



# DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

IN PURSUIT OF NATIONAL SECURITY

VOL. 8 NO. 2

ISSN 2347 - 3703

JANUARY-MARCH 2019

## Special Issue: West Asia and North Africa (WANA)

- US Decision to Withdraw from Syria:  
Ramifications for Major Players  
*Anu Sharma*
- India's Relations with the Horn of Africa  
*Sarvsvreshth Dhammi*
- Unravelling the Kurdish Puzzle in West Asia  
*Dipanwita Chakravorty*
- Iran, NPT and JCPOA: Some Observations  
*Hina Pandey*
- Iran-Saudi Arabia Proxy War in Yemen:  
A Quest for Hegemony  
*Nitya Jadeja*
- Rivalry between Iran and Israel:  
The Next War in the Middle East?  
*Prem Anand Mishra*
- EU's Engagement in WANA Region:  
Need for a Pragmatic Approach  
*Ankita Dutta*

# DEFENCE AND DIPLOMACY

---

IN PURSUIT OF NATIONAL SECURITY

VOL. 8 NO. 2 • JANUARY-MARCH 2019

**Special Issue: West Asia and North Africa (WANA)**



## **CENTRE FOR AIR POWER STUDIES**

### **VISION**

To be an independent **centre of excellence on national security** contributing informed and considered research and analyses on relevant issues.

### **MISSION**

To encourage independent and informed research and analyses on issues of relevance to national security and to create a pool of domain experts to provide considered inputs to decision-makers. Also, to foster informed public debate and opinion on relevant issues and to engage with other think-tanks and stakeholders within India and abroad to provide an Indian perspective.

# CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Editor's Note   | v  |
| 1. US Decision to Withdraw from Syria:<br>Ramifications for Major Players<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>      | 1  |
| 2. India's Relations with the Horn of Africa<br><i>Sarvureshth Dhammi</i>                           | 11 |
| 3. Unravelling the Kurdish Puzzle in West Asia<br><i>Dipanwita Chakravortty</i>                     | 27 |
| 4. Iran, NPT and JCPOA: Some Observations<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>                                     | 41 |
| 5. Iran-Saudi Arabia Proxy War in Yemen:<br>A Quest for Hegemony<br><i>Nitya Jadeja</i>             | 51 |
| 6. Rivalry between Iran and Israel:<br>The Next War in the Middle East?<br><i>Prem Anand Mishra</i> | 69 |
| 7. EU's Engagement in WANA Region:<br>Need for a Pragmatic Approach<br><i>Ankita Dutta</i>          | 81 |
| Index: Pervious Issues  | 92 |

## ➤ EDITOR'S NOTE

The suicide bombing at Pulwama on February 14, 2019, that killed 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel has completely changed the complexion of the sub-conventional threat India had been facing so far. The very fact that a local Kashmiri youth had been adequately 'brainwashed' by a terror organisation—the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), operating from the other side of the international border—to give up his life, is a situation that some analysts have said 'was waiting to happen'. Adil Ahmad Dar was the Indian Kashmiri youth who rammed his Maruti van laden with explosives into the bus carrying the CRPF personnel. It remains to be seen how this will impact the security forces engaged in the Valley fighting the militant threat 24x7x365. Another ominous sign for the security forces deployed in the Kashmir Valley is the threat issued by the Hizbul Mujahideen Valley chief, Riyaz Naikoo, warning that the security forces operating in the Valley would now be targeted by young children wearing vests strapped with explosives. Suicide terrorism appears to be the new dynamic that could emerge to threaten the fragile security situation obtaining in the Valley.

The events that followed this dastardly act demonstrated the important role that *defence and diplomacy* play while dealing with an 'errant' neighbour, hell-bent on using terror as a tool for 'bleeding' a 'more powerful' neighbour. The suicide attack was quickly acknowledged by the JeM, the terror group that operates 'freely' in Pakistan under the stewardship of Masood Azhar.

The timing for the attack could not have been better planned by the Pakistani state—in cahoots with its 'terror arm', the JeM. Let us examine this a little closer. On the diplomatic front, the US was cosyng up to Pakistan which was to play the role of interlocutor to ensure that the Taliban agrees to talks with the US special envoy to carry the peace process forward, and, in turn, ensure that President Trump's intention of pulling out at least 7,000 US troops

from Afghanistan is realised. It was clear that the Taliban would be willing for talks with the Americans, but had strong reservations about holding talks with the Afghan government—without which any peace initiative holds no meaning. It is naïve to expect a power-sharing arrangement—and call it a ‘peace process’—while the two most important stakeholders (the Taliban and the Afghan government) are still at each other’s throats and killing each other’s militants/security forces respectively; there needs to be a modicum of a ‘ceasefire’ before a ‘peace process’ can be implemented in earnest. Yet, in the middle of all this, it appeared that the primary aim of the ‘peace process’ was the safe withdrawal of US troops. The US special envoy was hoping to elicit an assurance from the Taliban not to attack US troops—the very same troops that had been hunting the very same Taliban till a few weeks ago! The sanctuary provided by the Pakistan state to the Taliban was the ‘ace up its sleeve’ that Pakistan hoped to exploit in getting the Taliban to talk to the US, and obtain some concessions for itself in the bargain.

The shrewd Pakistani mindset saw this as an opportunity not to be missed. It is no secret that Pakistan wants to weaken Afghanistan politically, economically and socially, and instal a government that is favourable to Pakistan; in furtherance of Pakistan’s elusive bid to seek ‘strategic depth’ vis-à-vis India. This was also a time when the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) had almost been convinced that Pakistan’s money laundering and financial assistance for terror activities justified moving it from the Grey List to the Black List. This move would have been disastrous for the already shaky economy of Pakistan, struggling as it was with a heavy debt burden for which it was seeking a relief from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in terms of a ‘bail-out package’. Keeping the US in good humour was, therefore, of utmost importance to the Pakistani state.

One would have imagined that an event like the Pulwama attack of February 14 would have pushed Pakistan over the precipice as far as the FATF report was concerned. In reality, with deft manoeuvring—Pakistan’s forte over the years—it emerged almost clean once the dust of Pulwama settled. India had made a bid to the FATF to put Pakistan on the Black List. Much to our chagrin, the FATF did not

do so 'as yet', giving Pakistan time till September 2019 to clean up its act or face the prospect of being put on the Black List. The FATF also did not agree to Pakistan's bid to be removed from the Grey List—a laughable request in the first place, especially with the memory of the Pulwama attack just a week old—in view of the poor (debt ridden) state of its economy. This once again points to the diplomatic heft one carries; while India was able to 'isolate' Pakistan diplomatically post-Pulwama, Pakistan was still able to 'wriggle out' from the corner it was in on February 22, 2019, when the 37-member FATF delivered its decision. Of course, this was done by hanging on to the coat-tails of its 'benefactor' which carries all the economic clout of the lone superpower.

Back to events that unfolded post-Pulwama. The Indian Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met on February 15, and it was decided that the government would initiate all possible diplomatic steps to ensure Pakistan's "complete isolation". Pakistan's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status was withdrawn. The Indian armed forces were given a free hand to plan an appropriate riposte, which came in the early morning hours of February 26, as a strike on the JeM terror training camp at Balakot—a small town in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) region of Pakistan. The strike was carried out by Mirage-2000 aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

All IAF aircraft returned safely after a successful strike on the training camp for the JeM cadres at Jabba Top near Balakot. The accuracy of the strike was established beyond doubt in the post-strike imagery obtained from various sources.

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) responded the next day with a strike package of 24 aircraft, supported by an Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft (the Swedish Erieye). The intention of this 'strike package' was as much to demonstrate Pakistan's ability to respond to India's strike the previous day, as it was to attempt to achieve an 'opportunist kill' on some of the advanced aircraft of the IAF—the Mirage 2000 and the Su-30 MKI. Thanks to the superior training of the IAF pilots and fighter controllers manning the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and ground-based radars, the IAF pilots were able to keep themselves safe from the Beyond Visual Range (BVR)

Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) that is believed to have greater range than the BVR missiles in the IAF's inventory currently. From all the reports that have been doing the rounds, a few facts have emerged:

- India has debunked the myth that precipitate action within Pakistani territory by India against terror organisations that enjoy safe havens in Pakistan would invite nuclear retaliation by Pakistan; the attack by the IAF against the JeM training camp at Balakot (in the KPK area) in the wee hours of February 26, 2019, proved just that.
- An IAF MiG-21 Bison, piloted by Wg Cdr Abhinandan, did shoot down an F-16 of the PAF.
- Wg Cdr Abhinandan was, in turn, shot down; he ejected over Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJ&K) and was captured.
- He was returned to India on March 1, 2019.
- This was the first ever recorded 'kill' of an F-16 aircraft by a MiG-21 in air-to-air combat.
- The propensity of the Pakistan state, led by its propaganda mouthpiece, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), to spin a web of untruths and propagate a narrative to the contrary was evident for all to see.

Let us now move on to other significant developments in the West Asia and North African (WANA) region—the principal focus for this issue of *Defence and Diplomacy*.

Syria has been at the forefront of all the action in the West Asian region in the past quarter, largely for the impending troop pull-out by the US. This is likely to have serious repercussions for many stakeholders in the region, including the Kurds, who would feel betrayed and abandoned after having helped the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) fight the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The US has also been supporting the SDF in the Syrian civil war to overthrow the Assad regime. Now, President Trump, however, is committed to pulling out the 2,000-odd US troops from Syria.

The other stakeholders in Syria are Russia and Iran. Both are likely to consolidate their influence over the region even more aggressively

once the US troops withdraw. Russia, on its part, would be looking to consolidate its interests in the oil, gas and mining sectors in Syria. Taken along with the Russian plans for construction of a ship building plant in Tartus (for repairs to different types of vessels), it appears that the Russian presence in Syria would be seen for a long time to come.

How does this, along with the benefit that Iran would get from the US' troop withdrawal, impact the security of Israel? It is well known that the Hezbollah is being actively supported by the Iranians. So far, due to the presence of US troops in the region, this overt support was difficult; the floodgates would open the moment the US presence is withdrawn. President Assad has recently made threatening statements to take back the Golan Heights from Israel "using all possible means", emboldened as he is by the presence of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) elements in Syria; a US withdrawal would only embolden him further. In January, rockets fired against Israel—purportedly by the Quds force (a 'special forces' unit of the IRGC)—were neutralised by the Iron Dome system of Israel. In retaliation, the Israeli Air Force attacked and destroyed a few Al Quds munition storage sites and Iranian military training sites in Damascus, leading to 21 casualties that included 12 IRGC personnel.

Events like these only enlarge the possibility of a war between Iran and Israel in the future. The Iranian Air Force chief whipped up war hysteria by mouthing the oft-repeated Iranian sentiment when, in response to the Israeli air strikes in January 2019—that killed 12 IRGC personnel—he said, "We're ready for the decisive war that will bring about Israel's disappearance from the earth. Our young airmen are prepared for the day when Israel will be destroyed." The Iranian forces' presence in Syria (due to the ongoing Syrian civil war) only exacerbates the situation. With Ayatollah Ali Khamenei exercising direct control over the IRGC and the Al Quds force, the possibility of a flare-up leading to a military confrontation between Iran and Israel needs serious consideration by the two major powers in the region—the US and Russia. Although the other Arab nations would also have wanted a piece of the action in such a confrontation till a few years ago, the bitter Sunni-Shia rivalry between the two



main protagonists—Saudi Arabia and Iran—has ensured a strange relationship developing in the West Asian region. Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman, besides Egypt, are now aligned with Israel against Iran – a truly astonishing turn of events.

On March 8, 2019, China's State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi answered questions from the media (both Chinese as well as foreign) at the Second Session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC). President Xi Jinping's **Thought on Diplomacy** was reiterated by him as being the guideline for Chinese diplomatic actions across the world. While China prepares for the second Belt and Road Initiative Forum in end-April, it hopes to encourage Syria to join the Belt and Road Initiative. China hopes to step in once the US withdraws and assist in the reconstruction of Syria—a humungous effort, no doubt, but one which China is willing to take on. Some estimates are that it could cost as much as US\$ 250 billion for full reconstruction of Syria. Of course, the strategic advantage that China is seeking for itself is sale of military hardware to the beleaguered Syrian Army, and, more importantly, access to the Mediterranean Sea by way of the Syrian port at Tartus. Did I just hear a Chinese version of the American saying, "There are no free lunches"?

Happy reading!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'James', with a small asterisk or mark below it.

# US DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM SYRIA: RAMIFICATIONS FOR MAJOR PLAYERS

ANU SHARMA

The US entered the year 2019 with a new plan for Syria, i.e. to pull out its troops. US President Donald Trump announced the withdrawal of troops from Syria through a tweet on December 19, 2018, which read, “We have defeated ISIS in Syria, my only reason for being there during the Trump Presidency”.<sup>1</sup> The more recent information, however, still pertains to approximately 2,000 US troops still remaining in Syria. This change in stance of the US government is confusing people around the world. However, this rapid and sudden decision to withdraw from Syria is being referred to as a decision based on chaos and confusion in the White House. President Trump’s decision to pull US troops out is being framed as the fulfillment of the campaign promise. President Trump has been a long-time critic of the Obama Administration’s policy on fighting the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS): in 2013, he had tweeted that the US “should stay the hell out of Syria.”<sup>2</sup>

---

Ms **Anu Sharma** is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. Tweet by US President Donald Trump on December 19, 2018, at 6:29 am, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1075397797929775105>. Accessed on January 7, 2019.
2. Tweet by President Trump on June 15, 2013, at 5:33 AM, [https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/346063000056254464?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwtterm%5E346063000056254464&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fworld%2F2018%2F12%2F19%2Fguide-americas-meandering-syria-policy-under-trump%2F](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/346063000056254464?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwtterm%5E346063000056254464&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Fworld%2F2018%2F12%2F19%2Fguide-americas-meandering-syria-policy-under-trump%2F). Accessed on January 9, 2019.

While the president provided no concrete timeline for the withdrawal, Defence Department officials said he had ordered it to be completed in 30 days.<sup>3</sup> However, two months since the announcement of withdrawal, the US Administration has still not chalked out a formal plan for the troops' withdrawal from Syria. Definitely, this pullout (from Syria) will have long-term implications for the country concerned, the West Asian region and international relations in general.

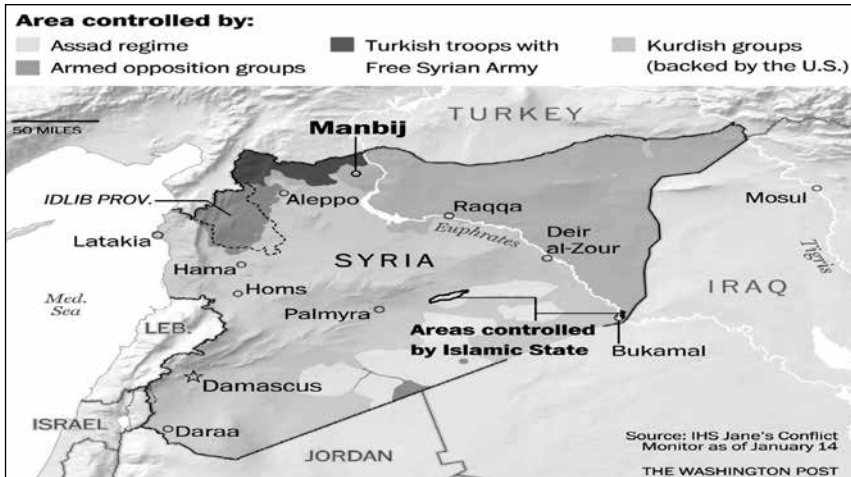
However, the pulling out of the US military troops might enable Syrian President Bashar al Assad and his key allies—Russia and Iran—to engage more with the Syrian troops to crush the remaining rebel ISIS forces, eventually giving President Assad complete control over Syria (see Fig 1). Still, in the region, the clear beneficiaries of this action remain Iran, Russia, Turkey and Syria. Russia and Turkey have welcomed the US decision to withdraw from Syria as this provides them with an opportunity to advance their own plans in Syria. At the same time, Russia praised the US decision to withdraw as this might make space for a “political solution” of the Syrian problem.<sup>4</sup> Where, on the one hand, Russia, Iran and Turkey are being signalled as the major beneficiaries of the US act; Israel is being described as one of the big potential losers of the US' withdrawal. The reason being cited for this is that the US' withdrawal could encourage Iran and other proxies to develop their military capabilities closer to Israel's northern borders. At the same time, another argument points towards the fact that by announcing the Syrian pullout, President Trump is jumping ahead of the goal of destroying the ISIS. However, as it appears, the ISIS has not been fully destroyed. The ISIS may not have achieved the Caliphate, but it has blended into the population and into areas that are less governed and, thus, it could be argued that it holds the potential to regenerate. The motivation for the ISIS is still very much alive.

---

3. Megan Specia, “The Planned US Troop Withdrawal from Syria: Here’s the Latest”, *The New York Times*, January 16, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/16/world/middleeast/syria-us-troops-timeline.html>. Accessed on February 17, 2019.

4. Chris Mills Rodrigo, “Russia Praises US Decision to Pull Troops out of Syria”, *The Hill*, December 19, 2018, <https://thehill.com/policy/international/middle-east-north-africa/422145-russia-praises-us-decision-to-pull-out-of-syria>. Accessed on January 8, 2019.

Fig 1: Areas Controlled by Assad Regime



Source: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/02/22/why-trump-is-suddenly-going-back-his-promise-withdraw-all-us-troops-syria-explained-one-map/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.110047d029ef](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/02/22/why-trump-is-suddenly-going-back-his-promise-withdraw-all-us-troops-syria-explained-one-map/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.110047d029ef). Accessed on February 27, 2019.

### REASONS FOR THE US DECISION TO WITHDRAW

US involvement in Syria began in the year 2014 when former President Barack Obama launched a military campaign against the ISIS. The operation initially started with 50 ground troops in 2015, eventually growing to the current official total of about 2,000 troops.

President Barack Obama had sent the US troops to Syria in 2015 as part of a coalition to fight against the ISIS. However, President Trump, in December 2018, cited “historic victories”<sup>5</sup> over the militants when he announced a withdrawal of the US troops from Syria. President Trump, during his campaign for presidency, had made withdrawing the US forces from Syria one of the foremost issues of his campaigns. He renewed his call to “get out of Syria” in April 2018. This withdrawal of troops can be cited as President Trump’s unilateral decision and not that of his security team.<sup>6</sup>

However, one of the important reasons that can be cited for this move is related to the fact that the Trump Administration

5. Tweet by US President Donald Trump on December 19, 2018, at 3:10 pm, <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1075528854402256896>. Accessed on February 27, 2019.

6. Jon B Alterman, “The Implications of US Withdrawal from Syria”, *CSIS*, December 19, 2018, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/implications-us-withdrawal-syria>. Accessed on February 10, 2019.

possibly wants to appease Turkey, which objects to the US arming and training the Syrian Kurdish forces that have been fighting the Islamic State Group (ISG) in eastern Syria, but which also have links to the Kurdistan's Workers Party (PKK, Kurdish: Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê) in Turkey. Another reason cited for this withdrawal is the statement by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on December 12, 2018, wherein he hinted at "an imminent Turkish incursion into Kurdish-controlled areas in Syria",<sup>7</sup> which would have put the US troops at risk in that region. Gaining control of the Syrian frontier, from the Euphrates river to the Iraqi border, would be a huge strategic gain for Turkey, and President Trump appears to calculate that it might be enough to move Ankara away from Tehran.<sup>8</sup>

Turkey, a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ally, had also been toying with the idea of buying an S-400 Russian missile defence system instead of the US-built Patriot system.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the extradition issue of the Turkish dissident religious leader, Fethullah Gulen, also plays a major role in this. According to Peter Kenyon of NPR (National Public Radio), "Over the years, anti-Gulen rhetoric has become a mainstay of Turkey's pro-government media. The Gulen religious movement has been commonly referred to as FETO, 'Fethullah Terrorist Organization,' and it's commonly referred to as a 'terror-cult.'"<sup>10</sup> This clearly expresses the state of affairs between the US and Turkey, and Turkey's intention to get the benefit by playing the Gulen card. However, the sudden announcement of the withdrawal was a surprising departure from the guidance of President Trump's own generals and advisers.

---

7. Dorian Jones, "Turkey to Launch New Military Operation against Syrian Kurds", *VOA News*, December 12, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/turkey-says-it-will-launch-new-syria-offensive-within-days-/4697274.html>. Accessed on February 10, 2019.

8. Martin Chulov, "Donald Trump's Syria Withdrawal could Reverberate for Years", *The Guardian*, December 20, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/20/donald-trump-syria-war-withdrawal-consensus-iran-isis>. Accessed on February 14, 2019.

9. Rodrigo, n. 4.

10. Sasha Ingber, "Trump Says Extraditing Turkish Cleric Fethullah Gulen Is 'Not under Consideration'", *NPR*, November 17, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/11/17/668898939/trumps-says-extraditing-turkish-cleric-fethullah-gulen-is-not-under-consideratio>. Accessed on February 11, 2019.

## LARGER ROLES FOR OTHER MAJOR PLAYERS

It can be said that President Donald Trump's decision fits in with his own apparent aggressive rhetoric against the US' involvement in foreign wars. As President Trump's decision to withdraw from Syria continues to baffle the security analysts and pundits around the world, there are speculations that this action will give an upper hand to three major players in the region, i.e. Russia, Iran and Syria. These three nations have been cited as the clear-cut winners of this US action.

**Iran:** Iran emerges as one of the biggest beneficiaries of this pull-out. Throughout the war, Iran has emerged as the steadfast supporter of the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria. This relationship has often been referred to as the tactical-strategic relationship between the two countries. It can be said that to some extent, mutual contempt for Saddam Hussein's Iraq brought Syria and Iran together in the 1980s, and mutual fear and antipathy towards the US and Israel has helped sustain their alliance.

One school of thought argues that President Trump's decision to withdraw troops from Syria would only embolden Iran's ambitions in Syria. The situation can get worse if Israel escalates its campaign against both Iran and Hezbollah; especially in a region that's already dealing with unrest and turmoil.<sup>11</sup> It has been alleged that Hezbollah has expanded its operations into Syria—Lebanon's neighbour. The allegations are that Hezbollah, together with the Iranian forces, has been helping the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad stay afloat and threaten Israel in the process.<sup>12</sup>

A meeting between Turkish President Erdogan and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in December 2018—after the declaration by President Trump on the withdrawal from Syria—indicates an emerging alliance between Iran and Turkey. This working relationship is vital for Iran as the sanctions reimposed by the US after withdrawing from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have already started affecting Iran. This provides a reason for minimal opposition

---

11. Michael Kranz, "Why Trump's Withdrawal From Syria is Bad News for Israel—and Good News for Iran", *Vox News*, January 3, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/1/3/18159364/trump-syria-withdrawal-israel-iran-hezbollah>. Accessed on February 24, 2019.

12. *Ibid.*

from the Iranian side to the military intervention planned by Ankara to cleanse the northern part of Syria of the armed Kurdish forces. What can affect Iran is the fact that the rising Turkish influence in the northern region can undermine Syria's sovereignty and its efforts to restore its territorial integrity.<sup>13</sup>

The other school of thought believes that Iran's actions in Syria will be emboldened further to influence the Syrian politics, economy, and security sector, as well as the reconstruction resources.<sup>14</sup> It is worth noting that Iran is emerging as the foremost nation helping Syria with the post-war reconstruction. In these circumstances, withdrawal of US troops from Syria will help Iran strategically, giving it more space to pursue its long-sought land bridge, linking Tehran to Beirut and the Mediterranean.<sup>15</sup> Overall, it has been argued repeatedly that the US pullout will have reverberations throughout the West Asian region that can tilt the regional balance of power further in favour of Iran. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, in a number of speeches, has forcefully said that the presence of the US in West Asia has harmed countries in the region, and he has called on Washington, time and again, to fully withdraw its troops from the region. Previously, the US presence in Syria has been justified to help contain Iran's and Russia's growing influence in the region.

**Russia:** A day after the announcement of President Trump's withdrawal from Syria, Russian President Vladimir Putin welcomed the American action. However, the Chinese government news agency Xinhua stated that the US withdrawal "comes as part of the Russian pressure on the US to pull out in order to accelerate the Syrian political process and find a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis." The reason cited points to the fact that such a presence is further complicating the political landscape in the country, given the fact that the US

---

13. Maysam Behraves, "Iran's Policy in Syria Post-US Troop Withdrawal", *Middle East Monitor*, December 28, 2018, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20181228-irans-policy-in-syria-post-us-troop-withdrawal/>. Accessed on February 27, 2019.

14. Ranj Alaaldin, "What the US Withdrawal from Syria Means for ISIS, Iran and Kurdish Allies", Brookings, December 21, 2018, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/12/21/what-the-u-s-withdrawal-from-syria-means-for-isis-iran-and-kurdish-allies/>. Accessed on February 24, 2019.

15. *Ibid.*

entered Syria in 2014 without the consent of the Syrian government.<sup>16</sup> The abrupt decision of the US president to bring back troops from Syria has put Russian President Putin in a pivotal position. It has also handed Russia the bigger responsibility of stabilising the Syrian political process and promoting reconstruction in Syria. Here, it is important to keep in mind that Russia, along with Iran, has been the undeterred support factor of the Assad regime in Syria. President Putin's agenda in Syria is clear. By 2018, approximately 63,012 Russian troops had fought in Syria, which shows how deeply Russia has been involved in the Syrian war.<sup>17</sup> This move of withdrawal by the US has, inadvertently, made Russia the 'most influential power broker' in Syria.

Even during the war, Russian companies had invested in Syria's oil, gas and mining sectors and won contracts to build flour mills and water-pumping stations. This is happening in accordance with the energy cooperation framework between Russia and Syria. This framework specifies the modalities of the restoration and reintegration of damaged rigs and infrastructure, energy advisory support, and training related with it. The country's refineries need thorough reconstruction after their throughput capacity has halved from the pre-war level of 250,000 barrels per day. Taking control of the gas fields seems a better (and more profitable) bet for Russia.<sup>18</sup> If it manages to secure a fixed price, stable demand is guaranteed domestically, as gas will remain the dominant electricity generation input. Still, the main international aspect and the key objective of this move is the final and unconditional consolidation of Russian interests in West Asia eventually.<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, investing in the Syrian energy infrastructure can help secure Russia's oil and gas interests in neighbouring Iraq.

---

16. Chengcheng, "News Analysis: US Withdrawal from Syria Positive for Political Process: Experts", *Xinhuanet*, December 22, 2018, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-12/22/c\\_137690521.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-12/22/c_137690521.htm). Accessed on February 25, 2019.

17. "Russia Says Over 63,000 Troops Have Fought in Syria", *The New Arab*, August 22, 2018, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/news/2018/8/22/russia-says-over-63-000-troops-have-fought-in-syria>. Accessed on March 5, 2019.

18. Viktor Katona, "Russia Is Taking over Syria's Oil And Gas", *Oilprice.com*, February 14, 2018, <https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/Russia-Is-Taking-Over-Syrias-Oil-And-Gas.html>. Accessed on February 25, 2019.

19. Ibid.



*Stroytransgaz* has signed a deal with the Iraqi government to rebuild the Kirkuk-Baniyas pipeline, which would connect the Lukoil fields near Basra and Gazprom fields near Kirkuk with the friendly Syrian port of Baniyas, 35 km north of Russia's naval facility at Tartus. Russian involvement in the Syrian oil and gas sector will eventually let the former have a firm footing in West Asia, and, eventually, establish Russia as a dominant player in the region.

