



THE EARLY PHOENIX

A first look at today's most notable stories from the Middle East, selected by ACLS experts

19 January 2023

IRAN

1. [**Exclusive: US Envoy Malley Met With Iran's UN Ambassador**](#) (*Iran International*). [A]ccording to information *Iran International* obtained, US Special Representative for Iran Robert Malley met with Iran's ambassador to the United Nations in New York, Saeed Iravani, "at least three times in the last two months."
2. [**The EU Approved Designating Iran's Revolutionary Guard as a Terrorist group**](#) (*Al Sharq Al-Awsat*). The majority of European Parliament representatives agreed to pass a plan calling on the European Union and member states to classify the "Revolutionary Guard" as a terrorist organization, at a time when Iran warned of "unbearable" consequences if European countries decided to proceed with the plan. 598 out of 638 deputies in the European Parliament voted to approve the request of the European Union and member states to include the "Revolutionary Guard" on the list of terrorism.
3. [**Campaign To Give Power Of Attorney To Iran's Exiled Prince Gains Momentum**](#) (*Iran International*). Many Iranians, including artists and athletes, have signed a petition endorsing exiled Prince Reza Pahlavi as their representative to lead a transition from clerical to secular rule.

TURKIYE

4. [**Details of Cavusoglu's Visit to the United States**](#) (*Sky News Arabia*). US Secretary of State Antony Blinken hosted his Turkish counterpart in Washington for the first time since the Biden administration took office nearly two years ago, in a visit dominated by the F-16 deal, the Ukraine war, and Ankara's refusal to agree to grant NATO membership to Sweden and Finland. The Biden administration expressed its support for the sale of aircraft to Turkey, despite the opposition of the US Congress because of "Ankara's controversial human rights record and its policy towards Syria," as part of the administration's efforts to preserve NATO unity in the face of the Russian military attack on Ukraine.

THE GULF

5. [**In the Absence of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, a Meeting of the Leaders of Six Arab Countries in Abu Dhabi \(Enab Baladi\)**](#). On Wednesday, January 18, the UAE capital, Abu Dhabi, hosted a “consultative meeting”...The meeting bore the name “Prosperity and Stability in the Region,” and was attended by the leaders of Qatar, Bahrain, the Sultanate of Oman, Jordan and Egypt. It was the first of its kind in 2023, after many Arab meetings that were held in 2022, at the summit level.
6. [**Saudi Finance Minister: The Era of Unconditional Grants and Aid is Over \(The New Arab\)**](#). Saudi Finance Minister Muhammad Al-Jadaan said today, Wednesday, that the Kingdom is moving towards changing the way it provides aid to its allies, represented by providing direct grants and deposits without conditions. Al-Jadaan explained that the Kingdom saw early global inflation looming on the horizon and acted accordingly, which helped keep inflation in the Kingdom at an average of approximately 2.6%, expecting that “inflation will not be high next year.”
7. [**Saudi Finance Minister: We are Open to Trade Talks in other Currencies Besides the Dollar \(Al Arabiya\)**](#). Saudi Finance Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan said in an interview with “Bloomberg” in Davos today, Tuesday, “There are no problems discussing how to settle our trade agreements, whether it is in US dollars, euros, or Saudi riyals”...The world's largest oil exporter is seeking to strengthen its ties with important trading partners, including China. Last year, during President Xi Jinping's visit to Riyadh, the two countries agreed to enhance coordination on energy and exploration policy. Xi said during that visit that his country will make efforts to buy more oil from the Middle East and also wants to settle this trade in yuan.
8. [**At a Value of \\$370 Million, Kuwait Signs an Agreement to Purchase Turkish "Bayraktar TB2" Aircraft \(Al Jazeera\)**](#). The Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense and the Turkish company Baykar signed an agreement to export the latest “Bayraktar TB2” armed drones to the Kuwaiti army.
9. [**Saudi Arabia Shows its Support to the Syrian Revolution \(Facebook Profile Page\)**](#). Twelve years after the beginning of the Syrian Revolution, Al Arabiya Channel, without any written explanation, added the Syrian Revolutionary flag to its logo on its Syria Facebook page, signifying its support and sending a political message to Turkey.

IRAQ

10. [President of Iraq: Baghdad and Erbil Reject the Violations of Iran and Turkiye \(Al Hadath\)](#). Iraqi President Abd al-Latif Rashid said that the Turkish military presence on the territory of Iraq is unacceptable, and stressed the need for an agreement between the two countries to grant Baghdad a fair share of water.

YEMEN

11. [Children Die Every Day: A Lethal Injection Spreads in Sana'a \(Al Hadath\)](#). Medical sources in the capital, Sana'a, which is under the control of the Houthi militia, the Iranian arm in Yemen, revealed that a new fake medicine injection has spread in a number of pharmacies and hospitals. It is given to newborns and pregnant women and causes death...According to statistics, from January 2021 to August 2022, about 3,132 newborn deaths were recorded, and fetal deformities amounted to 618 cases.

LIBYA

12. [Washington is Discussing with Haftar the Unification of Libya's Military \(Al Hadath\)](#). The US embassy in Libya said on Wednesday evening that talks took place between the Libyan army commander, Khalifa Haftar, and the Chargé d'Affairs at the US embassy, Leslie Ordman, and the deputy commander of the US Air Forces in Africa, General John de Lamontagne, to discuss the importance of unifying the Libyan army under an elected civilian leadership.

SYRIA

13. [A Leaked Document Reveals the Participation of a Division of the Syrian Regime's Army in a Foreign Mission for Russia \(Syria TV\)](#). A secret document leaked from the Syrian regime's army showed the participation of the "25th Special Task Division," led by Major General Suhail al-Hassan, in a foreign mission for Russia...According to the sources of the "Syrian Observatory for Human Rights," the members of the 25th Division participated in military operations within the areas controlled by Russia in eastern Ukraine.
14. [The European Union Renews its Rejection of Normalization with the Syrian Regime \(Syria.news\)](#). The European Union renewed its rejection of normalization with the Syrian regime, stressing that the process of rebuilding Syria and lifting sanctions will



not begin as long as the Syrian regime does not actively participate in the political solution.

15. [Saudi Foreign Minister Discusses Syria Developments with UN Envoy Geir Pedersen](#) (*Syria TV*). The Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan, discussed in the Swiss city of Davos, on Wednesday, efforts to resolve the Syrian issue, with the United Nations envoy to Syria, Geir Pedersen.