



BEIRUT INSTITUTE SUMMIT

May 12 & 13, 2018 | The St. Regis Abu Dhabi, UAE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SESSIONS

Session

Geopolitical Realignments: The Emerging Landscape

The increasingly assertive leadership in the Arab region is altering dynamics in the Middle East and globally. How will the regional order evolve over the next 5-10 years and beyond to 2030? What are the implications for the international system? What are the policy opportunities for creating a resilient regional and global order in the future?

Date

Sunday | May 13, 2018

Duration

63 minutes

[Session Video](#)

[Panelist Profiles](#)

Please credit Beirut Institute Summit when using this material.

Moderator:

- Najwa Kassem, Host of a Political Program on Al-Hadath, Al Arabiya

Panelists:

- MP Alistair Burt, Minister of State, HM Government, UK
- HE Nabil Fahmy, Dean of School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, American University in Cairo, Egypt
- HE Mohamed Dayri, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Libya
- Dr. Khaled Mahamid, Founder – Member, Syrian Emirates Business Council, UAE-Poland
- Shady Qubaty, President, Yale Arab Students Association, Yemen
- Dr. Robert Danin, Senior Fellow, Council on Foreign Relation and Harvard Belfer Center, USA

MP Alistair Burt:

The United Kingdom will always follow its own path. We have an independent foreign policy despite accusations to the contrary, and we will stick with that. But of course its interests will continue to be aligned with friends over the next few years, as they have been. As far as the European Union is concerned, to make it very plain, a leaving of the European Union is not a leaving of our friends in the European Union or our friends in Europe. And I think as been recently demonstrated with the action in Syria, it makes no difference. Our relationships are strong when our interests are aligned. We will continue to work together, so I think we can be sure of that. And our interests will remain aligned with the United States, no matter again that there will be occasions on which we will disagree with their policies, and in relation to that, I think it is our duty to be honest and open when we disagree

--

We've seen recently that the UN Security Council is struggling to work effectively. It can no longer stop wars, and if wars are continuing, it can't end them. That has got to change. We've got to ensure that international conventions such as those against chemical weapons are adhered to. These things have been constructed over many years and if they fail, there is huge damage.

--

No matter how assertive your leadership, you still need friends. And I pick out two of the old partnerships in the region with Western powers we hope will still be very important in the region. We want the United States for example to stay engaged with the GCC. The GCC is an important partnership here. We would very much welcome a resolution of the issue between GCC partners; so that partnership is important to support the leaderships here.

--

Just to pick out diplomacy - space is going to be needed. Assertiveness should not be aligned with an increasing sense of the binary - you are either for us or you are against us. The world cannot work if it's constantly divided into two. There's got to be space to be able to explore areas where we have different views. JCPOA currently is that space. We all share the same concerns about activities of Iran, and we want to deal with them but we disagree about how to do it. We can't be placed into a box to say unless you take a particular path then you must support so and so.

--

People locally have to find a way to resolve conflicts before we move on. Before we can deal with the reconstruction ... I think we'll have to get used to the fact that there is no will certainly in the United Kingdom to enforce the end of conflicts. We have to find a different way to resolve conflict. But unless the region can, we won't be able to move forward.

--

Both Syria and Yemen are intensely painful. Our efforts are now directed very heavily towards the diplomatic. But the parties involved have got to see whether they want to be involved in an endless conflict which will go on ad infinitum. They've got to be participants in ending the conflict themselves, because they won't be able to rely on external structures.

--

If the UN Security Council cannot bring conflict now to an end, and cannot in doing so be part of the peace building future, then who is going to do that? It has to be done locally. And what we will have to do is give every support to that. But, it seems to me it is a painful process to go through to get to that stage.

--

There are causes to conflict that are here not connected with the outside world but, equally, the resilience and the confidence to deal with them increasingly needs to come from here as well. And that should be the message for this conference.