**Turkey:** For months now, Turkey has threatened to invade the Kurdish controlled Syrian territory. This seems to be the most important fallout of the US pullout from Syria. Kurdish fighters make up the bulk of the 60,000-strong US-trained and -equipped Syrian force that has carried on the ground war against the ISIS. Turkey considers the Syrian branch of Turkish Kurds, who have fought a decades-long guerrilla war for autonomy, as terrorists.<sup>20</sup> The Turkish foreign minister has declared that Turkey will launch an offensive against the Syrian Kurdish forces if the US delays the pullout of its troops from Syria. US forces have worked closely with the Syrian Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) militia. This is seen by Ankara as a "terrorist offshoot" of the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has waged an insurgency against the Turkish state since 1984.<sup>21</sup>

Turkey has concertedly supported anti-Assad forces and also ignored the ISIS' actions in Syria for a long time. At the time when Russia entered Syria to intervene, Turkish domestic politics was facing a foreign policy debacle in 2012. After a long period of non-cooperation with the Western forces, Turkey opened its air bases to the Western coalition with two primary objectives: first, to hasten the fall of the Assad regime; and, second, to facilitate Turkey's own efforts to counter the Kurdish advances along its border with Syria.<sup>22</sup>

---

20. Karen DeYoung, Louisa Loveluck and John Hudson, "US Military Announces Start of Syria Withdrawal", *The Washington Post*, January 11, 2019, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/us-military-announces-start-of-syria-troop-withdrawal/2019/01/11/77455bda-1585-11e9-90a8-136fa44b80ba\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.6255ed0326f2](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/us-military-announces-start-of-syria-troop-withdrawal/2019/01/11/77455bda-1585-11e9-90a8-136fa44b80ba_story.html?utm_term=.6255ed0326f2). Accessed on February 26, 2019.

21. "Turkey Says it will Launch Syria Offensive if US Delays Pullout", *The Guardian*, January 10, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/10/turkey-says-it-will-launch-syria-offensive-if-us-delays-pullout>. Accessed on February 26, 2019.

22. Sanu Kainikara, *In the Bear's Shadow: Russian Intervention in Syria* (Canberra: Air Power Development Centre, 2018), pp. 70-71.

According to Sanu Kainikara, defeating the ISIS was not a priority for Turkey. This is evident from the fact that Turkey had declared the ISIS a terrorist organisation in the year 2014. However, the only obstacle to Turkey's evolving foreign policy ambitions in Syria remains Russia. It is very unlikely that Russia will provide any assistance to Turkey where the future of Syria and Turkish ambitions in it are concerned.

In the wake of (the US) pullout from Syria, Turkey has started mounting its invasion forces near its southern border with Syria, indicating a drive to remove Kurdish military groups from the country's northeast. Adding to this furore is the statement by President Trump's National Security Adviser John Bolton that the US would not be leaving until it has received a guarantee from Turkey that its allies would not be attacked once the US forces have gone.<sup>23</sup>

### **SITUATION SO FAR...**

One of the main problems arising out of this hasty US withdrawal from Syria is the many dominant actors with competing interests in the West Asian region. The Syrian conflict has, inadvertently, become the most consequential struggle of the region where both the regional actors and external players have strived hard to shape the outcome of the crisis. And in the middle of an unclear plan for withdrawal, the long-term effect of the withdrawal also remains uncertain. There emerge three major critiques of President Trump's decision to withdraw from Syria: firstly, the fact that the ISIS has been defeated but not eliminated, still becomes an issue of concern not only for the Syrian regime but for the rest of the world; secondly, it simplifies the plan-of-action for Russia and Iran for reasserting their control and influence in Syria; and, thirdly, this might erode the credibility of the US among its allies in the region. Looking at the situation purely from this point of view, in the longer run, this hasty US decision might prove favourable for Iran and its allies and Russia, making it a tricky business for the US and its allies in the region. The potential losers of the American action would be Israel and the Kurdish allies of the US.

---

23. Martin Chulov, "Trump's Syria Pull-out Begins as US Armoured Vehicles Depart", *The Guardian*, January 11, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/11/syria-troop-withdrawal-under-way-says-us-led-coalition>. Accessed on February 27, 2019.

For the Syria-Russia-Iran alliance, the path to recapturing the whole of Syria has just opened up. For Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, too, a roadblock has been removed to push further against the Kurdish fighters whom he considers as terrorists. There are speculations that the Turkish pushback will begin with the early targets that may include the border city of Kobani where the Kurds took heavy casualties fighting off the ISIS with US air support in the past. This indicates that the heightened Turkish-Kurdish hostility in the region is on the verge of provoking another war on Syrian soil between the Turks and the Kurds.

At the same time, confusion still prevails over the timeline and process of the withdrawal by the US from Syria. This confusing environment is creating a power vacuum in the region which can be beneficial for the Russian-Iranian alliance but detrimental to Syria in case the ISIS makes a comeback. The media claims that the presence of the ISIS in Syria and Iraq raises concerns regarding its growing numbers.

# INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE HORN OF AFRICA

**SARVSURESHTH DHAMMI**

The Horn of Africa (HoA)<sup>1</sup> is one of the important regions in the world owing to its geostrategic location. The region is rich in natural resources, fresh water reserves, cheap labour, raw materials and a critical Sea Lane of Communication (SLOC). The region provides a natural harbour to ships passing through this area. The SLOC connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea through the Suez Canal and provides access to West Asia and countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Historically, the HoA countries have been playing an important role in India's economic, political and strategic development. India also played an essential role in the overall development of the HoA countries. However, due to the weak economy, unstable political situation and a variety of other factors—including terrorism, insurgency, lack of infrastructure, and technology—new challenges have emerged for the Horn countries. With its emergence as an important global player in the 21st century India can play a constructive role to help the Horn countries develop independent policies with mutual benefits that have remained under development due to hostile social, political and economic policy

Dr Sarvsureshth Dhammi is a Research Associate at the Centre for the Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

1. The "Horn of Africa" consists of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia and the greater Horn of Africa, consists of eight countries, namely, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

guidance of the traditional countries of the world. The paper aims to understand and analyse India's economic and strategic relations with the countries in the HoA, the future prospects of strengthening the relations, and the challenges ahead, with Chinese presence in the region.

### **INDIA AND THE HORN OF AFRICA: HISTORICAL LINKAGES**

The development of India's historical relationship with the HoA goes back to almost 2,000 years when Indian traders engaged in the trade of silk and spices in exchange for ivory and gold. The historical relations flourished during the Axumite Empire (1st century AD), and further, trade relations were established between ancient India and the Kingdom of Aksum.<sup>2</sup> With the help of the monsoon winds, traders from India travelled to the Horn region. The Greek Ptolemaic dynasty and Indian traders first developed the trade route via the Red Sea linking with the Indian Ocean. The Indian ports of Muziris, Barygaza, Korkai, Arikamedu and Kaveripattinam on the southern end of India were the prime centres for trade with Africa.

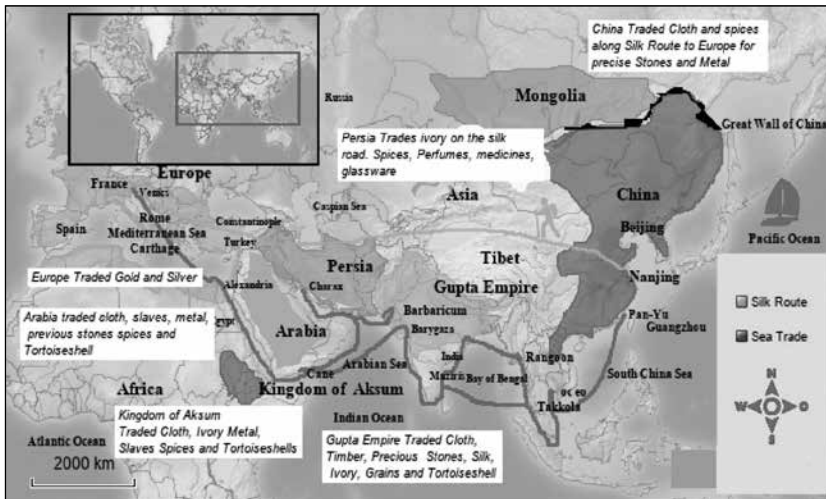
Further, the Romans established their rule in Egypt and played a critical role in the development of the route connecting the Red Sea. Besides trade, Indian architecture was also influenced by African and Roman architecture during the medieval times. The imperial linkages of the British, French and Portuguese with the nations in the HoA region and India became the other reason for the development of relations between India and the HoA nations. The exploitation during the colonial period is an important part of their history. Both sides have often reiterated the historical importance of ties through agreements and treaties, even in the present times. Moreover, the African struggle helped Mahatma Gandhi to enrich his political philosophy of non-violence and peaceful resistance.

After independence, India's diplomatic relations with the HoA countries went through a number of phases, and the basis of these relations can be traced to the colonial period and India's struggle for independence.

---

2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Document on India-Ethiopia Relations, Government of India, September 2017, [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Ethiopia\\_Sept\\_2017.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Ethiopia_Sept_2017.pdf). Accessed on January 1, 2019.

Fig 1: Map of Ancient Trade Route



Source: StepMap, <https://www.stepmap.com/map/europe-india-and-asia-trade-routes-UNPHJz4LXL>. Accessed on January 15, 2019.

After independence, the relations with the HoA countries remain on a progressive note for India. Although there are internal and external disputes among the HoA countries, their relations with India have always been maintained and have progressed through a number of agreements, treaties, bilateral visits and policies initiated by India for the overall development of the region. These can be seen through the prism of five major policy initiatives by India, i.e. Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) 1964; EXIM Bank Line of Credit (LOC) 1994; Pan African e-Network Project (PAENP) 2004; India-Africa Forum Summit 2008; and India-Japan economic partnership for the economic development of Asia and Africa (i.e. Asia-Africa Growth Corridor – AAGC 2017).

In 1964, India introduced the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme to establish relations of concern based on inter-dependency for a solid economic foundation with African and other countries in the world. The ITEC programme has provided training (defence and civil) to the HoA countries and consultancy services for a number of projects running in the region; as also Indian experts to help development projects, donation of equipment, study

tours and aid for disaster relief.<sup>3</sup> The ITEC programme assistance, especially to Ethiopia, has been increased ten-fold—from 25 slots in 2007 to 250 slots in 2016-17.<sup>4</sup> In Eritrea, ITEC slots rose from 20 in 2014-15 to 47 in 2018-2019, and 20 slots were granted to Djibouti for the year 2016-17, of which five have been utilised. Although data for Somalia is not available, ITEC is believed to be working in the country progressively.<sup>5</sup> India's cooperation through the ITEC programme has worked exceptionally well for the economic development of the Horn countries, but the outcome of this programme has remained low due to the economic gap and trade deficit of the HoA countries with India.

To bridge this gap, in 1994, India started the EXIM Bank Line of Credit (LOC) to the region. The EXIM Bank vision has evolved from a product-centric approach with export capability creation and export credits. Through the EXIM Bank, India has provided loans to the weaker countries to overcome the challenges of globalisation. Since the opening of the economy, Ethiopia became one of the largest recipients (USD 1 billion) of LOC from India in 2015. Djibouti's LOC is USD 49.13 million<sup>6</sup>, Eritrea's USD 20 million, whereas data for the LOC to Somalia is not available.

To further strengthen the economic development of the African countries, the Pan African e-Network Project (PAENP) was introduced for the African countries on the request of former Indian President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam in 2004 and was formally launched on February 26, 2009. Under this project, India set up an optical fibre network in the continent to provide satellite connectivity, tele-education, and tele-medicine to the African countries. In the first phase of this project, all four countries of the HoA were covered. The PAENP is equipped to

---

3. Ministry of External Affairs, "Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme," <https://www.itecgoi.in/about.php>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

4. Chithra Purushothaman, "India's Economy Diplomacy with Ethiopia," Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, July-December 2018, <https://idsa.in/africatrends/indias-economic-diplomacy-with-ethiopia>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs Document on India-Eritria Relations, Government of India, December 2018, [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India-Eritrea\\_Bilateral\\_Brief\\_-\\_Dec\\_2018.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India-Eritrea_Bilateral_Brief_-_Dec_2018.pdf). Accessed on January 1, 2019.

6. Rajiv Bhatia, "Horn of Africa: Why India Should Care More", *The Hindu*, December 17, 2010, <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/Horn-of-Africa-why-India-should-care-more/article15596868.ece>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

support e-commerce, e-governance, resource mapping, infotainment and meteorological and other services. The project aims to establish linkages for tele-medicine, tele-education, internet, VoIP services, video-conferencing, providing facilities and experts from Indian super-speciality hospitals and universities for the people of the HoA.<sup>7</sup>

In 2008, the India-Africa Forum Summit provided an umbrella to all the Indian initiatives started earlier to strengthen the economy and was aimed at inclusive development of the African countries. Through this forum, India is providing help to build a self-dependent economy of the Horn countries through mutual resurgence and mutual empowerment. In the third India-Africa Forum Summit in 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi stressed on the interlinked resurgence of India and Africa. He said, “We (India) will raise the level of our support for your vision of a prosperous, integrated, and united Africa that is a major partner for the world.”<sup>8</sup>

The participation of the African countries—which numbered only 15 during both previous summits—increased to 41 in the third India-Africa Forum Summit. It shows the importance given by both sides to the development of each other’s economy. The last important pillar of growth of India’s economic relationship with the HoA is the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor in which India partners with Japan. It is an India-Japan economic cooperation agreement aimed at developing the Asian and African economies. It provides for digital connectivity and building of infrastructure in both regions.<sup>9</sup>

India has acknowledged the importance of the Horn countries and extended its support for their socioeconomic development. The economic initiatives have helped in the overall development of the region. However, despite the fact that the HoA has limited resources, and is weaker economically, India has signed a number of bilateral

---

7. “Pan African e-Network Project (PAENP),” Ministry of External Affairs, January 2013, [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Pan\\_African\\_e\\_docx\\_for\\_xp.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Pan_African_e_docx_for_xp.pdf). Accessed on January 1, 2019.

8. Reinvigorated Partnership—Shared Vision, “India-Africa Forum Summit 2015,” Ministry of External Affairs, <http://mea.gov.in/india-africa-forum-summit-2015/index.html#>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

9. Anita Prakash, “The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor: Bringing Together old Partnerships and New Initiatives,” *ORF Issue Brief*, April 25, 2018, <https://www.orfonline.org/research/the-asia-africa-growth-corridor-bringing-together-old-partnerships-and-new-initiatives/>. Accessed on January 8, 2019.



and multilateral agreements to achieve the goal for peace and development of the HoA region:

**Table 1: India's Contribution and Bilateral Agreements with the HoA Countries**

| Sr. No | Country  | Year                           | Name of the Agreement  |
|--------|----------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1.     | Ethiopia | 1967, 1972,1993, 2004 and 2008 | Air Service Agreement  |
| 2.     | Ethiopia | 1969                           | Agreement of Technical, Economic and Scientific Cooperation  |
| 3.     | Ethiopia | 1983                           | Cultural Agreement   |
| 4.     | Ethiopia | 1997                           | Trade Agreement  |
| 5.     | Ethiopia | 2002                           | Cooperation in Micro Dams and Small Scale Irrigation Schemes Agreement   |
| 6.     | Ethiopia | 2007                           | Establishment of Joint Ministerial Commission Agreement.<br>Agreement on Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection.<br>Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology Agreement.<br>Agreement on the Educational Exchange Programme.<br>Agreement on the Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations.                     |
| 7.     | Ethiopia | 2011                           | Agreement on Double Taxation Avoidance.<br>Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between India, National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) and Federal Micro and Small Enterprises Development Agency (FEMSEDA).<br>MOU between Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). |

|     |                 |      |   |
|-----|-----------------|------|---|
| 8.  | <b>Eritrea</b>  | 1993 | Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme  |
| 9.  | Eritrea         | 1998 | Trilateral agreement among India, Eritrea and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)   |
| 10. | Eritrea         | 2006 | MoU on cooperation in the field of agriculture  |
| 11. | Eritrea         | 2010 | Pan-African e-network project. An agreement on cooperation with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU)  |
| 12. | Eritrea         | 2014 | Agreement for setting up a Vocational Training Centre   |
| 13. | <b>Djibouti</b> | 1989 | Cultural Cooperation Agreement  |
| 14. |                 | 2003 | Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA). Civil Aviation Agreement. Education, Cultural and Scientific Cooperation for the year 2003-2005. |
| 15. | Djibouti        | 2006 | Pan-African e-Network Agreement   |
| 16. | Djibouti        | 2015 | International Solar Alliance  |
| 17. | <b>Somalia</b>  | 2010 |   |
| 18. | Somalia         | 2011 | USD 2 million aid to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM)  |
| 19. | Somalia         | 2012 | USD 1 million aid to AMISOM   |
| 20. | Somalia         | 2015 | Foreign Service Institute (FSI) trained 20 diplomats from Somali Foreign Ministry   |
| 21. | Somalia         | 2017 | USD 1 million assistance to the AMISOM  |
| 22. | Somalia         | 2018 | MoU signed between the Indian FSI and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Somalia  |

## ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Since 1964, the ITEC programme has occupied a paramount place in India's foreign policy. The ITEC programme helps to develop cooperation, incorporating the idea of partnership for mutual benefits, and expand cooperation based on priorities determined by the partner HoA countries. It provides cooperation in the field of establishing businesses, a vocational training centre for small scale industries and provides advanced agricultural techniques to produce food crops required in the region. India also introduced the LOC to strengthen the weak economies of the region. But, due to the 1990s' economic crisis in India and unstable governments in the HoA, the economic growth remained low until 2000. Regional and international power politics, terrorism, military coups, insurgency, and poverty became the primary reasons for the low growth. The two-way trade had grown to just USD 5.3 billion with the entire African continent until 2001.<sup>10</sup>

After 2001, the shift in Indian economic and diplomatic policies led to the focus on economic options in the Third World countries (mostly Africa). India introduced the PAENP in 2004 and set up the optical fibre network in Africa which provided satellite connectivity, tele-education, and tele-medicine to the African countries. The significant linkages created by the e-network helped the HoA countries to provide education and develop small scale businesses in the remote areas of the region. The software for the tele-education delivery system has helped to create remote virtual classrooms with seamless two-way interactions between students, teachers and business representatives of India and the HoA countries. It has contributed towards upliftment of the existing economic and educational infrastructure in the region.

The tele-medicine software was customised for patients to give them better and reasonable medical advice to fight against the menace of severe diseases in the region. The patients' reports were sent to specialist doctors in India, who diagnosed and provided treatment to these patients. The tele-medicine network connected 48 hospitals in

---

10. Elizabeth Sidiropoulos, "India-Africa Relation under Modi: More Geo-economic?," The Brookings Institution, January 30, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/india-africa-relations-under-modi-more-geo-economic/>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

Africa with 12 Indian super speciality hospitals. It helps train doctors and nurses in remote centres in the HoA, including the entire African continent. The revenue generated by this initiative has strengthened the economies of both sides. In 2008, all economic initiatives were clubbed together under one platform of the India-Africa Forum Summit. This provided a single window clearance for the African countries on social, economic, and strategic cooperation with India. Due to these initiatives, trade between India and Africa reached USD 70 billion in 2013, and Ethiopia became the largest trading partner with India (see Table 2).<sup>11</sup> The number of participating African countries also increased from 15 to 41 in the third India-Africa Forum Summit in 2015.

However, due to zero contribution in the budget by the participating nations of Africa, and the high operational costs of the project, India was forced to discontinue all its PAENP services in 2017. The programme was handed over to the African Union Commission in 2017. The unique effort by India brought social and economic development with qualitative results in the HoA. Until 2017, more than 22,000 African students had obtained degrees from various universities through this network.<sup>12</sup> The current activities under this project through the African Union (AU) include management of education, funding mechanism, providing a survey of participating states, and linking of regional and remote education centres to reach out to every educated individual. The PAENP helped India to connect with the people of the HoA countries on a large scale.

---

11. Ibid.

12. Abhishek Mishra, "Pan Africa E-network: India's Africa Outreach," *Observer Research Foundation*, May 4, 2018, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/pan-africa-e-network-indias-africa-outreach/>. Accessed on January 6, 2019.

**Table 2: Import Export between India and the HoA Countries (in Million USD)**

| Name of the Country | Year    | India's Exports | India's Imports    | Total trade |
|---------------------|---------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|
| <b>Ethiopia</b>     | 2009    | 620             | Data not available | 620         |
|                     | 2010    | 610             | Data not available | 610         |
|                     | 2011    | 700             | Data not available | 700         |
|                     | 2012    | 1000            | Data not available | 1,000       |
|                     | 2013    | 1300            | Data not available | 1,300       |
|                     | 2014    | 1200            | Data not available | 1,200       |
|                     | 2015    | 1380            | Data not available | 1,380       |
|                     | 2016    | 1410            | Data not available | 1,410       |
| <b>Eritrea</b>      | 2013-14 | 16.45           | 4.85               | 21.30       |
|                     | 2014-15 | 14.06           | 230.68             | 244.73      |
|                     | 2015-16 | 6.45            | 167.45             | 173.90      |
|                     | 2016-17 | 3.22            | 36.41              | 39.63       |
|                     | 2017-18 | 7.43            | 1.96               | 9.39        |
|                     | 2918-19 | 6.18            | Data not available | 6.18        |
| <b>Somalia</b>      | 2013-14 | 210.89          | 46.39              | 257.27      |
|                     | 2014-15 | 352.81          | 38.25              | 391.05      |
|                     | 2015-16 | 486.60          | 15.58              | 502.18      |
|                     | 2016-17 | 506.47          | 17.70              | 524.17      |
|                     | 2017-18 | 455.52          | 3.55               | 459.07      |
| <b>Djibouti</b>     | 2010-11 | 319.87          | 2.41               | 321.41      |
|                     | 2011-12 | 475.34          | 2.15               | 477.49      |
|                     | 2012-13 | 411.86          | 5.18               | 417.04      |
|                     | 2013-14 | 307.04          | 4.15               | 311.19      |
|                     | 2014-15 | 237.96          | 1.47               | 239.43      |
|                     | 2015-16 | 204.69          | 1.23               | 205.92      |

Source: Ethiopia (Trading Economics) <https://tradingeconomics.com/ethiopia/imports>, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti (Ministry of External Affairs, India), [https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India-Eritrea\\_Bilateral\\_Brief\\_-\\_Dec\\_2018.pdf](https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/India-Eritrea_Bilateral_Brief_-_Dec_2018.pdf), [https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bilateral\\_Somalia\\_June\\_2018.pdf](https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Bilateral_Somalia_June_2018.pdf), <http://indembassyeth.in/india-djibouti-commercial-relations/>. Accessed on January 15, 2019.

## STRATEGIC RELATIONS

The HoA plays a significant role in world peace and its security, largely due to its geostrategic location. It provides access to West Asia, Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and Europe by connecting through the Suez Canal and the very important SLOC also passes through the region which shares 10 per cent of the world trade and approximately 35 to 40 per cent of the energy trade of the European Union. Moreover, the HoA has played an important role in a number of wars and other limited military operations. During the counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan and West Asia (Iraq and Yemen), the US and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) established a ground network in the HoA for air, naval, and ground operations in the region. This led to an increase in its security budget from USD 4.6 million to USD 67 million in 2006 for combating terrorism.<sup>13</sup>

In 2008, piracy became the primary challenge for the trade passing through the region. The number of attacks rose to 1,099 between 2005 and 2011.<sup>14</sup> For the security of national interest in the HoA, India started sending its navy warships to patrol the Gulf of Aden. The Indian Naval Ships (INS) continuously visit the Djibouti port in the Red Sea and provide security assistance to the merchant ships passing through the region. Since 2010, India has been helping to fund training, coordinating and cooperating in the capacity building of the East African forces in anti-piracy, counter-insurgency and terrorism operations. Moreover, during the third India-Africa Summit, India promised to step up its efforts to maintain peace and stability in Africa by providing training in peace-keeping, counter-terrorism, cyber security, and maritime and space security.

India's strategic engagement with the HoA is on three fronts. Firstly, it provides security assistance through the United Nations and sends its peace-keeping forces from time to time to the region. India's engagement in peace-keeping operations has been based on the

---

13. Rick Rozoff, "U.S, NATO Expand Afghan War to Horn of Africa and Indian Ocean," *Global Research*, January 8, 2010, <https://www.globalresearch.ca/u-s-nato-expand-afghan-war-to-horn-of-africa-and-indian-ocean/16854>. Accessed on January 20, 2019.

14. Quy-Toan Do, Lin Ma and Claudia Ruiz, "Pirates of Somalia: Crime and Deterrence on the High Seas," World Bank Group, July 2016, <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/689501484733836996/pirates-of-somalia-on-the-high-seas.pdf>. Accessed on January 31, 2019.

principle that the operations should be led by the UN, humanitarian concern, and promotion of gender equality. India's contribution to peace-keeping operations in the Horn countries shows its solidarity with the African countries. Indian peace-keeping forces participated during the Somalian crisis from 1991 to 1994, the 2006 to 2008 border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and, currently, in the Sudan-South Sudan conflict (April 2005 onwards).<sup>15</sup> At present, the AU is leading peace-keeping operations in the HoA in coordination with the UN. Indian military officers and diplomats are playing an important role in the UN peace-keeping missions. India's sincerity, achievements and dedication for a better Africa can be seen through the completion of its 70 years in UN peace-keeping operations in 2018.

Secondly, India provides technical assistance to the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM). In the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) in 2015, India highlighted cooperation in the fields of security, economy and infrastructure development through the AU. Since 2011, India has been providing funds to the AMISOM. On August 31, 2017, India gave aid of USD 1 million for the AMISOM.<sup>16</sup> Thirdly, it is directly engaged with the countries in the HoA. India's initiative of Africa's prioritisation through different organisations is aimed at reducing its commodity trade dependency through industrialisation, training its soldiers for peace-keeping and peace-enforcement, and preparing them to handle crisis situations.

Engagement between the two sides is helping them to overcome strategic challenges. India has helped these countries to counter the designs of influential powers in the contemporary world, particularly the growing influence of China in their internal politics through the debt trap. Chinese active engagement has posed a direct challenge to India's interest in the region. Sudan has not extended the licence to India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Videsh (ONGC Videsh) after its contract with the

---

15. Ruchita Beri, "India: Providing for Peace in Africa," Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, October 25, 2015, <https://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?25966/India+Providing+for+Peace+in+Africa>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

16. Press release, Embassy of India in Addis Ababa, India's Contribution to AMISOM, August 31, 2017, <http://indembassyeth.in/indias-contribution-amisom/>. Accessed on January 1, 2019.

Sudanese Greater Nile Oil Project expired in 2016.<sup>17</sup> At a time when the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) holds 40 per cent stake in the same project, the Chinese involvement in the non-renewal of the licence to ONGC Videsh cannot be discounted.<sup>18</sup> This is a direct case of power politics waged between India and China in the greater HoA.

The Indian president's visit to Djibouti and Ethiopia in October 2017 can be seen as a step towards New Delhi's strategic and political objective of expanding its influence in the region. It was the first visit of the Indian president after assuming office, on the invitation of the president of Djibouti. Marked by mutual respect and understanding, both presidents discussed regional, bilateral relations and multilateral issues related to political and strategic interests. Later, after reaching Ethiopia, the Indian president reviewed all the agreements with Ethiopia such as the air service agreement for Indian aircraft, scientific cooperation, trade agreements, bilateral investment promotion, cooperation in the fields of science and technology, double taxation and agriculture.

Moreover, India is continuously providing funds for the AMISOM and provides training to its Foreign Service officers for the better future of Somalia. In 2018, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between India's Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Somalia. In 2018, on strategic grounds, Eritrea also requested India to deliver civil aircraft from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). Strategically, dealing in defence technologies and scientific research are the future political and strategic interests for both sides. On the one hand, it helps in developing the self-defence capabilities of the Horn countries; on the other, it will push higher-end technologies for more research and design, and availability at low cost for the region.

---

17. Sanjeev Choudhary, "Sudan Won't Extend ONGC's Licence to Operate Oil Block," *Economic Times*, April 24, 2017, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/sudan-wont-extend-ongcs-licence-to-operate-oil-block/articleshow/58333314.cms>. Accessed on August 4, 2018.

18. "Sudan Wants India's ONGC Videsh to Withdraw Arbitration Over oil Payment Dues," *Economic Times*, August 17, 2018, <https://auto.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/oil-and-lubes/sudan-wants-indias-ongc-videsh-to-withdraw-arbitration-over-oil-payment-dues/65436660>. Accessed on August 18, 2018.



## CHALLENGES OF CHINESE PRESENCE

On the security front, the opening of China's first overseas base at Djibouti is a matter of grave concern for India's maritime security and its operations in the East and North African countries, but, so far, the joint development process has not been in India's favour. Hence, to become an important player in the former, for achieving its foreign policy objectives, India needs to look for the viability of its active efforts, showcasing the extraordinary geopolitical significance of the HoA. The presence of the Chinese military in the Red Sea at Djibouti and at Gwadar port in Pakistan comprises an open strategy of China to obstruct India's engagements in the HoA and West Asia. Both the military bases complement China's grand strategy, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and its foreign policy objectives in the region.<sup>19</sup> However, depending on India's diplomatic relations with the US, India could use the US base in Djibouti at a time of crisis through its Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreements (LEMOA)<sup>20</sup> that was concluded in August 2016.

