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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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Recognize Palestinian Statehood Now / Ghassan Khatib

A unilateral Palestinian declaration of statehood, recognized and encouraged by the international community, could promote stability, end hostility and create a better atmosphere for these two states to negotiate the remaining aspects of their relations, such as solving the refugee issue and sorting out security arrangements and other aspects of bilateral relations. This would include the presence of Jewish settlers in the Palestinian state and their illegal use of sovereign Palestinian resources, such as land and water.

Source: bitterlemons.org, November 17, 2009

Abbas' Intentions / Editorial

Speculation abounds as to the seriousness with which Palestine President Mahmoud Abbas declared his intention not to run for elections in January. There were doubts from the start that are now being reinforced following the news that there might not be any elections at all. Abbas' announcement appears mainly aimed at pressuring the US to force Israel to freeze settlements. He may not resign if he receives real concessions from Israel with regard to the settlements issue.

Source: [Arab News \(Jeddah\)](http://ArabNews.com), November 16, 2009

What Can Palestinians Learn from the American Civil Rights Movement? / Aziz Abu Sarah

The struggle for civil rights, freedom and independence is not unique to the Palestinian people. Many nations have travelled the same road. The American civil rights movement in particular has important lessons for those working to forge peace between Israelis and Palestinians. It succeeded in using non-violent strategies to bring about the end of legally sanctioned segregation in the United States. What principles can the Palestinians learn from the movement?

Source: [Common Ground News Service](http://CommonGroundNews.com), November 12, 2009

What Nasrallah Did Not Say Directly / Tariq Alhomayed



I always recommend reading Hassan Nasrallah's speeches rather than listening to them, because reading one of his speeches unemotionally allows one to read between the lines. The latest speech given by the Hezbollah leader was as if he were trying to compete with Mr. Amr Musa for the position of Secretary-General of the Arab League.

Source: [Al-Sharq Al-Awsat \(London\)](http://Al-Sharq.com), November 17, 2009

Iran's Islamic Regime Is No Model to Follow / Ana Maria Luca

The Arab world is a very complex neighborhood, with different sets of challenges that each country must face individually. Yet, all countries share the need to reform their markets and educational systems. Three valuable decades have been wasted since the formation of the Islamic Republic of Iran; the region cannot afford another such period. Political Islam is not the answer. Skeptics should look at Iran and take note. It is not a pretty picture.

Source: [The Daily Star \(Beirut\)](http://TheDailyStar.com), November 17, 2009

Football vs Flu / Editorial

The outpouring of energy associated with the Egyptian-Algerian football match would represent an admirable awakening of the collective psyche were such fervour directed towards compelling national priorities. This football frenzy contrasts sharply with the laxity, confusion and chaos that mark our approach towards political participation, reform, unemployment and the collapse of health and education services. The list of Egypt's ills goes on and on.

Source: [Al-Ahram Weekly \(Cairo\)](http://Al-Ahram.com), Issue No 972, 12 - 18 November 2009

Pragmatic Populism or Islamic Extremism? / Ömer Taspinar

How can a country that is supposedly turning authoritarian at home and Islamist in its foreign policy be pursuing a democratization package for Kurds and an engagement policy with Armenia? Where is the Islamic agenda in all these policies? Skeptics will argue that Ankara's close relations with Iran and recent problems with Israel illustrate the Islamist tilt in its foreign policy. But is Turkey's Iran policy based on a sense of Islamic solidarity?

Source: [Today's Zaman \(Istanbul\)](http://Today'sZaman.com), November 16, 2009