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March 17, 2010

Middle East News: World Press Roundup

The ongoing controversy between the US and Israel continues to dominate coverage: the New York Times sees an opportunity for the United States; Israel continues to refuse to reign in settlements; Tom Friedman says the US should support the PA state building agenda; Maureen Dowd says Iran is benefiting from the controversy; Sec. Clinton tones down administration rhetoric; the Quartet is meeting to discuss the matter; a Ha'aretz commentary asks whether Pres. Obama will seek to unseat PM Netanyahu and an editorial says he should agree to American demands; Netanyahu's brother-in-law calls Obama an "anti-Semite." More than 100 Palestinians are injured in West Bank violence, and the Christian Science Monitor says Iran sees an opportunity in the chaos. Israel lifts the closure of the West Bank. PLO secretary-general Yasser Abed Rabbo announces a major Palestinian conference on Jerusalem. General David Petraeus expresses concern that Israel's policies may be endangering US troops. The OIC accuses Israel of promoting a religious war. 13 human rights organizations petition on behalf of Palestinian mobility. Tensions emerge between US Jewish and Presbyterian leaders.

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Opportunity in a Fight With Israel

Article Author(s): Mark Landler

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Article Type: Analysis

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s):

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/17/world/middleeast/17diplo.html?ref=middleeast> [6]

For President Obama, getting into a serious fight with Israel carries obvious domestic and foreign political risks. But it may offer the administration a payoff it sees as worthwhile: shoring up Mr. Obama's credibility as a Middle East peacemaker by showing doubtful Israelis and Palestinians that he has the fortitude to push the two sides toward an agreement.

Israel Objects to U.S. Construction Demands

Article Author(s): Ethan Bronner

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s):

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/17/world/middleeast/17mideast.html?ref=middleeast> [7]

The discord between the United States and Israel over Jewish building in East Jerusalem deepened Tuesday with Israeli officials saying they would reject demands by Washington and expressing anger over the public upbraiding of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by the Obama administration.

Let's Fight Over a Big Plan

Article Author(s): Thomas L. Friedman

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/17/opinion/17friedman.html?ref=opinion> [8]

Underlying the latest U.S.-Israel spat over settlements is the deeper ? real ? problem: There are five key actors in the Israeli-Palestinian equation today. Two of them ? the Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad and the alliance of Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah ? have clear strategies. These two are actually opposed, but one of them will shape Israeli-Palestinian relations in the coming years; indeed, their showdown is nearing. I hope Fayyad wins. It would be good for Israel, America and the moderate Arabs. But those three need their own strategy to make it happen.

Bibi's Tense Time-Out

Article Author(s): Maureen Dowd

Media Outlet: The New York Times

Article Type: Opinion

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/17/opinion/17dowd.html?ref=opinion> [9]

So, Barack Obama can lose his temper without a teleprompter. And we have the supremely aggravating Bibi Netanyahu to thank for that.

On St. Patrick's Day, of all days, we wouldn't want to think that our president did not know how to pick his donnybrooks.

The American government did unfortunately apologize to Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, who got mad when a State Department spokesman correctly observed that the Libyan leader doesn't always make sense. But in the case of a defiant Israel, the White House has not yet retreated into its usual compromising crouch.

With subtle shift in nuance, Hillary Clinton reiterates U.S. stance on Israel

Article Author(s): Glenn Kessler

Media Outlet: The Washington Post

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/16/AR2010031602078....> [10]

In the face of bipartisan concern over U.S. criticism of Israeli policies, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Tuesday reiterated the administration's demand for a "full commitment" to peace talks from Israel but also ever so slightly bolstered her rhetorical support for the Jewish state.

More than 100 injured in 'Day of Rage' Israeli-Palestinian clashes

Article Author(s): Maher Abukhater

Edmund Sanders

Media Outlet: The Los Angeles Times

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.latimes.com/news/nation-and-world/more/la-fg-palestinian-protests16-2...> [11]

Rising political and religious tensions in Jerusalem spilled into the streets Tuesday with a string of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police that left more than 100 people injured.

In scenes reminiscent of past uprisings, dozens of Palestinian youths, some with scarves masking their faces, pelted police with rocks, blocked roads and burned tires in half a dozen neighborhoods around East Jerusalem.

Israeli police, who have been on high alert for days, responded with tear gas, rubber bullets and stun grenades, witnesses said.

Anger builds over Israel housing

Article Author(s): Maher Abukhater
Paul Richter
Edmund Sanders

Media Outlet: The Los Angeles Times

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.latimes.com/news/nation-and-world/more/la-fg-us-israel17-2010mar17,0,...> [12]

Reporting from Washington and Jerusalem Paul Richter -- With anger over Israeli building plans stoking tensions about the future of Jerusalem's holy sites, violence spilled into the streets Tuesday in a string of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli police that injured more than 100 people.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton delayed a trip to the Middle East by the U.S. special envoy as Washington pressed the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to roll back construction of housing units in disputed East Jerusalem.

Why Iran smiles on Jerusalem clashes

Article Author(s): Scott Peterson

Media Outlet: The Christian Science Monitor

Article Type: Analysis

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2010/0316/Why-Iran-smiles-on-Jerusalem...> [13]

Iran is closely watching the unfolding crisis between Israel and the United States over Israeli settlements ? and Jerusalem clashes with Palestinians that injured more than 100 today ? for ways to rejuvenate its diminished influence in the Middle East.

