The US Keeps “Promoting Peace and Stability” with its Record Weapons Sales

Among those major geopolitical challenges the world faces these days, the so-called arc of instability that stretches from North Africa to Pakistan is by far the most pressing one. The volatile situation in the Middle East has turned those states that used to enjoy relative stability into potential war zones due to Washington's extensive meddling in Iraq, Libya, Syria and even Egypt. Should this region be plunged into the depths of a wider regional conflict, the repercussions for the rest of the world are going to be grave, including such developments as soaring global oil prices, a massive migrant influx, along with an ever increasing number of those young men opting to stay in the region in a bid to join those radical terrorist organizations that do not seem to experience any shortage of capital no matter what.

However, in a bid to carry on enjoying their super profits US military contractors carry on pumping weapons into the region, refusing to defuse the potentially catastrophic situation, as Washington makes one bold statement against individual regional players after another. This conviction of the US that there's no peace on the table in the Middle East can be witnessed in its continuous attempts to establish the so-called Sunni Arab “NATO”

Last February, in its typical fashion Voice of America would try to create a favorable media buzz by solemnly announcing to the rest of the world that the US would summon high-profile representatives of 60 states in Warsaw to discuss the prospects of its new Middle Eastern military block. However, there was no mention of the fact that Mike Pompeo had to change the agenda of the summit, as there was no more than a handful of participants willing to discuss “Iran's destabilizing role.” Yet, the number of states that would participate in the summit re-branded as the discussion aimed at the promotion of peace and stability in the Middle East shows that most international players have no interests in searching a casus belli against Tehran. Nevertheless, the US Secretary of State couldn't prevent himself from revealing the original plan behind the Warsaw summit, as he would outline the steps that Washington was going to make in its opposition against Iran.

However, those were hardly a secret as new weapons shipments continue arriving at a number of Middle Eastern states without delays, which blows the lid off an active phase of war preparations. According to the data presented by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the sheer volume of the arms trade between certain regional players and the West is large enough to fuel an all-out regional conflict for years.

In particular, it’s been revealed that Middle Eastern arms imports accounted for 35% of global arms imports in the 2014–18 timespan. Over the last five years the number of small arms, armored vehicles and munitions purchased across the region has almost doubled.

It should be noted that a total of four regional players entered the list of top 10 largest importers of weapons over the five year span: Saudi Arabia (1st place in the global rating with a share of 12%), Egypt (3rd place in the global rating with a share of 5.1%), the United Arab Emirates (7th place with a share of 3.7%) and, curiously enough, there’s Iraq on that list (8th in the global rating with a share of about 3.7%).

The ever increasing number of arms deals being signed by the leading players of the region is of particular concern against the backdrop of the possible development of the situation in the region. Thus, the growth of arms imports in 2014–2018 compared to the period of 2009–2013 showed that Egypt has more than doubled its arms imports with a 206% increase, Saudi Arabia coming second with its 192%, with Iraq (139%) lagging slightly behind. However, over the same period of time, Qatar showed an increase of 225%, while Israel is topping the charts with its 354%. 
What that essentially means is that even those regional states that had no original intention of fighting anyone are getting more susceptible to being drawn into a shooting conflict. It goes without saying that the absolute majority of American, French and British weapon systems shipped to the region are being delivered to the Persian Gulf that remains riddled with internal contradictions.

It’s hardly a secret that the United States remains the world’s biggest exporter of weapons that controls 36% of the market. Over the last five years it has shipped its weapon systems to some 98 countries of the world, with pretty much every single conventional item of its arsenal being for sale, starting with modern armored vehicles and ending with short-range ballistic missiles. At the same time, France wants its own piece of the market, increasing its weapons sales by 43% over the last five years.

Of course, it's hardly a secret that well over 50% of all the weapon systems sold by the above mentioned players are being shipped to the Middle East, with Britain selling some 60% of its fighter jets to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

It's safe to say that these days nobody wants to know where those weapons Washington, Paris and London sold are going to be deployed, as long as they are being paid for in hard cash. However, with the Middle Eastern region remaining the most unstable part of the world it's simply irresponsible to carry on dumping weapons into this conflict-ridden land. The US behavior starts looking even more morally bankrupt if you take into consideration the fact that to this very day Washington remains the self-proclaimed world gendarme that is engaged in virtually every single military conflict that breaks out across the globe, which means that it has a vested interest in protracting those instead of assisting the parties involved in their attempts (however genuine) to find a peaceful solution.

Back in the Cold War days communist countries would typically accuse the West of being a “war arsonist” that sets a country on fire on one day and then pretends to act as a firefighter squad on the other. No matter what you attitude towards socialist ideas may be, it’s hard to describe both the US and UK in any other terms than the one used by the Soviet propaganda some three decades ago.

It's safe to say that once a wider regional conflict in the Middle East is triggered, there's no predicting its outcome or the damage it may cause to both the regional players and the rest of the world, especially in a situation when there's no shortage of modern weapons.

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