



MUSLIM Institute
Mission of Unity, Stability &
Leadership In Muslims

Round Table Discussion on
**Emerging Geo-Political Scenario in
Middle East**

Organized by
MUSLIM Institute

MUSLIM Institute organized a round table discussion “Emerging Geo-Political Scenario in the Middle East” on Tuesday, August 1, 2017 at National Library of Pakistan, Islamabad. Former Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi chaired the session whereas H.E. Mr. Walid Abu Ali (Ambassador of Palestine to Pakistan), Dr. Tughral Yamin (Associate Dean, CIPS, NUST), H.E. Jao Paulo Sabido Costa (Ambassador of Portugal to Pakistan), Lt. Gen. (R) Naeem Lodhi, Dr. Zafar Iqbal Cheema (President, Strategic Vision Institute) and M.M. Al-Ashabi, (Ambassador of Yemen to Pakistan) were the expert panelists on the occasion.



Brief summary of the thoughts shared by the speakers is given as under:

Middle East, being historically significant region, is the birth place of Abrahamic religions Islam, Christianity and Judaism. Middle Eastern countries Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are all members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which pumps roughly 40% of the world's total oil supply needs while Saudi Arabia is leading the group with highest petroleum exports.

Emerging situation in the Middle East reveals disunity, lack of consensus, ideological and political divide. One dramatic and disastrous thing which happened in the Middle East is human displacement and mass migration. There are not only internal factors but also the external ones like the tug of war between world powers which are adding fuel to the fire.



Post-colonial policy is likely to be continued in the Middle East in order to maintain western hegemony over the region. Only the pro-western regimes are allowed to enjoy stability. Some great powers pursue regime change policy to destabilize their opponent block. They scored high success in re-chartering the Middle East especially in the case of Libya, Syria and Iraq. Foreign military intervention as well as economic assistance to pressure groups in the region play dominant role in redefining regional political power game. Emergence of non-state actors and terrorist organizations is also very important. The question is from where they are getting money, from where they are getting weapons and logistic supply as well as armed training and recruitment? This hints that it is not just an indigenous terrorist organization and is likely to shape the future geopolitical situation of the Middle East. The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran is also there which is becoming cause of many conflicts.

The policies of the Middle Eastern countries are influenced by extra regional countries like Iran and Syria being supported by China and Russia whereas Saudi Arabia by United States of America and pro-western countries.

Regionally and internationally, we have to emphasize the interest of the international community in the Middle East. Interest number one is Israel, since 1948 when Israel was created by occupying Palestinian land, it has been projected as the sign of democracy in the Middle East. So, the western world has been helping Israel in maintaining her status as the super power of the region while focusing its superiority in

terms of military and economic capabilities. There can never be any peaceful settlement of the Middle Eastern disputes in the presence of Palestine conflict, the denial of the fundamental rights of Palestinians as well as the denial of their territorial integrity. Atrocities and barbarities being committed by Israel in Palestine are beyond any human comprehension. International community should urge Israel to respect international laws as well as stop helping Israel in the subjugation of innocent Palestinians.



After 1973 war, when oil was used as a weapon, western world realized the importance of oil in world politics. First and second gulf war's main objective was to control the supply of oil and gas in the region regardless of its historic cosmetic presentation. Another interest is the market whether it be military or civilian. For those exporters (actor involved in the region), they have to maintain market in the Middle East and the availability of cash money in the market in order to better deal with any international or national economic crisis. They control the market for better functioning of oil supplies sent by these groups to the western world. Due to these strategic interests all propaganda around is continue to have an unstable Middle East.

It is pertinent to identify the actors who actually want peace in the region and what are the entities who do not want to destabilize the region. Then it is also important to know that if we all know what is happening there actually, then why the affected people as well as the countries are unable to address the crisis. Then what are the implications for Pakistan in the wake of this crisis? The people of the region actually want peace. Some of the monarchs and the rulers of the region also want peace but some of them seem to be aspiring absolute control over the region irrespective of the means to achieve their desired status. Supra-national arms exporting corporations are keen to see the region in current situation for the smooth functioning of their arms supply. Secondly why the people and the countries of the region are unable to resolve the crisis? In this respect, confessions of an Economic Hit Man better reveals the fact that how they (international actors involved in the crisis) control the economies of the world and how they modify the thinking of the people through social media. They not only control economies but also control knowledge. In knowledge, they propound such theories which will mislead you into their desired direction. Thirdly, how

the affected people as well the countries can get out of this trouble. They have to seriously think, analyze and pragmatically look into the machinations used by great powers and respond as well as devise methods accordingly. At the end, what should Pakistan do, Pakistan should adopt the policy of deferment in its judgments and policies towards the Middle East.



Interactive Session

Brief summary of the interactive session is given below:

Under the current circumstances Pakistan cannot be part of strengthening the seed of sectarian divide among its masses. Pakistan does not have too much geo-strategic proximity to influence the region. It has only diplomatic and political clout with Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Iran is enjoying good political relations with the Russian and Chinese governments. Middle Eastern countries have much greater economy than Iran but Iran is more independent economically. Historically, Pakistan has always been following the notion of non-partisanship on any inter-Muslim and inter Arab dispute. Pakistan has always tried to play the role of a facilitator. When there was great crisis between Egypt and Syria in sixties and then at the time of Iran-Iraq war in eighties, the government of Pakistan led a number of mediatory missions to help resolve the crisis.

The aim of Zionists is to keep Muslims disintegrated and keep on creating the space for occupying Palestinian land. The world is well aware of the fact that what is going on in Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Yemen. In the wake of this biggest humanitarian crisis, one child is dying at every ten minutes. Where is the international Law? The world has turned a deaf ear to this crisis. In current situation of Middle East, Pakistan and Turkey can play a very crucial role not only economically but also in defense cooperation.



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