

# MEI MEDIA WATCH

(A Survey of Editorials)

No. 31

Thursday, 31 May 2012

## Kofi Annan Plan for Syria, March 2012

**Note:** Ever since the Syrian crisis began in the early 2011, there has been no viable solution to bring about an understanding between the Syrian government and protesters. on 16 March 2012 special envoy of the United Nations and Arab League Kofi Annan submitted what has been called as ‘Six-Point Peace Plan’ to the UN Security Council. It eventually came into force on 12 April following its acceptance by the Syrian Govt. Editorial commentaries from the international and the Middle Eastern media on this event are reproduced here. **Editor, MEI@ND]**

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Jeddah, Editorial, 18 March 2012, Sunday

### 1. Bold steps must be taken in Syria

**K**ofi Annan, the UN-Arab League envoy on the Syrian crisis, has expressed his disappointment over the Syrian regime’s failure to end its crackdown on its own citizens. On Friday (16 March), Annan urged the Security Council to close ranks and support his efforts to end the violence in Syria, which is on the brink of civil war. **For the full text:**

<http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=20120318119865>

**gulfnews.com**

Dubai, Editorial, 24 March 2012, Saturday

### **2. Annan's plan can help avert Syria civil war**

**T**here is urgent need for a ceasefire as the bloodshed on all sides has been too costly. The recent development with regard to the events in Syria is important. It will define whether the country is heading towards an all-out war or a compromise involving all sides. It is essential that this latest event is seen as an opportunity to stop the bloodshed. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/annan-s-plan-can-help-avert-syria-civil-war-1.998859>

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**Khaleej Times**  
ONLINE

Dubai, Editorial, 28 March 2012, Wednesday

### **3. Annan's onerous mission**

**U**N Special envoy to Syria, Kofi Annan's mission to gather support for ending the violence in the country has received an unexpected boost. President Bashar Al Assad has agreed to Annan's six-point peace plan, thus lending hope that the violence may end sooner than expected. The UN envoy, has in response, urged Damascus to put its commitments to practice. Fortunately, the Russian leadership's lending support to the Syrian peace initiative may have forced Assad to review his obdurate stand. How China responds remains to be seen but considering its support of the Security Council humanitarian resolution and more significantly the latest breakthrough — that is yet to be implemented— things are looking positive. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/March/editorial\\_March52.xml&section=editorial&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/March/editorial_March52.xml&section=editorial&col=)

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**gulfnews.com**

Dubai, Editorial, 29 March 2012, Sunday

### **4. Syrians deserve peaceful power transition**

**B**ut government's ruthlessness gives the Annan plan very little chance of success. The Syrian government of Bashar Al Assad has agreed to work with Kofi Annan's plan for starting a dialogue with the opposition on Syria's future. The plan is backed by the UN Security Council, including Syrian allies Russia and China, and has attracted worldwide support. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/syrians-deserve-peaceful-power-transition-1.1001015>

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Editorial, 31 March 2012, Saturday

### 5. Syria's cover for murder

It's now been 10 days since the U.N. Security Council endorsed a six-point plan for Syria created by former secretary general Kofi Annan, and the Obama administration's ambassador described it as "the best way to put an end to the violence, facilitate much-needed humanitarian assistance and advance a Syrian-led political transition." During that time, according to the London-based Strategic Research and Communication Centre, 624 more Syrians have been reported killed, including 58 women and 45 children. **For the full text:** [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/syrias-cover-for-murder/2012/03/30/gIQAQP63IS\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/syrias-cover-for-murder/2012/03/30/gIQAQP63IS_story.html)



Jeddah, Editorial, 2 April 2012, Monday

### 6. Bold initiatives needed

It was disconcerting that the Syrian regime has a change of heart after accepting the plan of Kofi Annan, the UN-Arab League special envoy, to put an end to the Syrian crisis. Barely a few days after Bashar Al-Assad announced his acceptance of Annan's proposal, the Syrian president remarked that the plan has to be negotiated. **For the full text:** <http://www.saudi gazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=20120402120854>



Jeddah, Editorial, 5 April 2012, Thursday

### 7. Syria: No time to lose

One must hope against hope that the loud explosions which reverberated across Homs and the clashes which were reported in several areas across Syria yesterday do not signal the end of a peace plan proposed by former UN Secretary-General Kofi (4 April) Annan and endorsed by the UN Security Council to break the Syrian impasse. The plan offers the best hope for Syria and its leaders to avoid the fate of Libya and Yemen. But President Bashar Al-Assad still behaves as though he has not learned anything from the recent history of the Middle East. **For the full text:** <http://www.saudi gazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentID=20120405121092>