In this regard, the visit of Indian President Shri Ram Nath Kovind to Djibouti and Ethiopia on October 17, 2017, comprised a step towards weaving India's new strategic approach to engage with the HoA countries to neutralise Chinese influence.<sup>21</sup> At this juncture, it is important for India to strengthen its diplomatic feet, with greater responsibility and more funds for regional and international economic and security development to restore its goodwill and active role in the security of the HoA and SLOC. The primary challenge for the PAENP is lack of good communication by the Horn countries to ensure the continued sustainability of the network. There is a need to include other AU official languages to reach out to each and every corner of the continent. In this context, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) can further strengthen Indian efforts in the region.

---

19. C Raja Mohan, "India and Djibouti's Geopolitical Scrum," *Indian Express*, October 3, 2017, <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/raja-mandala-india-and-djiboutis-geopolitical-scrum-ram-nath-kovind-abroad-visit-4871697/>. Accessed on August 3, 2018.

20. Varghese K George, "India, US Sign Military Logistics Pact", *The Hindu*, August 30, 2016, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/India-US-sign-military-logistics-pact/article14598282.ece>. Accessed on January 26, 2019.

21. *Ibid.*

## CONCLUSION

India and the HoA have great potential to develop their relationship through cooperation between the two sides which will help in breaking the monopoly of the traditional powers. The active engagement of the political and economic leaders can also help to address the regional issues of the Horn countries. India needs to develop policies towards the HoA to settle its disputes with the concerned countries. The bilateral trade of India with the HoA has reached approximately USD 7 billion and is expected to improve further. Bilateral agreements on development of industries may help to reinvigorate the economy and generate employment in the Horn. Hence, the HoA holds both strategic and economic prospects for India, and to ensure its long-term cooperation in the region, India needs policies to address the increasing Chinese influence.

As most of the HoA countries are going through social and political crises, leading to instability, terrorism, insurgency, and piracy, they need to address their regional and internal issues by peaceful means at the earliest. In this light, India can also play the role of a peace-maker through the ongoing international peace efforts. India's engagement through regional organisations and its economic partners in the world (Japan and the Southeast Asian countries) can help to bring development in the region. There is an opportunity for ISRO and the Indian defence sector to cooperate with the weaker countries of the HoA. Remote sensing information and economically reasonable weapons for self-defence can play an important role in the peaceful development of the region. Lastly, for achieving new objectives, India and the HoA countries need to have a relook into their foreign policies. The diplomatic community of India needs to review its 2017 decision to discontinue the PAENP. It was a strategic failure as India had engaged with the HoA countries to cement their ties through the PAENP.

# UNRAVELLING THE KURDISH PUZZLE IN WEST ASIA

**DIPANWITA CHAKRAVORTTY**

US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw US troops from Syria has yet again brought the uncertain future of the Kurds in West Asia into the limelight. During the fight against the Islamic State, the Kurds were major partners for the Western countries, but for many observers, the Kurds themselves were a mystery. Thus, it is imperative to not only understand the Kurdish identity, but also the various trajectories the community has taken over the years, which, in turn, would help us perceive the future possibilities for this community.

## **WHO ARE THE KURDS?**

The Kurds are native to the mountainous region/Mesopotamian highlands in the northern part of West Asia, numbering approximately 28 million, which makes them the fourth largest ethnic group in the region. They live in a territory that spans the modern-day borders of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Armenia. They form a distinctive community, with their own culture and language. Although they speak different dialects and adhere to different faiths (a majority are followers of the Sunni sect) due to the cross-border nature of their community, they have similar

---

Dr **Dipanwita Chakravortty** is a Research Associate at the Centre for the Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

traditions when it comes to their lifestyle.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally, the Kurdish life is nomadic, revolving around sheep and goat-herding in the highlands. They are neither economically strong nor politically divisive. The majority of the Kurds live in relative isolation due to their mountainous terrain that formed a geographical and cultural barrier between them and other states and communities.<sup>2</sup> This resulted in their ferocity to defend their own territory and their largely self-sufficient economy which reduced their dependence on outsiders.

According to Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) statistics (see Fig 1), in 2016, the number of Kurds in the four countries was about 28 million.<sup>3</sup> In Turkey, the eastern and southeastern areas are called 'North Kurdistan,' which is an area of about 190,000 sq km with approximately 14.3 million Kurds; in Iraq, the northern area is known as 'South Kurdistan,' which is an area of about 125,000 sq km with approximately 5.6 million Kurds; in Syria, the northeastern region is known as 'West Kurdistan' or 'Rojava Kurdistan,' which is an area of about 12,000 sq km with 1.5 million Kurds; the northwestern region of Iran is called 'East Kurdistan,' with an area of about 65,000 sq km and about 8.2 million Kurds. Apart from that, around two million Kurds have settled in various countries in Europe and North America.<sup>4</sup>

The community is largely described as one of the largest of stateless people in the world. They have a long history of political marginalisation and persecution by different kingdoms and nation states. They have repeatedly rebelled in pursuit of greater autonomy or for the creation of their own state, particularly in Turkey, but to no avail. Their pursuit of an independent state, commonly known as Kurdistan, can be traced back to the 12th century when Turkish Seljuk Prince Saandjar had promised to create a province with a similar name for the community.<sup>5</sup> As time passed, the contours of

---

1. "Who are the Kurds?," BBC, October 31, 2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29702440>. Accessed on January 2, 2019.

2. David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (I.B. Tauris, 2004).

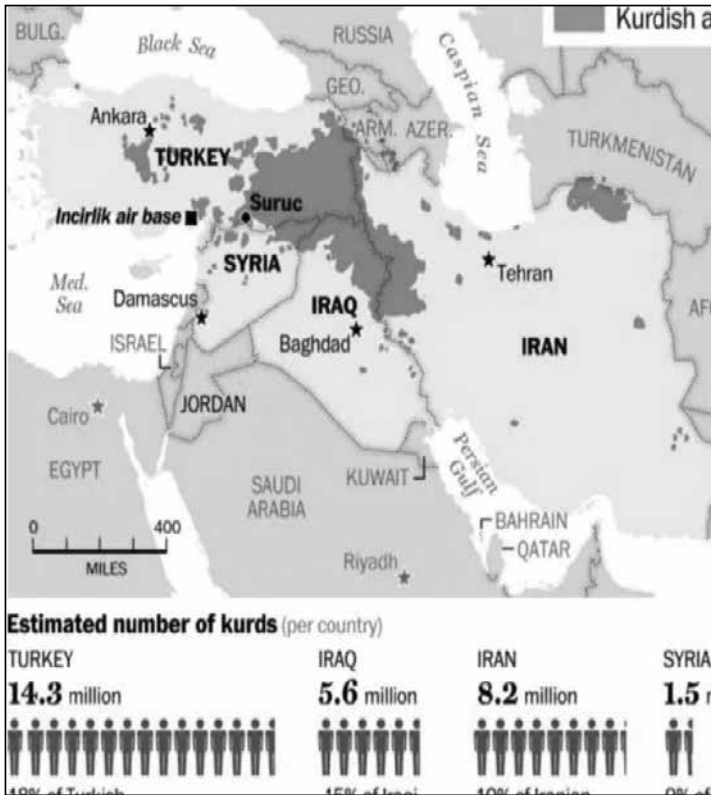
3. "Kurdish Nationalism in the Middle East," Central Intelligence Agency, December 19, 2016, <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp79-00927a004100020004-3>. Accessed on January 2, 2019.

4. Ibid.

5. McDowall, n. 2.

the promised state also fluctuated but it remained predominantly the mountainous region at the crossroads of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria. The region was divided on two occasions: the first in 1514, when it was divided between the Ottomans and the Persian Empire

**Fig 1: Estimated Number of Kurds in West Asia**



Source: Ishaan Tharoor, "The Middle East's Alphabet Soup of Kurds, explained," 22 February 2016, *The Washington Post*, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/02/22/the-middle-east-s-alphabet-soup-of-kurds-explained/?utm\\_term=.bbb9ab92caaa](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/02/22/the-middle-east-s-alphabet-soup-of-kurds-explained/?utm_term=.bbb9ab92caaa). Accessed on January 6, 2019.

after the Battle of Chaldiran and the second between 1920 and 1923, after the Treaty of Lausanne was signed.<sup>6</sup>

Immediately after World War 1, President Woodrow Wilson's support for the principle of national self-determination for the

6. n. 3.

non-Turkish nationalities living under the Ottoman Empire gave an impetus to the Kurds. This was encapsulated in the Treaty of Sevres, signed on August 10, 1920. However, the then Turkish leader Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, led a nationalist uprising which compelled the Allies to revise the treaty and a newer version of the same—Treaty of Lausanne —was signed in 1923. Under the revised agreement, all references to an autonomous or independent Kurdistan were omitted and new boundaries between Turkey, Iran and Iraq led to the division of the Kurds among these countries.<sup>7</sup> Since then, they became a minority in various countries and faced various forms of national oppression. According to Lungthuiyang Riamei, “In some cases, these oppressions were brutal, as in Kemalist Turkey, while in others, it was cunning, like the suppression in Iran. Iraq, on the other hand, has allowed the existence of a Kurdish nationality but made it subservient to the official policy of Arabisation which included implantation of Arabs on their lands.”<sup>8</sup>

### **KURDISH NATIONALISM**

Since the end of World War II, the Kurdish nationalist movement became a bargaining chip between the United States and the Soviet Union. They were seen as an important sphere of influence in the region by the two great powers. However, the geopolitical location of the Kurds in the sensitive boundary regions resulted in them becoming pawns to the interest of not only the two great powers but also other states in the region. The newly carved states of Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria began to view the Kurds as a minority and any sign of their rebellion was considered a threat to the identity and security of the state. This resulted in the rise of different political strands among the Kurds based on the relations with their host state and each strand carved its own political discourse for the Kurdish nationalist purpose.

### **KURDS IN IRAN**

In December 1945, with the blessings of the Soviet Union, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) was established in Mahabad

---

7. Lungthuiyang Riamei, *Kurdistan: The Quest for Representation and Self-Determination* (KW Publishers, 2017).

8. *Ibid.*

county, Iran. The party included an Iranian committee under the leadership of Qazi Muhammad and an Iraqi counterpart under the leadership of Mustafa Barzani. The party announced a Kurdish state known as the 'Mahabad Republic' and the end goal was to overthrow the Iranian and Iraqi dynasties. However, the Pahlavi dynasty sent a large number of troops and completely wiped out the party. Muhammad was killed while Barzani was exiled to the Soviet Union. This set the stage for hostile relations between the Kurds in Iran and the rulers of the Pahlavi dynasty, including the last Shah of Iran Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.<sup>9</sup>

During the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the Iranian Kurds were strong supporters of the revolution against the Shah. They supported the coming to power of Ayatollah Khomeini as they felt that their aspiration for greater autonomy would be respected by the new leaders of Iran. However, this came to no avail. In December 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini pointed out that the concept of ethnic minorities is contrary to the principles of Islam and any opposing demand of the same is against the unity of the *ummah* or the larger Islamic community.<sup>10</sup> With this statement, the Islamic leaders of Iran completely shut the door for any future discussion on greater autonomy or independence of the Kurdish community. This gave rise to several underground Kurdish groups: some were political while a few picked up arms. One of the major groups—the Kurdistan Free Life Party (PJAK)—has waged an intermittent armed struggle against the state since early 2000 and has established ties with other Kurdish armed groups in Turkey and Syria.<sup>11</sup>

Interestingly, the leaders of Iran—both the rulers of the Pahlavi dynasty and the subsequent Islamic leaders—have maintained consistent supportive relations with the Kurds in Iraq. Before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the Shah had supported the insurgency by the Iraqi Kurds against the al-Bakr government in Iraq. In recent years, the Iranian leadership has backed Iraqi Kurdish efforts against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). One can argue that this duplicitous strategy of fighting against the Iranian Kurds while supporting Iraqi Kurds can

---

9. Dong Manyuan, "The Kurdish Issue in the Middle East Context," *China Institute of International Studies*, 2017, [http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2017-09/28/content\\_40031507.htm](http://www.ciis.org.cn/english/2017-09/28/content_40031507.htm). Accessed on January 5, 2019.

10. Abbas Valli, *Kurds and the State in Iran: The Making of Kurdish Identity* (I.B. Tauris, 2014).

11. *Ibid.*

be traced to two possibilities. Firstly, Iran would never want an actual realisation of Kurdistan in its neighbourhood which would affect its own civilians and the nationalist discourse and, thus, it has tried to create discord between the two groups. Secondly, relations between the Iranian and Iraqi states have been fraught with tension since their inception and, hence, Iran has strategised and supported a minority opposition group in order to create tension within the Iraqi state.

### **KURDS IN IRAQ**

The Republic of Iraq was established in July 1958 when the Faisal dynasty was overthrown in a *coup d'état* by the Free Officers led by Army Brig Abd al-Karim Qasim. He made several changes in the domestic policies of Iraq and made overtures for improving relations with the other Arab states. He also invited Barzani to return to Iraq from the Soviet Union to help the newly formed government to manage the Kurdish area, especially in the light of the 1959 Mosul uprising.<sup>12</sup> With his return, Barzani tried to revive his old party, the KDP, and promoted several young leaders like Jalal Talabani. But soon, differences emerged between the old and new leadership about the end goals of the party. The traditionalist faction led by Barzani supported tribalism and conservatism in their nationalist discourse while the new faction under Talabani supported socialism and secularism. The party got split in 1959.<sup>13</sup>

A few years later, in July 1964, Barzani captured Talabani and his followers and expelled them to Iran. With this, Barzani became the *de-facto* leader of the Kurdish movement in Iraq till 1975 when the Iraqi Ba'ath Party ordered an attack against the KDP armed forces. During the operation, Barzani suffered a major defeat and fled to Iran leaving the reins of the party in the hands of his son, Masood Barzani. On the other hand, Talabani led his followers into Syria and with the help of the Syrian Ba'ath Party and formed the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in Damascus. He continued to send cadres into Iraq to establish a grassroots organisation.<sup>14</sup>

During the Gulf War, both these parties launched an uprising which was suppressed by the Saddam Hussein regime. Subsequently, a 'No-Fly Zone' was set up by the United States, Britain and France in northern

---

12. Ibid.

13. McDowall, n. 2.

14. Ibid.



Iraq to protect the Kurdish community. Both these parties started establishing 'a state within a state' in their respective areas in this zone. They also fought a three-year civil war from 1994-97 which eventually ended in reconciliation when they signed the Washington Agreement in 1998.<sup>15</sup> This agreement, which still holds today, urged the two parties to join their forces to build an autonomous region together. Today, this region is known as Iraqi Kurdistan, governed by the Kurdistan Regional Government, with its capital in Erbil. It is a federal entity of Iraq.

### **KURDS IN TURKEY**

In Turkey, the Kurds have been ostracised since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Massacres such as the Dersim genocide and Zilam massacre have led to systematic suppression of the Kurds within the state. Till 1991, they were known as Mountain Turks and their language and culture was illegal in the country. To this day, any attempt at a political discussion regarding Kurdish nationalism is seen as a separatist movement and, hence, grounds for imprisonment.<sup>16</sup> Politically, the Turkish government has consistently thwarted any attempts by the Kurds to organise politically. Most Kurdish parties are either shut down or their members are harassed or imprisoned which leads to a complete breakdown of any political structure that the community tries to create. The only party that continues to exist despite all attempts by the Turkish government is the Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK).<sup>17</sup>

Inspired and influenced by the Iraqi Kurds, their counterparts in Turkey established the PKK in November 1978 under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan. It set up the People's Defence Forces (HPG) and Women's Liberation Army (YJA) which have fought for the cause of Kurdish independence since 1984. The organisation was one of the first Kurdish parties to establish links with other Kurdish organisations and create joint bases in Turkey, Iraq, Syria and Iran in order to create a unified working base for the Kurdish nationalist discourse.<sup>18</sup> A year later, Ocalan shifted to Syria to control PKK operations in all four countries.

---

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Manyuan, n. 9.

18. Ibid.

These operations mostly are in the form of guerrilla attacks on the security forces which has led it to be labelled as a 'terrorist group' by the US, European Union (EU) and Turkey. The violent insurgency against the Turkish government escalated in the early 1990s which led to the death of approximately 40,000 civilians, both Kurdish and Turkish.<sup>19</sup>

After the capture of Ocalan in 1999, the new leaders of the PKK— Cemil Bayik, Murat Karayilan and Fehman Huseyin—continued the process of expanding their network with other Kurdish organisations. However, they continued to clash with the Turkish government intermittently. Relations worsened by 2010 when the Turkish Air Force bombed PKK bases in Iraqi Kurdistan and northern Syria. Both sides continued to respond to each other's offensive moves which resulted in rising casualties.<sup>20</sup> In October 2014, hundreds of Turkish Kurds came out on the streets to protest against the siege of Kobani by the ISIS. Due to growing relations between the various Kurdish communities, as a result of the efforts by the PKK, there was a new sense of bonhomie between the Syrian and Turkish Kurds. The Turkish government responded by using teargas and water cannons on the protestors. This move was highly criticised by the Western powers, including the EU, that blamed Turkey for not supporting the Kurds and their allies in their war against the ISIS.<sup>21</sup> This led to a fallout of relations between the US and Turkey.

### KURDS IN SYRIA

Like the other three countries, the Kurds in Syria also faced institutional discrimination. With the onset of the Syrian civil war and the subsequent rise of the ISIS, the Syrian Kurds gained several opportunities to consolidate their power and geographical landscape. As the respective Syrian and Iraqi Army soldiers fled due to the rapid onslaught of the Islamist forces, there was a complete military and economic collapse throughout the region. The Kurds, taking advantage of this

---

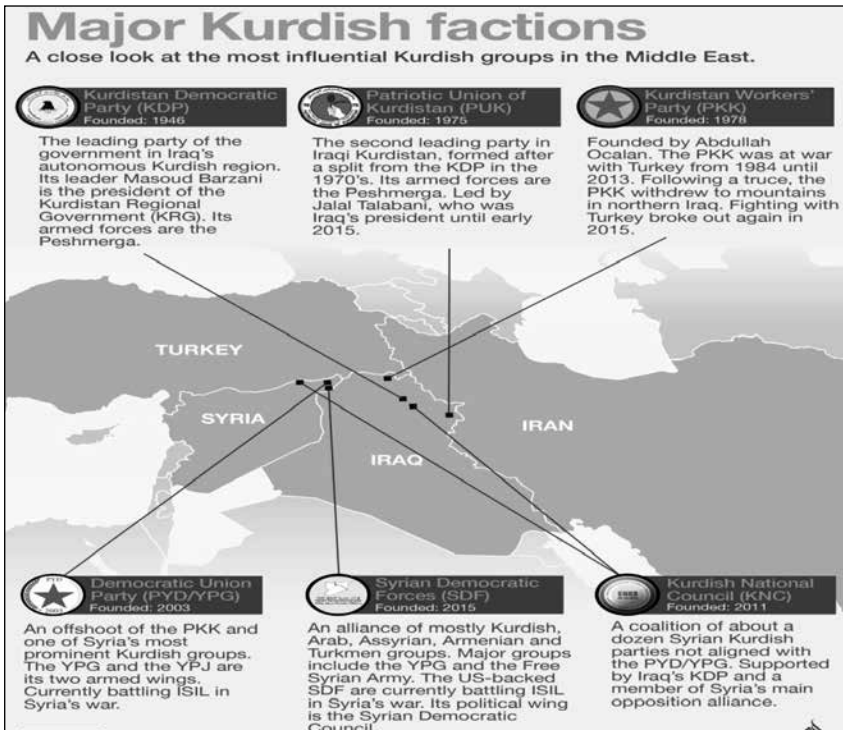
19. n. 3.

20. Michael M. Gunter, "Iraq, Syria, ISIS and the Kurds: Geostrategic Concerns for the U.S. and Turkey," *Middle East Policy Council*, vol 22, no. 1, <https://www.mepc.org/iraq-syria-isis-and-kurds-geostrategic-concerns-us-and-turkey>. Accessed on January 3, 2019.

21. Ibid. See also: Mustafa Gurbuz, "US-PYD Rapprochement: A Shift in Washington's Strategy?" *Rudaw*, October 24, 2014, <http://rudaw.net/english/opinion/241020141>. Accessed on January 3, 2019.

chaos, seized huge tracts of territory that were previously owned by/historically relevant for, the community in the area.<sup>22</sup> With the backing of the newly acquired land, they were in a position to claim autonomy and a separate nation state. Thus, protecting this new territory became extremely important for the Kurdish community as it provided them with a new hope for political identity.

**Fig 2: Kurdish Factions in West Asia**



Source: *Al Jazeera*, October 1, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/kurds-170516072934887.html>. Accessed on January 6, 2019.

Several Syrian Kurdish political parties that operated underground like the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and the Kurdish National Council (KNC) came together to form a committee and armed forces known as the People's Protection Units (YPG) to govern and defend

22. "Who are the Kurds," *Al Jazeera*, October 1, 2017, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/05/kurds-170516072934887.html>. Accessed on January 3, 2019.

the newly acquired territories in northern Syria, including the towns of Kobani, Amuda and Afrin.<sup>23</sup> Soon, the committee got dissolved but the YPG continued to function as a single cohesive unit to protect these areas while aligning its loyalty with the PYD. After the YPG fought and repelled an assault by the ISIS in Kobani, it declared the formation of the 'Democratic Federation of Northern Syria.' It was strongly supported by the PKK in the political endeavour (see Fig 2).<sup>24</sup>

### ISIS AND KURDS

The Kurds have been at the forefront of the war against the ISIS in Syria as well as in Iraq since early 2013. The first clash between the ISIS and the Kurds took place during the Battle of Ras al-Ayn. In November 2012, the Syrian Army withdrew from the border city and its nearby villages and the YPG took control of the area. This area is very important in terms of its location as it is one of the major border crossings between Syria and Turkey.<sup>25</sup> Control over the city by the *ihadists* would have brought them one step closer to Istanbul. In January 2013, the Islamic *ihadists* tried to take over the city of Ras al-Ayn by laying a siege around it. Intense fighting took place between the two groups which resulted in the city being divided between an Islamist-controlled eastern part and a YPG-controlled western part. In July 2013, the Kurdish fighters expelled the *ihadists* from the city and its neighbourhood and soon took control of the border crossing with Turkey.<sup>26</sup> This battle was an important milestone as it led to two important developments:

- It gave a signal to all the local leaders and tribesmen that in the absence of a state army, the Kurdish armed forces were their only hope against the Islamic *ihadists*.
- The regional and international leaders—especially of Iraq and the US—realised that the Kurds were their only stable ally in the frontlines of the ISIS conflict.

---

23. Dexter Filkins, "The Fight of their Lives," *The New Yorker*, September 29, 2014, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/09/29/fight-lives>. Accessed on January 6, 2019.

24. "Turkey v Syria's Kurds v Islamic State," BBC, August 23, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-33690060>. Accessed on January 5, 2019.

25. Gunter, n. 20.

26. *Ibid.*

By mid-2013, the *jihadists* group and the Syrian Kurds clashed in more than three Kurdish enclaves that bordered the territory under the ISIS' control in northern Syria, including Kobane, where the headquarters of the YPG was situated. The ISIS laid siege on the town and its surrounding areas. It slowly moved into Iraq, and came into direct conflict with the Peshmerga (armed forces of the KDP) in the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan.<sup>27</sup> A few months later, in 2014, the PYD gave a call to all Kurds living in any of the four countries to join the Kurdish forces against the ISIS. Fighters from the PKK in Turkey and Peshmergas from Iraq joined the YPG and they successfully pushed back the ISIS from Kobane.<sup>28</sup> Soon, they joined hands with the KDP and took control of the border crossing between Iraq and Syria.

**Fig 3: Impact of US withdrawal from Syria on Kurdish Forces**



Source: *The Washington Post*, December 31, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/what-a-us-withdrawal-from-syria-would-mean-for-the-kurdish-forces-left-behind/2018/12/31/0b38fc8e-0d2f-11e9-8f0c-6f878a26288a\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.0fc8cba2d69a](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/what-a-us-withdrawal-from-syria-would-mean-for-the-kurdish-forces-left-behind/2018/12/31/0b38fc8e-0d2f-11e9-8f0c-6f878a26288a_story.html?utm_term=.0fc8cba2d69a). Accessed on January 6, 2019.

27. Aymenn Al-Tamimi, "The Islamic State and the Kurds: The Documentary Evidence," *Combating Terrorism Centre*, vol 10, issue 8, September 2017, <https://ctc.usma.edu/the-islamic-state-and-the-kurds-the-documentary-evidence/>. Accessed on January 5, 2019.

28. "PKK Urges Kurd Unity in Face of Advancing IS Militants," *Middle East Eye*, August 5, 2014, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/pkk-urges-kurd-unity-face-advancing-militants>. Accessed on January 6, 2019.

The alliance between different Kurdish forces led to the creation of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in October 2015. *The Economist* described the alliance as “an extension of the YPG.”<sup>29</sup> Slowly, many Arabs and other ethnic volunteers started joining the forces and by 2016, the percentage of non-Kurdish fighters in the SDF increased to almost 40 percent of the total.<sup>30</sup> With its increasing success rate against the ISIS and growing popularity, many countries like the US and France started providing it arms and ammunition. It became the partner-on-the ground to the Western countries against the ISIS.<sup>31</sup> Within a few months, the SDF made strategic wins against the Islamic *jihadists* and started reclaiming territories from the latter. The SDF started pushing back the ISIS fighters from various directions to their one last stronghold in Syria.

#### THE FUTURE OF KURDS IN THE REGION

Encouraged by their resounding victory against the ISIS, the Kurds began to again demand an independent state from their Western partners. This time around, they have realised that is better not to depend on the machinations of the Western powers, and, instead, to hold onto the newly occupied territories and declare their independence unilaterally. However, with the announced withdrawal of the US troops by President Donald Trump in December 2018 from Syria, the fate of their aspiration looks unpredictable (see Fig 3). Turkey, under President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has announced its intention to step into the vacuum in Syria after the US troops depart. The problem, however, is that Erdogan equates the SDF with the PKK and, thus, all territories held by the SDF are perceived by Turkey as “occupied by hostile groups.”<sup>32</sup> President Erdogan, in December 2018, declared that the Turkish military was gearing up for a ground incursion into

---

29. “Smoke and Chaos,” *The Economist*, August 27, 2016, <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2016/08/27/smoke-and-chaos>. Accessed on January 6, 2019.

30. *Ibid.*

31. “Key U.S. Partner in Syria Thrown Into Disarray,” *The Wall Street Journal*, December 20, 2018, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/key-u-s-partner-in-syria-thrown-into-disarray-11545340230>. Accessed on January 7, 2019.

32. Steven A. Cook, “Turkey Is Lying About Fighting ISIS,” *The Foreign Policy*, December 28, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/12/28/turkey-is-lying-about-fighting-isis/>. Accessed on January 7, 2019.

SDF controlled territories. The Pentagon immediately responded by warning against such unilateral action.<sup>33</sup> However, with the withdrawal of its troops from Syria, the US is left with few options of curtailing Turkey, apart from issuing warnings.

Thus, this leaves the SDF with very limited options to retain the lands that they have occupied as well as their renewed aspiration for statehood. One of the possible options that the Kurds have is to unilaterally declare independence and immediately try to gain legitimacy from the US and other European powers. This possibility is time-constrained as the Kurds have to act while the US troops are still present in Syria. However, there is a high probability that apart from the US, other countries might not recognise the new state as Turkey might decide to play its trump card—its strong alliance with Russia to deter countries from recognising the Kurdish state. The second more feasible option for the Kurds is to cut a deal with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to retain the autonomy of their territory. For President Assad—who lacks a strong military at present—having a Kurdish region as a buffer between the Syrian and Turkish borders would be a less threatening option than having a long-term strong presence of Turkey right next to its fragile borders. However, in order to cut a successful deal with the Syrian government, the Kurds have to move away from the US sphere of influence, so that Moscow no longer feels the pressure to curb Kurdish influence in Syria. With the US out of the picture, Russia would, in all probability, allow President Assad to make overtures to the Kurds. In both possibilities, one thing that is clear is that now is the time for the Kurds to make a strong move towards realising their aspiration of statehood, else they will again be lost in the larger milieu of West Asia as the ‘largest stateless ethnic group in the world.’

