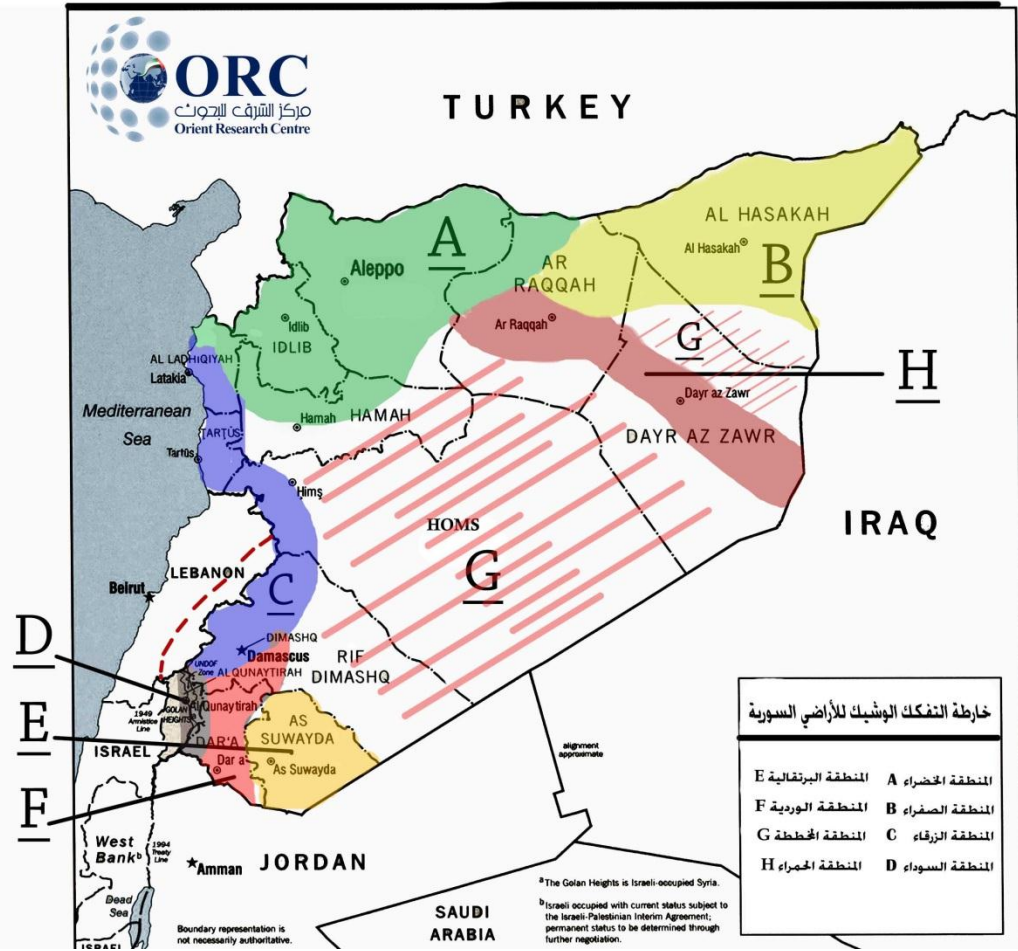


Session: The end of Syria as we know it

Do nothing, destroy everything all-around

Dr. Samir Altaqi
Orient Research Centre

April 2013

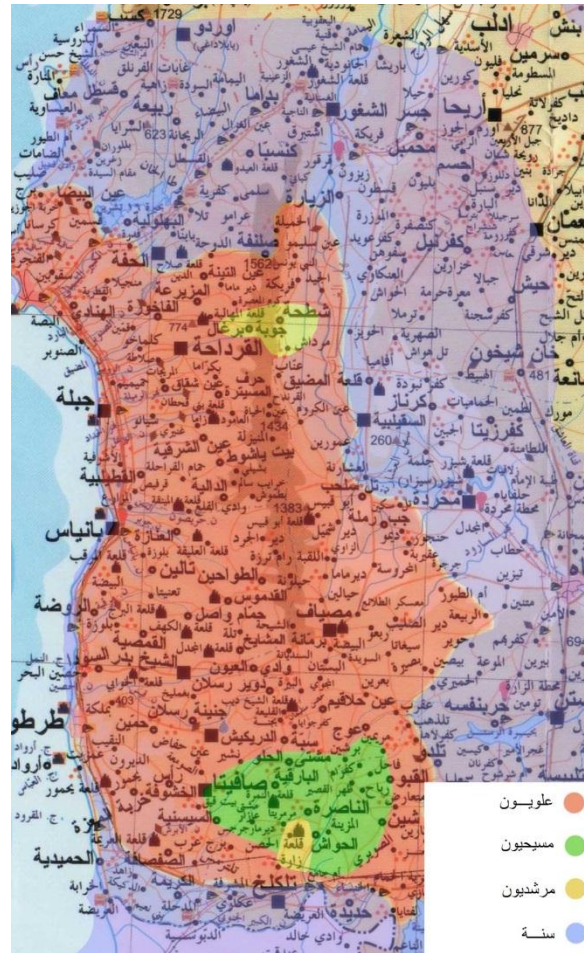


خارطة التفكك الوشيك للأراضي السورية
 المنطقة الخضراء A المنطقة البرتغالية E
 المنطقة الصفراء B المنطقة الوردية F
 المنطقة الزرقاء C المنطقة المخططة G
 المنطقة السوداء D المنطقة الحمراء H

^a The Golan Heights is Israeli-occupied Syria.
^b Israeli occupied with current status subject to the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement; permanent status to be determined through further negotiation.

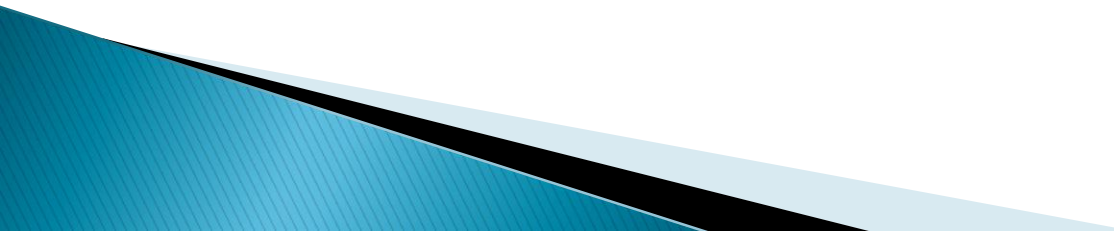
Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.

Potential ethnic friction coastal area

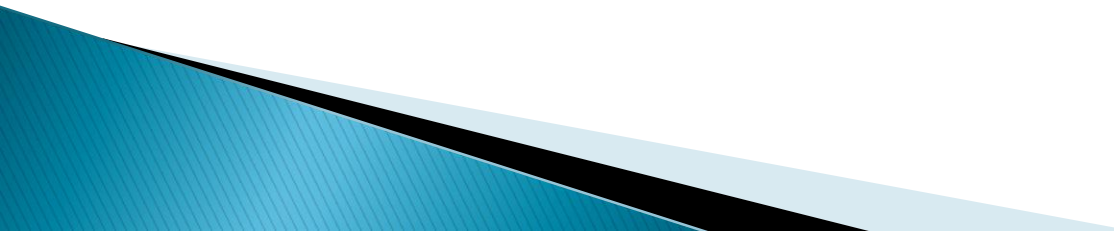


The internal balance of force in Syria

In this paper, we based our analysis on one some fact that appear stable for the moment:

- ▶ No consistent massive Western intervention looming in the horizon
 - ▶ The brutal current asymmetric balance of weakness between the two sides, will most probably prevail with the current mutual erosion of the nation state and society fabric.
 - ▶ Unless there is a dramatic change in the attitude of external forces we can not expect any side to break this balance
- 