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PREVIEW-Israeli settlement dispute clouds quartet meeting

Article Author(s): Conor Sweeney

Media Outlet: Reuters

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LDE62F0JR.htm> [14]

A bitter dispute over Israeli settlements is clouding the chances for progress on Friday at a high-level Moscow meeting aimed at advancing Middle East peace. Russia, eager to raise its profile as a Middle East peacemaker, has long hoped to push the process forward by hosting a follow-up to the 2007 Annapolis peace conference in the United States, with all the major players on hand.

Pentagon eyes impact of Israel-Palestinian tension

Article Author(s): Adam Entous

Media Outlet: Reuters

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N16115782.htm> [15]

Tensions between Israel and the Palestinians have an "enormous" effect where U.S. military forces operate in the Muslim world and are closely monitored, the U.S. general who oversees the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan said on Tuesday.

The comments by General David Petraeus, who heads U.S. Central Command, put a spotlight on the concerns among senior officers as they are drawing down U.S. forces in Iraq, carrying out a major troop surge in Afghanistan and preparing for a possible showdown with Iran over its nuclear program.

Israel lifts closure of West Bank as tensions calm

Article Author(s): Amy Teibel

Media Outlet: The Associated Press

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.statesman.com/news/nation/israel-lifts-closure-of-west-bank-as-tensio...> [16]

Israel on Wednesday lifted its tight restrictions on Palestinian access to Jerusalem's holiest shrine and called off an extended West Bank closure after days of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces.

Despite moving to end the lockdown, Israel still kept thousands of police officers on alert as an uneasy calm settled over the holy city.

The recent violence has taken place against a backdrop of deep Palestinian frustration over a yearlong standstill in peace talks and dovetailed with the worst U.S.-Israeli diplomatic feud in decades.

Pan-Islamic body accuses Israel of dragging Mideast into "religious war"

Media Outlet: Xinhua

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s): http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/17/c_13213848.htm [17]

A pan-Islamic body accused Israel of trying to drag the Middle East into a religious war after the Jewish state inaugurated on Monday a restored historic synagogue in the Old City in East Jerusalem, not far from the third holiest site for Islam, al-Aqsa Mosque.

Organization of Islamic Conference Secretary General Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu "renews his call on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities in pre-empting Israel from dragging the region into a religious war by continuing its blatant assault on the sanctity of Muslims," the Jeddah-based body said in a statement.

Israel's Titanic moment: Does Obama want Bibi's head?

Article Author(s): Bradley Burston

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Opinion

Date: March 16, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1156827.html> [18]

Hamas has designated this day, in this place, its Day of Rage. Why, then, the smiles on the faces of Mahmoud Zahar and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad?

Perhaps it's because after more than 22 years of costly trial and error, Hamas has finally come upon the secret of how to bring down the Jewish state:

Let the ship sink itself.

This month, down here in the engine room of the Titanic, a single coherent order continues to sound from the officers shrouded in fog on the bridge: "More power!"

It's time for Netanyahu to say yes to Obama

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Article Type: Editorial

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1157031.html> [19]

The cancellation of the visit by American envoy George Mitchell, who has been delegated to renew the diplomatic negotiations, embodies the slippery slope facing Israel during the past week. Even before completing the first year of his second term in office, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has managed to foment crises in two key strategic areas: the peace process with the Palestinians and relations with the United States.

Netanyahu's brother-in-law: Obama is an anti-Semite

Article Author(s): Barak Ravid

Media Outlet: Haaretz

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1157061.html> [20]

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's brother-in-law Dr. Hagai Ben-Artzi on Wednesday called U.S. President Barack Obama an anti-Semite in an interview with Army Radio.

"It's not that Obama doesn't like Bibi," he referring to Netanyahu using his nickname. "He

doesn't like the nation of Israel."

Netanyahu was quick to distance himself from Ben-Artzi's remarks, saying he completely disagrees with his brother-in-law.

Groups petition court for Gaza to W. Bank movement

Article Author(s): Dan Izenberg

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=171095> [21]

Thirteen human rights organizations spearheaded by Hamoked: Center for the Defense of the Individual and Gisha ? Legal Center for Freedom of Movement petitioned the High Court of Justice on Monday against a new Defense Ministry regulation severely restricting the right of Palestinians living in Gaza to move to the West Bank.

'Report demonizing Israel risks Presbyterian-Jewish ties'

Article Author(s): E.B. Solomont

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Date: March 17, 2010

Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishNews/Article.aspx?id=171151> [22]

American Jewish leaders are slamming a report by the Presbyterian Church USA that blames Israel for the ?Palestinian resistance? and denounces companies doing business with Israel.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs, which circulated a memo to its member agencies and board of directors Monday, said the biased report reduced the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to a caricature, demonizing Israel and delegitimizing its right to exist as a Jewish state.

Fateful choice

Media Outlet: The Jerusalem Post

Article Type: Editorial

Date: March 17, 2010






Source Link(s): <http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Editorials/Article.aspx?id=171162> [23]

In still another sign of the rapidly deteriorating relations between Israel and the US ? a function of the Obama administration?s unwarranted and shocking overreaction to the Ramat Shlomo dispute ? special Mideast envoy George Mitchell postponed his arrival here, originally

slated for Tuesday.

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