

November 2016

## Politics:

Iran's parliament [approved](#) President Hassan Rouhani's proposed new ministers for Sports and Youth Affairs, Culture and Islamic Guidance, and Education.

President Rouhani [appointed](#) Dr Zahra Ahmadi Pour to positions of Iranian Vice President as well as head of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organisation.

Iran's Defence Minister General Hossein Dehghan [announced](#) that Iran will reveal a new domestically-manufactured helicopter and tank in the near future.

The Deputy Interior Minister and chief of the election commission Mohammad Hosseini Moghimi [announced](#) that the commission will begin its activities in the next month in preparation for the 2017 presidential election.

Iran's Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli [received](#) a 'yellow card' from the Iranian parliament following questioning by parliamentary members.

## International Relations:

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei [declared](#) that Iran was not concerned about Donald Trump's election to the US presidency because all American presidents hold hostile views towards Iran.

The chairperson of Russia's Federation Council Valentina Ivanovna Matviyenko [met](#) with Iranian officials including President Hassan Rouhani, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Parliamentary Speaker Ali Larijani in Tehran. The two countries emphasised their desire to enhance bilateral political, parliamentary and relationships.

The Speaker of Hungary's National Assembly László Kövér [met](#) President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Zarif in Tehran to discuss further peaceful nuclear cooperation.

President Rouhani [announced](#) that the US election result will not impact Iran's foreign policy.

Defence Minister Dehghan and his Chinese counterpart General Chang Wanquan [signed](#) an agreement to promote bilateral military cooperation against terrorism.

The Iranian deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs Hossein Jaber Ansari [met](#) with the UN Special Envoy on Syria Staffan de Mistura in Tehran. Jaber stressed on the vital role that the United Nations will play in ending Syria's conflict.

The second phase of high-level talks between Iran and the European Union were [held](#) in Brussels.

Foreign Minister Zarif visited Eastern Europe. He [met](#) the Romanian Prime Minister Dacian Ciolos in Bucharest to discuss further cooperation in the fields of banking, energy and transportation. Zarif also [visited](#) Bratislava, meeting the Slovak President Andrej Kiska to discuss mutual cooperation, especially on economic matters.

In a joint press conference with the Czech Foreign Minister Lubomir Zaoralek, Foreign Minister Zarif [announced](#) that Tehran will pursue other options if countries including the US do not comply with the nuclear agreement.

Foreign Minister Zarif [travelled](#) to Beirut where he met with several Lebanese officials including the new President Michel Aoun, Prime Minister Tammam Salam, Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil and Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri in Beirut. Zarif also [met](#) with the Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah to discuss the current situation in Middle East.

President Rouhani [received](#) the new British Ambassador to Tehran Nicholas Hopton. Rouhani told the ambassador that Iran has complied with all requirements of the nuclear deal.

President Rouhani [met](#) Togo's Foreign Minister Robert Dussey in Tehran.

Ayatollah Khamenei [condemned](#) the Saudi war on Yemen as an example of terrorism during a meeting with the Finnish President Sauli Niinistö.

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At least ten Iranian pilgrims were [killed](#) and five injured in a suicide attack in the Iraqi holy city of Samarra. Iranian security forces are advising against travel to Samarra.

The Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal al-Mekdad [visited](#) Tehran, where he met Foreign Minister Zarif to discuss the two countries' cooperation against terrorism and extremism in the region.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini [met](#) President Rouhani and Foreign Minister Zarif. The two parties underlined the need for increased diplomatic cooperation on regional tensions, especially in Syria.

Foreign Minister Zarif travelled to Moscow to [talk](#) with the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and the Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem. Zarif commented that the fight against terrorism in the Middle East would require further commitment from the international community.

The chair of the Iranian parliamentary Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy Alaeddin Boroujerdi [remarked](#) that Iran will monitor the new US president in case the 2015 nuclear deal is violated.

## Economics:

Iran [opened](#) the first passenger terminal at the Chabahar Port to travellers.

The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) [signed](#) an agreement with Norway's DNO for a study on the Changuleh oil field along the Iran-Iraq border.

Iran and Armenia [signed](#) a tariff agreement to facilitate commercial and economic cooperation between the two countries.

The International Energy Agency [announced](#) that Iran's petroleum production will increase to six million barrels per day by 2040.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines [officially](#) resumed its flights to Iran.

Iran [quadrupled](#) its petroleum exports to India over the past year.

Iran [expects](#) to receive its first delivery of Airbus planes by the end of December 2016.

Austria [announced](#) that it will open several banks in Iran to promote international transactions.

Britain [lifted](#) sanctions on one of Iran's major banks, Bank Saderat Iran.

**NEW MESF IRAN PUBLICATION: Shahram Akbarzadeh & James Barry (2016): 'Iran and Turkey: not quite enemies but less than friends,' Third World Quarterly. Available [here](#).**

The rise and subsequent erosion of friendly relations between Iran and Turkey was a result of their regional ambitions. While Turkey had long seen its secular system as presenting an alternative to Iran's Islamic ideology, the alignment of their regional interests facilitated a rapport between the two states in the first decade of the twenty-first century. However, the Arab Spring proved divisive for this relationship as each state sought to advocate its model of government and secure a leadership role in the Arab world. The war in Syria widened the divide, as Iran's long-standing support for the Bashar al-Assad regime could not be reconciled with Turkey's desire to see President Assad out of office. Using a close reading of Persian and Turkish sources, the authors will analyse the Iran-Turkey divide, focusing specifically on how the Iranians have portrayed it as a clash of civilisations, citing Turkey's so-called 'neo-Ottoman' ambitions as the primary cause.