Still there are complex and extensive forms of foreign intervention

- ▶ Some forms of the external intervention could accelerate the atomization of the state.
 - ▶ Neglect of some other foreign players, works in favor of decay of the state.
 - ▶ No military breakthrough is eminent: No military zero summing outlet.
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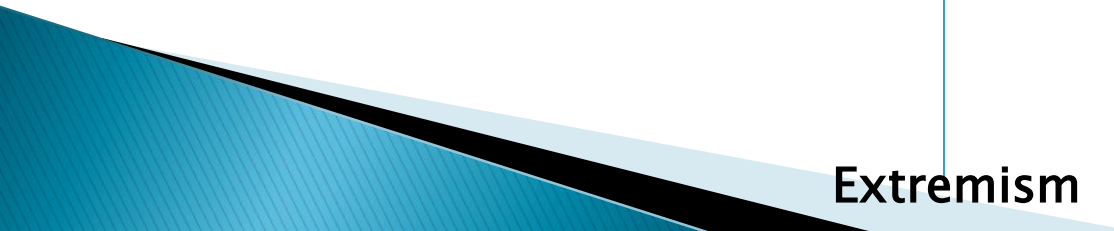
Two decisive factors

Basing our current analysis on those elements, we consider that the main two factors determining the possible scenarios of the dramatic situation in the country, would be:

1. **Collapse of the state**
2. **Rise of sectarian extremism**

State collapse

Extremism



Rise of extremism

- ▶ Rise of extremism on both sides will lead to change in the conflict nature:
 - Internationally: the conflict will become a war against terrorism
 - Regionally: Regional inter-confessional war
 - Extension the conflict life cycle

State collapse

Main factors that promotes further collapse of the regime and state:

- The broadening of the liberated areas.
- The battle of Damascus, and dragging the city into chaos.
- Economic collapse.

State collapse

Scenario 2: very unlikely

- State still powerful
- Protracted conflict and failing state
- Exhausted brutal regime ruling a broken society
- With gradual raise of sectarian extremism

Perceived favoring players: Assad, Russia, Iran

Scenario 4: (Do nothing – worst case)

- Complete fragmentation and Somalization of the state and society
- could be dragged into a regional confessional conflict and flare of terrorism.

Perceived Favoring player: AQ!

Scenario 1: (best case)

- Political process before the collapse of the state and flare up of extremism
- Needs international mediation

Perceived favoring players: UN, AL, EU, etc.

Scenario 3


collapse of the Syrian nation state as we know it but still low extremism containable:

Syrian Al-Taef

Perceived favoring players: USA, Turkey, Israel, Muslim Brotherhood.

Extremism

Regime behavior turning the state into a militia:

- ▶ Delegating power to informal military organizations (Shabiha, National Defense Army, Intelligence forces...)
 - ▶ The regime shrinks to be limited by its suppression organizations.
 - ▶ The continuous use of violence against civilians as a cleansing tool in certain areas.
 - ▶ New divisions of governorates
 - ▶ Extreme brutality against civilians
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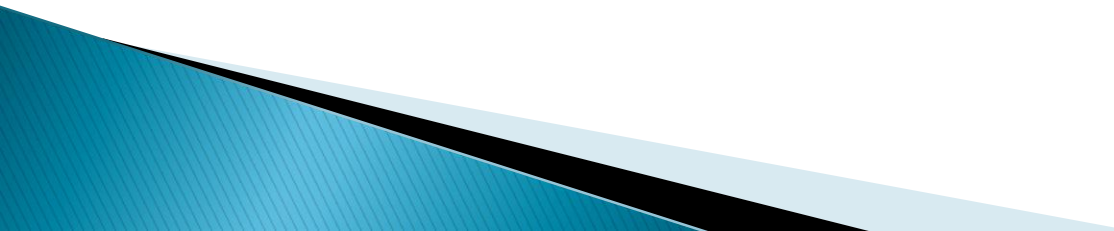
Basic assumptions from our analysis– domestically