HE Nabil Fahmy:

هناك رفض شعبي في مختلف المجتمعات للسياسة التقليدية و للسياسيين التقليديين... هناك في كل الشرق الأوسط رفض للحالة القديمة ورغبة في التجديد في أشكال مختلفة. ما يصعب الموضوع في منطقتنا أنه بالإضافة الى الرغبة الشعبية في التغيير والنظر الى الأمام، هناك العديد من المشاكل الإقليمية والنزاعات الإقليمية. إذن، المسألة ليست فقط في التغيير الداخلي إنما أيضاً في النزاعات الإقليمية والحقوق.

--

علينا النظر الى المنطقة بشكل مختلف لأن الاعتماد متزايد على النفس، ولأن التعاون الإقليمي والتفاعل مع الغير أصبح بدلاً عن الاعتماد على الغير وردة فعل من الداخل. لماذا؟ لأن أولويات الغير اختلفت. لم نعد في حرب باردة وإن كنا، قد نكون على وشك حرب باردة جديدة.

--

دول مثل مصر ودول عربية ثقيلة أخرى عليها ان تبادر بالتفكير بما هو المطلوب عربياً وما هو التصور العربي للمستقبل وكيفية التعامل مع ذلك. المطلوب ليس فقط طرح فكر استراتيجي وإنما أيضا طرح خطوات تكتيكية. لا نستطيع وضع خطط طويلة الأجل دون التعامل مع الواقع. ولا نستطيع بصراحة التعامل كرد فعل جزئياً دون أن نضع كل هذا في اطار إذا كنا نريد حقا الحصول على عائد كامل للمجتمعات العربية التي تريد حياة أفضل.

--

لن نستطيع حل القضايا الإقليمية بدون دعم دولي، إنما لن تحل إلا بمبادرة عربية.

--

أعتقد ان العالم العربي سينقسم في المرحلة القادمة بين من يبادر ومن يتحرك كردة فعل **activist vs reactivist**. من يبادر سيكون له طرف رئيسي في المستقبل ومن يكون له ردة فعل سيكون دائما متأخراً وفي موقف الدفاع عن النفس.

--

ان الرسالة العربية الإقليمية يجب ان تؤكد على حماية دولة المواطنة الحاضنة بمعنى لن نقبل بتغيير هوية الدولة من دولة عربية، مصرية عراقية، يمنية أيا كانت - دولة حاضنة لكل فئات المجتمع.

HE Mohamed Davri:

للأسف ان قضية ليبيا دُولت وأصبحت قضية إقليمية وقضية دولية بلاعبين دوليين ولاعبين إقليميين. بدون تواجد الوفاق بين هذه الدول، أعتقد أنه من الصعوبة بمكان التوصل الى حل سياسي في ليبيا.

--

في الجلسة الماضية تحدث نائب الممثل الدولي في سوريا السفير رمزي رمزي عن ضرورة وجود توافق بين الولايات المتحدة وروسيا. في ليبيا لا نجد هذا التوافق. لا أحد في موقع القيادة. No one is in the driving seat.

--

للأسف المجتمع الدولي كان قد سبق أن اعترف بفشله في ليبيا. رئيس اوباما في الجمعية العامة ١٨ سبتمبر ٢٠١٥ أقر بأنه
"we failed Libya" ...

--

هناك اعتراف غربي بعدم وجود اي خطط لمعالجة الأوضاع في ليبيا بعد ازالة او بعد الإطاحة بالنظام السابق. أعتقد اننا في ليبيا نتطلع في وجود حل ليبي ليبي ولكن الحقيقة ان المجتمع الدولي يلعب دورا كبيرا في حلها ولكنه لم يصل بعد الى اي توافق في المسألة الليبية. هنالك تنافس غربي في ليبيا بين بعض الدول الغربية أدى الى الطريق المسدود.

--

اود ان اشير الى مشكلة كبيرة يعاني منها السيد غسان سلامة نفسه ومن كان قبله وهو تعدد المبادرات.

--

هنالك تنافس غربي على ليبيا وهنالك تنافس ايضا أحيانا بروح طيبة وبارادة سليمة من أشقائنا في الاتحاد الإفريقي الذين يرون ان ليبيا جزء لا يتجزأ من أفريقيا.

--

ليس هنالك توافق إقليمي ودولي من اجل حتى السماح الليبيين بحل مشاكلهم بأنفسهم.