## **gulfnews.com**

Dubai, Editorial, 5 April 2012, Thursday

### **8. Al Assad's chance to end bloodshed**

**S**yrrian president must make a genuine effort to ensure Annan's plan is a success. Bashar Al Assad's decision to agree to a much awaited peace plan and allow a team of United Nations members to enter Syria presents him with a fantastic opportunity to try and resurrect his flagging equity. The occasion should not, therefore, be blighted by an escalation in violence ahead of the April 10 (2012) deadline for a ceasefire. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/al-assad-s-chance-to-end-bloodshed-1.1004272>

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## **Khaleej Times** ONLINE

Dubai, Editorial, 7 April 2012, Saturday

### **9. The Syrian ceasefire**

**T**he April 12 (2012) deadline for all sides in Syria to cease fighting is drawing closer by the day. But instead of a lessening of violence there has been an intensification. Even though Damascus has assured UN Envoy Kofi Annan of its commitment to the deadline and is also reported to have withdrawn tanks and forces from some areas, there has been so significant cessation in fighting. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April\\_3.xml&section=editorial&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April_3.xml&section=editorial&col=)

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## **The New York Times**

Editorial, 9 April 2012, Monday

### **10. President Assad's Latest Bluff**

**T**he international community's latest attempt to stop President Bashar al-Assad's reign of terror in Syria is failing. Instead of abiding by a commitment to a cease-fire negotiated with the United Nations, he has kept his killing machine rolling, raising the death toll to an estimated 9,000 Syrians in the year since the start of the uprising. **For the full text:** [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/10/opinion/the-latest-bluff-of-president-bashar-al-assad-in-syria.html?\\_r=1&ref=editorials#](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/10/opinion/the-latest-bluff-of-president-bashar-al-assad-in-syria.html?_r=1&ref=editorials#)

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## **The National**

Abu Dhabi, Editorial, 10 April 2012, Tuesday

### 11. Assad regime makes mockery of ceasefire plan

As the deadline approached for President Bashar Al Assad to withdraw his forces from Syrian cities today (10 April), the only surprise on the ground was the "shock" expressed by the negotiator who brokered the attempted ceasefire. Kofi Annan, the United Nations-Arab League special envoy to Syria, said on Sunday (8 April) that he was "shocked by recent reports of a surge in violence and atrocities in several towns and villages in Syria". **For the full text:** <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/assad-regime-makes-mockery-of-ceasefire-plan>



Editorial, 10 April 2012, Tuesday

### 12. The U.N.'s failed plan for Syrian peace

Twenty days have passed since the U.N. Security Council endorsed the Syria peace plan of former secretary-general Kofi Annan. It's been eight days since Mr. Annan said the regime of Bashar al-Assad had agreed on a deadline of April 10 (2012) — Tuesday — to withdraw heavy weapons from cities, and five since the Security Council ratified that date. So the entirely predictable outcome of the initiative ought now to be recognized: Mr. Annan and his backers have merely provided cover for Mr. Assad to go on slaughtering his own people. **For the full text:** [http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-uns-failed-plan-for-syrian-peace/2012/04/09/gIQAJa3e6S\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-uns-failed-plan-for-syrian-peace/2012/04/09/gIQAJa3e6S_story.html)



Beirut, Editorial, 11 April 2012, Wednesday

### 13. Death of a plan

It is time for the process of posting the death notices of the United Nations-Arab League plan for peace in Syria to begin. The deadline of envoy Kofi Annan has come and gone, with no sign of a cease-fire on the ground. Instead, the Syrian regime has dug in its heels; it has adopted some cosmetic measures, and spent time talking about the number of journalists it has allowed into the country. But in the meantime, it withdraws troops from one area only to deploy them in a new location. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/Apr-11/169838-death-of-a-plan.ashx#axzz1rc0aSyjW>



Cairo, Editorial, 12-18 April 2012

### 14. Defusing Syria

**T**he Syrian conundrum is the litmus test of the Arab Spring. The Syrian crisis will either extricate or kill the Arab Spring. If Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad survives, then the hopes of democracy activists in the country and the region at large will be dashed. The region is destined to go through a rough period. The uprisings are incomplete and will take time to coalesce into properly functioning democracies. **For the full text:** <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1093/ed.htm>

