, in Solidarity Against US “Economic Terrorism”

Peter Koenig interviewed by and Press TV

September 12, 2019

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/iran-solidarity-against-us-economic-terrorism/5688929>

3c)

U.S. Sanctions Are Killing Cancer Patients in Iran

Washington claims that maximum pressure won't stop the supply of medicine and other humanitarian necessities, but banking sanctions are driving up import prices, blocking supply chains, and creating deadly drug shortages.

By Abbas Kebriaeezadeh

August 14, 2019

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/08/14/u-s-sanctions-are-killing-cancer-patients-in-iran/>

3d)

Impact of United States political sanctions on international collaborations and research in Iran

By Fatemeh Kokabisaghi, Andrew C Miller, Farshid R Bashar, Mahmood Salesi, Ali A K Zarchi, Abdalsamad Keramatfar, Mohammad A Pourhoseingholi, Hosein Amini, Amir Vahedian-Azimi

June 2019

<https://gh.bmj.com/content/4/5/e001692>

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4)

Hong Kong Protest Leader Hangs Out with White Helmets Boss

By Makia Freeman

September 12, 2019

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/hong-kong-protest-leader-hangs-out-white-helmets-boss/5688967>

“ [...] The Hong Kong protests are now in their 15th week and show no signs of slowing down. With the US gradually moving its focus away from Russia as enemy #1 and onto China as the new enemy #1, you can expect to see more Sinophobia (and less Russophobia). You can expect to see more foreign meddling and interference, more deals with and ‘aid’ to Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, the Uyghurs, the Dalai Lama (Tibetans) and any other minority group which could cause friction with the ruling Chinese Communist Party. This is the 21st century, and all of these economic and meddling shenanigans are part of the 21st century new hybrid warfare.”

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5a)

A Structural Reevaluation of the Collapse of World Trade Center 7

Draft

By Leroy Hulse, Zhili Quan, Feng Xiao

University of Alaska Fairbanks

September 3, 2019.

http://ine.uaf.edu/media/222439/uaf_wtc7_draft_report_09-03-2019.pdf

5b)

The Betrayal of America. Revisiting the 9/11 Evidence

By Elias Davidsson

2019

<https://amirmortasawi.wordpress.com/2019/05/15/20688248/>

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6a)

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks and answers to media questions at a joint news conference following talks with Foreign Minister of Iran Mohammad Javad Zarif, Moscow, September 2, 2019

http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/ckNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3768089

"[...] It will be recalled that the JCPOA is based on a very delicate balance of interests, commitments and compromises. It cannot be divided into parts (with one part mandatory and the other optional). This is absolutely impossible. We fully realise that the steps that Iran has to take on the partial suspension of its voluntary commitments under the JCPOA are a direct consequence of the United States' unacceptable moves as regards this highly important document that was approved by the UN Security Council. We are witnessing attempts to provoke Iran into breaching the non-proliferation regime and undermining its cooperation with the IAEA. They are apparently looking for a pretext to implement military scenarios. We categorically condemn these scenarios that are certain to be fatal for the entire region. Therefore, we note the restraint of our Iranian colleagues, who are strictly abiding by all the international legal standards on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear arms in this case. We hope that all other participants in the JCPOA will duly appreciate Iran's conduct.[...]"

6b)

Iran May Be Weak, But Its Strategy Is Working

By Reva Goujon

VP of Global Analysis, Stratfor

September 12, 2019

<https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/iran-may-be-weak-its-strategy-working-us-trump-sanctions-nuclear-jcboa>

"Highlights

- Iran's brazenness this summer is paying off: Washington continues to face a massive dilemma in trying to deter Tehran in the Persian Gulf, Iran has exposed U.S. President Donald Trump's extreme reticence toward war and France has offered the Islamic republic financial incentives in return for de-escalating tensions.*

- *The removal of national security adviser John Bolton — a hawk on Iran — from Trump's war Cabinet could provide more space for diplomacy, but unless Trump accedes to Iran's demand for some sanctions relief, there is little chance that the two countries will reach a breakthrough at this month's U.N. General Assembly in New York.*
- *With political pressures to rise in both Tehran and the White House heading into 2020 and Iran now more confident that Trump is intent on avoiding war, there is still potential for Tehran to resurrect its military threat in the Persian Gulf to break another stalemate.”*

6c)

Protecting Europe-Iran Trade to Prevent War: A Provisional Assessment of INSTEX

By Esfandiyar Batmanghelidj and Sahil Shah

June 2019

<https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ELNBB-INSTEX-June-27-2019-ADVANCE-COPY.pdf>

“Executive Summary

The uncertainty over the future of the JCPOA threatens progress made by France, Germany, and United Kingdom to establish INSTEX, a state-owned entity that will help facilitate Europe-Iran trade in the face of US secondary sanctions.

