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[Note: Using editorials as an indicator, this series presents views, understanding and attitude of the Urdu periodicals in India towards various developments concerning the Middle East. The selection of an item does not mean the endorsement or concurrence with their accuracy or views. Editor, MEI@ND]



The Siasat Daily (The Politics Daily), Hyderabad

Editorial, 24 April 2013, Wednesday

1. Syria and the United Nations

The UN is concerned about the supply of weapons to the rebels in Syria. Israeli allegations of the use of chemical weapons by Syrian government forces are another source of concern. The UNSC efforts to rein in the Arab League have been unsuccessful. It became clear after the Qatari Prime Minister's meeting with the UN General Secretary in New York that the Arab League would continue to provide vital support to the rebels. A political resolution of the crisis in Syria is still out of sight and the situation is deteriorating every day. The two sides continue to refuse to end fighting leading to enormous loss of life. Syria has been seething under bloodshed since the start of the protests in March 2011. Reports have suggested that there is a large-scale presence of foreign fighters among the rebels and several extremist groups are fighting inside Syria. There have been reports of war crimes committed on both sides. The UN should also be concerned about the activities of NATO forces and the US and Israel. The allegations of the use of chemical weapons could be used as a pretext for external intervention in Syria. The problem is that international organizations and world powers are more concerned about security of Israel than the people of Syria who are bearing the brunt of the war. The Arab League hardly has any influence

even among its member countries but it expects them to rally around its efforts to dismantle the Syrian regime. The UN should expedite its efforts to find a solution to the crisis. Earlier, Kofi Annan had resigned as special UN-Arab League envoy and now his successor Lakhdar Brahimi also finds himself without any success. The deployment of peacekeeping forces will not bring any success until the demands of the opposition are accepted. The most important task at hand is to bring the two sides to the negotiations table after stopping the violence. The humanitarian crisis in Syria is worsening and more than 4 million people have become refugees and homeless. More than 70,000 people have been killed. The challenge is to stop violence and bloodshed and then find a political solution to the crisis.

Source: <http://www.siasat.com/urdu/news/idr125-5>



Roznama Rashtriya Sahara (National Sahara Daily), Delhi

Editorial, 29 April 2013, Wednesday

2. Will the US intervene in Syria?

The US President has issued a statement that Syria has crossed the red line. He stated during a press conference in the White House that the Syrian government forces have used chemical weapons on the rebels. The statement is not surprising given that Israel has been alleging it since long. The US has just repeated an Israeli claim, which is nothing new. Many people, however, have been surprised that the statement was issued during a joint press conference with the Jordanian King whose family claims to be the descendants of the prophet. In fact exploring 'red lines' has been a favourite time-pass of the US administration for a long time; the only place it could not find any 'red line' has been with respect to Israel. Barack Obama has disappointed the entire world by not taking a strong stand against Jewish settlements in the occupied lands. Thus, repeating Israeli claims and toeing on Israeli lines on international matters is not surprising; he has just followed the convention. The issue is what could be the reason behind this claim - is the US preparing to undertake a direct intervention in Syria? If true then it would be bad news not only for Syria but also for the entire world. The US is already in deep financial trouble due to its misadventures in Iraq and Afghanistan. If it wants one of its allies to intervene in Syria on its behalf, like France did in Libya then that is just as problematic. Syria is different from Libya, particularly because it has a strong military and secondly, it lies in the heart of the Arab world. It is surrounded by many important regional players including Lebanon and Iran. The only country that may be eager to do the dirty-job could be Israel. However, the problem is this would create strong reactions in the Arab world. Then there is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and any intervention in Syria could escalate into a serious regional crisis. However, Bashar al-Assad has also failed to resolve the problem. He should understand that a ruler cannot rule by fighting his own people. He has failed to learn any lessons from the fate of Muammar Qaddafi. Rather than

fighting the so-called rebels, he should try to reach a negotiated political resolution. If he tries to resolve the crisis through peaceful means, he would find many sympathizers and supporters across the world.

Source: <http://roznamasahara.samaylive.com/Details.aspx?id=45301&boxid=51856421>

Compiled and Translated by Md. Muddassir Quamar

Md. Muddassir Quamar is a Doctoral Candidate at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Email: muddassir.2005@gmail.com

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