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## THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 12 April 2012, Thursday

### 15. War of attrition

**D**amascus has attempted to give the impression that it has acceded to the cease-fire plan created by the international community, but Wednesday (11 April) could be described as the day when the Syrian army instead declared war on its country. The might of the army, employing its ground force, artillery, and in some cases helicopter gunships, is virtually unprecedented in the country's military history. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/Apr-12/169963-war-of-attrition.ashx#axzz1rtCKHLIZ>

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## gulfnews.com

Dubai, Editorial, 12 April 2012, Thursday

### 16. Syria needs an end to the killing

**A**nnan plan seems unlikely to achieve a cessation of violence. The suffering Syrian people have to deal with yet more broken promises from their government, as hundreds of people died in savage violence this week, despite the government having supposedly agreed to a peace deal brokered by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and supported by the UN Security Council. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/syria-needs-an-end-to-the-killing-1.1007353>

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## Khaleej Times ONLINE

Dubai, Editorial, 12 April 2012, Thursday

### 17. Day of the deadline

**S**yria's reassurance to UN Envoy Kofi Annan of its commitment to the ceasefire by the stipulated 6am Thursday (12 April) deadline led to a lull the evening before. But, things are not looking good despite this reiteration of commitment. A last minute precondition for withdrawal of tanks and heavy weaponry by the government resulted in a deadlock on

Tuesday (10 April) after the opposition backed Free Syrian Army refused to give written guarantees to President Bashar al Assad. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April23.xml&section=editorial&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April23.xml&section=editorial&col=)

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## THE HINDU

Chennai, Editorial, 13 April 2012, Friday

### 18. Assad's last chance

**B**y implementing the April 12 (2012) ceasefire which former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan proposed, President Bashar al-Assad has finally recognized the deepening global anxiety over Syria. The fighting has taken a terrible toll; according to the U.N., 9,000 civilians have died since public protests against Syria's regime started in March 2011. The government also says 2,000 soldiers have been killed. As the conflict developed into civil war, the army increasingly used tanks, armoured vehicles, rocket-armed helicopters, and mortars; 42,000 civilians fled the country, the majority to Turkey and the rest to Lebanon and Jordan. **For the full text:** <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/article3308068.ece>

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## TheNational

Abu Dhabi, Editorial, 13 April 2012, Friday

### 19. Syrian 'ceasefire' is still a long shot

**A**fter 13 months of unrelenting bloodshed, a death toll of more than 9,000 and tens of thousands displaced, any break in Syria's violence is welcome. But to term yesterday's (12 April) interlude a "ceasefire" masks what this crisis truly is: an oppressive regime waging war on a lightly armed opposition that for months persisted in non-violent demonstrations even as the regime murdered men, women and children. **For the full text:** <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/syrian-ceasefire-is-still-a-longshot>

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## THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 14 April 2012, Saturday

### 20. A plan with teeth

**T**wo days into the cease-fire in Syria, citizens seemed to be enjoying a desperately needed break in hostilities and bloodshed. But the immediate cessation of violence was only one part of the package pushed by the Security Council, and the Syrian government has distorted the plan beyond recognition by picking apart every detail in order to delay its full implementation. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/Apr-14/170229-a-plan-with-teeth.ashx#axzz1rtCKHLIZ>

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Dubai, Editorial, 14 April 2012, Saturday

### **21. A shattered ceasefire**

**S**o much for the truce — second day in the ceasefire and fresh clashes broke out between Syrian forces and the opposition Free Syrian Army. Those few hours of relative calm since Thursday (12 April) morning may well have been the lull before the storm. It may have been over optimistic to suppose that the ceasefire would hold at all but hope grew after assurances by Damascus that it would stand by its commitment and in view of some withdrawal of tanks and the ensuing cessation in fighting. Irrespective of who was responsible for initiating the violence again, things may be back to square one. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April26.xml&section=editorial&col=](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/displayarticle.asp?xfile=data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April26.xml&section=editorial&col=)

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Dubai, Editorial, 15 April 2012, Sunday

### **22. Ceasefire offers hope for Syrians**

**T**he humanitarian effort can begin in earnest only when the guns remain silent. After 13 months of bloodshed, a tenuous ceasefire brokered between the United Nations-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan and the Syrian government appears to be largely holding. According to reports, there was some bloodshed yesterday (14 April), leading to at least nine deaths, mainly in the restive city of Homs. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/ceasefire-offers-hope-for-syrians-1.1008447>