--

حتى لا اكون متشائما. ود ان اطرح طموحات الليبيين حاليا . هنالك توافق على ضرورة الذهاب الى انتخابات كأحد الخطوات الأساسية لحل المعضلة السياسية. هنالك أيضا طموح في ايجاد عاصمة هادئة بعيدا عن الميليشيات التي تسيطر عليها للأسف . ومن ثم فإن هنالك جهد يعني عطا عن الدور العربي هنالك جهد مصري عاليا وهو جهد تم ايضا التأكيد عليه من الولايات المتحدة وأيضاً فرنسا مؤخراً . الجهد المتعلق في توحيد المؤسسة العسكرية. فيدون حل المشكلة الأمنية وبالذات في العاصمة طرابلس لا يمكن مهما كانت العصى السحرية ليأتي بها اي كان لإيجاد حل سياسي بوجود هذه الميليشيات.

Dr. Khaled Mahamid:

في المشهد السوري ، نحن لسنا بعيدين عن التنافس الدولي والإقليمي وحتى العربي-العربي في سوريا. بعد مضي سبع سنوات ودخولنا في العام الثامن وبعد الثمن الباهظ الذي دفعه الشعب السوري مما يقارب مليون بين شهيد ومعتقل وخمس ملايين في الخارج و ست ملايين في سوريا والبنية التحتية لسوريا، مع الأسف لقد فشل التحالف الذي سمي بأصدقاء سوريا. ظهور الحلف الثلاثي الذي يسمى بمحور استانا او سوتشي - تركيا وروسيا وايران - لم يحقق النصر الكبير ولكن هناك بلورة استراتيجية لهذا التحالف في المشهد السوري.

--

انا احب ان اعلق على كلام معالي الوزير البريطاني بانه اذا فشل مجلس الامن بحل المسائل في سوريا فعلى السوريين الاعتماد على انفسهم. كيف لنا الاعتماد على انفسنا وهناك عشر جيوش غازية في سوريا؟ هناك تواجد أميركي و تواجد بريطاني وايراني بأعداد مئة الف مقاتل وتواجد روسي ودخول القوات التركية وفرنسا في الأخير وهناك احتلال في الجولان. طبعاً للأسف الشديد صحيح ما تكلمت عنه بان هناك انقسام داخل سوريا. النظام يعتمد على ايران اعتماداً رئيسياً لأنه حليفها الاستراتيجي وهناك انقسام داخل المعارضة. ولكن تم توحيد المعارضة وتشكيل وفد واحد من اجل الانخراط بالعملية السياسية ولكن كما اشرت حقيقة لا يوجد نية عن هذا النظام بالحل السياسي وهو يتوهم اليوم وحلفائه الإيرانيين ويتفاعل بالنصر العسكري.

--

بدون حل سياسي في سوريا لن تهدأ هذه المنطقة والوضع في سوريا ما زال يهدد الأمن واستقرار السوريين.

--

اليوم ، موقع سوريا الاستراتيجي هو من سمح لهذه الدول بالتدخل ونحن اليوم نشاهد التدخل الروسي أعاد روسيا الى محور اللاعب الأساسي والكبير في الشرق الأوسط... ونحن نلاحظ اليوم ان نتانيا هو يزور موسكو أكثر مما يزور واشنطن. لذلك انا اعتقد ان مفتاح الحل في سوريا سوف يوقع بيد روسيا وبدون تفاهم أميركي وروسي لن يكون هنالك حل اكيد.

--

باعتقادي نحن مقبلين على فترة حاسمة تكون تصعيداً حقيقياً إقليمياً او حلاً شاملاً. وباعتقادي ان قرار السيد ترامب سوف يتيح لمزيد من الحلول اذا تم التوافق مع الدول الإقليمية والضغط على إيران وعلى بعض الدول العربية. نحن نلاحظ ان هنالك دول شقيقة لها علاقات استراتيجية مع إيران ومع العلم ان إيران اليوم تزود الحوثيين بضرب المملكة السعودية وتزعزع الاستقرار في سوريا ولبنان وحتى وصل الأمر بها الى المغرب العربي.