---

33. Ibid.

# IRAN, NPT AND JCPOA: SOME OBSERVATIONS

HINA PANDEY

## TO DEAL OR NOT TO DEAL: THE P4+1 DELAY

Just two months into 2019 and the developments concerning global nuclear security are already shaping up. *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* has set the 'Doomsday' clock to two minutes to midnight; President Trump has already pulled out of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, further generating worries for the soon to expire New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in 2021. Last year, he also pulled out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), popularly known as the P5+1 Iranian nuclear deal or the EU3+3 nuclear agreement, resulting in some US sanctions being re-applied on Iran. It is also becoming evident that North Korea's de-nuclearisation agenda—that was put on the negotiating table in 2018—might also reach a deadlock. Even if the Vietnam talks succeed, there still remains a long road to North Korea giving up its nuclear capability.

Out of all these deadlocks, the most disheartening appears to be the American withdrawal from the JCPOA, as the agreement was reached after many rounds of strenuous negotiations among six players, giving hope to nuclear diplomacy, reiterating that dialogue can break the most rigid state positions and that even the long-pending nuclear proliferation dilemmas can be turned into non-proliferation promises.

---

Ms **Hina Pandey** is an Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Air Power Studies, New Delhi.



It is, indeed, unfortunate that within three years of reaching the landmark nuclear deal and more than one year of its successful implementation, in 2019, the JCPOA might be at risk of fading away. The deal is now reduced to the P4+1; it now weighs largely on the European Union (EU) to ensure that the landmark agreement stays despite the American withdrawal, and that Iran—that still receives the benefit of the deal—does not walk out of it. All this doesn't seem an easy effort for the EU, especially when the US is rallying against it and has even encouraged other countries to mirror its actions on the JCPOA. Recently, at an international conference, Vice President Pence urged the American allies to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, and identified Iran as the “greatest threat to peace and security”.<sup>1</sup>

Unsurprisingly, since the reinstatement of American sanctions since November 4, 2018, a debate is shaping up in Iran on whether to remain within the JCPOA or not. Indeed, Iran is feeling the pressure from the hardliners within, who have always suspected the JCPOA from the first day that it was concluded. While it is reported that “51 percent of the Iranian public still backed the deal”,<sup>2</sup> the critics within Iran often cite the delay in the operationalisation of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)—a payment mechanism that has been crafted especially to relieve Iran of the economic sanctions' stress. The mechanism was not operational even by the end of December 2018, close to six months since the withdrawal, aggravating Iran's worries.<sup>3</sup> However, on January 31, 2019, France, Germany and the United Kingdom officially introduced the SPV—known as INSTEX

1. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Pence Calls On European Allies To Withdraw From Iran Nuclear Deal”, February 14, 2019, available at <https://www.rferl.org/a/irans-destructive-policies-in-crosshairs-at-warsaw-mideast-conference/29769431.html>. Accessed on February 17, 2019.
2. Patrick Wintour “Iran's Foreign Minister says Public are Losing Faith in Nuclear Deal”, *The Guardian*, February 17, 2019, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/17/iran-foreign-minister-says-public-losing-faith-in-nuclear-deal>. Accessed on February 18, 2019.
3. “Hard-liners Attack Rouhani Over Outreach to Europe on JCPOA”, *Al Monitor*, Iran Pulse, December 18, 2018, available at <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/12/iran-jcboa-rouhani-jalili-sniping-attack-spv-hardliners.html> and Farhad Reizai, “Debate in Tehran: Stay in the JCPOA or Leave It?”, *The Begin Sadat Centre for Strategic Studies*, December 21, 2018, available at <https://besacenter.org/perspectives-papers/debate-tehran-jcboa/> and “Europe: Working Twenty-Four Seven' to set up Iran Payment Channel” *Press TV*, December 13, 2018. Available at <https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2018/12/13/582834/Europe-Iran-payment-mechanism-spv-Tarja-Cronberg>. All items accessed on December 22, 2018.

SAS (Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges).<sup>4</sup> This is good news as the SPV had suffered delays due to opposition from Italy and Spain. It is noteworthy that after many rounds of serious technical coordination on the part of EU members, finally, the INSTEX might bring some respite as it is aimed at providing relief from the unilateral American sanctions on Iran by enabling the EU companies to continue their business with Iran legitimately.<sup>5</sup> Essentially, it permits goods to be bartered between the EU and Iranian companies, thus, making payment in US dollars irrelevant. This encourages the EU companies to continue their trade with Iran, particularly the smaller companies that don't have much exposure in the US. Interestingly, the INSTEX mechanism is also available for third party operators, and in the long term, it may be made available to non-EU countries as well, though nothing is certain as of now.<sup>6</sup>

It is important to note that the EU's efforts in successful implementation of the SPV are crucial in saving the nuclear deal. Already, the EU has stressed more than often the need to preserve the JCPOA, as Iran is holding to its part of the nuclear deal. Iran, too, has reaffirmed more than once, its own intent of abiding by the JCPOA despite President Trump's pull-out, however, it expects the EU and allies to take prompt action in order to incentivise the benefits for Iran. However, time is of the essence here and Iran's patience seems to be running out. In a recent Munich Conference (February 2019), Iranian Foreign Minister Javid Jarif hinted that the "...EU needs to do more than talk if they want to preserve a deal meant to keep Tehran from obtaining a nuclear weapon...".<sup>7</sup>

If the nuclear deal fades away, it would mean the failing of multilateral negotiations, making it immensely difficult to gain Iran's

---

4. Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer, "Europe Launches Special Payment Vehicle INSTEX to Support Trade Opportunities with Iran", *Lexology*, February 4, 2019, Available at <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=d0cbc112-df00-4b59-bc7a-669242732f1e>. Accessed on February 20, 2019.

5. "EU's Iran Payments Vehicle Ready—but Stuck" *Euractiv*, January 29, 2019, available at <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/eus-iran-payments-vehicle-ready-but-stuck/>. Accessed on February 18, 2019.

6. Deringer, n.4.

7. David Rising, "Iran Warns Europe That It Must Work Harder to Save the Nuclear Deal", February 17, 2019, available at <http://time.com/5531372/iran-nuclear-deal-europe/>. Accessed on February 18, 2019.

goodwill for any future negotiations. This would mean, once again, the Iranian nuclear conundrum being identified as a proliferation threat. Thus, in the light of the non-proliferation promise, the JCPOA needs to be saved.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

If one observes closely, the JCPOA compels one to think about the Iranian nuclear issues in four different ways. The present article examines these points in greater detail. Broadly, the success or failure of the JCPOA remains an important case study in nuclear non-proliferation. The JCPOA cannot be viewed as a stand-alone nuclear agreement. Instead, it has significant bearings on the future of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as Iran, being an NPT member, challenges the NPT uniquely. Additionally, the JCPOA is important as the lessons that can be learned by observing the Iranian nuclear behaviour—while it remains within the JCPOA—are likely to generate value for the global non-proliferation order. By observing Iran's nuclear issue within the JCPOA, three broad observations may be made. However, before delving deep into these, it is important to examine Iran's unique nuclear status.

## **IRANIAN NUCLEAR CHALLENGE: UNIQUE**

### *Iran Is Not North Korea*

The Iranian case is an interesting study in nuclear non-proliferation. It is the only NPT member country in current times to have challenged the existing norm of 'denial of enrichment and reprocessing' in its nuclear fuel cycle while remaining under stringent sanctions for more than two decades. Iran is the only NPT member state that was the cause of anxiety for nuclear non-proliferation proponents for years over the enrichment issue—that was viewed as a crisis for the nuclear non-proliferation regime—and the impact of which was anticipated in terms of a cascading nuclear weapons arms race in the Middle East. While North Korea, too, remained a challenge for the nuclear non-proliferation regime for years, it officially withdrew from the NPT in 2003, thus, becoming a state challenging the NPT from the outside. Iran, on the other hand, challenged the NPT from within.

Additionally, post 2003, the primary concern in dealing with the North Korean nuclear challenge focussed on how to bring it back to the NPT. Today, North Korea is a full-fledged nuclear weapons state, albeit de-facto, having delivery capabilities. Over the years, North Korea declared itself a Nuclear Weapon State (NWS); even claiming to have acquired the thermonuclear capability in 2017. But the case of Iran seems to distinguish itself. Iran is not an all-out NWS like North Korea, even as of 2018. Some 18 years since Iran was suspected to have weapons intent, there is no smoking gun evidence that the country possesses nuclear weapons. Iran's proliferation dilemma in all these years was limited largely to it getting beyond a certain level of enrichment to weaponise. In recent times, while the Trump Administration remains adamant on putting maximum pressure on Iran—such that it might renegotiate the terms of the JCPOA—one has to note that it might not be easy. Iran has behaved differently from North Korea: its negotiation behaviour (towards the journey to the JCPOA) could be said to be driven more by a genuine will and by moderates like Rouhani who are not always ready to trade their nuclear weapons programme for a quick bargain. On the other hand, North Korea's nuclear negotiation approach is presumed to be a tactic for economic bargains. Whether or not North Korea gives up its nuclear weapons capability in exchange for economic and security guarantees, is an altogether different matter. But when it comes to Iran, it cannot be overlooked that if the JCPOA collapses for any reasons, getting Iran back to negotiate would be more difficult as compared to North Korea.

### **JCPOA ATTEMPTS TO RESOLVE IRANIAN STATUS WITHIN THE NPT**

Fundamentally, what the JCPOA has done is to blend the former status of Iran as a proliferation threat, arising out of its position of right to enrichment into a non-proliferation promise by allowing it to enrich to a certain degree, under stringent monitoring and thereby legitimising the very enrichment which was the bone of contention for many years. It is important to highlight that amidst the NPT members and former members, Iran's nuclear status figured in the proliferation threat literature as a member state attempting a nuclear

breakout by diverting civilian nuclear technology provided under the NPT. The important concern relating to Iran's proliferation issue was how to prevent Iran (an NPT member country) from developing a suspected weapons programme. The JCPOA somewhat shifts the debate of Iran being identified as a potential breakout state to an NPT member state having actualised its right to 'nuclear enrichment' implicitly provided by the NPT's Article IV. It is known that Article IV of the NPT provides for an "inalienable right to nuclear energy" to its member countries. However, not every Non-Nuclear Weapon State (NNWS) owns a full fuel cycle, or has the capability for enrichment. The Iranian quest for enrichment and its clandestine nuclear activities discovered at Natanz in 2002 had generated debates about Article IV of the NPT being misused. The JCPOA here attempts to resolve this dilemma. It not only lets Iran enrich uranium under monitored limits but also prevents Iran from breaking out. Under the JCPOA, the Iranian nuclear programme remains exclusively for peaceful purposes in the coming years. This gives some respite to the doubts about Article IV being misused by Iran. While the skeptics and the critics of the JCPOA continue to doubt its promises, one can argue that if Iran remains genuinely committed to it, the JCPOA would be doing its job well in resolving the issue of Iran being labelled as a proliferator. Had the JCPOA not come into effect, the Iranian nuclear programme might have continued with its label of *virtual arsenal*<sup>8</sup> and would have continued to be addressed as an NPT member state misusing Article IV by advancing towards weaponisation.

### **HERE'S WHY RESOLVING THE IRANIAN CONUNDRUM IS IMPORTANT**

The aforementioned point throws light on why the resolution of the Iranian issue is important. Indeed, the case of Iran is important not only because of the proliferation labels or the misuse of Article IV, but because the nuclear issue is also symbolic. Iran was one of the first countries to have signed the NPT way back in 1968 (under

---

8. Sverre Lodgaard, "Challenge From Within: The Case of Iran", cited in Olav Njolstad, ed., *Nuclear Proliferation and International Order: Challenges to the Non-Proliferation Treaty* (London: Routledge Global Security Studies), pp. 84-103.

the US influence). Iran, like many other countries, successfully represented one aspect of the grand bargain. This grand bargain implied foregoing the right to possess nuclear weapons in exchange for the right to peaceful nuclear energy. Because Iran remained within the NPT, its being identified as a proliferation problem disturbs the very norm that the NPT stands to promote. Additionally, Iran's nuclear conundrum mattered also because it could have been a greater geopolitical-proliferation challenge in West Asia. Some studies, such as the report to the Trilateral Commission (2006), while discussing future proliferation scenarios, had argued that "...Iran would become a nuclear weapons state in the coming decade (2016)...". Furthermore, it was argued that this was likely to generate a cascade of nuclear weapons in West Asia that would possibly trigger the "...first nuclear arms race in the Mid-East, far more volatile than the cold war competition...".<sup>9</sup> It is to be noted that resolving Iran's conundrum was important from the point of regional security aspects, especially bearing in mind Israel's concerns. Had the issue gone out of hand, an adverse reaction from Israel could not have been ignored. Thus, Iran was more than a proliferation challenge. It was, indeed, a geostrategic challenge having the potential to destabilise the region through the prospect of a military confrontation. By seeking a solution to the Iranian nuclear dilemma, the JCPOA, in a way, has taken away the military option for some time. While it is true that Israel and the US don't seem to have aligned with this view, as long as Iran remains within the JCPOA and remains true to its commitments, it will certainly weaken the option of a military solution by either the US or Israel.

### **THE JCPOA REMAINS VULNERABLE**

This year (2019), the Iran deal has entered its third year from the date of its conclusion. It is surprising that it still stands despite the US withdrawal and the continued efforts from the P4+1 and Iran's commitment to it. One of the key reasons that the final solution in

---

9. Graham Allison, Herve de Carmoy, Therese Delpech, Chung Min Lee, "Nuclear Proliferation: Risk and Responsibility (Report to the Trilateral Commission)", Trilateral Commission, USA, 2000.

terms of the JCPOA was made possible was that the negotiating parties had delinked the issue of Iran's ballistic missile development from the nuclear enrichment issue. However, the US' withdrawal and its insistence on curtailing Iran's missile programme through a renegotiated deal have once again generated mistrust around Iran's implementation of the deal. So far, Iran has been able to handle a certain degree of criticism, especially when it has been in full compliance with the deal; yet it has not fully obtained relief from the sanctions. This makes the JCPOA vulnerable at this point. It is evident that the Iranian expectations from the EU have not been met: in a recent statement, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif has once again warned that "... his country would not wait forever to get compensated for the US withdrawal... and that Tehran may be thinking about alternate approaches if disappointed...".<sup>10</sup> All this needs to be contextualised within the setting of the possibility of some American *unilateral sanctions proving to be effective*.<sup>11</sup> In addition to this, a lot depends on the success of the payment mechanism that is yet to be operationalised. In this context, three challenges could be noted. While the SPV is designed to provide Iran with some economic respite, the EU-3 (France, Germany and UK) have highlighted that it will primarily be used for the sale of food, medicine and medical devices. The problem is that Iran actually expects the EU-3 to take care, and cover all aspects, of the Iranian trade so that its economy does not feel the pressure of sanctions. It is also noteworthy that once again even the EU is attempting to link the issue of the relaxation of sanctions to Iran's missile programme and regional activities. If this also becomes a *quid-pro-quo* issue, and the payment mechanism becomes one way of demanding that Iran modify its behaviour with respect to its missile programme, then this is likely to affect the functioning of the SPV. The EU at this point cannot afford to

---

10. "Iran FM Laments Europe Dragging Its Feet on JCPOA", *Iran Front Page*, December 28, 2018, available at <https://ifpnews.com/exclusive/iran-fm-laments-europe-dragging-its-feet-on-jcpoa/>. Accessed on December 29, 2018.

11. "The Iran Nuclear Deal At Three", *International Crisis Group*, January 20, 2019, available at <https://lobelog.com/the-iran-nuclear-deal-at-three/>, Accessed on February 18, 2019.

leverage its economic concessions to influence Iran's behaviour.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, what is most striking is that at this point, the INTEX is not even aimed at addressing the oil-related transactions which are the primary source of foreign currency for Iran. This further questions the effective functioning of the INTEX.<sup>13</sup> One can argue that the nuclear deal with Iran at this stage is hanging by a thread, at least for Iran; walking away from the deal looks like an easier solution, if one compares it to the effort the EU would have to make in order to ensure the efficacy of the INTEX. This is not to suggest that Iran at this point is ready to leave the deal but even if Iran walks out, it knows that the onus would lie on President Trump and the European allies who failed to deliver to Iran for remaining within the JCPOA.

---

12. Hamidreza Azizi, "Europe's Financial Mechanism for Iran (INSTEX): Will It Be Enough to Save the JCPOA?", available at <http://valdaiclub.com/a/highlights/europe-s-financial-mechanism-for-iran/>. Accessed on February 18, 2019.

13. "What is the EU-Iran Payment Vehicle INSTEX?", January 31, 2019, available at <https://www.dw.com/en/what-is-the-eu-iran-payment-vehicle-instex/a-47306401>, Accessed on February 20, 2019.



# IRAN-SAUDI ARABIA PROXY WAR IN YEMEN: A QUEST FOR HEGEMONY

NITYA JADEJA

## INTRODUCTION

West Asia has for long been embroiled in turmoil. Since times unknown, the whole West Asian region has been the theatre for conflicts due to various reasons. It has been plagued with terrorism, gender inequality, extreme militarisation, religious divide and various other issues. In recent times, much of the chaos in the region is pinned down as a sectarian divide; however, the ground reality is that the big regional powers are utilising sectarianism as a tactic to enhance their influence in the region.

Sectarianism, as a concept, refers to the divide between sects—considering the other to be inferior or false. Linked to religion, it often occurs that sects within the same religion hold their faith as the path to true salvation and consider other sects to be propagating wrong ideals. The religious fervour within the sects is often very high, and it results in conflicts between the sects. This has been notably observed in Europe among the Protestants and

---

Ms **Nitya Jadeja** was formerly a Research Intern at the Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

Catholic Christians. In West Asia, sectarianism is caused by an age old rivalry between the Sunni and Shia Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a Sunni monarchy, and has been one ever since its inception in 1932.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, Iran is a Shia theocracy. In 1979, under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, the monarchy in Iran was overthrown, to be replaced by a new political ideology of a theocratic government. It combined Islamic ideology with democracy, wherein an Islamic jurist would oversee the country's political structure and ensure that the government abides by the Islamic law, the *Sharia*.<sup>3</sup> It had a deep impact on the world, as Iran emerged as the foremost country to be an Islamic Republic. Khomeini considered monarchy to be against Islam, and the revolution propagated his beliefs.<sup>4</sup> This was perceived as a threat by Saudi Arabia, which had been asserting regional dominance until then.

Inspired by the Iranian revolution, the Shia minorities in various Gulf Arab countries began protesting for equal rights. Feeling threatened by the protests and to curb the growing influence of Iran, the Gulf Arab countries formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).<sup>5</sup> It was established in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on May 25, 1981, and included Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Oman, because of their geographical proximity, with similar political systems based on the same Islamic ideology and

- 
1. After the death of Muhammad, the prophet, in 632 AD, the Sunni and Shia divide emerged. Abu Bakr, Muhammad's friend and father-in-law, was chosen as the successor. The Shias believe that Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, should have been the rightful successor. When Ali was later chosen as the fourth caliph, many disagreed. Hence, the Muslim community split into Sunnis and Shias. Over the decades, they developed their own ideologies, with Shia Muslims having one supreme leader and an authoritarian structure and the Sunni Muslims having religious leaders in each country. "What's the Difference Between Sunni and Shia?", August 8, 2018, Arab World Media, <https://www.arabworldmedia.org/field-guides/whats-the-difference-between-sunni-and-shia-muslims/>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.
  2. Neha Kohli, "Saudi Arabia and the Region", in *West Asia in Transition*, vol 2, Part 2 (Saudi Arabia: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, First Published in 2018), p. 73.
  3. Greg Bruno, "Religion and Politics in Iran", Council on Foreign Relations, June 19, 2008, <https://www.cfr.org/background/religion-and-politics-iran>.
  4. Ana Soage, "What is Really Behind the Saudi-Iranian Cold War?", Suffolk University, *ResearchGate*, June 2017, p. 4.
  5. Prasanta Kumar Pradhan, "Arab Spring and Sectarian Politics in West Asia", in *Arab Spring and Sectarian Faultlines in West Asia, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria* (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses), ch 1, p. 3.

common interests in West Asia.<sup>6</sup> The aim of the council was to bring together the Sunni Arab states of West Asia against Iran's widespread Shia propaganda and rising influence in the region.

The US-led invasion of Iraq and the subsequent fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 altered the regional political dynamics of West Asia considerably. The US introduced a Shia government in Iraq, which was supported by Iran.<sup>7</sup> Due to the same sectarian ideology in the two countries, Iran's influence in Iraq increased substantially and they formed close ties, which became a source of considerable apprehension for Saudi Arabia. By this time, Iran and Saudi Arabia had begun struggling to obtain dominance in terms of influence and political power in the region. The improvement in bilateral ties between Iran and Iraq only exacerbated the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

With the occurrence of the Arab Spring in 2011, the conflicts started spreading across the West Asian region. People began protesting, leading demonstrations and opposing the authorities, to establish democracy in the Arab countries. A major contributor to the Arab Spring comprised the youth, who had faced the brunt of the income inequality, poverty and unemployment, and were largely tired of the authoritarian structure in the Arab states.<sup>8</sup> They led demonstrations to usher in democracy, and it led to widespread conflicts in West Asia. Both Iran and Saudi Arabia utilised these new theatres of conflict in the region to establish their influence. One such theatre of their rivalry was Yemen.

The Yemeni civil war had its foundations in the political marginalisation of the Northern tribes and dissatisfaction of the Southern citizens with the government. During the Arab Spring uprisings in 2011, protests began in Yemen to end the autocratic rule former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. It started as a movement to

---

6. Ministry of External Affairs, "Gulf Cooperation Council; Briefs on India and Regional Organisations", February 2013. Accessed on February 4, 2019 <https://mea.gov.in/regional-organisations.htm>

7. "Iranian-Saudi Hegemonic Rivalry", Belfer Centre for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, October 25, 2017, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/iranian-saudi-hegemonic-rivalry>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

8. Elfaith A. Abdel Salam, "The Arab Spring: Its Origins, Evolution and Consequences... Four Years On", *Intellectual Discourse*, vol 23, no 1, International Islamic University Malaysia, p. 123.

usher in democracy in Yemen. The Houthis, a powerful Northern tribe, who took an active part in the demonstrations, got access to weapons and the conflict escalated into a civil war. President Saleh was forced to resign in November 2012, and an interim government, with Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi as the president, was established to negotiate the terms of the new regime. However, with Yemen's request for Saudi Arabia's intervention in the conflict and the proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the situation deteriorated in Yemen.

### **YEMEN'S HISTORY AND THE BEGINNING OF CONFLICT**

Around 630 A.D., many tribes in West Asia began converting to Islam. During that era, Yemen was ruled over by the Arab Caliphates. The Ottoman Empire took over Yemen in the 16th century, but it was expelled by the Yemeni tribes in the 17th century. Later, in the 19th century, they again successfully took over what was to become the Yemen Arab Republic in 1918.<sup>9</sup>

North Yemen was a part of the Ottoman Empire till 1918. After the collapse of the empire, Imam Yahya, the leader of the Zaidi community, assumed power. His son acceded to his position and remained until 1962. A military coup was organised in the country in the same year, overthrowing the Imamate system and declaring the country as the Yemen Arab Republic.<sup>10</sup> Post the coup, a civil war ensued in North Yemen as the royal family, along with the tribes in the Northern regions, waged guerrilla warfare on the republican forces. Egypt sponsored the republican forces, providing them with arms and money.<sup>11</sup> The then President of Egypt, Gamal Abdel Nasser, also sent his troops to lead a military coup along with the republicans, against the Yemeni government. As a response to President Nasser's intervention, Saudi Arabia

---

9. "History of Yemen", One World: Nations Online Project, <https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/History/Yemen-history.htm>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

10. Prasanta Kumar Pradhan, "Yemen: Political Instability and Sectarian Rife", in *Arab Spring and Sectarian Faultlines in West Asia, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria* (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses), ch. 3, p. 62.

11. "The Proxy of my Proxy: Saudi Arabia vs. Egypt in North Yemen", Moments in U.S. Diplomatic History, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, <https://adst.org/2015/07/the-proxy-of-my-proxy-saudi-arabia-against-egypt-in-north-yemen/>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

began to back the Imamate militarily and financially during the civil war.<sup>12</sup> In 1967, the Egyptian forces withdrew, and Saudi Arabia halted aid to the royalists. An agreement was reached in December 1967, for the withdrawal of both forces. The civil war officially ended in 1970, and a political agreement was consented to, with the republicans integrating representatives of the royalist factions into the government.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, what later became South Yemen, was integrated as a part of the British Empire in 1839. Till 1937, it was ruled over by the British as a part of British India. However, in 1937, it was established as a Crown colony. The British sponsored the Federation of South Arabia, containing Aden, along with various tribal states of what was to become South Yemen. As rival political factions for the liberation of South Yemen emerged, they fought for power and control over South Yemen. After the Marxist National Liberation Front of Yemen took control over most of the area, the British Federation fell and had to withdraw in 1967.<sup>14</sup> It was captured by the Communists who established the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen on December 1, 1970. Post the establishment of North and South Yemen as separate countries, they were at loggerheads with each other. In 1972, they waged a war against each other, and the Arab League intervened in the same year, calling for a ceasefire.<sup>15</sup> The hostility between the two countries continued till 1990, when both North and South Yemen agreed to unify as the Republic of Yemen. On May 22, 1990, Ali Abdullah Saleh, president of the Yemen Arab Republic, became the first president of the united Yemen.<sup>16</sup>

During that time, in the 1980s, the Zaidi Shia clans in North Yemen were extremely tired of their political marginalisation, the undermining of their religious traditions and the increasing influence of Saudi Arabia in North Yemen's domestic politics. To overcome

---

12. Ibid.

13. "North Yemen Civil War (1962-1970)", Military Guide, Global Security, <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/yemen.htm>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

14. n. 9.

15. "Yemen Profile- Timeline", *BBC News*, November 5, 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14704951>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

16. Pradhan, n. 10, p. 63.

this, the leader of the Houthi clan, Hussein Badreddine Al Houthi, established an entity named 'Ansar Allah' (Partisans of God) in the 1980s as a broad-minded cultural, educational, and theological movement.<sup>17</sup> Their aim was to revive the religious traditions of Zaidism.<sup>18</sup> By the 1990s, they began protesting against the autocratic rule of Saleh. Various Zaidi Shia clans, attracted by their ideas, joined the Ansar Allah. Soon, they came to be known as the Houthis.<sup>19</sup>

In 2004, the Houthis began disrupting mosque services in Sa'ada, shouting anti-government, anti-American, and anti-Israeli slogans. The protests also spread to Sana'a, the capital of Yemen. By June 2004, the government forces began clashing with the Houthis in the cities of Marran and Haydan, accusing them of instigating sectarianism in the country. In July 2004, a bounty of Yemeni Rial 10 million was put on Badreddine al-Houthi, the leader of Ansar Allah. President Saleh also linked the Houthis to Iran and to Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Houthi rejected the claims, saying they were against Saudi Arabia's involvement in their domestic affairs, and that they were loyal to Yemen. The fight between the government and the Houthis continued, and in September 2004, Hassan al-Houthi, the leader of Ansar Allah, was killed. This seemed like the end of the Houthi conflict in 2004.<sup>20</sup>

However, the clashes between the government and Houthis were far from over. In March 2005, Hussein's brother, Abdul Malik al-Houthi, assumed leadership of the Houthis and led the clan in the fight against the government. This marked the second armed conflict between the Houthis and President Saleh. Sporadic clashes between the two forces continued till 2010; there has been a total of six armed conflicts between President Saleh and the Houthis.<sup>21</sup>

In the fourth round of the conflict, Qatar mediated between the Houthis and President Saleh, leading to a ceasefire in June 2007.

---

17. Ranjit Gupta, "Yemen: An Introduction", in *West Asia in Transition* (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, First Published in 2018), Vol 2, Part 3, p. 110.

