Reshaping of the Middle East is Underway, but It's Not in Favor of the United States

Hardly anyone would argue that the United States has been the main perpetrator and instigator of armed conflicts in some Middle Eastern states (Iraq, Syria, Libya, Iran, Yemen) for a long time. Undercover of Washington’s unshakable support for traditional allies, many of them began to go beyond the framework of international law with impunity, becoming the causative agents and instigators of regional conflicts in the process. That includes the intervention of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in Yemen and their boycott of Qatar, Turkey’s various maneuvers in Libya and against Kurds in Syria and Iraq, the refusal of the US-imposed and now deposed Afghan government of Karzai to negotiate with the Taliban (a movement banned in Russia), and the expansion of Israeli development in the West Bank with the openly favorable position of Washington.

It should also be recognized that a significant role in creating armed conflicts in the region belonged to CENTCOM, the US Central Military Command established by Ronald Reagan in 1983, which is currently one of the 11 Pentagon “combatant commands” that literally cover the entire globe, extending even into space and cyberspace. Washington has designated CENTCOM’s “area of responsibility” (AOR) to encompass 20 countries spanning the Greater Middle East, most recently including Israel. According to the command’s website, it is four million square miles, populated by more than 560 million people from 25 ethnic groups with multiple religious traditions and speaking 20 languages along with many local dialects. Although CENTCOM’s mission statement reads that it directs and enables military...
operations and activities with allies and partners to enhance regional security and stability, its true purpose is quite different - to assert American supremacy, demonstrating the allegedly enduring need for American global leadership.

However, in recent decades, CENTCOM attracted increased international and regional attention for its attempts to decide the fate of the post-Cold War US empire, including with American weapons. The result is the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians in the region because of CENTCOM military operations.

But it was with CENTCOM that the American empire began to crumble, as its very existence coincided with an almost staggering decline in regional security and stability throughout the Greater Middle East. The humiliating collapse of US military ambitions in Afghanistan after 20 years of CENTCOM’s invasion of that country only underscored this point. Therefore, the militarization of the US policy in the Middle East, implemented since 1983, is now universally perceived as a fatal mistake. Washington’s most acceptable step in this regard could be the complete abolition of the combat command along the lines of Afghanistan. After all, the main reason for the creation of CENTCOM in the Cold War-era - US dependence on oil imported from the Persian Gulf - has now disappeared. Therefore, today, Washington no longer needs to justify its presence in the Middle East region with an M-16 rifle or Made in USA missiles in front of it but using the negotiation processes. This way, the number of civilian casualties caused by US arms and soldiers in the region will be considerably reduced, which will also bring down the criticism of the US. And such suggestions for the US leadership are becoming clearer today, particularly in the theses of Andrew Bacevich, an American historian specializing in international relations, security studies, US foreign policy, and US diplomatic and military history.

The Arab world today is reshaping itself, undergoing a period of transition after a decade of uprisings, upheavals, revolutions, and civil wars, many of which were initiated by Washington. In the last decade, several countries in the region have seen their institutions collapse, and the very notion of the nation-state sometimes seemed to be on the verge of extinction. Today, Arab countries are in an excellent position to begin their transition to good governance, resolving Libya, Tunisia, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. Democratic elections are scheduled to occur in many countries shortly, particularly in Libya in December this year and Lebanon in the first quarter of next year. In Iraq and Lebanon, elections are seen as a starting point for transitioning to more representative political regimes not based on sectarian or religious grounds. This task is difficult, no matter how profound the demands of the countries’ populations for more democratic forms of governance may be.

Syria is actively seeking a way out of the destabilization of the past decade. And the political winds in this country today show that even some of the very forces that used to work against the Syrian regime have started reopening their Embassies in Damascus or getting their leaders to call Syrian President Assad, which has not happened since March 2011.

In retrospect, countries in the region have now realized the abysmal gap between the democratic aspirations of the Arab peoples themselves, and the political stencils imposed from the US, or through its helpers. In particular, in the form of implantation of radical Islamists, which included parties associated with the Muslim Brotherhood (a movement banned in Russia) in Egypt, Syria, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and other countries.

And against this background, for many regional countries, Russia’s return to the Middle East as one of the key players causes only positive emotions. The region has rightly realized that Russia’s position is to consider regional interests, local cultures, and specifics of political life; Russia does not pursue the right angle but tries to consider the interests of each of the states in the region. Russia’s interests do not include destroying the balance, as the United States used to do, which evokes sympathy from many countries in the Middle East. As a result, the number of regional countries that have become loyal to Russia now includes even those that previously, to put it mildly, weren’t very sympathetic of Moscow, particularly Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Therefore, it is not surprising that even the US media believes that Russia has already achieved a big win and massive influence in the Middle East. The US, on the other hand, squandered some of its influence, losing confidence in countries that for decades were considered allies.

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