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Middle East News & Views

מרכז משה דיין ללימודי המזרח התיכון ואפריקה
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A weekly sample of news and opinions on current events from around the Middle East collected and brought to you by the Dayan Center.

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[Wa'alaykum Assalaam / Ahmed Al-Jarallah](#)

We should welcome the man who delivered a historic speech at our homes. Our greetings to you Abu Hussein! As an Arab and Muslim citizen, I strongly believe that you care about the welfare of millions of Muslims around the world whose religion promotes tolerance and peace. This is Islam. It is our religion, not the ideology of Osama bin Laden and his terrorist group al-Qaeda.

Source: **Arab Times (Kuwait), June 6, 2009**

[Who's Naive...the Arabs or Obama? / Tariq Alhomayed](#)



Following the US President's historic speech in Cairo, an Israeli official said "Obama is a naive person with good intentions but will collide quickly with the reality and wake up from his rosy dreams." These are dangerous and important words. The Israelis acted quickly to absorb the shock while the reaction of Hamas - which Obama avoided calling terrorist, was indifferent and without any sense of responsibility.

Source: **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London), June 8, 2009**

[From Lebanon to Iran / Diana Mukkaled](#)

One has difficulty these days resisting the temptation to making the obvious comparison between the media campaigns for the election taking place next Sunday in Lebanon, and the election that will take place four days later in Iran. There is an election fever in both countries that did not occur during previous elections, and the results of one election will undoubtedly reflect upon the other.

Source: **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London), June 5, 2009**

[Lebanon election: Israel Prefers Hezbollah / Randa Takieddine](#)

On the eve of decisive elections in Lebanon, a week before the important elections in Iran, Obama wants, by solving the Palestinian-Israeli struggle, to boost the forces of political moderation in the Muslim and Arab worlds, which have been weakened by Israel's unresponsiveness to any Arab peace initiative put forward by Arab political moderates. Obama is aware that the Israeli-Palestinian struggle is the region's central problem.

Source: **Ya Libnan (Beirut), June 6, 2009**

[A Question for this Morning / Husam Itani](#)

More important than the results of the Lebanese elections are the lessons that the Lebanese should learn about their country and its capabilities. The elections were placed in the context of the confrontation between the two camps of moderation and defiance in the region and between two international projects, based on the role which Lebanon has become addicted to playing – both voluntarily and coerced – since its independence, exceeding its own capabilities.

source: **Al-Hayat (London), June 8, 2009**

[Turks Must Learn Sympathy Comes With Empathy / Semih Idiz](#)

Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu has a vision of Turkey as a "leader country." By this he means a country that commands respect in the international community, and whose advice and assistance is sought over difficult issues. There are few Turks who would not share this vision. But whether they all understand the prerequisites for this is another question.

Source: **Hurriyet Daily News (Istanbul), June 5, 2009**

[Freedom of Expression is Hostage to the Armenian Question / Orhan Kemal Cengiz](#)

Ironically, the day after PM Recep Tayyip Erdoğan rebuked Israeli President Shimon Peres at the last Davos summit, saying, "You know how to kill very well," employees of the *Taraf* daily, a liberal Turkish newspaper, were on trial in 16 criminal cases. Erdoğan exercised his freedom of expression to the limit; however, in his country one single newspaper -- *Taraf* again -- has been on trial in 69 different criminal cases for its peaceful exercise of freedom of expression.

Source: **Today's Zaman (Istanbul), June 5, 2009**