INSTEX is a limited solution for a specific problem. The mechanism is intended to alleviate restrictions on sanctions-exempt trade, stemming from the reluctance of European banks to conduct cross-border transactions with Iran.

INSTEX cannot directly counteract the Trump administration’s “maximum pressure” campaign nor can it fully deliver on the JCPOA’s economic promises. Given its focus on humanitarian trade, INSTEX can help Iranian people by reducing the inflationary impact of increases in the price of imported goods.

The strength of INSTEX is in its declared humanitarian focus, which shields it from US pressure and also maximizes the likelihood that European companies will engage the currently untested mechanism. The officials working to operationalize INSTEX are doing so in accordance with four workstreams:

- *Workstream 1: Operations and Trade Mechanism*
- *Workstream 2: Compliance Framework*
- *Workstream 3: Integration with Iranian Corresponding Entity*
- *Workstream 4: Expansion to “Like-Minded Countries”*

Progress is being made in each workstream. However, significant challenges remain that will likely mean that in 2019 the scale of INSTEX commercial operations will be limited. The critical question

facing policymakers in Europe and Iran is whether the first transactions can take place in the next few weeks in order to be part of Europe's considered response to Iran's escalation on the JCPOA."

6d)

'The New Normal': Trump's 'China Bind' Can Be Iran's Opportunity

By Alastair Crooke

September 9, 2019

<https://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2019/09/09/new-normal-trumps-china-bind-can-be-irans-opportunity/>

"[...] China's General Administration of Customs (GAC) detailing the country's oil imports data shows that China has not cut its Iranian supply after the US waiver program ended on 2 May, but rather, it has steadily increased Iranian crude imports since the official end of the waiver extension, up from May and June levels. The new GAC data shows China imported over 900,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil from Iran in July, which is up 4.7% from the month before.

And a new path is opening in front of Iran. After Biarritz, Zarif flew directly to Beijing where he discussed a huge, multi-hundred billion (according to one report), twenty-five-year oil and gas investment, (and a separate) 'Road and Belt' transport plan. Though the details are not disclosed, it is plain that China – unlike America – sees Iran as a key future strategic partner, and China seems perfectly able to fathom out the Iranians, too. [...]"

6e)

Iran will be a full nuclear power by the end of 2020: no return to the 2015 agreement

By Elijah J Magnier

September 9, 2019

<https://ejmagnier.com/2019/09/09/iran-will-be-a-full-nuclear-power-by-the-end-of-2020-no-return-to-the-2015-agreement/>

"[...]The US has nothing to offer to Iran but further sanctions and additional pressure on Europe, so the old continent follows its withdrawal path. The US administration planned to form various coalitions, including an Arab NATO, but failed so far to pull off any such alliance. US officials believed the Iranian regime would fall in months and that the population would turn against their leaders. Nothing of the sort happened. On the contrary: Trump and his neo-cons brought Iranian pragmatists and hardliners together for the same cause. The US destroyed the possibility of any moderate argument with people like Rouhani and Zarif, and showed that it was too untrustworthy for any reliable deal or agreement. [...]"

6f)

Israeli PM Netanyahu's Himalayan Miscalculation on Iran: Bringing China into the Mideast

By Juan Cole

September 8, 2019

<https://www.juancole.com/2019/09/netanyahus-himalayan-miscalculation.html>

"[...] Netanyahu could have had an Iran under the JCPOA that integrated increasingly with the West and became open to Western pressure. He blew it."

6g)

Post-Bolton Thaw in US Relations with Iran?

By Stephen Lendman

September 12, 2019

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/post-bolton-thaw-us-relations-iran/5688982>

"[...] On Wednesday, Rouhani said "as long as there are sanctions in place, there is no point in negotiating with the US."

On the same day, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani commented on Bolton's sacking, saying:

"Superficial changes in the American governing body do not alter Iran's perception of the nature of US actions and policies," adding:

"Obama and Trump both pursued a policy of sanctions against the Iranian nation. (Its) criterion for assessment is the actual policy and performance of the United States, especially its adherence to international obligations and removal of sanctions against the Iranian people."

US war by other means rages against Iran, Venezuela, and other nations, along with its endless hot wars in multiple theaters. [...]"

6h)

Inside story of the first Iran nuclear deal

Lula on fights with Hillary, talks with Ahmadinejad, Obama 'good but nervous and too young'

By Pepe Escobar

September 6, 2019

<https://www.asiatimes.com/2019/09/article/inside-story-of-the-first-iran-nuclear-deal/>

6i)

The Pirates of Gibraltar

By Sasan Fayazmanesh

September 13, 2019

<https://www.counterpunch.org/2019/09/13/the-pirates-of-gibraltar/>

6j)

A rules-based or US-based international order for Iran?

By Hans Blix (Former Foreign Minister and Director-General Emeritus of the IAEA)

July 8, 2019

<https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/commentary/a-rules-based-or-us-based-international-order-for-iran/>