18. Charles Schmitz, "The Rise of Yemen's Houthi Rebels", *BBC NEWS*, February 28, 2015 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-31645145>

19. Gupta, n. 17, p. 110.

20. Christopher Boucek, "War in Saada: From Local Insurrection to National Challenge", Middle East Programme, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, pp. 5-6.

21. Marcus Montgomery, "A Timeline of Yemen Crisis, from 1990s to the Present", Arab Centre Washington DC, December 7, 2017, [http://arabcenterdc.org/policy\\_analyses/a-timeline-of-the-yemen-crisis-from-the-1990s-to-the-present/](http://arabcenterdc.org/policy_analyses/a-timeline-of-the-yemen-crisis-from-the-1990s-to-the-present/)

Known as the Doha Agreement, it included components such as the reconstruction of Sa'ada, disarmament by the Houthis and establishment of a committee to come up with details of the peace settlement. However, the agreement failed, and clashes between Saleh and the Houthis gained momentum in March 2008.<sup>22</sup>

Another round of fighting ensued in 2008. As the violence escalated, the Yemeni government launched Operation Scorched Earth<sup>23</sup> in August 2009, to stop the Houthi rebellion, once and for all. However, the conflict did not arrive at any conclusion. Finally, in February 2010, Saleh and the Houthis mutually agreed upon a ceasefire and the government diverted its efforts against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>24</sup>

In 2011, the Arab Spring hit West Asia, leading to demonstrations for the end of autocratic rule across the region. Using the uprisings in Yemen as an advantage, the Houthis joined in the protests to overthrow Saleh's regime. They took control of the Sa'ada province amidst the pandemonium caused by the uprisings in Yemen.<sup>25</sup> Saleh used the military against the protestors, however, a few high ranking officers defected to the other side and the army lost its morale. Under the advice of Saudi Arabia and the GCC, Saleh finally agreed to resign from the presidency in November 2012.<sup>26</sup> He signed the GCC Initiative to enable a smooth transition of democracy in the country and power was handed over to Vice President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi.<sup>27</sup>

However, as per the GCC Initiative, Saleh was given immunity from prosecution in exchange of his resignation. He was also allowed to retain the presidency of the General People's Congress (GPC), Yemen's largest parliamentary party. In addition to that, he retained his influence over most of the armed forces. These aspects of the

---

22. Boucek, n. 20, p. 7.

23. This operation was led by the Yemeni government to crush the Houthi rebellion in August 2009. They deployed more than 40,000 soldiers for the same. There was increasing use of government artillery and aerial bombardments during the course of this operation. The Popular Army, which was an amalgamation of tribal levies and informal fighters was also deployed. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

24. Montgomery, n. 21.

25. "Mapping the Yemen Conflict", European Council on Foreign Relations, <https://www.ecfr.eu/mena/yemen>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

26. Pradhan, n. 10, p. 65.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

deal were greatly disliked by the Yemeni citizens and the Houthis were dissatisfied with the new government for granting these arrangements to Saleh.<sup>28</sup>

As per the GCC Initiative, the National Dialogue Conference (NDC) began on March 18, 2013. A total of 565 delegates, including Yemeni youth, women, representatives of Houthis as well as the Southerners took part in the conference. A host of political and administrative issues was discussed throughout the conference to come to a consensus regarding the constitutional reforms needed in Yemen. On January 21, 2014, the NDC presented the final document, with 1,800 recommendations.<sup>29</sup> On February 10, 2014, President Hadi announced a six-region federation plan for Yemen, dividing it into Azal, Saba, Janadand and Tahama regions in the North and Aden and Hadramawt regions in the South. The Houthis rejected the plan outright, on the grounds that it divided Yemen on the basis of poor and rich regions. The Southerners also rejected the plan, claiming that their aspirations for autonomy were not met.<sup>30</sup>

Meanwhile, the Houthis and Saleh formed an alliance. Saleh retained influence on the army, and being the president of the GPC, he was able to manipulate the military. His aim was to come back to power during the mayhem caused by the transition process. The Houthis, using military support provided by Saleh, went on to capture Sana'a in September 2014. By January 2015, they took over the presidential palace and placed Hadi under house arrest. On February 6, 2015, they dissolved the government and announced a revolutionary committee to form a new Parliament.<sup>31</sup>

The UN Security Council passed Resolution 2216 on April 14, 2015, recognising Hadi's government as the legitimate one in

---

28. Ashiya Parveen, "The Yemen Conflict: Domestic and Regional Dynamics", in *West Asia in Transition* (Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, First Published in 2018), Vol 2, Part 3, p. 131-132.

29. Erica Gaston, "Process Lessons Learned in Yemen's National Dialogue", *United States Institute of Peace Special Report 342*, February 2014, p. 3.

30. "Yemen Rebels, Southern Group Slam Federation Plan", *Arab News*, Agence France Presse, February 12, 2014, <http://www.arabnews.com/news/524581>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

31. Pradhan, n. 10, pp. 67-68.



Yemen, and demanding that the Houthi forces withdraw from the illegally occupied territories. The resolution also imposed a general asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo on the Houthi leader Abdalmalik al-Houthi and on Ahmad Ali Abdullah Saleh, the son of former President Saleh, for funding the Houthi rebellion.<sup>32</sup>

Within two weeks of his house arrest, Hadi managed to escape to Aden, announcing it as the temporary capital. He rescinded his resignation and asked the GCC countries formally to militarily intervene in Yemen to combat the Houthis. However, by March 2015, he left Aden with the growing threat from Houthis and took sanctuary in Riyadh.<sup>33</sup>

Following the request of President Hadi, Saudi Arabia led a coalition of Sunni Arab countries, with the United Arab Emirates as a key ally. They intervened militarily on account of the request made by the internationally recognised government. They viewed the Houthi rebels as Iranian proxies, it being a predominantly Shia movement, and launched an aerial campaign against them.<sup>34</sup> They led air strikes in Sana'a, Sa'ada, Taiz, Al-Hudaydah and Aden. The coalition was supported by the USA, whose assistance comprised primarily providing logistical support in the form of refuelling air planes mid-air, as well as with intelligence and targeting. Within two months, they were successful in pushing the Houthis back from Aden, however, they failed to recapture Sana'a.<sup>35</sup>

Today, the crisis in Yemen has unfolded into a complex battle between various internal and external sources. It is speculated that in response to the Saudis' intervention, Iran has been supporting the Houthis<sup>36</sup> to build pressure on its long-time rival and that both

---

32.. "Security Council Demands End to Yemen Violence, Adopting Resolution 2216 (2015), with Russian Federation Abstaining", 7426th Meeting, Meeting Coverages and Press releases, Security Council, United Nations, April 14, 2015, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc11859.doc.htm>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

33. Parveen, n. 28, pp. 136-137.

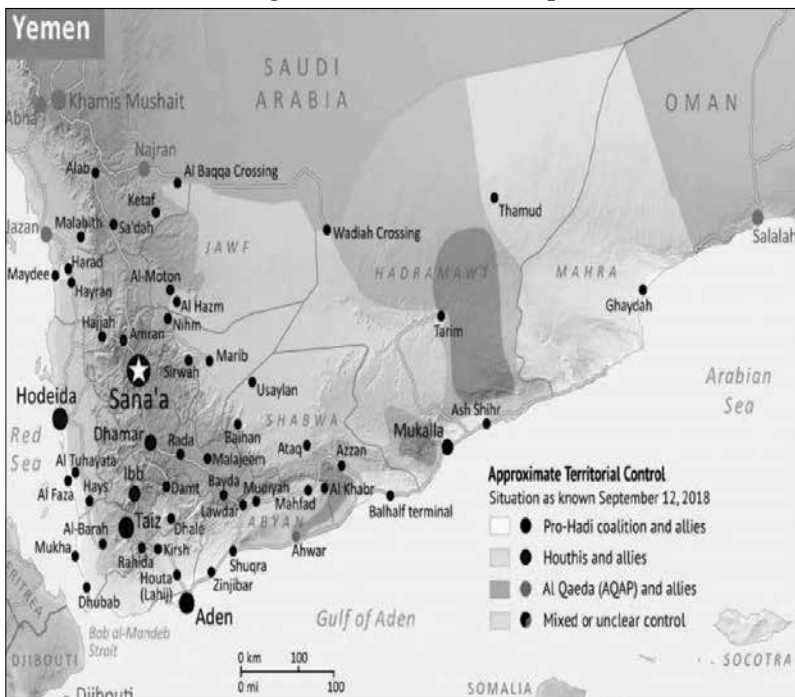
34. "Yemen: Is Peace Possible?", *Middle East and North Africa*, International Crisis Group, February 9, 2016, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-peace-possible>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

35. Parveen, n. 28, p. 137.

36. Jonathan Saul, Parisa Hafezi, Michael Georgy, "Exclusive: Iran Steps up Support for Houthis in Yemen's War: Sources", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-iran-houthis/exclusive-iran-steps-up-support-for-houthis-in-yemens-war-sources-idUSKBN16S22R>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

states are conducting a proxy war under the guise of a sectarian conflict. But the citizens of Yemen, as well as various political factions, have different aspirations from the country, and want to establish different forms of government structures that would fulfil their requirements.<sup>37</sup> This has led to an armed conflict in Yemen—a civil war for political reasons—and has escalated the entire conflict between the government and the marginalised groups into a regional threat (see Fig 1).

**Fig 1: Yemen Control Map**



Source: Evan Centanni, Djordje Djukic, “Yemen Control Map and Report - September 2018”, Map by Evan Centanni and Djordje Djukic, from base map by Koen Adams of onestopmap.com *Worldview Stratfor*. <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/yemen-control-map-report-september-2018>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

### SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN’S RIVALRY INTENSIFIES

After Saddam Hussein’s fall in 2003, the dynamics between Saudi Arabia and Iran steadily deteriorated. When Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

37. n. 34.

won the Iranian elections in 2005, he brought drastic changes in the Iranian foreign policy. He began uranium enrichment for Iran's nuclear programme, which Saudi Arabia perceived as an impending threat of building nuclear weapons.<sup>38</sup> This further deteriorated Iran-Saudi bilateral relations.

The tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran were already rising when the Arab Spring swept across West Asia. People began mass protests against oppression by their governments across West Asia and North Africa in 2011. It marked an era of revolutions in the area as people started questioning autocratic rule. In Egypt and Tunisia, the authoritarian leaders were forced to step down to pave the way for democratic governments. However, in Bahrain, Libya, Syria and Yemen, it escalated into armed conflicts.<sup>39</sup> As other regional countries started interfering, it soon led to a battleground to conduct proxy wars. In Syria and Yemen especially, Saudi Arabia and Iran supported opposing sides, and their rivalry was disguised as support to the countries to achieve stability.

In 2015, the Obama government signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran, along with the other P5+1 states (France, Russia, United Kingdom, Germany and China). The idea behind the JCPOA was to enable Iran to pursue a peaceful nuclear programme.<sup>40</sup> Saudi Arabia was sceptical of this deal and feared that Iran would misuse it to build nuclear weapons. It was also displeased by the US government's support to Iran and the lifting of sanctions.

In response, Saudi Arabia began to form closer ties with Israel, Iran's long standing enemy.<sup>41</sup> Although Israel was shunned by the Muslim world due to its Jewish majority, it ceased to be a matter of concern for Saudi Arabia. Both Israel and Saudi Arabia have common adversaries, i.e., the Iranian regime, Syria's Assad regime

---

38 Afshin Molavi, "Iran and the Gulf States", *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, <https://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/iran-and-gulf-states>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

39. "The 'Arab Spring': Five Years On", Amnesty International, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/01/arab-spring-five-years-on/>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

40. Pradhan, n. 10, p. 18.

41. Amanda Erickson, "What's Behind the Feud between Saudi Arabia and Iran? Power", *The Washington Post*, December 20, 2017, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/12/20/whats-behind-the-feud-between-saudi-arabia-and-iran-power/?utm\\_term=.f282cdc3a05b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/12/20/whats-behind-the-feud-between-saudi-arabia-and-iran-power/?utm_term=.f282cdc3a05b). Accessed on February 4, 2019.

and Hezbollah.<sup>42</sup> Hence, improved relations with Israel appear to be beneficial for Saudi Arabia, and both states identify the advantage.

### **YEMEN AS A THEATRE FOR SAUDI AND IRAN PROXY WAR**

Yemen is the poorest of the Arab countries. Saudi Arabia has maintained the policy of 'Keep Yemen Weak' to ensure that it is financially dependent on the kingdom, thus, securing the Saudis' hegemony in their backyard.<sup>43</sup> Riyadh has always preferred a weak regime in Sana'a. This was also to prevent Iran and its political and religious ideologies from gaining a foothold in Yemen.<sup>44</sup>

A major reason for Saudi Arabia and Iran to conduct proxy wars is the ease with which they can disguise their intentions. By claiming to intervene in conflict ridden areas, to bring order and stability in the region, it has been easy for both states to attack each other through opposing sides. Also, since the government (in Yemen) was Sunniled whereas the Houthis were a Shia majority, the need to preserve their ideology in the region and help it prevail became an important factor. Hence, they have participated in the Yemen conflict, resulting in a full-fledged armed conflict in the backdrop of a civil war.

Saudi Arabia has been influencing the politics in Yemen since its unification. When the Houthis first began protesting under the banner of Ansar Allah, Saudi Arabia advised President Saleh to militarily suppress them.<sup>45</sup> After President Hadi requested for intervention by the GCC countries, Saudi Arabia led the coalition in Yemen, launching air strikes against the Houthis. They claimed that the Houthi rebels were Iranian proxies, to unseat the government and establish the Shia ideology in Yemen.<sup>46</sup> With the Saudis' intervention in Yemen, and their allegations of the Houthis being an Iranian proxy, Iran

---

42. Michael J. Totten, "The New Arab-Israeli Alliance", *World Affairs Journal* <http://www.worldaffairsjournal.org/article/new-arab%E2%80%93israeli-alliance>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

43. Peter Salisbury, "Yemen and the Saudi-Iranian 'Cold War'", Middle East and North Africa Programme, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, February 2015, p. 3.

44. Stig Stenslie, "Not too Strong, Not too Weak: Saudi Arabia's Policy Towards Yemen", Policy Brief, Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, March 2013, p. 1.

45. Gupta, n. 17, p. 110.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

has been invariably pushed into the scenario. However, Saudi Arabia has overstated Iran's influence on the Houthis rebels. This is clear from the fact that the Houthis adhere to the Zaidi sect, and do not conform to Twelver Shi'a Islam, which Iran practices. The Zaidi tradition is closer to Sunni Islam instead, and the Houthis have shown no solidarity whatsoever with other Shi'a communities.<sup>47</sup>

Currently, the rivalry between the Iran and Saudi Arabia is at its peak and both are vying for regional hegemony, supremacy and political influence in the region.

### **YEMEN'S PRESENT SCENARIO**

Presently, Yemen is close to becoming a failed state. It is facing the most severe humanitarian crisis in the world. There is large scale destruction and massive devastation to both life and property. Three million Yemenis have been displaced due to the crisis and more than 22 million Yemenis need urgent humanitarian assistance to survive. It is on the brink of famine, with around 15 million Yemenis suffering from malnutrition, among whom four lakh are children.<sup>48</sup> Over 16 million people lack access to basic health care with more than half of Yemen's health services destroyed.<sup>49</sup> Public institutions have collapsed and there has been a widespread epidemic of cholera, with more than a million people afflicted with the disease.<sup>50</sup>

In March 2015, the Saudi-led coalition imposed a naval and aerial blockade on Yemen. All the ships coming for harbour in Yemeni ports had to undergo an inspection. As per Saudi officials, this was necessary to intercept Iranian weapons being smuggled to the Houthis and to prevent the Houthis from exploiting shipments for their own advantage.<sup>51</sup> After an alleged Iranian missile was

---

47. Anu Sharma, "The Yemeni Conundrum", Centre for Air Power Studies, May 12, 2018, p. 2.

48. "Yemen Crisis", UN Refugee Agency, <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/yemen/>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

49. "Why is Yemen the World's Worst Humanitarian Crisis?", International Rescue Committee, October 15, 2018, <https://www.rescue.org/article/why-yemen-worlds-worst-humanitarian-crisis>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

50. "About OCHA Yemen", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, <https://www.unocha.org/yemen/about-ocha-yemen>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

51. Jeremy M. Sharp, "Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention", *Congressional Research Service*, Updated August 24, 2018, pp. 16-17.

fired by the Houthis inside Saudi Arabia, in November 2017, Saudi Arabia imposed a full blockade on Yemen. It included the Hodeidah port, the second largest port in Yemen, and a hub for commercial and business activities.<sup>52</sup> With the blockade on the port, it became increasingly difficult for humanitarian aid to reach the afflicted citizens. The United Nations and other humanitarian organisations strongly criticised Saudi Arabia for the blockade, as it intensified the conflict in Yemen. On December 20, 2017, the Saudi-led coalition announced a 30-day relaxation period on the blockade, allowing relief and humanitarian aid to reach the Yemenis.<sup>53</sup>

Due to the blockade, around half million metric tonnes of UN supplies could not reach the Yemeni population. The fuel prices increased significantly, hampering transport of water and medicines, and putting a million children at risk of contracting various diseases.<sup>54</sup> The blockade only served to intensify the crisis, leading up to 14 million Yemenis to the brink of starvation, and 8 million on the verge of death due to lack of availability of food to survive. Fourteen million people were denied access to water and sanitation, which exacerbated the conditions for cholera.<sup>55</sup>

Today, Yemen is on the brink of famine, with missile attacks by the Houthis and air strikes by the Saudis in areas with large civilian populations, leading to a great loss of life of the Yemeni citizens.

On December 2, 2017, former President Saleh held a televised address on Yemen Today TV.<sup>56</sup> He announced the end of his alliance with the Houthi rebels and expressed his desire to improve his

---

52. Shaul Shay, "Operation 'Golden Victory' - A Turning Point In The War In Yemen", *The Jerusalem Post*, June 25, 2018, <https://www.jpost.com/opinion/operation-golden-victory-a-turning-point-in-the-war-in-yemen-560853>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

53. Sharp, n. 51, p. 17.

54. "Yemen: Impact of the Closure of Seaports and Airports on the Humanitarian Situation - Situation Update 2", UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, ReliefWeb, November 16, 2017, <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/yemen-impact-closure-seaports-and-airports-humanitarian-situation-situation-update-2-16>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

55. "Quick Facts: What you Need to Know About the Crisis in Yemen", *Mercy Corps*, Last updated: December 13, 2018, <https://www.mercycorps.org/articles/yemen/quick-facts-what-you-need-know-about-crisis-yemen>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

56. Hakim Almasmari, Daniel Nikbakht, "Yemen Rebel Ally to Saudis: Let's 'Turn the Page'", *CNN*, December 3, 2017, <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/12/02/middleeast/yemen-saleh-olive-branch/index.html>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

relations with the Saudi-led coalition. The coalition found the turn of events favourable and granted him air support. However, things took a drastic turn on December 4, 2017, when former President Saleh was assassinated by the Houthis rebels.<sup>57</sup> This clearly emphasised the uncompromising nature of Houthis ambitions.

However, December 13, 2018, marked a breakthrough in the Yemeni conflict. After a week of negotiations in Sweden, mediated by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, a ceasefire between the Houthis and President Hadi was achieved in the city of Hodeidah.<sup>58</sup> The ceasefire enabled humanitarian aid to flow freely into Yemen. The ceasefire, named the Stockholm Agreement, also enabled limited prisoner exchanges and paved the way for further discussions between the warring factions of Yemen. As per Martin Griffiths, the UN special envoy for Yemen, the agreement is holding, even if it looks dire.<sup>59</sup> Although it certainly does not mark the end of the Yemeni conflict, it does usher in hope to the citizens.

The Saudi-led coalition is supported by the USA. The USA provides logistical support to Saudi Arabia. Although the USA has justified its support to Saudi Arabia as a means to restore the government recognised by the United Nations, its support also stems from its perception of Iran as a dangerous influence in West Asia, and an adversary to the USA.<sup>60</sup> Due to the USA's involvement in West Asia, Russia's presence soon became visible. However, Russia has largely been playing a balancing act. On the one hand, it accepts the Hadi government as legitimate, as per international

---

57. Hakim Almasmari, Tamara Qiblawi Hilary Clarke, "Yemen's Former President Ali Abdullah Saleh Killed Trying to flee Sanaa", *CNN*, December 5, 2017, <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/12/04/middleeast/yemen-former-president-ali-abdullah-saleh-killed-intl/index.html>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

58. Aziz El Yaakoubi, Johan Sennero, "Yemen's Warring Parties Agree to Ceasefire in Hodeidah and U.N. Role", *Reuters*, December 13, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security/yemens-warring-parties-agree-to-ceasefire-in-hodeidah-and-un-role-idUSKBN1OC0G4>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

59. "Yemen Ceasefire Looks Dire but is Holding, says UN Envoy", *The Guardian*, January 30, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/30/yemen-ceasefire-is-holding-says-un-envoy>. Accessed on February 4, 2018.

60. Paul Pillar; "Why Does the U.S. Support War Crimes in Yemen?", *National Interest*, September 5, 2018, <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/paul-pillar/why-does-us-support-war-crimes-yemen-30572>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

recognition of the same.<sup>61</sup> On the other, in February 2018, it vetoed the United Nations Security Council draft resolution prepared by Britain, holding Iran responsible for its inability to block supplies of missiles to Houthis.<sup>62</sup>

Due to the anarchy, Al Qaeda has established a large network in Yemen, conjoining with the Saudi branch to form Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. Due to a crackdown by the Saudi government in late 2008, the cadres of the Saudi branch of Al Qaeda escaped across the border, to unite with their counterparts in Yemen. This was announced in January 2009, when its then leader, Nasir al-Wuhayshi, aired an inaugural video.<sup>63</sup>

Since then, it has been successful in creating a quasi-state, by expanding its territorial control in Southern Yemen. It has projected itself as a humanitarian ruling organisation, by posting pictures of its members paving roads, repairing bridges, building hospitals and so forth. This has helped them gain the approval of the local citizens as well as tribal leaders, expanding their outreach in Yemen significantly.<sup>64</sup>

Subsequently, the conflict in Yemen has escalated. With intervention from the USA and Saudi Arabia in Yemen, and the speculated influence of Iran on the Houthis, it is no longer a regional conflict. Yemen has become a theatre for the ongoing quest for hegemony between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Yemenis are in a difficult position, trapped between the Houthis' aggression and Saudis' military intervention. Today, there is no semblance of order or a governance structure, and there is food and water scarcity and a threat to human lives.

---

61. Jonathan Fenton-Harvey, "Russia's Deadly Game in Yemen", *The New Arab*, March 6, 2018, <https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/indepth/2018/3/6/Russias-deadly-game-in-Yemen>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

62. "Russia Vetoes UN Measure to call out Iran Over Arming Yemen's Houthis", *Middle East Eye*, February 26, 2018, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/russia-vetoes-un-draft-resolution-iranian-arms-shipments-yemen-896791772>. Accessed on February 4, 2019.

63. "Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula", *Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder*, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/al-qaeda-arabian-peninsula-aqap>. Accessed on February 4, 2019

64. Dipanwita Chakravorty, "Al-Qaeda in Arabian Province", *West Asia in Transition* (Yemen: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, First Published in 2018), Vol 2, Part 3, p. 126.



## CONCLUSION

Although neither Iran, nor Saudi Arabia seem to be winning the proxy war, the greatest loss in any scenario is to the Yemeni citizens. They have been embroiled in a quest for regional hegemony and political influence in West Asia. Today, amid the warring factions, they suffer the highest casualties.

The establishment of the National Dialogue Conference in 2015, was a step in the right direction even if it was not a success. The Stockholm Agreement, which led to a ceasefire in Hodeidah port, is also a positive step towards diffusing the conflict.

In order to find a solution to the Yemeni conundrum, it is necessary that external states minimise their intervention and interference in the Yemeni conflict. Instead of choosing a side to support, they must help bring the opposing factions together to conduct a dialogue to understand each other's grievances and come to a diplomatic consensus.

# RIVALRY BETWEEN IRAN AND ISRAEL: THE NEXT WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

PREM ANAND MISHRA

## INTRODUCTION

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 was a breakaway point between Iran and Israel. The revolution was the genesis of a hostility that could lead to a possible war in the future. However unlikely it (war) used to appear in the past, the present crisis—particularly since the end of the Syrian civil war—and the ongoing proxy war could also precipitate a war between Iran and Israel. The Syrian civil war has made Iran the most potent power in the region and, therefore, its old rhetoric of eliminating Israel from the map of the world<sup>1</sup> is no longer a hoax; this has alarmed Israel. The recent exchanges of missiles from the Syrian base and the response from Israel<sup>2</sup> have

---

Mr **Prem Anand Mishra** is a Doctoral candidate at the Centre for West Asian Studies in the School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi.

1. Avi Issacharoff, "Iran vs. Israel: Is a Major War Ahead?", *The Atlantic*, May 11, 2018. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/05/iran-israel-syria/560210/>; Tamar Pileggi, "Khamenei: Israel a 'Cancerous Tumor' that 'Must be Eradicated'", *The Times of Israel*, June 4, 2018. Available at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/khamenei-israel-a-cancerous-tumor-that-must-be-eradicated/>. Accessed on November 1, 2018.
2. Isabel Kershner, "Israel Confirms Attacks on Iranian Targets in Syria", *The New York Times*, January 20, 2019. Available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/20/world/middleeast/israel-attack-syria-iran.html>; Jack Khoury, Yaniv Kubovich and Noa Shpigel, "Syria Says Israel Struck in Damascus; 'Unlikely Hezbollah Members Targeted'", *Hareetz*,

been more frequent than before. In May 2018, the Israeli Air Force carried out extensive attacks against Iranian military targets in Syria in response to Iranian rockets being fired against Israel.<sup>3</sup> It is, therefore, important to understand what the current nature of this conflict is and what could be a possible scenario beyond the political rhetoric often used by both sides. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has sharpened his tone and announced that he would attack anyone who harms Israel<sup>4</sup>—this was in response to an old threat of eliminating Israel made by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).<sup>5</sup>

The exchanges across the Syrian border have alarmed Israel about a possible full-front war. The exchange of heated rhetoric, however, from both sides has often made headlines in the past, with Israel referring to Iran not only as an enemy of Israel but as the primary security threat for the entire West Asian region.<sup>6</sup> This has been echoed by many Sunni Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia. The probability of a full scale war, however, depends on a host of factors, viz. domestic, regional and even from a global perspective. At the domestic level, the Palestinian question has remained a major bone of contention between these two rivals. Iran's support to Hamas since the first Intifada<sup>7</sup> and its position on Jerusalem—which the

---

December 27, 2018. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/syria-says-israel-struck-in-damascus-unlikely-hezbollah-members-targeted-1.6783667>. Accessed on January 4, 2019.

3. Issacharoff, n. 1.
4. Angus McDowall, and Dan Williams, "Israel Strikes in Syria in More Open Assault on Iran", *Reuters*, January 21, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-israel-strikes/israeli-military-strikes-iranian-targets-in-syria-idUSKCN1PE0Y2>. Accessed on January 25, 2019.
5. Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Iranian Regime on Israel's Right to Exist", *The Atlantic*, March 9, 2015. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/03/Iranian-View-of-Israel/387085/>. Accessed on December 5, 2018. Julian Robinson, "Iran 'is Impatient to Fight Israel and Eliminate it from the Earth': Threat after Israeli Missile Attack on Tehran Forces in Syria Leaves 11 Dead", *Mailonline*, January 21, 2019. Available at <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6614431/Israeli-bombardment-Syria-kills-11-monitor.html>. Accessed on January 25, 2019.
6. "Lieberman to Mattis: Iran is 'Greatest Threat' in Middle East 'and Beyond'", *The Times of India* April 27, 2018. Available at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/liberman-to-mattis-iran-is-greatest-threat-in-middle-east-and-beyond/>. Accessed on December 2, 2018.
7. For more details on the Intifada, see Zachary Lockman and Joel Beinin, eds., *Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising Against Israeli Occupation* (Washington DC: MERIP Books, 1989); "Iranian Leaders Vow to Back Hamas in Fight Against Israel", *Times of Israel*

Iranians call Al Quds (Arabic name of Jerusalem)—has a domestic implication. Every year, Iran celebrates Al Quds Day<sup>8</sup>, and on every occasion, the Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei commands legitimacy from the Iranian people as well as from the larger Shia population all over the Middle East—from Iraq to Lebanon, and from Bahrain to Syria.

