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Weekly coverage round-up (Apr 1 - 5)

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Al-Jumhuriya Collective



A quick English summary of our Arabic news coverage this week.

“A view from inside the Golan” (1 April, 2019). In the wake of President Trump’s formal recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, the approximately 26,000 Syrians remaining in the area feel existentially threatened more than ever before, according to local writer Aram Abu-Saleh. Among the possible consequences of the recognition is US participation in a proposed wind turbine project, headed by the Israeli firm Energix, to be built on occupied Syrian territory. For more, read the [full report](#) (Arabic).

“Turkey’s intractable alliances” (2 April, 2019). Turkey’s decision to press ahead with the purchase of a Russian-made S-400 air defense system against the wishes of the United States and Ankara’s partners in NATO has put it in a dilemma. Increasingly it appears Turkey will have to choose between the two powers it has hitherto succeeding in courting in parallel: Washington and Moscow. Should its relations with the latter deteriorate substantially, one outcome may be the launch of a military campaign in Syria’s Idlib Province. For more, see our [full report](#) (Arabic).

“The large cities, and networks of economics and influence” (3 April, 2019). Turkey’s ruling AKP party and its far-right Nationalist Movement Party ally were defeated in most of the country’s large cities in Sunday’s municipal elections, including Ankara, Izmir, Adana, Mersin, and likely Istanbul too, at the hands of the opposition CHP and its own right-wing ally, the Good Party. This was in spite of a concerted effort by President Erdogan to rally supporters in what he framed as a “war against the enemies of the state,” marshalling his vast political resources and influence over the media against his “pro-terrorist” opponents. For a detailed analysis of the economic and other factors that

contributed to this historic result, see our [full report](#) (Arabic) by Dr. Şenay Özden.

“Is Russia pushing Hezbollah out of al-Qalamoun?” (4 April, 2019). Russia may be gradually encroaching on Hezbollah’s influence in the mountainous al-Qalamoun region adjoining the Lebanese-Syrian border; a region to which the Lebanese militia has attached paramount strategic significance since entering the Syrian war. The group has already reportedly withdrawn from al-Qalamoun’s city of Yabroud in January, and their departure from the town of Qara is now “a question of time,” according to alleged leaks reported by local sources to Al-Jumhuriya. For more, see our [full report](#) (Arabic).

“Assessing the Algerian intifada” (5 April, 2019). Algeria’s president of twenty years, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, announced his resignation Tuesday following five weeks of peaceful street protests. For a detailed account of what led to this historic moment, and what may come next, read our [full report](#) (Arabic) by Riadh Boukhedcha.