How Well the Arab World is Taking Trump's Victory

As one cold expect the Arab countries, just like any other state in the world, were following closely the US presidential campaign. This is understandable, since the people of this war-torn region are kin to know what the White House is going to do in the next four years and in which way this will affect the Middle East.

As for Barack Obama that is going to leave office pretty soon, it's hardly a secret that local media sources were criticizing his policies in strong language.

"Obama's legacy in the Middle East — is a complete disaster, as the conflict in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Libya continue, while being unaddressed." Al Jazeera would often write, quoting a speech delivered by the famous professor of international affairs at Harvard, Stephen Walt. Terrorist attacks are shaking Turkey, Tunisia, Lebanon, while the situation in Palestine remains unclear, since the prospects of an actual settlement between Israelis and Palestinians are becoming increasingly remote. The steps that the US has taken in Libya and Yemen have led to their complete collapse as states. At the same time, all Obama ever did was to repeat his mantra that "Assad should leave", which only aggravated the war in Syria. The only achievement that Obama can somehow put on his scoreboard — is the the Iran nuclear deal.

According to the Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahram, "this campaign has been so scandalous, it is unlikely that the US will be able to recover from it in the near future."

"If America was perceived as a beacon of democracy, its lights have considerably dimmed recently." – says the Lebanese Daily Star.

The remarks of Haed Al Maena, a Saudi journalist writing for the Saudi Gazette were particularly bold. "This election campaign was the most polarized one in the US history," - he would note. Analyzing the course of the election campaign, the author concludes that "the Arabs have to rely on themselves, instead of expecting anything from America." The journalist subjected Hillary Clinton to particularly harsh criticism by claiming that "she's been kissing ground the Israelis walk on, going as far as promising to invite Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu as the first foreign visitor to the White House in case of her victory. She announced strong support for the Israeli government, which occupies other peoples' land, murdering children and carrying on the worst form of apartheid known to men... This woman does not feel any remorse — we can just remember her insulting remarks about her husband's rape victims. The recent revelations released by the WikiLeaks show that she believes that the destruction of Syria will be beneficial to Israel."

The Middle Eastern ruling and media elites alike resided on the assumption that Hillary Clinton would win. That is why Trump's success was rather unexpected, which in turn created a massive confusion. Now all the attention is paid to the detailed study and analysis of all the statements the next president of the United States has ever made.

One may remember Trump's remarks about him being on the same side with Russia and the Syrian regime in the
fight against ISIS, instead of creating a no-fly zone that Hillary Clinton was advocating.

Many Arab journalist are stressing the part of Trump's speech at the National Convention of the Republican Party in July 2016, where he accused the Obama administration of forcing America to bow to China, Mexico, Russia and the Islamic state.

However, an increasing amount of attention is being paid to Trump's attitude towards Islam and the Muslim refugees. The Al Jazeera has already published an article under the title President of Islamophobia, which stated that Trump rose to the heights of power due to his Islamophobic campaign, and now Islamophobia has become the US official policy. It was noted that at first, when in one of the speeches Trump proposed a ban against Muslims entering the United States, this position received no approval. However, in March 2016, according to the survey, a significant portion of the US population fully supported this approach.

One must note that Trump's position on the Arab-Israeli conflict is also rather sensitive for the Arab world.

Trump, notes the above mentioned journalist Khalid Al Maena, would bring no good for the Arabs, since he's naive and unexperienced and will only do what he believes is good for himself. And really - Al Maena concludes — "how can one treat Arabs with sympathy, if they are at each other's throats."

A number of Arab commentators have already noted that Trump's positive remarks about Israel, as some of them claim that he promised to move the US embassy to Jerusalem — the declared but not recognized capital of the Israeli state.

The Jerusalem Post would stress that the victory of pro-Israeli right-wing Trump would be "the end of the Palestinian state."

Vladimir Mashin, Ph.D. in History and a political commentator, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook”.