Another dimension is regional. The history of the Arab-Israeli conflict since the Nakba<sup>9</sup> in 1948 and the formation of the State of Israel; the Six-Day War in 1967, and, more significantly, the 1973 War between Egypt and Israel, have cast a discernible shadow on Arab-Israel relations. But the 1979 Iranian revolution changed the politics of the region. The Arabs, led by Saudi Arabia, found Iran a bigger threat than Israel; as a result, the new reality is that barring Qatar, Israel has become an indispensable player for the Arab rulers to counter Iran. Lastly, the global dimension also holds major significance. Since the start of the Syrian civil war in 2011, the Russian presence has made the region a real game of thrones. Iran, along with Syria, harbours the Russian camp and the rest have aligned themselves with the US. The Arab-Israeli conflict and Palestinian question have remained under the shadow of the continuous cold war between Saudi Arabia and Iran. This new reality has helped Israel to exploit the insecurity of the Arab rulers against Iran. In the backdrop of this changing cartography of politics in the region, the Iran-Israel confrontation could take the region into further chaos. To map these dimensions and their consequences in the realm of a possible war between Iran and Israel, one needs to link the genealogy of the historical rivalry between Iran and Israel to offer a meaningful understanding of the present chaos.

### THE GENEALOGY OF CONFLICT

The genealogy of the rivalry finds its presence in the Iranian revolution of 1979. Before 1979, during the Shah's period, the relationship was

---

December 12, 2017. Available at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iranian-leaders-vow-to-back-hamas-in-fight-against-israel/>. Accessed on November 4, 2018.

8. "Iran Marks International Quds Day", *Tehran Times*, June 8, 2018. Available at <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/424229/Iran-marks-International-Quds-Day>. Accessed on December 2, 2018.

9. For more details, see H Sa'di, Ahmad and Lila Abu-Lughod, *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

indeed better; possibly also because of the bonhomie between the US and Iran. After the revolution, Khomeini saw Israel as a Zionist regime and viewed it through the same lens that the Iranians used for viewing the United States and other Western countries, including Russia. But the real confrontation started during the 1982 Lebanon War<sup>10</sup> during which Israel targeted the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) to eliminate its operations from Lebanon. The birth of Hezbollah was a product of Israel's operations in Lebanon. Since then, Hezbollah represents the most lethal Iranian proxy in the region and has been involved in every direct and indirect operation against Israel. Hezbollah has developed a close network with Hamas and other anti-Israel forces.

In 2006, Israel had to withdraw from Lebanon; this gave Hezbollah—and in the larger scheme of things, Iran—a moral victory. Hezbollah and Hamas have received incessant support in their operations against Israel. Hamas, however, stopped taking support after Iran declared unconditional support to the Assad regime. It may be recalled that Hamas, an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, had been fighting against Assad. For Iran, however, saving Assad was a bigger game plan. Iran was instrumental in saving Assad but only after luring Shia militias from all over the world, including from Pakistan, through the IRGC.<sup>11</sup> These historical accounts are a testimony of Iran's position against Israel. After Hamas, Iran has openly embraced the Islamic Jihad for fighting against Israel.<sup>12</sup> In 2012, Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei said, "The Zionist regime is a true cancer tumor on

---

10. For details on the 1982 War, see Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, *Israel's Lebanon War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984).

11. Phillip Smyth, "Iran Is Outpacing Assad for Control of Syria's Shia Militias", The Washington Institute Policy Analysis, Policy Watch 2955, April 12, 2018. Available at <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/iran-is-outpacing-assad-for-control-of-syrias-shia-militias>. Accessed on January 2, 2019. Martin Chulov, Saeed Kamali Dehghan and Patrick Wintour, "Iran Hails Victory in Aleppo as Shia Militias Boost Syria's Bashar al-Assad", *The Guardian*, December 14, 2016. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/14/iran-aleppo-syria-shia-militia>. Accessed on January 2, 2019.

12. Yaniv Kubovich, "Iran's Fighting Force in Gaza, Calling and Firing the Shots: This Is Islamic Jihad in Palestine", *Haaretz*, June 17, 2018. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/iran/.premium-what-is-islamic-jihad-in-palestine-iran-s-fighting-force-in-gaza-calling-and-firing-the-shots-1.6158730>. Accessed on November 4, 2018.

this region that should be cut off".<sup>13</sup> Later, in November 2014, the supreme leader gave a nine-point agenda to eliminate Israel.<sup>14</sup> The hatred and animosity between Iran and Israel have many trajectories. Israel was the US' major supporter in the Gulf War, and Iraq, under Saddam, was a bigger threat to it than Iran. Before the Lebanon War, Israel attacked Iraq's nuclear site in 1981 under Operation Opera, also known as Operation Babylon.<sup>15</sup> Since then, Iran has remained the major threat for the state of Israel. Israel has been a vocal supporter of military action against Iran and has been involved in many covert and overt operations, including killing Iranian nuclear scientists.<sup>16</sup> After Saddam, Israel's major security concern has been Iran, and Israel has tried to persuade the United States on many occasions to destroy Iran.<sup>17</sup> It is important to first understand the US-Israel relationship to fully comprehend the history of confrontation between Iran and Israel.

### THE US FACTOR

The Iran-Israel rivalry has always been shaped by the US factor. The revolution was a shock for many in the US government who were in denial over the fact that the Shah could be overthrown. A new

13. Tamar Pileggi, "Khamenei: Israel a 'Cancerous Tumor' that 'Must be Eradicated'", *The Times of Israel*, June 4, 2018. Available at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/khamenei-israel-a-cancerous-tumor-that-must-be-eradicated/>. Accessed on February 2, 2019.
14. Ayatollah Khamenei Twitter account, "Why Should & how can #Israel be eliminated? Ayatollah Khamenei's answer to 9 key questions", November 9, 2014. Available at [https://twitter.com/khamenei\\_ir/status/531366667377717248/photo/1](https://twitter.com/khamenei_ir/status/531366667377717248/photo/1). Accessed on January 2, 2019. Winer, Stuart and Marissa Newman, "Iran Supreme Leader Touts 9-Point Plan to Destroy Israel", *The Times of Israel*, November 10, 2014. Available at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-supreme-leader-touts-9-point-plan-to-destroy-israel/>. Accessed on January 2, 2019.
15. Amos Perlmutter, Michael I. Handel and Uri Bar-Joseph, *Two Minutes Over Baghdad* (London and Oregon: Frank Cass, 2003), <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/daily/military-history/operation-babylon-israels-strike-on-al-tuwaitha/>. Accessed on January 4, 2019.
16. Sebastien Roblin, "How Israel Tried to Destroy Iran's Nuclear Program: Assassinate the Scientists", *The National Interest* June 2, 2018. Available at: <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/how-israel-tried-destroy-irans-nuclear-program-assassinate-26085>. Accessed on December 2, 2018. Bozorgmehr Sharafedin, "Iran Sentences 'Mossad Agent' to Death Over Scientist killings", *Reuters*, October 24, 2017. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-court/iran-sentences-mossad-agent-to-death-over-scientist-killings-idUSKBN1CT1XU>. Accessed on December 2, 2018.
17. Jonathan Steele, "Israel Asked US for Green Light to Bomb Nuclear Sites in Iran", *The Guardian*, September 25, 2008. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/sep/25/iran.israelandthepalestinians1>. Accessed on December 4, 2018.

low between Iran and the United States was reached when the US Embassy in Tehran was captured for 444 days by revolutionaries, with the direct support of Ayatollah Khomeini.<sup>18</sup> During the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88) US and Israel provided arms support to both Iran and Iraq and this was humiliating for Khomeini. For a majority of Iranians, this fact has always been kept in the dark and is not a part of the political discourse in Iran even today. In the post-1967 Six-Day War scenario during the Cold War period, Israel was a strategic partner for the United States. Since 1967, the US has given Israel unconditional support and the Israeli lobby has been extremely influential in shaping US foreign policy in the Middle East. The 1973 oil embargo made oil a strategic weapon against the US and its partners, including Israel. Since then, Israel has been the closest ally for the US not only in the region but beyond. The US factor, therefore, dominates as the most crucial dimension in the case of any possible war between Iran and Israel. For Israel, US is the custodian of its security and except during the Iranian nuclear deal, it has always managed the US position in its favour. The vetoes in the UN against all international laws, and its settler colonial project in the West Bank and Gaza, testify to the strong relations between the US and Israel. The Ahmadinejad period in Iran was a significant phase in the Israel-Iran rivalry, when Iran even disputed the Jewish holocaust.<sup>19</sup> Between Rafsanjani and Khatami, Iran took a moderate path, with pragmatism in its foreign policy, but the return of Ahmadinejad bolstered the position of the conservatives and the power of supreme leaders, and since then, the rivalry has reached a new phase of hot pursuit and regular confrontation from both sides.

18. John Kifner, "How a Sit-In Turned into a Siege", *The New York Times Magazine*, May 17, 1981. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/05/17/magazine/how-a-sit-in-turned-into-a-siege.html>. Accessed on January 2, 2019. See also Mark Bowden, *Guests of the Ayatollah* (New York: Grove Press, 2006).
19. Bozorgmehr Sharafedin, "Why Iran Takes Issue with the Holocaust", BBC News, October 9, 2013. Available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-24442723>. Accessed on December 4, 2018. "Holocaust a Myth, says Iranian President", *The Guardian* December 14, 2015. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/dec/14/iran.secondworldwar>. Accessed on December 4, 2018. Parisa Hafezi, and Firouz Sedarat, "Ahmadinejad says Holocaust a lie, Israel has no Future", Reuters, September 18, 2009. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran/ahmadinejad-says-holocaust-a-lie-israel-has-no-future-idUSTRE58H17S20090918>. Accessed on December 2, 2018.

In October 2010, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg and Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Daniel Ayalon released a joint statement<sup>20</sup> calling Iran one of the “greatest challenges” to stability in West Asia and reconfirmed a US-Israeli effort to prevent the country from developing nuclear weapons. The nuclear deal was a significant shift from the US’ point of view. In the aftermath of the Arab uprisings, the US zeroed in on Iran as a responsible power to bring stability to the region, much to the chagrin of many in Israel and the Saudi monarchy as well. Later, the US invasion in 2003, supported by Israel, had many unsavoury consequences. The absence of institutions and support to dictators against the will of the people brought the region into the hands of non-state actors. The birth of the Islamic State was a product of the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the resulting sectarianism within Iraq. Iran, however, expanded its influence by exploiting the sectarian malice, first in Iraq and later in the different parts of West Asia, particularly in Syria. These issues have given Iran an advantage to leverage its position against Saudi Arabia and Israel. The cold war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the deep sectarianism, and the weakening US position helped Israel as the world’s attention shifted from Israel’s settler colonial project in the Palestinian territory. Although the nuclear deal was the lowest phase in US-Israel relations, the arrival of President Trump and the clout of the evangelical Christians and Jewish lobby in the US has turned the relationship around. With the announcement to shift the US Embassy (in Israel) to Jerusalem, President Trump has willy-nilly jeopardised the peace process. Iran, through its many proxies, has openly threatened to renew its support for the war in Gaza.

### **THE ROLE OF SAUDI ARABIA**

The dimension of Saudi Arabia is another important factor that directly or indirectly affects Iran-Israel relations. In the last many decades, the fight for supremacy between Iran and Saudi Arabia for becoming the leader of the ‘Muslim world’ has given sectarianism a global face. Since the revolution in 1979 the Saudi

---

20. “Iran’s Nuclear Program Poses a Major Risk to Mideast Stability”, *Haaretz*, October 19, 2010. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/1.5127614>. Accessed on December 4, 2018.



monarchs have always feared the revolutionary ideas emanating from Iran and accused Tehran of interfering in the domestic affairs of Saudi Arabia. Ever since the revolution, the security of the eastern province of Saudi Arabia has been a serious concern for Riyadh. The export of the *Wahhabi* brand of Islam was the Saudis' response to the Iranian revolution. Saudi Arabia is a close partner of the US and despite historically opposing Israel and its acts in Palestine in the recent past, the Saudi-Iran cold war has led Riyadh and Tel Aviv to forge a strategic alliance against Iran. Saudi Arabia accuses Iran of using the Houthi proxies in Yemen and has even sought support from the US to marginalise Tehran. The recent Gulf crisis over Qatar also points to Tehran. The 'Yemen Model', as many argue, is Iran's strategic use of proxies against its rival. For Riyadh, stopping Iran and its agenda of expanding the Shia crescent in the Arab world—an unacceptable act—has, therefore, precipitated the emerging contact between Saudi and Israel towards a new alliance. Saudi Arabia is yet to establish official relations with Israel, but the recent chain of events may pave the way for that possibility. Netanyahu's visit to Oman;<sup>21</sup> the use of Saudi air space for Israeli airplanes; the muted criticism on Israel's actions in Palestine and the limited response to the Jerusalem question have emboldened Israel to counter Tehran. Israel has supported Saudi Arabia indirectly in the Yemen War by threatening Iran against any attempt to close the Bab-el Mandeb<sup>22</sup> near the Red Sea. Recently, Netanyahu sent an olive branch to Prince Mohammad Bin Salman and called for a united front against

- 
21. Noa Landau, and Jack Khoury, "Netanyahu Visits Oman, Which Has No Diplomatic Ties With Israel", *Haaretz*, October 27, 2018. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/netanyahu-secretly-visits-oman-which-has-no-diplomatic-ties-with-israel-1.6594761>. Accessed on January 2, 2019. "Israel's Prime Minister Visits Oman, an Arab Monarchy—and is Welcomed", *The Economist*, November 3, 2018. Available at <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2018/11/03/israels-prime-minister-visits-oman-an-arab-monarchy-and-is-welcomed>. Accessed on 2 January, 2019.
  22. "Israeli Premier Warns of Military Action if Iran Shuts Bab al-Mandab Strait on Red Sea", *Albawaba News*, August 2, 2018. Available at <https://www.albawaba.com/news/israeli-warns-military-action-if-iran-shuts-bab-al-mandab-strait-red-sea-1167768>. Accessed on December 4, 2018. "Israel Warns Iran of Military Response if it Closed Key Red Sea Strait", *Reuters*, August 1, 2018. Available at <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-redsea/israel-warns-iran-of-military-response-if-it-closed-key-red-sea-strait-idUSKBN1KM5VM>. Accessed on January 2, 2019.

Tehran by offering his support on the issue of Jamal Khashoggi. The Saudi-Iran cold war has cemented Israel's acceptance among the Sunni Arab countries. Israel already has close networks with Jordan and Egypt. This mutual hatred for Iran has helped Israel and has completely debunked the Palestinian question.

### **PALESTINIAN QUESTION**

The changing dynamics in the region have put the Palestinian issue into deep slumber. The cold war between Iran and Saudi Arabia has not only helped Israel's strategy in the wider Middle East but completely reduced the Palestinian question. In all possibility, despite Iran's open support to many proxies against Israel, a large number of Palestinians believe that the Palestinian issue is no longer an Arab cause<sup>23</sup>. Although the Arab states still give financial aid to Palestine, the absence of robust political support is a new reality. Since the rise of Hamas, Iran had been actively engaged in the Palestine issue, but the Syrian civil war has sequestered its (Hamas') relations with Tehran; Hamas' proximity with the Muslim Brotherhood, and Iran's position on supporting the brutal regime of Assad were the reasons for the fall-out. However, Iran embraces parties like the Islamic Jihad and calls for all support to eliminate Israel. But in this entire political theatre, the Palestinian question has suffered a huge setback and Iran has much to be blamed for. The continued interference in Saudi Arabia using its proxies in Yemen, in Lebanon and Bahrain—and, therefore, the fear of 'Shia expansionism'—has resulted in the authoritative Sunni regimes of the Gulf and others becoming overtly dependent on the US and also secretly engaging with Israel.

### **THE PRESENT CHAOS**

Since the Syrian civil war, Iran has been providing military arms and financial support to Hezbollah and other proxies through the IRGC. The IRGC works under the direct command of the supreme leader in Iran and has been the real beneficiary of the Iranian economy in the name of Iranian security. The clout of the supreme leader and

---

23. Policy and Survey Research (ND), "Palestinian Public Opinion Poll No-57". Available at <http://www.pcpsr.org/en/node/621>. Accessed on December 4, 2019.

his direct connection with all the proxies through the IRGC and Al Quds forces could lead to a possible hot war between Iran and Israel. Since the start of the Syrian civil war, Iran's real aim was not only to safeguard the Assad regime or to defeat the Islamic State but, most significantly, to have an army of war veterans under the support of the IRGC and other Shia militias from different parts of the world to support Hezbollah in a larger war with Israel at the Golan Heights. Historically, since its defeat in 1982 and till 2011, Syria was in no position to confront Israel, and any action, therefore, would have helped Israel to destroy Syria. The civil war in Syria has brought Iran into the region and the present, therefore, could lead to a war with Israel—as manifest in the recent remarks by the Iranian leadership on Israel.<sup>24</sup> The possible war and the present collision also reflect a new dimension: the mute response from the global powers, especially the US and Russia. The vacuum can jeopardise the possibility of reconciliation among all the regional and global players on the Syrian issue. The exchange of the massive missile attacks near the Syrian border between Israel and Iranian proxies in the last few days also made headlines on social media—a new weapon for state propaganda. Recently, the Israeli defence forces were found trolling Iran on social media.<sup>25</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The rivalry between Iran and Israel has arrived to a new reality where the rhetoric would cease in the case of a direct confrontation. Whether these recent attacks would lead to certain war would depend on how far both states can confront each other. However, considering their military strength, the war may plunge the entire West Asian region into turmoil. The domestic factors are compelling

---

24. Cassandra Gomes-Hochberg, "Iran's Khamenei Meets Islamic Jihad Leaders, Calls For Israel's Downfall", *Jerusalem Post*, December 13, 2018. Available at <https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Iran-News/Irans-leader-meets-Islamic-Jihad-leaders-calls-for-Israels-downfall-575951>. Accessed on January 2, 2019. Anshel Pfeffer, "Israel and Iran Are on a Collision Course in Syria – and the U.S. and Russia Don't Care", *Haaretz*, January 21, 2019. Available at <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-israel-and-iran-are-on-a-collision-course-in-syria-and-u-s-and-russia-don-t-care-1.6865766>. Accessed on February 2, 2019.

25. Jared Keller, "Israel To Iran: Too Close For Missiles, I'm Switching To Tweets", *Task and Purpose*, January 21, 2019. Available at <https://taskandpurpose.com/israel-iran-syria-strikes-tweet>. Accessed on February 2, 2019.

for both powers to use their overt and covert operations to seek larger legitimacy. The Netanyahu government is facing serious corruption charges and its recent national citizens' laws have further divided the country on ethnic lines. Tehran, on the other hand, is having its own trouble and in the last few years since the green revolution in 2009, the streets of Iran have often been major sites of protests, including in Qom. Ali Khamenei too has faced criticism and the voice for more power to the people would compel the authorities to change their position. The short term can see a strategic plan by these states to quell any domestic protest and seek further legitimacy through war-mongering. But the regional dimension is more compelling than the domestic one. The existing rivalries and emerging relations may bring Iran and Israel into a short war to seek regional hegemony. For Tehran, any disengagement of the global powers will create a vacuum that will help its influence in the Fertile Crescent and can challenge Saudi Arabia. The Palestinian angle would help Iran to seek legitimacy from the Arabs who have been marginalised after all hopes for the Arab Spring died sooner than they had expected. Iran is likely to exploit the anger of the Arab world on the Palestinian question. For Israel, any such possibility will make it more acceptable for the Arab regimes. How the regional dynamics will play out remains to be seen.

The global dimension may have a veto in quelling any possible war, or the other way around. For the US, West Asia will always remain central to its foreign policy to maintain its hegemony and, therefore, Israel will remain its closest ally. The US position on Iran is more belligerent than in the recent past and for Trump in the White House, along with Pompeo and John Bolton as his associates, any action from Iran would, therefore, allow the United States to directly engage in the war. The UN position would be further marginalised in that situation. In this scenario, Russia can be the most important player, like in Syria. Tehran would find it difficult to refuse the Russian demands considering its reasonably good relations with Israel, but it would all depend on how much the global powers would engage in reducing the tension. Numerous issues are forging the new realities and all these permutations and combinations would determine whether war would be a real possibility or remain a plank to gain

domestic legitimacy. Benny Morris, the celebrated Israeli historian, has recently predicted a doomsday for Israel but it depends on how different dimensions shape up in the future. In the final analysis, West Asia is likely to remain in a state of chaos, with an uncertain future.

# EU'S ENGAGEMENT IN WANA REGION: NEED FOR A PRAGMATIC APPROACH

ANKITA DUTTA

## INTRODUCTION

Europe shares an extremely complex history with its Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) neighbours. Its historical relations are largely built around colonialism; it is only recently that the European Union (EU) has tried to create a unified approach towards the region. This was largely precipitated by the changing geopolitics in the region in the wake of the end of the Cold War when issues such as immigration, terrorism, trafficking, and energy needs shifted the European attention. This led the West Asian and North African (WANA) region—also referred to as the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) region by Western observers—to come into sharper focus in the EU's foreign policy concerns, with renewed emphasis on security and stability in the region. This paper attempts to present a critical assessment of the development of the EU's approaches towards the WANA region.

---

Dr **Ankita Dutta** is a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.

## EU'S APPROACHES IN WANA REGION

Since the end of the Cold War, the WANA region has become important for the European countries within both the foreign policy and domestic arenas. The institutionalisation of relations between the EU and the WANA region was started with the Barcelona Process of 1995 which established the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. By the mid-2000s, the existing Euro-Mediterranean relationships were defined through two pillars: the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Union for the Mediterranean. By engaging in the maintenance of economic, political, and humanitarian security in the region, the EU's proactive foreign policy towards its Middle Eastern and North African neighbours had two main objectives: to encourage political and economic reform in the WANA countries and to ensure regional cooperation between the EU and its neighbours.<sup>1</sup> However, with the changing geopolitical realities of the second decade of the 21st century, the EU upgraded its approach towards the region with the declaration of the EU's Global Strategy released in 2016. The following sections give a glimpse of the development of the EU's approaches to the region.

### *Euro-Mediterranean Partnership*

The Barcelona Process of 1995 institutionalised the partnership between the EU and its southern Mediterranean neighbours. The Barcelona Process led to the creation of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), demonstrating the attempts on the part of the EU to create a unified and defined foreign policy towards the region. The Barcelona Declaration was signed by 15 European member states of the EU and 12 Mediterranean countries (eight Arab countries—Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Palestinian Territories, Lebanon and Syria—plus Israel, Malta, Cyprus and Turkey).<sup>2</sup>

The Barcelona Process introduced a structure for comprehensive cooperation which was divided into three “baskets”: political and

1. Stefanie Georgakis Abbott, “The EU and the Middle East: From the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to the Union for the Mediterranean”, in Yannis A. Stivachtis, ed., *Conflict and Diplomacy in the Middle East: External Actors and Regional Rivalries* (England: International Relations Publishing, 2018).
2. Bichara Khader, *The European Union and the Arab World: From the Rome Treaty to the Arab Spring* (Barcelona: 17 Papers IEMed., European Institute of the Mediterranean and EuroMeSCo, 2013).

security; economic and financial; and socio-cultural. The main objective was the establishment of a free trade zone in the Mediterranean through economic liberalisation by 2010.<sup>3</sup> The main reason for the institutionalised relations between the EU and the WANA region was the realisation that the Mediterranean region was strategically a good place for Europe to invest its economic and political resources in. The Paris Summit of 2008, which relaunched the EMP as a union for the Mediterranean, emphasised the goals of the EU's policy in the region towards pursuing a "mutually and effectively verifiable Middle East Zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems".<sup>4</sup> The Barcelona Process and the Paris Summit paved the way for decades of policy-making towards the WANA region.

However, in an assessment done by the European Commission in 2000, the commission recognised that although the Barcelona Process had paved the way for increased demonstration by the signing countries to increase their commitment towards the countries in the Mediterranean region, there were certain drawbacks as well. The commission recognised that the "Middle East peace process has run into difficulties and affected the general Barcelona process; progress with the association agreements has been slower than expected; trade among the partners themselves is very low".<sup>5</sup>

### *European Neighbourhood Policy*

The introduction of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was a response to the evolving security situation in the EU's periphery. The policy was designed to support the EU's efforts to realise the objectives of the European Security Strategy (ESS) that was adopted in December 2003. The ESS was rather explicit in defining the neighbourhood as a key geographical priority of the EU's external actions.<sup>6</sup> The ENP governed the EU's relations with 16 of the EU's

---

3. Abbott, n. 1.

4. *Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean*, Paris, July 13, 2008, Brussels, Council of the European Union, [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/101847.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/er/101847.pdf)

5. *The Barcelona Process: Five Years on 1995-2000 (2000)*, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Commission.

6. *European Security Strategy: A Secure Europe in a Better World*, December 2003, European Commission, Brussels.



closest eastern and southern neighbours.<sup>7</sup> Yannis Stivachtis identifies a number of reasons which forced the EU to adopt the ENP in 2004. First, the collapse of the Middle East Peace Process led to the worsening of Israeli–Palestinian relations. This development, in combination with the 9/11 attacks that led the George Bush Administration to declare the “War on Terror” and the subsequent military intervention in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003), changed the geostrategic environment in the EU’s neighbourhood. Second, as a result of the 2004 EU enlargement, the external borders of the EU changed, and new security challenges emerged in the EU’s “near abroad” as a consequence. Third, the results of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP)—that was introduced in 1995—were disappointing. Specifically, the EU’s hesitant Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in concurrence with the conflicting views and priorities of the EU member states, had a negative impact on security-related matters in the WANA region.<sup>8</sup>

The EU’s relationship with its WANA neighbours was to be built on mutual commitment to common values principally within the fields of the rule of law, good governance, and respect for human and minority rights. The EU expected its WANA partners to abide by international law and collaborate in conflict resolution, the fight against terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) proliferation. The ENP is mainly a bilateral policy built upon legal agreements, such as the partnership and cooperation agreements or association agreements which determine the relations between the EU and each individual WANA country. The ENP sought to further regional integration, notably in the area of trade, and invited the WANA countries to promote infrastructure interconnections and networks. The basic principles of the ENP were: “joint ownership” and “differentiation”. “Joint ownership” of the process was to be based on the awareness of shared values and common interests between the EU and its WANA partners. For the principle of “differentiation”, the ENP document specified that the drawing up of the action plans and the priorities agreed to with each partner would depend on

---

7. These include: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

8. Yannis A. Stivachtis, “The EU and the Middle East: The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP)”, in Stivachtis, ed., n. 1.

its particular circumstances and they could differ with respect to geographic location, political and economic situations, relations with the EU and with neighbouring countries, reform programmes, needs and capacities, commitment to shared values, as well as perceived interests in the context of the ENP.<sup>9</sup>

The ENP was reviewed in 2011, following the ‘Arab Spring’ uprisings. However, given the significant developments in the neighbourhood, it became essential to undertake a further review of the ENP. In this regard, a joint communication was published on November 18, 2015, following a public consultation involving the partner countries, international organisations, social partners, civil society and academia. Under the revised ENP, stabilisation of the region—in political, economic, and security related terms—was at the heart of the new policy. Moreover, the revised ENP put strong emphasis on two principles: the implementation of a differentiated approach to its neighbours, to respect the different aspirations of their partners and to better answer EU interests and the interests of their partners; and an increased ownership by partner countries and member states.<sup>10</sup>

### *European Union’s Global Strategy*

The political instability in the region has a direct impact on the security of the European conflict. The Arab uprising, Syrian crisis, resulting migration crisis, along with the Ukrainian crisis of 2014 led the EU to fundamentally rethink its approach in its neighbourhood. The EU’s Global Strategy of 2016 presents a complex, contested and connected world, where the EU’s strategic interests must be coherent with its values. It also espouses the concept of principled pragmatism as a guide for the EU’s external action in the years ahead. The strategy envisions the EU contributing in making states and societies more

---

9. *European Neighbourhood Policy Strategy Paper*, Communication from the Commission [COM(2004) 373 final], Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 2004, [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/2004\\_communication\\_from\\_the\\_commission\\_-\\_european\\_neighbourhood\\_policy\\_-\\_strategy\\_paper.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/2004_communication_from_the_commission_-_european_neighbourhood_policy_-_strategy_paper.pdf). Accessed on January 23, 2019.

