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Middle East News & Views

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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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[Emergence of a Wiser Hamas / Sami Moubayed](#)

Anyone who watches the political satire "Umbilical Cord", presently being staged in Gaza, realises that Hamas has changed colours, both in terms of political rhetoric, and behaviour. The play hints that Hamas is a proxy for Iran in the Palestinian territories, while its rival Fatah is proxy for the US, accusing both of ignoring the sufferings of the people in the Gaza Strip.

Source: **Gulf News (Dubai), March 16, 2010**

[Yes... Hamas Should Remain Silent / Tariq Alhomayed](#)

Hamas must also remain silent, especially as international positions have been taken to crystallize condemnation of Israel, and all we need is for Hamas not to take negative international positions in order to achieve false popularity. If Hamas wants to gain real popularity then it must seek to unify the Palestinian ranks instead of serving Iran's goals and prolonging the suffering of the people of Gaza.

Source: **Al-Sharq Al-Awsat (London), March 22, 2010**

[An Opportunity to Salvage Iraq's Pride / Marwan Al Kabalan](#)

Iraq's parliamentary elections are now behind us and the political weight of the major factions has become clear. Although incumbent Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki and former prime minister Ayad Allawi have won most of the popular vote, neither have a majority to form a government alone. That could lead to a heated and possibly lengthy power struggle between the two heavyweights.

Source: **Gulf News (Dubai), March 19, 2010**

[Washington's Worst Ally / Ayman El-Amir](#)

Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has taken a handful of dust from East Jerusalem and thrown it in the face of Barack Obama, his administration, the American people and the Arabs. Arab regimes should seek to change the Middle East paradigm by demonstrating to the US that it has much to lose if it continues its unconditional support of its worst ally.

Source: **Al-Ahram Weekly (Cairo), Issue No 988, 4 - 10 March 2010**

[New Leadership for Al Azhar / Editorial](#)

Things are changing for Mr. Ahmed el Tayeb, who last week was named Grand Imam of Al Azhar Mosque and Grand Sheikh of Al Azhar University, the most influential school in Sunni Islam. He is trading his suits for the long cloaks traditionally worn by a cleric of his stature. This should be a mere change in wardrobe for Mr. el Tayeb, who has warned that an overemphasis on outward piety can come at the expense of inward spiritual growth.

Source: **The National (Abu Dhabi), March 21, 2010**

[Women's Movement a Prelude to the Green Movement / Nooshabeh Amiri](#)

Within the struggle for freedom in Iran, Iranian women turned to new and modern ways of battle, the most meaningful of which is the Campaign for One Million Signatures for Change. This is a movement that clearly contains all the elements of a peaceful civil movement and is based on spreading awareness, using modern means along with respect for the cultural dimensions and values of Iranian society.

Source: **Roouz Online (Paris), March 19, 2010**

[The 'Armenian Problem,' Intellectuals and Politicians in Turkey / Sahin Alpay](#)

PM Erdoğan said that Turkey, in response to genocide resolutions adopted by the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US House of Representatives earlier this month, could consider sending back 100,000 illegal Armenian immigrant workers whom it allows, as a sign of goodwill toward Armenia, to stay and work in Turkey. The media blasted Erdoğan for his remarks, accusing him of suggesting that Armenian workers are a sort of pawns in Turkey's hands.

Source: **Today's Zaman (Istanbul), March 22, 2010**