- ▶ Regardless of the fates of the conflict:
 - No more perspectives to change the regime and save the old central state structure. **State and regime are now physically merged together.**
 - Sunni radicalization is overwhelmingly prevailing as moderate military opposition is so weak: (Al–Nusra recruits jumped from 7000 and 17000 fighter after the restriction of some regional military support to the FSA).
 - No way to re– launch the national reconciliation as well as the economy without a new National consensus

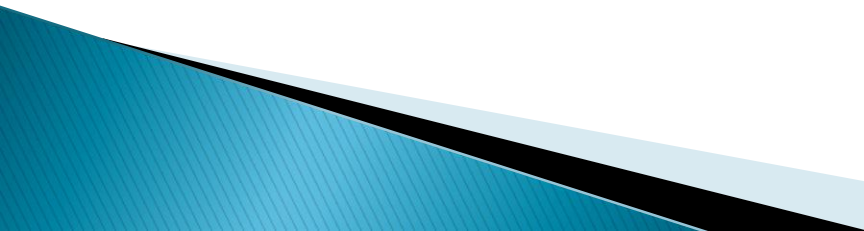
Bashar Al-Assad

- ▶ Then, we can conclude that Bashar Al-Assad can no more rule regardless of the fate of conflict, and his absence will not change a lot.
 - ▶ He is no more an issue

Basic assumptions form our analysis– at regional level

- ▶ There is no way to prevent the spread of sophisticated hardware, when the regime collapses and the regular army is changed into a militia
 - ▶ Pretty sure, the conflict will spill out to Lebanon, Iraq Jordan and may be Turkey
 - ▶ All neighboring players are beginning to create “de facto” buffer zones fostering division
- 

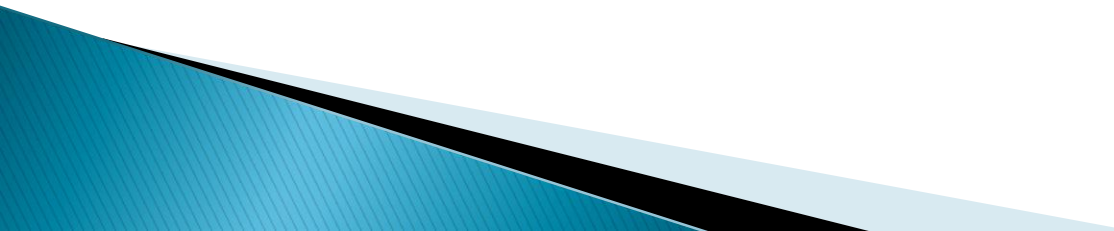
Factual trends on the ground

- ▶ The collapse of the regional and national economy in Syrian is leading into a factual annexation of each areas to neighboring countries
 - ▶ “Militia–zation” and war lords prevailing on both sides
 - ▶ Fragmentation of the FSA
 - ▶ Formation of the interim government is factually limited to the formation of an entity in the North affiliated to the Turkish economy and administration
 - ▶ Trends to massacres, depopulation, and ethnic cleansing raising alarmingly.
- 

A political process hugged by the international community

- ▶ Due to deep mutual distrust and political mismanagement, although the political process can only come out of a Syrian dialogue, Syrians are no more able to help themselves alone.
- ▶ An international mediation is most needed

Our suggestion to curb spontaneous worst case scenario

- ▶ Initiation of a National dialogue aiming to re-establish a basic national unity consensus:
The Syrian National Dialogue Forum
 - ▶ A three stage political process with the regardless of BA's fate
 - ▶ An international group which would act as shepherd and guarantors backing Linbrahimi
- 

Scenarios 2015?

1. Political unification under de-centralized Syria: best case Scenario
 2. Chaos
 3. Annexation of parts of Syria: Worst Case
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