10. *Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy*, Joint Communication to the European Parliament, Council, European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions, 2015, [http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/enp/documents/2015/151118\\_joint-communication\\_review-of-the-enp\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/enp/documents/2015/151118_joint-communication_review-of-the-enp_en.pdf). Accessed on January 23, 2019.

resilient—solving conflicts and promoting development and human rights is essential to addressing the threat of terrorism, the challenges of demography, migration and climate change, and to seizing the opportunity of shared prosperity.

The strategy identifies three main aims for the Middle East and North African region. *First*, foster dialogue and negotiation over regional conflicts in Syria and Libya. On the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, the EU will work closely with the Quartet (the US, UN, EU and Russia), the Arab League and all key stakeholders to preserve the prospects of a viable two-state solution. *Second*, the EU will deepen sectoral cooperation with Turkey, while striving to anchor Turkish democracy in line with its accession criteria. The EU will, therefore, pursue the accession process—sticking to strict and fair accession conditionality—while coherently engaging in dialogue on counter-terrorism, regional security and refugees. *Third*, the EU will pursue balanced engagement in the Gulf. It will continue to cooperate with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and individual Gulf countries. Building on the Iran nuclear deal and its implementation, it will also gradually engage Iran on areas such as trade, research, environment, energy, anti-trafficking, migration and societal exchanges. It will deepen dialogues with Iran and the GCC countries on regional conflicts, human rights and counter-terrorism, seeking to prevent contagion of existing crises and foster the space for cooperation and diplomacy.<sup>11</sup>

### **EU'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE REGION**

Despite the various policies and declared commitment, the EU's approach towards the WANA region has suffered from lack of coherency; it has struggled to make progress and has suffered from major weaknesses. Although emphasis is placed on human rights, conflict resolution, democracy promotion, rule of law, etc., there is a significant gap between the EU's rhetoric and practice. Moreover, to a large extent, the EU has acknowledged that it has limited leverage over developments in the WANA region where the US and Russia remain the most important external actors.

---

11. *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe—A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy* (Brussels: June 2016, European Commission).

Many a times, the approach towards the region has been diluted when the member states have become the acting agents. The example can be taken of Libya where France and Italy have continued to promote different approaches which has led to considerable confusion over the unified European approach. This lack of unity over Libya has continued to undermine the EU's political and economic leverage over the Libyan actors and their foreign sponsors, leaving Libya in a dangerous stalemate that only furthers the security risks for Europe. Also, the European nations failed to present a coordinated united stand on the war in Yemen, and have been largely absent in the Qatar crisis since it began in 2017. Looking at Saudi Arabia, Europe appears at odds over the mass arrest of activists or limitation of arms sales to the country. Although they approved a non-binding resolution in the EU Parliament in the wake of the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul, further action on, or, and criticism of, the Khashoggi murder in Europe has, thus, far been limited to a Schengen-wide travel ban for 18 Saudi citizens suspected to be involved in the murder. The EU member states continue to be driven by the key goal of protecting and expanding economic interchanges with all the Gulf actors, as demonstrated by the refusal by states such as France, the UK, Italy and Spain to end arms exports to Riyadh even as Germany, Norway and Denmark implemented such a ban.<sup>12</sup>

Another main criticism of the EU approach is provided by Bichara Khader.<sup>13</sup> For him, questions of human rights and democracy did not take priority as the EU settled for a more realist approach to the WANA politics while the Arab civil society was not being taken seriously in the EU–WANA dialogue. By sidelining civil society actors and with the gradual prioritisation of security over reform, the EU contributed indirectly to the political status quo and undermined the application of the principle of “differentiation”. In other words, the EU did not cultivate an image of a “credible partner”, learning to “listen to unfamiliar voices” and speaking to important actors of Arab civil society. This led the Arab world to think that the EU was simply interested in exporting its institutional model and value

---

12. Andrea Dessì, *The EU Global Strategy and the MENA Region: In Search of Resilience* (Brussels: EU Global Strategy Watch, Foundation for European Progressive Studies, 2018).

13. Khader, n. 2.

system. These top-down approaches of the EU or 'one size fits all policy' failed to produce the expected results and this is precisely why the union was taken by surprise at the outbreak of the Arab Spring in 2011. It dispelled the myth in many European countries that the Arab public opinion is diversified and that there have always been forces for change in the WANA region and there is a vibrant civil society in spite of all forms of coercive state control.

Despite the lack of a unified stand on regional issues, Europe's opposition to US President Trump's unilateral moves vis-à-vis Iran and the Palestinians and the support it continues to provide to Tunisia can be singled out as positive developments tied to the European policy towards the WANA region since 2016. On the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Europe has opposed Washington's unilateral recognition in May 2018 of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. EU representatives boycotted the opening ceremony of the new US Embassy in Jerusalem and have refused to modify their public recognition of East Jerusalem as occupied territory under international law. Also, it has stepped in with emergency funding—in the wake of the US ending its funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) dealing with Palestinian refugees—to continue its education, health and emergency operations in the Gaza Strip and the broader region. In a clear indication of what *realpolitik* is all about, while the EU continues its criticism of Israeli actions and settlement enterprise, its trade with Israel—particularly in the high technology, defence and cyber domains—has grown considerably in the past few years! Also, several European states and Israel have also signed a gas pipeline deal in 2017 that could lead to the exporting of East Mediterranean gas into Europe. The EastMed pipeline is to ship up to 16 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas a year from the Levantine Basin near Israel and Cyprus to Greece and Italy from 2025.<sup>14</sup>

In Iran, the EU's defence of the nuclear deal following the US' unilateral withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and its reimposition of sanctions on Iran have become the most significant developments tied to the EU policy towards the WANA region. Having failed to convince President Trump from

---

14. "EU States and Israel Sign Gas Pipeline Deal", *EUobserver*, December 6, 2017, <https://euobserver.com/energy/140183>. Accessed on January 24, 2019.

exiting the JCPOA, Europe has since moved to adopt a number of policies aimed at shielding European companies and businesses involved in Iran from the threat of secondary US sanctions. The EU's blocking regulation<sup>15</sup>, Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and other efforts are welcome, but it is too early to tell if these will succeed in providing enough incentives for Iran to continue the deal. This is precisely why a number of major European companies, e.g. Total, A.P. Moller-Maersk, Peugeot,<sup>16</sup> etc. have withdrawn or halted their businesses in Iran. The emphasis placed on small and medium enterprises might not entirely ease the burden and they would be hard pressed to accept the risks associated with investing in Iran.

Tunisia has been identified as a key priority of the EU's engagement policy in the WANA region, especially with regard to its progress in political transition since the Arab Spring. In the aftermath of the 2010-11 revolution, the EU almost doubled the amount of aid allocated to Tunisia for the period 2011-13 (from Euros 240 million to 445 million).<sup>17</sup> The EU's assistance was intended to support economic recovery, judicial reform, gender equality, disadvantaged urban districts, border management, and migrant protection, as well as a programme focussing on cross-cutting issues such as the development of civil society and capacity building. The European leaders also sought support to establish a privileged partnership in 2012 and to launch the negotiations for the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) in 2016. Despite a robust beginning, efforts to prioritise border control, migrant re-admissions and anti-terror training have dominated the EU approaches while other areas such as agricultural liberalisation, seeking greater and reciprocal market access or support for legal migration routes, have largely been sidelined.<sup>18</sup>

---

15. Hogan Lovells, "The Updated Version of the EU Blocking Regulation Enters into Force", August 8, 2018, <https://www.hoganlovells.com/en/publications/the-updated-version-of-the-eu-blocking-regulation-enters-into-force>. Accessed on January 8, 2019.

16. "10 Companies Leaving Iran As Trump's Sanctions Close In", *Forbes*, June 6, 2018, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ellenrwald/2018/06/06/10-companies-leaving-iran-as-trumps-sanctions-close-in/#3cb92b9fc90f>, Accessed on January 24, 2019.

17. Adel Abdel Ghafar, "Toward a Recalibration of EU-North Africa Relations", Brookings, May 31, 2017, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/toward-a-recalibration-of-eu-north-africa-relations/>. Accessed on January 25, 2019.

18. Bettina Rudloff and Isabelle Werenfels, "EU-Tunisia DCFTA: Good Intentions Not Enough", *SWP Comment* 2018/C 49, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin, <https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/eu-tunisia-dcfta-good-intentions-not-enough/>. Accessed on January 25, 2019.

The most vital role that the EU plays in the WANA region is that of a financial supporter. The EU and its member states have allocated €10.8 billion economic aid for humanitarian assistance, development, and stabilisation since the start of the crisis, making the EU the leading donor of the international response for the Syrian crisis.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, it has launched the EU's Emergency Fund for Africa for stability and addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. The EU Trust Fund for Africa aims to foster stability and to contribute to better migration management, including by addressing the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration. To date, 187 programmes have been approved across the three regions for a total amount of approximately €3.59 billion, divided as follows: Horn of Africa: €1286.6 million, North of Africa: €582.2 million, Sahel/Lake Chad: €1721.1 million.<sup>20</sup> The caveat is that a careful examination of the projects approved will demonstrate how the key priority of the EU actors remains tied to migration, anti-terrorism and border control, rather than long-term support for economic development or governance reforms, which are key requirements for resilient states and societies.<sup>21</sup>

## CONCLUSION

To conclude, as the region is marred with a multitude of crises and political instability, it is hard to see what the future holds for the EU's partnership with the region. Although the member states in the EU as well as the region have time and again renewed their calls for commitment to each other, the sweeping changes within the EU as well as in the WANA region make it difficult to project how far the institutionalised partnership programmes and strategies are going to be successful. Within the EU, the Brexit vote, as well as the rising waves of populist sentiment in France, Hungary, Italy, and beyond, cast doubt upon the ability of the EU to maintain a cohesive policy

---

19. *The EU and the Crisis in Syria*, European Union External Agency, Brussels, September 24, 2018, [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage\\_en/22664/The%20EU%20and%20the%20crisis%20in%20Syria](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/22664/The%20EU%20and%20the%20crisis%20in%20Syria), Accessed on January 27, 2019.

20. EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa, European Commission, 2018, [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/eu-emergency-trust-fund-for-africa-20181220\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/eu-emergency-trust-fund-for-africa-20181220_en.pdf), Accessed on January 27, 2019.

21. Dessì, n. 12.

towards the region. The regional instability created by the civil war in Syria and the refugees that the conflict has produced have raised political questions within Europe about the EU's policies toward the WANA region. The refugees of the Syrian War put a massive burden on other countries in the region, like Jordan, and further disrupt European attempts at consolidation of, and cooperation in, the region.

This begs the question: does the EU retain some influence over the region, given that the main countries of the region are going to be responding more to internal factors rather than external ones? The global strategy of 2016 tries to answer this by emphasising that one of the main challenges will be to establish the means to strengthen endogenous forces that make societies and institutions resilient, and willing and able to move the region into a more cooperative order. Despite several challenges, the EU remains committed to the WANA region, given that this area falls in its sphere of influence. It is true that many member states have a complicated history with the WANA states, but the success of any of the EU's policies would depend on the contemporary issues and situation. All in all, it may be said that a secure WANA region is in the best interests of the European Union.



# INDEX: PERVIOUS ISSUES

## VOL. 1, NO. 1. 2011 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1.  | India and the Global Scene<br><i>Shivshankar Menon</i>                                | 1-14    |
| 2.  | Aerospace Power in National Defence<br><i>T.M. Asthana</i>                            | 15-24   |
| 3.  | Humanitarian Interventions: Geo-politics in Sheep's Clothing<br><i>Kapil Kak</i>      | 25-36   |
| 4.  | Osama's Killing, US Exit Strategy and Pakistan's Instability<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i> | 37-49   |
| 5.  | Diplomacy and Military: 'Talk the Walk'<br><i>Manoj Kumar and Dhanasree Jayaram</i>   | 51-62   |
| 6.  | Iran's Nuclear Posturing<br><i>Asif Shuja</i>   | 63-72   |
| 7.  | Afghanistan: India's Interests<br><i>A.V. Chandrasekaran</i>                          | 73-84   |
| 8.  | The Future of Army Aviation<br><i>Rajiv Ghose</i>                                     | 85-94   |
| 9.  | The Indian Army and its Artillery<br><i>Debalina Chatterjee</i>                       | 95-106  |
| 10. | The UAE's Strategy Against Iran<br><i>Shelly Johny</i>                                | 107-116 |
| 11. | Air Power in the Foreign Policy of Nations<br><i>Jasjit Singh</i>                     | 117-126 |

## VOL. 1, NO. 2. 2012 (JANUARY-MARCH)

|     |  |        |
|-----|--|--------|
| 1.  | The Kudankulam Conundrum: Need for Deeper Analysis<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i>                        | 1-8    |
| 2.  | PLA Navy in the 21st Century: Developments and Implications<br><i>Rakesh Kaul</i>                  | 9-20   |
| 3.  | Beyond The Acquisition of C-130Js and C-17s<br><i>Ashok K. Chordia</i>                             | 21-28  |
| 4.  | A Guiding Tool for India's Foreign Policy<br><i>Asif Shuja</i>                                     | 29-38  |
| 5.  | Libya's Arab Spring – 2011<br><i>Vikram Pereira</i>  | 39-48  |
| 6.  | China's Concept of Space Warfare<br><i>J. V. Singh</i>   | 49-58  |
| 7.  | India's Afghanistan Policy: Reassessing India's Role in Afghanistan<br><i>K. N. Tennyson</i>       | 59-68  |
| 8.  | Prospects of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, 2012<br><i>Yeon Jung Ji</i>                        | 69-78  |
| 9.  | Safety and Security of India's Nuclear Installations<br><i>Sitakanta Mishra</i>                    | 79-90  |
| 10. | Defence Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention: Some Lessons From The West<br><i>Sanjay Kulshrestha</i> | 91-102 |

- |     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 11. | Military Infrastructure along the Northern Border of India:<br>Causes and Implications<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i> | 103-112 |
| 12. | Jihad in Pakistan's Heartland<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>   | 113-126 |

**VOL. 1, NO. 3. 2012 (APRIL-JUNE)**

- |     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | India's national Security: Challenges and Issues<br><i>Shivshankar Menon</i>   | 1-14    |
| 2.  | Opening the Arctic's Box with Environmental Change<br><i>Dhanasree Jayaram</i> | 15-24   |
| 3.  | Joint Training: Key to Synergy<br><i>S.S. Dhankhar</i>                         | 25-36   |
| 4.  | Pearl Harbour: As Viewed Through a Different Lens<br><i>V. Pereira</i>         | 37-48   |
| 5.  | Crude Politics: Is it Really Worth it?<br><i>Sanjay Kulshrestha</i>            | 49-60   |
| 6.  | Revisiting The 1971 War<br><i>Nishant Gupta</i>                                | 61-72   |
| 7.  | Imperatives of Space Security<br><i>Yeon Jung Ji</i>                           | 73-82   |
| 8.  | Iran-US Relations and the Nuclear Imbroglia<br><i>M. R. Khan</i>               | 83-92   |
| 9.  | China's Air Power: Capabilities and Strategy<br><i>J. V. Singh</i>             | 93-104  |
| 10. | Challenges in India-Pakistan Relations<br><i>K. N. Tennyson</i>                | 105-114 |
| 11. | The Hump Airlift: A Success Story<br><i>Ashok K. Chordia</i>                   | 115-123 |

**VOL. 1, NO. 4. 2012 (JULY-SEPTEMBER) Special Issue: China**

- |     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1.  | China's New Missiles Pose Unbeatable Threats<br><i>Jasjit Singh</i>                 | 1-12    |
| 2.  | China's Emerging Military Leadership<br><i>Parris H. Chang</i>                      | 13-24   |
| 3.  | China's New Military Commission: Post 18th Party Congress<br><i>Jayadeva Ranade</i> | 25-34   |
| 4.  | PLA's Growing Force Projection Capabilities<br><i>J. V. Singh</i>                   | 35-44   |
| 5.  | Information Warfare: Are We Ready?<br><i>Dhiraj Kukreja</i>                         | 45-54   |
| 6.  | China - The Future Cradle for Science and Technology<br><i>Vishal Nigam</i>         | 55-64   |
| 7.  | China's Military Space Capabilities<br><i>K.K. Nair</i>                             | 65-78   |
| 8.  | Role of China in Pakistan's Conventional Military Build-Up<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i> | 79-92   |
| 9.  | Water—The Next Flashpoint in Sino-India Relations<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>             | 93-102  |
| 10. | "The Dragon Awakens: China and its Soft Power"<br><i>Stuti Banerjee</i>             | 103-114 |

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| 11. Early Chinese Foreign Policy: From Tribute to Treaties<br><i>Arjun Subramanian P.</i>                                   | 115-124 |
| 12. China's Energy Security Issues<br><i>Indrani Talukdar</i>   | 125-136 |
| 13. The Turning Point in China's Ballistic Missile Development Programme:<br>The Dongfeng-21<br><i>Arjun Subramanian P.</i> | 137-146 |
| 14. China's Nuclear Modernisation—Trends and Implications<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i>  | 147-158 |
| 15. Graze China—The Most Favoured Nuclear Guest<br><i>Sitakanta Mishra</i>  | 159-168 |
| 16. PLA Delegates to The 18th Party Congress: A Brief Analysis<br><i>Jayadeva Ranade</i>                                    | 169-177 |

**VOL. 2, NO. 1. 2012 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. China' Leadership Changes: Some Implications for the Region<br><i>Jasjit Singh</i>  | 1-10    |
| 2. Indo-Vietnam Relations: Exploring Collaboration in China's Backwaters<br><i>A.V. Chandrasekaran</i>                             | 11-22   |
| 3. India and Iran: Rough Days Ahead<br><i>Dhiraj Kukreja</i>   | 23-30   |
| 4. Perspectives on Nuclear Power Post Fukushima:<br>United States, France and Germany<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>                        | 31-40   |
| 5. Nation-Building Through Innovative Communities<br><i>Manoj kumar</i>  | 41-52   |
| 6. The Politics of the Durand Line<br><i>Rhea Abraham</i>  | 53-62   |
| 7. Tunisia, Egypt and Libya after the Arab Spring:<br>Future of Economic and Strategic Ties With India<br><i>Sharad Srivastava</i> | 63-72   |
| 8. Robotics Response to Nuclear Crisis in Japan<br><i>Yeon Jung Ji</i>   | 73-82   |
| 9. Energy Security: The Option of Nuclear Energy<br><i>Stuti Banerjee</i>  | 83-92   |
| 10. Joint Task Force, Air Power and Operation Neptune Spear<br><i>Indrani Talukdar</i>   | 93-102  |
| 11. Iranian Nuclear Crisis: Impact on Iran-Arab Countries Relations<br><i>K.N. Tennyson</i>  | 103-114 |
| 12. China's Tawang Temptation<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>  | 115-124 |
| 13. Understanding Privatisation of Security in the 21st Centaury<br><i>Swati Kundra</i>  | 125-134 |
| 14. Pakistan's Unremitting Search for Strategic Depth in Afghanistan<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>                                      | 135-144 |

**VOL. 2, NO. 2. 2013 (JANUARY-MARCH)**

|   |      |
|---|------|
| 1. India-South Korea Defence Cooperation: Bolstering a Strategic Hedge<br><i>Yeon Jung Ji</i> | 1-12 |
|---|------|

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 2.  | India's Strategic Environment: Application of Grand Strategy<br><i>Prateek Kapil</i>                                | 13-24   |
| 3.  | Air Power in the Libyan Crisis<br><i>Indrani Talukdar</i>   | 25-34   |
| 4.  | The Dragon Awakens: China and its Soft Power<br><i>Stuti Banerjee</i>   | 35-46   |
| 5.  | India's Role in Rebuilding Afghanistan: Realities and Challenges<br><i>K.N. Tennyson</i>                            | 47-58   |
| 6.  | China's Footprint in South Asia: A Concern for India<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>  | 59-68   |
| 7.  | Politics of Ethnicity in Afghanistan: Understanding the Pashtuns and the Minor Ethnic Groups<br><i>Rhea Abraham</i> | 69-82   |
| 8.  | The Impasse in Iran<br><i>Kanica Rakhra</i>   | 83-90   |
| 9.  | India-China Relations: The Way Forward through Renewable Energy Diplomacy<br><i>Dhanasree Jayaram</i>               | 91-100  |
| 10. | Upheavals in the Arab World: Implication for India's Foreign Policy<br><i>Lunthuiyang Riamei</i>                    | 101-110 |
| 11. | IAF in Mootw: Capacity Building an Immediate Priority<br><i>Nishant Gupta</i>                                       | 111-120 |
| 12. | Finding Limits to the Sino-Pak Nuclear Nexus<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i>   | 121-128 |

**VOL. 2, NO. 3. 2013 (APRIL-JUNE)**

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1.  | Electromagnetic Weapons and Air Power<br><i>Indrani Talukdar</i>  | 1-10    |
| 2.  | Sino-US Rapprochement: New Trends<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>   | 11-20   |
| 3.  | Pakistan's Nasr Missile<br><i>Debalina Chatterjee</i>   | 21-30   |
| 4.  | Conceptualising Strategic Culture: A Perspective<br><i>Prateek Kapil</i>                                      | 31-42   |
| 5.  | Environment Change: The New Arena of Defence Cooperation<br><i>Manoj Kumar</i>                                | 43-54   |
| 6.  | Understanding the Syrian Crisis: Highlighting the Role of India and the Need for Peace<br><i>Rhea Abraham</i> | 55-66   |
| 7.  | Kazakhstan: A Neglected Partner<br><i>Dhiraj Kukreja</i>  | 67-76   |
| 8.  | Institution of the Dalai Lama and the Sino-Tibetan Conflict<br><i>Simart Kaur Virk</i>                        | 77-86   |
| 9.  | Air Evacuation: Looking Beyond Kuwait Airlift (1990)<br><i>A. K. Chordia</i>                                  | 87-96   |
| 10. | Afghan National Security Forces: Prospects and Challenges<br><i>K.N. Tennyson</i>                             | 97-108  |
| 11. | December 13 Attack on Indian Parliament: Looking at Attribution Theory Explanations<br><i>Kanica Rakhra</i>   | 109-118 |

12. Legality of Drone Strikes by the United States in Pakistan 119-129  
*Shiv Ram Krishna Pande*

**VOL. 2, NO. 4. 2013 (JULY-SEPTEMBER)**

1. Operations Cactus: An Eyewitness Account 1-10  
*Ashok K. Chordia*
2. Environment Change: The New Arena of Defence Cooperation 11-22  
*Manoj Kumar*
3. Environmental Stresses and Regional Cooperation: A Perspective 23-32  
*Nishant Gupta*
4. Boeing P-81 and India's Maritime Security 33-44  
*Saloni Salil*
5. Making Sense of Pakistan's Strategy 45-54  
*Shalini Chawla*
6. Applicability of Panchsheel in India-China Relations 55-64  
*Sana Hashmi*
7. India's Nuclear Grand Bargain 65-74  
*Sitakanta Mishra*
8. Nuclear Terrorism: Assessing the threat to India 75-82  
*Manpreet Sethi*
9. Hassan Rouhani: The Key to the Iranian Nuclear Impasse? 83-94  
*Caron Natasha Tauro*
10. US Alliance System and the East Asian Paradox 95-104  
*Nidhi Prasad*
11. Japan's Rearment and its Possible Consequences 105-114  
*Ankit Kumar*
12. Drift of Nuclear Energy Market Cooperation, Competition, and Interdependence 115-125  
*Ji Yeon-Jung*

**VOL. 3, NO. 1. 2013 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

1. Supercomputer Capabilities: Interpreting Its Role in Defence 1-12  
*E. Dilipraj*
2. Emerging Contours of Russia-Turkey Relations in the Security Environment of the Middle East 13-22  
*Chandra Rekha*
3. The Labyrinthine Role of News Media in National Security: Case Study Edward Snowden 23-32  
*Kriti Singh*
4. Eighth CII-CAPS International Conference on Aerospace Industry: A Report 33-46
5. India's Strategic Environment: Application of Grand Strategy 47-58  
*Prateek Kapil*
6. The Tibet Issue under China's New Leadership: Changes and Continuities 59-70  
*Tseyang Lhamo*
7. Rise of China and its Foreign Policy 71-80  
*Raj Mongia*
8. Regional Security Scan: India 81-90  
*Manmohan Bahadur*
9. The Access-Anti-Access Game: In East Asia 91-100  
*Arjun Subramanian P.*

- |     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 10. | Analysing China's Border Dispute Resolution with South Asia States<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>               | 101-114 |
| 11. | Breakthrough in Geneva<br><i>Sheel Kant Sharma</i>   | 115-122 |
| 12. | Drift of Nuclear Energy Market Cooperation,<br>Competition, and Interdependence<br><i>Ji Yeon-Jung</i> | 115-125 |

**VOL. 3, NO. 2. 2014 (JANUARY-MARCH)**

- |     |   |        |
|-----|---|--------|
| 1.  | Conflict and Aerospace Power in the 21st Century Valedictory Address at<br>5th Jumbo Majumdar Seminar by VCAS<br><i>R.K. Sharma</i> | 1-5    |
| 2.  | Rise of Asian Smart Powers: Initiatives of Japan, China and India<br><i>Ankit kumar</i>   | 7-18   |
| 3.  | Expansion of Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>  | 19-30  |
| 4.  | Military Implications of China's Rise<br><i>Ravinder Chhatwal</i>   | 31-40  |
| 5.  | The Global Political Economy and China<br><i>Raj Mongia</i>   | 41-52  |
| 6.  | 3-Dimensional Printing and the Future of Defence Manufacturing<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i>  | 53-62  |
| 7.  | Space Diplomacy and Defence: The Sense in Surging Apace<br><i>K.K. Nair</i>   | 63-74  |
| 8.  | The Demands on Leadership and Emerging Future Leaders<br><i>R. Ghose</i>  | 75-86  |
| 9.  | Some Airlifts That Influenced History<br><i>Ashok K. Chordia</i>  | 87-96  |
| 10. | Litmus Test of News Media's Role: Case Study Edward Snowden<br><i>Kriti Singh</i>   | 97-107 |

**VOL. 3, NO. 3. 2014 (APRIL-JUNE)**

- |     |   |        |
|-----|---|--------|
| 1.  | Change in the Nature of Warfare with Aerospace Power<br><i>Dhiraj Kukreja</i>                   | 1-9    |
| 2.  | Environmental Change and Security<br><i>Nishant Gupta</i>                                       | 11-24  |
| 3.  | Synergies in Indo-Russia Defence Cooperation Since 2000<br><i>Chandra Rekha</i>                 | 25-34  |
| 4.  | Indian Response to the US' Rebalancing Strategy<br><i>Asha M. Mathew</i>                        | 35-42  |
| 5.  | China's Naval Modernisation: Will it Cure India's Sea Blindness?<br><i>Arjun Subramanian P.</i> | 43-52  |
| 6.  | Fallout of the Infrastructural Development inside the TA<br><i>Simrat Virk</i>                  | 53-62  |
| 7.  | Nuances of the Dragon's Diplomacy and Strategy: Then and Now<br><i>Raj Mongia</i>               | 63-72  |
| 8.  | The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty: An American Perspective<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>                | 73-84  |
| 9.  | Rationality, Cognition and Strategic Thinking<br><i>Prateek Kapil</i>                           | 85-98  |
| 10. | The Politics of Missile Defence in Poland<br><i>Debalina Ghoshal</i>                            | 99-110 |