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Abu Dhabi, Editorial, 16 April 2012,

### **23. One step at a time to enforce Syria ceasefire**

**T**he death toll in Syria's unrest has declined since the start on Thursday (12 April) of a shaky ceasefire brokered by the United Nations and the Arab League. This is progress of a sort, but it should not be confused with the actual success of the ceasefire plan. The "full cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties", as sought by the UN, seems like an improbable outcome in the foreseeable future. **For the full text:** <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/one-step-at-a-time-to-enforce-syria-ceasefire>

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# THE DAILY STAR

LEBANON

Beirut, Editorial, 17 April 2012, Tuesday

## 24. False witnesses

**W**ith the first of the U.N. observers having arrived to Syria, and regime violence showing no sign of abating, it is becoming apparent that the Security Council mission has little to no purpose. Since the “cease-fire,” backed by the United Nations, came into effect Thursday (12 April), activists say around 55 people; mostly civilians have been killed across the country, with Monday bringing news of continued shelling in several cities. **For the full text:** <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/Opinion/Editorial/2012/Apr-17/170449-false-witnesses.ashx#axzz1sAoTAygC>

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Khaleej Times  
ONLINE

Dubai, Editorial, 17 April 2012, Tuesday

## 25. Ceasefire under the lens

**I**t’s monitoring time in Damascus. The first batch of the United Nations observers that arrived to supervise the fragile ceasefire has a gigantic task to deliver. Not only are they mandated to form an opinion that would enable the world body to act in Syria but would also further the process of transition. But the onus still lies with the reigning Baath Party, which should ensure that guns hold fire and nothing that violates the terms of the six-point peace plan agreed with the international community should occur. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April33.xml&section=editorial](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April33.xml&section=editorial)

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Khaleej Times  
ONLINE

Dubai, Editorial, 18 April 2012, Wednesday

## 26. Peace under UN canopy

**T**he arrival of 30 military observers under the canopy of the United Nations is intended to provide a salutary influence on the warring factions in Syria. Whether such a small group unsupported by any sort of weaponry will have any voice in the ongoing internal strife is a matter of concern. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April35.xml&section=editorial](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April35.xml&section=editorial)

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## **gulfnews.com**

Dubai, Editorial, 20 April 2012, Friday

### **27. All parties in Syria must commit to peace**

**G**iven the gravity of the situation, the Bashar regime should stop dictating terms. The recent developments in Syria are disturbing as the latest attempt to bring about an end to the violence now appears to be on shaky grounds. Such a state of fluctuation would only bring about a continuation of instability and a rising number of civilian injuries and deaths. **For the full text:** <http://gulfnews.com/opinions/editorials/all-parties-in-syria-must-commit-to-peace-1.1010909>

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## **Khaleej Times** ONLINE

Dubai, Editorial, 21 April 2012, Saturday

### **28. Observer mission in Syria**

**T**he Syrian government seems keen on proving its commitment to the United Nations' six-point peace plan. However, President Bashar Al Assad's recent signing of an agreement to allow an expanded UN observer mission for monitoring purposes may surprisingly have become the latest source of contention. **For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April40.xml&section=editorial](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April40.xml&section=editorial)

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## **TheNational**

Abu Dhabi, Editorial, 23 April 2012, Monday

### **29. Difficult task for UN's expanded mission in Syria**

**O**n Saturday (21 April), the UN Security Council expanded the international observers mission in Syria to include 300 observers, up from 30. On the same day, the regime was reported to have killed 40 people, including a family from Deraa that was trying to flee to Jordan. In one instance, shown in a video, activists were shot at while trying to speak to the mission's advance team. **For the full text:** <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/editorial/difficult-task-for-uns-expanded-mission-in-syria>

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Dubai, Editorial, 26 April 2012, Thursday

### **30. The post ceasefire gloom**

**T**he continuing violence despite the ceasefire implemented earlier this month (April) has raised fresh concerns about the Syrian crisis. UN special envoy Kofi Annan, whose six-point peace plan was agreed to by Damascus, has rightly called the post-ceasefire violence unacceptable. But the question is if the rapid deployment of more UN observers as urged by Annan could deter the killings and violence that have shown no sign of abatement so far.

**For the full text:** [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial\\_April51.xml&section=editorial](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=/data/editorial/2012/April/editorial_April51.xml&section=editorial)

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