

MEI MEDIA WATCH

(A Survey of Editorials)

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Tuesday, 1 May 2012

Friends of Syria Conference, April 2012

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Note: On 1 April 2012, the second round of Friends of Syria conference was held in Istanbul, Turkey. More than 70 countries participating in the conference decided upon various recommendations and declarations alongside certain decisions. The Syrian government denounced the conference and considered it to be a plot for conspiracy against Syria. Editorial commentaries from the international and the Middle Eastern media on this event are reproduced here. **Editor, MEI@ND**

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THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 2 April 2012, Monday

1. Ineffective words

While Western and Arab nations declared their intentions to provide aid and equipment to the Syrian opposition during the Friends of Syria meeting over the weekend, the Syrian government behaved as if the event was taking place on a completely different planet. The regime has proved utterly indifferent to the condemnations doled out by the international community; statements have been vague, promises have not been binding and, therefore unsurprisingly, none has been kept. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/Apr-02/168836-ineffective-words.ashx#axzz1qWPe99p6>

The National

Abu Dhabi, Editorial, 2 April 2012, Monday

2. Opposition in Syria must unite to cripple Assad

Yesterday (1 April), the Friends of Syria contact group meeting in Istanbul recognized the Syrian National Council as the "legitimate representative" of the opposition. The label only partially masks the fact that opposition divisions are deepening, rival factions are splintering and no single "opposition" speaks for the Syrian people. **For the full text:** <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/opposition-in-syria-must-unite-to-cripple-assad>



Dubai, Editorial, 3 April 2012, Tuesday

3. Start of a proxy war?

The Syrian National Council, with the help of the international community is to start paying the Syrian rebels fighting President Bashar Al Assad's forces. This decision is not only an important breakthrough; it consolidates the SNC's standing as a legitimate and internationally recognized opposition body. It also affirms unanimous consent for increasing non-military aid to the rebels from the 83-member Friends of Syria group that recently met in Istanbul. The boost in support to the opposition alliance is also expected to raise the stakes in the fight to unseat Assad. **For the full text:** http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April6.xml§ion=editorial&col=



Dubai, Editorial, 3 April 2012, Tuesday

4. Distrust of Al Assad regime is only growing

The Istanbul meeting offers a way for the global community to support the opposition. The opposition to Bashar Al Assad's regime in Syria received a welcome boost at the Friends of Syria conference in Istanbul this week when 83 attending nations recognized the Syrian National Council as "a legitimate representative of all Syrians and the umbrella organization under which Syrian opposition groups are gathering". **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/distrust-of-al-assad-regime-is-only-growing-1.1003269>



Editorial, 3 April 2012, Tuesday

5. Saving lives in Syria

Bashar Assad has reneged on similar commitments. The Western and Arab nations that have pushed for political change in Syria can continue to pursue that objective, but the urgent imperative is an end to the killing. A day after representatives of 83 nations promised "additional appropriate measures" to shore up the Syrian opposition, a special United Nations envoy said Monday (2 April) that the Bashar Assad regime will withdraw troops from populated areas by April 10, with a mutual cease-fire to begin within 48 hours. **For the full text:** <http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/opinionla/la-ed-syria-aid-rebels-20120403,0,5816688.story>

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