**VOL. 3, NO. 4. 2014 (JULY-SEPTEMBER) Special Issue: China**

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | Transforming China's Military: Modernisation Aspects<br><i>Srikanth Kondapalli</i>           | 1-18    |
| 2.  | India-China Relations in a Fast Changing World<br><i>Mohan Guruswamy</i>                     | 19-36   |
| 3.  | Plaaf's March from Antiquity to Modernity<br><i>Ravinder Singh Chhatwal</i>                  | 37-48   |
| 4.  | China-Pakistan Nexus: Challenges for India<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>                          | 49-62   |
| 5.  | Indo-China Trade Relations 2009-2014<br><i>Shreya Kakarla</i>                                | 63-74   |
| 6.  | China's Nuclear Energy Scenario: Three Years after Fukushima<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i>        | 75-84   |
| 7.  | Mapping the Cyber Dragon: China's Conduct of Terror in the Cyber World<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i> | 85-98   |
| 8.  | China's Burgeoning Anti-Satellite Activities<br><i>P. A. Patil</i>                           | 99-110  |
| 9.  | Saliency of South China Sea in China's Strategic Calculation<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>           | 111-120 |
| 10. | Relevance of Tibet Issue in India's National Security<br><i>Tseyang Lhamo</i>                | 121-132 |
| 11. | China's Peripheral Diplomacy: Responses from Japan, the US and India<br><i>Ankit Kumar</i>   | 133-144 |
| 12. | Chinese Media Landscape: An Overview<br><i>Kriti Singh</i>                                   | 145-158 |

**VOL. 4, NO. 1. 2014 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | Role of Defence and Military Diplomacy in India<br><i>Sanjay J Singh</i>                               | 1-13    |
| 2.  | Knowledge Society, Technology and National Security<br><i>Sheel Kant Sharma</i>                        | 14-20   |
| 3.  | China inside the Tibetan Autonomous Region<br><i>Simrat Virk</i>                                       | 21-30   |
| 4.  | The Paradox in US-China Relations: A Commentary<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>                                  | 31-40   |
| 5.  | India's Military Space Command: Lessons From Japan's Proposed Military Space Force<br><i>K.K. Nair</i> | 41-50   |
| 6.  | Is the World on the Brink of a New Cold War?<br><i>Chandra Rekha</i>                                   | 51-61   |
| 7.  | Out of Area Contingency (OOAC): The Indian Scenario<br><i>Vivek Kapur</i>                              | 63-80   |
| 8.  | Leveraging Defence Research: Innovating Across Defence to the Civil Spectrum<br><i>Manoj Kumar</i>     | 81-87   |
| 9.  | Articulation of International Laws Governing Cyber Warfare<br><i>Ashish Gupta</i>                      | 89-98   |
| 10. | Climate Change: The New National Security Threat<br><i>Ankit Kumar</i>                                 | 99-110  |
| 11. | Nuclear Rehabilitation of Pakistan!<br><i>Sitakanta Mishra</i>   | 111-120 |

**VOL. 4, NO. 2. 2015 (JANUARY-MARCH)**

1. Geo-Politics and Aerospace Power 1-7  
*SS Soman*
2. China's Role in Afghanistan Post 2014 9-22  
*Shalini Chawla*
3. China's Approach Towards Boundary Dispute Resolution:  
A Case Study of Central Asia 23-34  
*Sana Hashmi*
4. Not a Tilt to the US: Only Inevitable Continuity in US-India Relations 35-43  
*Hina Pandey*
5. India-Asean Cooperation on Cyber Security:  
Opportunities, Challenges and Capacity Building 45-54  
*AK Gupta*
6. US-Nato Drawdown from Afghanistan: Challenges for Xinjiang 55-63  
*Uday Deshwal*
7. Indian Print and Television Media Landscape: An Overview 65-78  
*Kriti Singh*
8. Agenda 'Somewhat' Set for the Npt Review Conference 2015 79-87  
*Manisha Chaurasiya*
9. Pinnacle Islands: A Study in Multiple Perspectives 89-98  
*Snigdha Mongia*

**VOL. 4, NO. 3. 2015 (APRIL-JUNE)**

1. China's Maritime Silk Road Initiative: A Critique 1-9  
*Vijay Sakhuja*
2. US Policy Towards the Tibet Issue 11-22  
*Tseyang Lhamo*
3. The Dragon Stands Strong in Africa: China's Africa Policy 23-32  
*Shaheli Das*
4. A Paradigm Shift: Defence Research and  
Development Organisation to Deliver 33-42  
*Manoj Kumar*
5. Threat From Electromagnetic Pulse Attack: Evolution, Intentions and Effects 43-56  
*Ashish Gupta*
6. Challenges of Terrorism In Cyber Space 57-71  
*E. Dilipraj*
7. Disaster Relief Operation: Kaizen to Draw More from Airlifts 73-84  
*Ashok K. Chordia*
8. Understanding New Media and Military Relationship 85-96  
*Kriti Singh*
9. Defence R&D in India: Challenges and Opportunities for Indian Industries 97-110  
*Prakash Panneerselvam*

**VOL. 4, NO. 4. 2015 (JULY-SEPTEMBER)**

1. Analysing the Greek Crisis 1-9  
*Nitin Gadkari*
2. Challenges of the Security Transition in Afghanistan Post US Drawdown 11-25  
*Shalini Chawla*
3. Al Qaeda to Islamic State: A Lesson Failed 27-35  
*Aersh Danish*



|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 4.  | Post-Earthquake Nepal and the Constitution:<br>An Opportunity Missed for an Inclusive and Fair Constitution?<br><i>Uday Deshwal</i> | 37-45   |
| 5.  | China's Foreign Policy Towards Sri Lanka: Implications For India<br><i>Shaheli Das</i>  | 47-59   |
| 6.  | Assessing the Challenges of Deterring China<br><i>Swati Arun</i>  | 61-70   |
| 7.  | India-China Military Space Cooperation:<br>Evolving Beyond Joint Statement to Engagement<br><i>Kiran Krishnan Nair</i>              | 71-79   |
| 8.  | China's Military Aviation Industry<br><i>Ravinder Singh Chhatwal</i>  | 81-89   |
| 9.  | Cyber Security Challenges for India: An Assessment of its Preparedness<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i>  | 91-107  |
| 10. | Social Media: Opportunities and Challenges<br><i>Kriti Singh</i>  | 109-119 |

**VOL. 5, NO. 1. 2015 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | The Evolution of Political Islam: How Islam got Radicalised<br><i>Syed Ata Hasnain</i>       | 1-8     |
| 2.  | New Rotary Wing Acquisitions: Operation Enhancement of IAF<br><i>Manmohan Bahadur</i>        | 9-18    |
| 3.  | Space Security Policy: Imperatives for India<br><i>R Radhish</i>                             | 19-31   |
| 4.  | China's Cyber Security Policy: An Organisational Assessment<br><i>M K Sharma</i>             | 33-46   |
| 5.  | China's Rapid Launch/Launch on Demand Capability<br><i>Arjun Subramanian P</i>               | 47-56   |
| 6.  | Land Power Vs Sea Power: Has China been able to Resolve its Debate?<br><i>Temjenmeren Ao</i> | 57-69   |
| 8.  | China-Bhutan: An Unresolved Boundary Dispute<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>                           | 71-80   |
| 9.  | Neurotechnology: An Emerging and Insidious Paradigm of Warfare<br><i>Ashish Gupta</i>        | 81-92   |
| 10. | Apache and Chinook Deal: A Perspective<br><i>R K Narang</i>                                  | 93-103  |
| 11. | Cruise Missiles in Future Wars: India's Prospects<br><i>Vivek Kapur</i>                      | 105-116 |
| 12. | Nuclear Security and Civil Society Organisations<br><i>Manisha Chaurasiya</i>                | 117-127 |

**VOL. 5, NO. 2. 2016 (JANUARY-MARCH)**

|    |  |       |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. | Stolen Cars and Terrorism: Using Indian Satellites (IRNSS) to<br>Break the Cross-Border Nexus and Promote Trade and<br>International Cooperation<br><i>K.K. Nair</i> | 1-11  |
| 2. | Technology Forecasting Techniques: An Aid to<br>Perspective Planning in Defence<br><i>Manoj Kumar</i>  | 13-28 |
| 3. | Electronic Warfare: Russia's Enhanced Capabilities<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i>   | 29-40 |

|    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 4. | Understanding Islamic State's Expansion:<br>The Wilayat Strategy and its Impact on South Asia<br><i>Aersh Danish</i> | 41-50   |
| 5. | Military Implications of China's Reclamation Drive in South China Sea<br><i>HPS Sodhi</i>                            | 51-63   |
| 6. | China in the International System: What Lies Ahead for East Asia?<br><i>Swati Arun</i>                               | 65-75   |
| 7. | Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel Trilateral Relations: Post Iran Nuclear Deal<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>                      | 77-87   |
| 8. | Understanding the Relevance of Indian Military Histories<br><i>R K Narang</i>  | 89-100  |
| 9. | Art of Human Hacking in Times of Social Media:<br>Case Study—Honey Trap Operations<br><i>Kriti Singh</i>             | 101-111 |

**VOL. 5, NO. 3. 2016 (APRIL-JUNE) Special Issue: India's Nuclear Challenges**

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | Nuclear Enterprise and Diplomacy: India Story<br><i>Sheelkant Sharma</i>   | 1-12    |
| 2.  | Overview of Nuclear Non-Proliferation, May 2015-May 2016<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i>  | 13-23   |
| 3.  | Pakistan's Nuclear Behaviour<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>  | 25-40   |
| 4.  | Global Centre of Nuclear Excellence: India's Nuclear Security Provider<br><i>Reshmi Kazi</i>   | 41-59   |
| 5.  | The Wisdom of India's No First Use Policy<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>  | 61-71   |
| 6.  | Lessons from the Iran Nuclear Deal: Moving Beyond the<br>NPT in Strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Architecture<br><i>Arka Biswas</i>                 | 73-86   |
| 7.  | Making Sense of Russia's Strategic Nuclear Modernisation<br><i>Deep Jyoti Barman</i>   | 87-98   |
| 8.  | Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperation: Strengthening<br>Bilateral Ties Between India and Russia<br><i>Chandra Rekha</i>   | 99-113  |
| 9.  | India-France Civilian Nuclear Cooperation: Dynamics and Challenges<br><i>Manisha Chaurasiya</i>  | 115-125 |
| 10. | Impact of Nuclear Weapons on the Expected Nature of War:<br>An Indian Perspective<br><i>Vivek Kapur</i>  | 127-138 |
| 11. | Challenges of Cyber Security to Nuclear Infrastructure<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i>   | 139-150 |
| 12. | DF-41 Icbm: A Short Imagery and Open-Source Data Analysis to<br>Study the Future Nuclear ICBM Capability of the Pla Rocket Force<br><i>Arjun Subramanian P</i> | 151-162 |

**VOL. 5, NO. 4. 2016 (JULY-SEPTEMBER)**

|    |  |       |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. | Nuclear Suppliers Group and India<br><i>Rajiv Nayan</i>  | 1-9   |
| 2. | Space for International Cooperation and Regional Stability:<br>Expanding India's SAARC Satellite Project to Northeast Asia<br><i>Kiran Krishnan Nair</i> | 11-20 |

|     |  |        |
|-----|--|--------|
| 3.  | China's Emerging Crisis<br><i>Temjenmeren Ao</i>   | 21-32  |
| 4.  | South China Sea Dispute after the Tribunal Decision<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>                                      | 33-42  |
| 5.  | China's Engagement in Central Asia: Cultural Diplomacy<br><i>Poonam Mann</i>                                   | 43-51  |
| 6.  | Analysing India-Iran Relations Post Removal of Sanctions<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>                                  | 53-64  |
| 7.  | Implications of Great Power Presence in Central Asia<br><i>Vivek Kapur</i>                                     | 65-73  |
| 8.  | The Caspian Region: Regional Cooperation to Ensure India's Energy Security<br><i>Ngangom Dhruba Tara Singh</i> | 75-84  |
| 9.  | The Evolving Face of Suicide Terrorism<br><i>Radhika Halder</i>  | 85-96  |
| 10. | Aerial Delivery of Men and Material: Quest for Accuracy<br><i>Ashok K. Chordia</i>                             | 97-105 |

**VOL. 6, NO. 1. 2016 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1.  | Emerging Trends in Russia-Pakistan Relations: Should India be Concerned?<br><i>Chandra Rekha</i>                                      | 1-13    |
| 2.  | The US Elections: Possible Changes in Policy and India<br><i>Stuti Banerjee</i>   | 15-24   |
| 3.  | Pakistan's Ballistic and Cruise Missile Programmes<br><i>Ravinder Singh Chhatwal</i>  | 25-35   |
| 4.  | New Chinese Bomber: Enhancing Long Range Strike Capability<br><i>Arjun Subramanian P</i>  | 37-45   |
| 5.  | The Toddler Terrorists: The Child Soldiers of the Islamic State<br><i>Aersh Danish</i>  | 47-59   |
| 6.  | "Right to be Forgotten" in the Digital Age: Ethics and Compliance Challenges<br><i>Ashish Gupta</i>                                   | 61-75   |
| 7.  | The Reinvention of Lighter-Than-Air Flying Machines<br><i>Vivek Kapur</i>   | 77-86   |
| 8.  | Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: Turning Back the Clock?<br><i>Jai Raina</i>   | 87-95   |
| 9.  | N N Vohra: 'Safeguarding India: Essays on Governance and Security'<br>( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>K K Nohwar</i>                     | 97-101  |
| 10. | R Rajaraman: 'India's Nuclear Energy Programme: Future Plans, Prospects and Concerns' ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i> | 102-106 |

**VOL. 6, NO. 2. 2017 (JANUARY-MARCH)**

|    |   |       |
|----|---|-------|
| 1. | We Need A 'Think Through' Strategy Against Pakistan's Proxy War in J&K<br><i>Syed Ata Hasnain</i> | 1-8   |
| 2. | Russian Discourse on US Nuclear Arms Reduction Proposal<br><i>Arun Mohanty</i>                    | 9-21  |
| 3. | The Trajectory of China's Aviation Industry<br><i>Manmohan Bahadur</i>                            | 23-34 |
| 4. | Prospects of China-United States Relations under Trump's Administration<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>     | 35-43 |
| 5. | China's Pragmatic Alignment with West Asia<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>                                   | 45-59 |

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 6.  | India-China Energy Cooperation: A Possibility for Rapprochement<br><i>Temjenmeren Ao</i>   | 61-72   |
| 7.  | Assessing the Impact of Beijing's Militarisation in the South China Sea on ASEAN Relations<br><i>Pooja Bhatt</i>   | 73-85   |
| 8.  | Operation Mekong: China Deals with Barriers to Embrace the Mekong River<br><i>Puyam Rakesh Singh</i>   | 87-98   |
| 9.  | Al Qaeda: Assessing the "Phenomenon"<br><i>Radhika Halder</i>  | 99-112  |
| 10. | India's Role in the Changing Geopolitical Scenario in the IO<br><i>RA Maslekar</i>   | 113-126 |
| 11. | Venkat Dhulipala: Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam and the Quest for Pakistan in Colonial North India ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Aersh Danish</i> | 127-130 |

**VOL. 6, NO. 3. 2017 (APRIL-JUNE)**

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1.  | The "Privacy Paradox" of the Digital Age<br><i>Ashish Gupta</i>   | 1-12    |
| 2.  | Air Gapping of Sensitive Computer Systems: Is it an Obsolete Practice?<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i>  | 13-27   |
| 3.  | President Trump's Hundred Days: US-Iran Relations and the Nuclear Deal<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>  | 29-37   |
| 4.  | THAAD Deployment in South Korea: Will This Move Alter China-South Korea Relations?<br><i>Debalina Ghoshal</i>                                       | 39-48   |
| 5.  | The Growth of Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan<br><i>Shreya Talwar</i>   | 49-63   |
| 6.  | Deterrence Through Space: A Case for an Indian Asat<br><i>Anand Rao</i>   | 65-73   |
| 7.  | India's Foreign Policy: Exploring the Maritime Outlook<br><i>Stuti Banerjee</i>   | 75-84   |
| 8.  | 'Make in India' in Civil Aviation<br><i>RK Narang</i>   | 85-97   |
| 9.  | Arif Jamal: Call For Transnational Jihad: Lashkar-e-Taiba 1985 – 2014 ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Radhika Halder</i>                               | 99-103  |
| 10. | Nitin Sathe: Born to Fly: Fighter Pilot MP Anil Kumar Teaches Us There is No Battle Mind Cannot Win ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Narender Yadav</i> | 104-106 |

**VOL. 6, NO. 4. 2017 (JULY-SEPTEMBER) Special Issue: India and Its Neighborhood**

|    |   |       |
|----|---|-------|
| 1. | Trump's Afghan Policy: Implications for Afghanistan and Pakistan<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>   | 1-13  |
| 2. | China's Internal Situation Before the 19th Party Congress: Overview<br><i>Jayadeva Ranade</i>   | 15-23 |
| 3. | India-China Boundary Dispute: A Review in 2017<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>  | 25-37 |
| 4. | India and Bangladesh: How Do We Stay on Track?<br><i>Sreeradha Datta</i>  | 39-47 |
| 5. | India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations Under the National Unity Government of Sri Lanka: Challenges and Future Scenario<br><i>Samatha Mallempati</i> | 49-60 |

- |     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 6.  | India's Fight Against Pakistan Sponsored Terror:<br>Case Study Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT)<br><i>Radhika Halder</i> | 61-70   |
| 7.  | Understanding the Dynamics of the Chabahar Deal for India and Iran<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>                         | 71-80   |
| 8.  | India-Myanmar Relations in the Era of Myanmar's Political Transition<br><i>Puyam Rakesh Singh</i>               | 81-92   |
| 9.  | India's 'Act East' Policy: A Means to Ensure Stalemate and<br>Growth in Southeast Asia<br><i>Temjenmeren Ao</i> | 93-106  |
| 10. | Tilak Devasher: Pakistan: Courting the Abyss ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Shreya Talwar</i>                     | 107-112 |
| 11. | Gautam Banerjee: Twelve Essays on Terrorism: A VIF Analysis ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Aersh Danish</i>       | 113-117 |

**VOL. 7, NO. 1. 2017 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

- |     |   |        |
|-----|---|--------|
| 1.  | A Decade of Offsets Policy: In Retrospect<br><i>SN Misra</i>  | 1-12   |
| 2.  | Implications of Piecemeal Distribution of IAF Assets<br><i>Vivek Kapur</i>  | 13-23  |
| 3.  | Organisational Decision Making in the Armed Forces:<br>Case Study, Perspectives and Challenges<br><i>Ankush Banerjee</i>  | 25-38  |
| 4.  | India-Japan Defence Ties Under the Leadership of<br>Shinzo Abe and Narendra Modi<br><i>Piyush Ghasiya</i>   | 49-50  |
| 5.  | Time to Consolidate Ties with Myanmar to Create a<br>New Regional Security Balance<br><i>Mohinder Pal Singh</i>   | 51-60  |
| 6.  | India's Engagement with South Caucasus<br><i>Ngangom Dhruba Tara Singh</i>  | 61-70  |
| 7.  | Climate Change: The Future Challenge to Security<br><i>Stuti Banerjee</i>   | 71-80  |
| 8.  | Left Wing Extremism in India: Understanding Ideological Motivations<br><i>Suparna Banerjee</i>  | 81-91  |
| 9.  | PK Roy & Aspi Cawasji: Strategic Vision-2030: Security and Development of<br>Andaman & Nicobar Islands ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Manmohan Bahadur</i>                | 93-96  |
| 10. | Arjun Subramaniam: Wider Horizons: Perspectives on National Security,<br>Strategic Culture, Air Power, Leadership and More ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Pooja Bhatt</i> | 97-100 |

**VOL. 7, NO. 2. 2018 (JANUARY-MARCH)**

**Special Issue: Non-Traditional Security Threats**

- |    |   |       |
|----|---|-------|
| 1. | Pakistan: Water Woes and Impact on Indo-Pak Relations<br><i>Tilak Devasher</i>                      | 1-12  |
| 2. | China-Pakistan Economic Corridor: Its Geopolitical and Security Impacts<br><i>Siegfried O. Wolf</i> | 13-23 |
| 3. | Trends in Terrorism<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>  | 25-34 |

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 4.  | Electricity Production and Environmental Sustainability:<br>Nuclear Energy Acts As the Bridge<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i> | 35-42   |
| 5.  | China's Recent Forays in Space<br><i>Ajey Lele</i>   | 43-55   |
| 6.  | Cyber Space Regulation: The Need of the Hour<br><i>E. Dilipraj</i>   | 57-67   |
| 7.  | Russia is yet to Win the 'War' against Drug Trafficking<br><i>Chandra Rekha</i>  | 69-83   |
| 8.  | Environmental Change as a "Threat Multiplier": The Case of Migration<br><i>Dhanasree Jayaram</i>                       | 85-96   |
| 9.  | The Global Phenomenon of Suicide Terrorism: A South Asian Perspective<br><i>Radhika Halder</i>                         | 97-107  |
| 10. | Jayadeva Ranade: Cadres of Tibet ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Puyam Rakesh Singh</i>                                   | 109-112 |
| 11. | Theo Farrell: Unwinnable: Britain's War in<br>Afghanistan 2001-2014 ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Poonam Mann</i>       | 113-116 |

**VOL. 7, NO. 3. 2018 (APRIL-JUNE)**

|     |  |         |
|-----|--|---------|
| 1.  | JuD's Social Outreach: Understanding Digital Terrorism<br><i>Shalini Chawla and E. Dilipraj</i>  | 1-11    |
| 2.  | Revisiting US-North Korea Standoff in the Current Uncertain Times:<br>Any Lessons Learnt?<br><i>Hina Pandey</i>                                | 13-22   |
| 3.  | The Defence Industrial Complex: US' Next Target to<br>Contain Russia's Military Resurgence<br><i>Chandra Rekha</i>                             | 23-36   |
| 4.  | India's Balancing Act with West Asia<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>  | 37-49   |
| 5.  | China-Philippines Contention in the South China Sea<br><i>Sana Hashmi</i>  | 51-63   |
| 6.  | Managing Crude: A Challenge for India's Energy Basket<br><i>Asheesh Shrivastava</i>  | 65-75   |
| 7.  | Securing the Ecological Balance in Northeast India under the 'Act East' Policy<br><i>Temjenmeren Ao</i>  | 77-88   |
| 8.  | South Asia's Refugee Experience: What about the Rohingyas?<br><i>Sripathi Narayanan</i>  | 89-99   |
| 9.  | Hassan Abbas: Pakistan's Nuclear Bomb: A Story of Defiance,<br>Deterrence and Deviance ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i>         | 101-104 |
| 10. | Ashok K Chordia: Operation Cactus: Anatomy of one of<br>India's Most Daring Military Operations ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Nishant Gupta</i> | 105-108 |

**VOL. 7, NO. 4. 2018 (JULY-SEPTEMBER) Special Issue: China**

|    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | Is Xi Jinping Really as Powerful as his Image Suggests?<br><i>Jayadeva Ranade</i> | 1-8  |
| 2. | China's New Diplomacy under Xi Jinping<br><i>Madhu Bhalla and Sanjeev Kumar</i>   | 9-18 |

|     |   |         |
|-----|---|---------|
| 3.  | Has the Chinese Assistance Made Pakistan Secure?<br><i>Shalini Chawla</i>   | 19-30   |
| 4.  | CMC and Propaganda under Xi Jinping: Invoking Military Nationalism to Address the Crisis of Morale<br><i>Bhavna Singh</i>                                       | 31-44   |
| 5.  | Is China's Air Force Really Too Tall for the Indian Air Force?<br><i>Ravinder Singh Chhatwal</i>  | 45-57   |
| 6.  | China's 'Grey Zone' Operations: How 'Maritime Militia' and 'Little Blue Men' are Changing the Maritime War Landscape<br><i>Pooja Bhatt</i>                      | 59-72   |
| 7.  | China's Nepal Policy in the 21st Century: Tibet, Security, and Connectivity<br><i>Rishi Gupta</i>   | 73-84   |
| 8.  | China's Interest in the Horn of Africa: Implications for India<br><i>Sarvureshth Dhammi</i>   | 85-96   |
| 9.  | Doklam Episode and Aftermath: India-China Bilateral Relations<br><i>Raj Mongia</i>  | 97-106  |
| 10. | Sri Lanka-China Relations in Recent Years: Possible Implications<br><i>Samatha Mallempati</i>   | 107-115 |
| 11. | Yogesh Joshi and Frank O'Donnell: India in Nuclear Asia: Evolution of Regional Forces, Perceptions and Policies ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Manpreet Sethi</i> | 117-121 |

**VOL. 8, NO. 1. 2018 (OCTOBER-DECEMBER)**

|    |  |       |
|----|--|-------|
| 1. | Emerging 'Middle Power' Influence in West Asia: Role of Turkey<br><i>Anu Sharma</i>  | 1-10  |
| 2. | International North-South Transport Corridor: The Game Changer for India?<br><i>Poonam Mann</i>                            | 11-21 |
| 3. | Rotary Unmanned Aerial Vehicle as a Military Platform<br><i>B S Nijjar</i>   | 23-35 |
| 4. | S-400 Triumph: Analysing Strategic Dimensions<br><i>Sitakanta Mishra</i>   | 37-46 |
| 5. | Considering The Importance of Pre-Negotiations: A Case of The Open Skies Treaty<br><i>Shrabana Barua</i>                   | 47-58 |
| 6. | Ethiopia's New Chapter: A New Dawn for Leadership<br><i>Sarvureshth Dhammi</i>   | 59-70 |
| 7. | Analysing SAARC and BIMSTEC: Can India Attain a Balance?<br><i>Jayesh Khatu</i>  | 71-82 |
| 8. | Mobo Gao: Constructing China: Clashing Perspectives of the People's Republic ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Bhavna Singh</i> | 83-87 |
| 9. | Dwarika Nath Dhungel and Madan Kumar Dahal: Nepal: A Country in Transition ( <i>Book Review</i> )<br><i>Rishi Gupta</i>    | 88-91 |

# NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles submitted to *Defence and Diplomacy* should be original contributions and should not be under consideration for any other publication at the same time. If another version of the article is under consideration by another publication, or has been, or will be published elsewhere, authors should clearly indicate this at the time of submission.

Each typescript should be submitted in duplicate. Articles should be typewritten on A4/Letter paper, on one side only, **double-spaced (including the notes)** and with ample margins. All pages (including those containing only diagrams and tables) should be numbered consecutively.

There is no standard length for articles, but 3,000 to 3,500 words (including notes and references) is a useful target. The article should begin with an indented summary of around 100 words, which should describe the main arguments and conclusions of the article.

Details of the author's institutional affiliations, full address and other contact information should be included on a separate cover sheet. Any acknowledgements should be included on the cover sheet as should a note of the exact length of the article.

All diagrams, charts and graphs should be referred to as figure and consecutively numbered. Tables should be kept to a minimum and contain only essential data. Each figure and table must be given an Arabic numeral, followed by a heading, and be referred to in the text.

Articles should be submitted on high-density 3-inch virus free disks (IBM PC) in rich text format (RTF) together with an **exactly matching double-spaced hard copy** to facilitate typesetting; notes should be placed at the end of each page. Any diagrams or maps should be copied to a separate disk separately in uncompressed TIF or JPG formats in individual files. These should be prepared in black and white. Tints should be avoided, use open patterns instead. If maps and diagrams cannot be prepared electronically, they should be presented on good quality white paper.

Each disk should be labelled with the journal's name, article title, author's name and software used. It is the author's responsibility to ensure that where copyright materials are included within an article, the permission of the copyright holder has been obtained. Confirmation of this should be included on a separate sheet included with the disk.

Copyright in articles published in *Defence and Diplomacy* rests with the publisher.

## STYLE

**Authors are responsible for ensuring that their manuscripts conform to the journal style.** The Editors will not undertake retyping of manuscripts before publication. A guide to style and presentation is obtainable from the publisher.

The style should be followed closely. Dates in the form January 1, 2000. Use figures for 11 and above. British spellings are to be used. Authors should provide brief biographical details to include institutional affiliation and recent publications for inclusion in About the Contributors. Sub-headings and sub-sub-headings should be unambiguously marked on the copy.

## NOTES

Notes should be **double spaced** and numbered consecutively through the article. **The first line of a note must align with subsequent lines. Each note number should be standard size and have a full point.**

- a) References to books should give author's name: title of the book (*italics*); and the place, publisher and date of publication in brackets.  
e.g. 1. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense* (NY: Columbia UP, 1961), Ch. 2, pp. 14-18.
- b) References to articles in periodicals should give the author's initials and surname, the title of the article in quotation marks, title of the periodical (*italics*), the number of the volume/issue in Arabic numerals, the date of publication, and the page numbers:  
e.g., Douglas M. Fox, "Congress and the US Military Service Budgets in the Post War Period," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, vol. 16, no. 2, May 1971, pp. 382-393.