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Reports

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As Conflict Grows in Middle East, US-Saudi Gulf Widens. YaleGlobal. Fahad Nazer. June 24, 2014.

The 2003 invasion of Iraq and the Arab Spring events have reconfigured the Middle East in fundamental ways. Civil war in Syria spills into Iraq, extremism spreads in northern Africa, and brakes are applied to fledgling democracy in Egypt. The United States and Saudi Arabia, longtime allies, are divided over how to handle unfolding disaster, argues Fahad Nazer: Saudi Arabia, preferring stability, adopts assertive

policies and is alarmed that the United States does not swiftly intervene. Nazer points out "The Saudis and Iranians find themselves on opposite sides in virtually every crisis currently gripping the region." The United States, responsible for removing secular strongman Saddam Hussein, may have little choice but to assist in defending Iraq.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/conflict-grows-middle-east-us-saudi-gulf-widens> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#2

Mounting Pessimism about Two-State Israeli-Palestinian Solution. Pew Research Global Attitudes Project. June 25, 2014.

In the wake of yet another breakdown in the Middle East peace process, publics in the region have little faith that a way can be found for Israel and an independent Palestinian state to coexist peacefully with each other. Majorities or pluralities in countries across the region voice the view that peaceful coexistence is not possible. And such pessimism is on the rise among many Middle Eastern publics.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2014/06/2014-06-25_Israel-Palestine.pdf [PDF format, 9 pages, 397.66 KB].

Item#3

Islam - Up for Grabs. YaleGlobal. Ooi Kee Beng. June 26, 2014.

The world is on the watch for Islamic extremism, recent examples include the execution of some 1,700 Shia soldiers in Iraq and the kidnapping of more than 200 schoolgirls in Nigeria. Two dynamics are underway that confound international relations, argues Ooi Kee Beng. First, a tendency among some Muslim nations to extend Islam rigidly to all aspects of governance and life invites a reciprocal tendency from non-Muslim observers to blame Islam for all social problems; second, Muslims hesitate to criticize their societies especially as criticism from non-Muslims runs rampant. Islam was once a liberating theology for the lower classes throughout Southeast Asia, but too often, the religion's compassionate teachings are overshadowed. Ooi concludes, "In recent times, in line with global fashion, increasing numbers of individuals and groups have opportunistically come to use 'Islam' as an easy route to infamy - and power."

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/islam-%E2%80%93-grabs> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#4

The Huthis: From Saada to Sanaa. International Crisis Group. June 10, 2014.

The power balance in Yemen's north is shifting. In early 2014, Zaydi Shiite fighters, known as the Huthis or Ansar Allah, Partisans of God, won a series of battles, in effect consolidating their control over Saada governorate, on the border of Saudi Arabia, and expanding southward to the gates of the capital, Sanaa.

Now a patchwork of shaky ceasefires is in place, albeit battered by bouts of violence. Tensions are high between Huthis and their various opponents. Fear is growing that an escalation could draw the state into a prolonged conflict. To head off a conflagration, the parties must turn the inchoate understandings reached during the country's National Dialogue Conference (NDC) into an implementable peace plan, says the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iran%20Gulf/Yemen/154-the-huthis-from-saada-to-sanaa.pdf> [PDF format, 34 pages, 1.22 MB].

Item#5

Engaging Afghan Religious Leaders for Women's Rights. U.S. Institute of Peace. Palwasha L. Kakar. June 18, 2014.

Women's rights programs in Afghanistan need to work with religious leaders who have moral authority among large segments of the Afghan public. Engaging those traditional leaders who have a track record of supporting women's rights begins with respecting their opinions and showing the patience to build trust through dialogue. It also requires supporting processes of change that are identified locally and ensuring that local partners take the lead role in the delivery of support as much as possible.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/PB175_Engaging_Afghan_Religious_Leaders_for_Women%27s_Rights.pdf [PDF format, 5 pages, 307.28 KB].

Item#6

The Central African Crisis: From Predation to Stabilisation. International Crisis Group. June 17, 2014.

To stabilise the Central African Republic (CAR), the transitional government and its international partners need to prioritise, alongside security, action to fight corruption and trafficking of natural resources, as well as revive the economy, according to the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/219-the-central-african-crisis-from-predation-to-stabilisation.aspx> Summary in English [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/fr/regions/afrique/afrique-centrale/republique-centrafricaine/219-the-central-african-crisis-from-predation-to-stabilisation.aspx> Summary in French [HTML format, various paging].

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/africa/central-africa/central-african-republic/219-la-crise-centrafricaine-de-la-predation-a-la-stabilisation.pdf> Full Text in French [PDF format, 48 pages, 2.81 MB].

Item#7

Beyond Red vs. Blue: The Political Typology. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. June 26, 2014.

Partisan polarization, the vast and growing gap between Republicans and Democrats, is a defining feature of politics today. But beyond the ideological wings, which make up a minority of the public, the political landscape includes a center that is large and diverse, unified by frustration with politics and little else. As a result, both parties face formidable challenges in reaching beyond their bases to appeal to the middle of the electorate and build sustainable coalitions.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2014/06/6-26-14-Political-Typology-release.pdf> [PDF format, 185 pages, 2.80 MB].

Item#8

Latino Jobs Growth Driven by U.S. Born: Immigrants No Longer the Majority of Hispanic Workers. Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project. Rakesh Kochhar. June 19, 2014.

For the first time in nearly two decades, immigrants do not account for the majority of Hispanic workers in the United States. Meanwhile, most of the job gains made by Hispanics during the economic recovery from the Great Recession of 2007-09 have gone to U.S.-born workers, according to the analysis of government data.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2014/06/2014-06-19_Latino-Labor.pdf [PDF format, 56 pages, 1.29 MB].

Item#9

Inequality and the Nature of Capital: A Reminder to Economists. YaleGlobal. Chandran Nair. June 17, 2014.

Inequality is not a new topic for developing nations, notes author Chandran Nair. "[Economists seek] to explain the world with reference to economic capital alone while ignoring the mother of all capitals - natural capital," Nair writes. "Our economic model not only allows for but thrives on what is essentially a collective free ride on the back of natural capital." Natural capital, including freshwater, clean air and rich soil, is underpriced and subject to massive overconsumption. Focus on economic inequality without proper management of natural capital will result in ongoing disasters including climate change. Nair suggests taxing access to natural resources. Nair concludes that addressing inequality in developing countries is the defining challenge of the 21st century.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/inequality-and-nature-capital-reminder-economists> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#10

The Water-Energy Nexus: Strategic Considerations for Energy Policy-Makers. World Economic Forum. Web posted June 23, 2014.

The paper explores the interconnection between water and energy production and presents energy policy-makers with factors to take into consideration for both the present and the future. Historically, the overlap of energy and water issues received little attention. Potable water became increasingly available with the use of energy to dig wells and to construct piping systems. Meanwhile, energy sources, from wood to workhorses, mined fossil fuels to steam generation, were extracted, processed and produced with water. Long overlooked, more people are becoming familiar with this water-energy nexus as demand for electricity grows and water supplies dwindle in certain regions across the world.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GAC/2014/WEF_GAC_EnergySecurity_WaterEnergyNexus_Paper_2014.pdf [PDF format, 12 pages, 4.75 MB].