Shady Qubaty:

The war will eventually end in Yemen. The question is when will this happen? But, after the war ends, Yemen will have to face many economic challenges and that has to do with economic development and rebuilding the infrastructure, of course after the huge damage which happened in Yemen. And this raises many questions on how this process will be able to happen.

--

We have to have an optimistic view on what we want to do with the country after the war in Yemen ends. We need to have a roadmap so that once the crisis ends, which will eventually happen, how do we move forward? The question over the development is very important, and it brings a lot of similarities to what we've seen after the second World War with the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, which aided Eastern Europe and recent Turkey. And we'll have similar initiatives falling in Yemen and in the region as well, probably in Syria - maybe through a "Salman "plan or "Al Zayed" plan to try and build up the country again.

--

As far as what the world and the United Nations could do to help [Yemen] would be to push it towards some political dialogue.

--

There is huge generations in Yemen who are currently not getting access to education, and on the other hand, you have the people who are able to leave the country and have the resources to do so, are leaving to get their education abroad. So the question is: how will you have a future in the country for people to come back and rebuild it? And also you have the whole question of brainwashing – which will be a huge issue moving forward for Yemen.

--

Yemen is one of the most populist countries in the region, and after the war ends, If you do not have the Yemeni youth rebuilding their own country - especially with such high levels of unemployment - it will be a breeding ground for extremist activities, and they would be able to use that platform to push the country towards a further dire situation.

Dr. Robert Danin:

We have had this region permeated by the cold war with bipolarity, with a conflict between the US and the Soviet Union played out in this region. And after the collapse of the Soviet Union, we had this unipolar moment, as it was described, in which you had Pax Americana and the US playing an unchallenged role. And I think what we're seeing now today is a move towards multi-polarity, in which there are many international players that have become involved in this region, not just the US, not just Russia - China, India, and other outside players are now active. And at the same time, at the regional level, you have a very dynamic situation - you have a number of failed states that we're all aware of, the power vacuums that have been created as a result. You have the traditional Arab states that once played such an important role - Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and to some extent Turkey from outside - no longer playing the power projection role. And at the same time new players - Saudi Arabia, the UAE - playing a new role.

--

I don't want to diminish in any way the tragedies of Syria, Libya, and elsewhere. There has been horrendous bloodshed in this part of the world for too long, and we all need to address it and own it, but we also need to be thinking: out of all of this, how do we build and move forward in a constructive way, collectively and in partnership?

--

I think there is a lot that all of us don't understand about this region, so for sure the United States has a great deal to learn in this part of the region, as we do - all of us.

--

All historical analogies are highly imperfect. But if I was right about the way in which we are moving towards a more durable state system, and especially with the end of pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism, and a move towards nationalism - in which you have countries in this part of the world pursuing their national interest - in many ways it seems to me this is analogous, however imperfectly, to the situation in Europe after the French revolution and the revolutions in Europe, in which out of that firmament was many struggles to create order out of a different type of order.

--

Anyone who thinks they can see the future is mistaken, but I think we have the ability to help shape it.

--

I hear a lot of talk about these various failures of the different regional bodies - the Arab League or the United Nations - and I think this is really the wrong way to think about it. All of these institutions are only as strong as the states within them are willing to use and lead within them. They offer the opportunity for coalitions to be created. The UN itself - how many troops does it have? The Arab League - how many troops does it have? We know the answer. What are its resources? These are only opportunities for the coalition of power and the coalition of will, but it takes ultimately states to lead within them. So I think to look at the UN and expect it to solve your problems with the Arab League is a fallacy. What we need is to see states emerge and use these institutions, build coalitions of the willing and the able, and we can create order out of the chaos. It will be imperfect, we will see a lot of struggle in this part of the world, but I remain hopeful and optimistic.

--

Most of the time we are reacting, we are not proactive. I think especially at this point in time, what we are looking for more often than not, are opportunities, partners, and situations to work with. I think we are particularly at a moment that the more you are doing in the region, the more we will work with you. The less we see opportunity, the more you will see a drift away. I think the days of looking to the United States to solve problems is over, but that doesn't mean we are leaving either. We seek to be a partner, but the initiative lies with you.

Please credit Beirut Institute Summit when using this material.

**© Copyright 2018 Beirut Institute
All rights reserved.**