

# Mid-East e-News

An electronic journal of the Middle East, for those who want to be informed.

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## Welcome

As usual, the last portion of the newsletter to be completed is the calendar (below). As I do that I realize that – even if you are avid readers of the fine print in e-News – many of the entries are so brief as to be incomprehensible. Perhaps so, but my recommendation is that you search for the name (*Who is Bulent Ecevit anyway?*) or the place (*Iskandariyeh is in Iraq?*) on the internet.

But, you say, that's why we read e-News, to have the information all in one place. I doubt it. I suspect, if you read this newsletter many of you are already following up on articles by referring to your favorite internet search engine. Try that with the "Mostar Bridge" and see what you find. Very interesting!

A friend stood up in a crowded IHOP last Saturday, and talked about Iraq and "shared that [we] had just come out of Iraq and for about a minute told of our experience and that things were not as bad as what they had heard over the media and that in fact a lot of good things were going on in Iraq which they never hear about and that they have a lot to be proud of in the way the U.S. Army is conducting itself. When I finished the restaurant erupted in applause. Several people came and shook my hand and said thank you for standing up and speaking. The IHOP staff was beaming..." Only in America!

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	
<b>Sudan</b>				200,000 refugees in Chad desert							Joint border patrols w/Chad							Darfur SLA rebels leave talks									UN departs	
				Annan arrives at deserted camp					US: Attacks must end																		EU backs sanctions	
				Bashir vows end to Darfur violence																								UN departs
<b>Turkey &amp; Cyprus</b>																												
<b>Pakistan</b>																												
<b>Afghan.</b>																												
<b>Yemen</b>																												
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>																												
<b>Iraq</b>																												
<b>Jordan</b>																												
<b>Syria</b>																												
<b>Israel</b>																												
<b>Palestine</b>																												
<b>July</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	

## Overheard...

Iraq - Lt. Col. Randall Potter, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division: *I have met two guys now who say, 'I don't love you and I don't hate you. But somebody's offered me \$200 to set up a mortar...and there's a bonus if we kill you.'* (Washington Post, 7/24/04)

Gaza Strip - Amna al-Zanin (July 13<sup>th</sup>, after the disruption caused to her family by an Israeli incursion): *I wish I could be a fighter to shoot at Israelis. I am willing to explode myself out of anger.* (New York Times, 7/24/04)

(July 23<sup>rd</sup>, after her son was killed when the family refused permission for militants to use their land for firing mortars): *Even if we ask them not to fire from our land, that doesn't give them permission to shoot at us. It's very painful that a Palestinian bullet was directed at a Palestinian chest.* (NYT, 7/24/04)

Sudan - Secretary of State Colin Powell (after Sudanese F.M. accused the US and UK of meddling in the crisis): *One person's meddling is another person's attempt to save people who are in desperate trouble. ... There is a humanitarian catastrophe at hand.* (AP, 7/23/04)

Iraq - Pvt. Akio Ellis (on his reactions after the death of his friend, a fellow-soldier in combat): *It also made me more determined to make this Iraqi government work to make sure my friend didn't die for nothing.* (Houston Chronicle, 7/22/04)

Iraq (after surviving a bomb that killed 68 potential police recruits in Baquba on July 28<sup>th</sup>) - Uday Mohammed: *This strengthens my intention to apply again. I came to protect my country, and I will not let these terrorists do these things again. These terrorists do not want Iraqis to live peacefully. They want to create chaos.* (Washington Post, 7/29/04)  
- Inaam Mahdi: *What honorable Iraqi would kill another Iraqi?* (AP, 7/29/04)

## Who's Who in the Middle East - Palestine

**Yasser Arafat** was born August 24, 1929, the son of a wealthy merchant. After graduating from Cairo University as a civil engineer he joined the Muslim Brotherhood. He became the PLO leader in 1969.

Arafat worked in Kuwait from the late '50s, where he helped to form Fatah (or Fateh), dedicated to the formation of an independent Palestinian state. This organization became involved in acts of violence against Israel, even as early as 1963, and in 1968 it was the primary target of the Israeli raid on Karameh, in Jordan.

When the presence of the PLO became a threat to the Jordanian monarchy (under King Hussein) they were expelled by a year-long military campaign, and moved their base of operations to Lebanon. From Lebanon they were again moved on (see e-News 21, Lebanon), and operated out of Tunisia until the Oslo Peace Accords allowed the formation of the PNA in 1994. During this time, the PLO had been aided by financial support from Iraq, which continued (in the form of cash payments to the families of suicide bombers) until the US invasion in 2003. For his cooperation in the Oslo agreement, Yasser Arafat shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.

Arafat was elected President of the Palestinian Authority in 1996, though elections have not been held since.

**Ahmed Qurei** was born in 1937 in Jerusalem, Qurei joined Fatah in 1968, and was instrumental in negotiating the Oslo Accords in 1993. Qurei was chosen to replace Mahmoud Abbas as Prime Minister of the PA in September, 2003, but was in conflict with Arafat even before his inauguration, over the issue of control of the Palestinian security services.

When unrest began in Gaza in July of this year, Qurei submitted his resignation. A major issue of the unrest is the corruption in the Palestinian Authority, and particularly in the security services, which were still not under the control of the Prime Minister. Qurei retracted his resignation on July 27<sup>th</sup>, having been granted additional authority to carry out reforms, but Arafat has still been unwilling to allow Qurei the authority he needs in the area of security.

**Marwan Barghouti** was born June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1958, and is another of the young generation of Palestinian leaders. He has been seen as a possible successor to Arafat. In 1996 he was elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council. He has spoken out against attacks on Israeli civilians, and against suicide bombings that became a major part of the 2000 Intifada, but was closely associated with the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and it was in this capacity that he was accused of murder by Israel.

In April 2001 he narrowly survived an attempt on his life from an Israeli rocket. He was arrested in 2002, accused of the killing of 26 Israelis, and sentenced in May 2004. He opposed the Oslo Accords, and frequently criticized Yasser Arafat, both for corruption and for human rights abuses within the PA.

**Mohammed Dahlan** was appointed as the PA's Minister of State for Security by Mahmoud Abbas in April, 2003. He is known to have struggled to control Palestinian violence, but has also had links with the Tanzim, one of the militant groups. He was born in 1961, which makes him one of the youngest of Palestinian leaders. He was also involved in the secret talks that led up to the Oslo Accords.

In February of this year Dahlan's forces clashed with those of Ghazi al-Jabali, the Chief of Police for the Gaza Strip. Jabali was kidnapped on July 17<sup>th</sup>, at the beginning of this month's unrest in Gaza, and dismissed by Arafat soon after his release.

**Lebanon – Civil War (2: 1984-1990)**

**President:** Amin Gemayel

**1984 April 18** With the Americans, French and Italians gone the United Nations presence continued, but without significant impact in maintaining peace, or even progress towards it. Attempts were made to negotiate a settlement, which would require both **Syria** and **Israel** to withdraw from the country. **Syria** consistently refused, preventing progress in this direction. As **Israel** withdrew from the vicinity of Beirut, in late 1983, **Druze** and **Christian militias** found themselves face to face, and severe fighting resulted. Until this point the **Lebanese army** had remained intact, despite being weakened, but it virtually collapsed in 1984 as most of its men defected to **Muslim** or **Druze militias**. In late 1984 another bomb at the US embassy killed a large number.

**1984 October** The Multinational Force had returned during 1984/5, supporting the Lebanese army, but was withdrawn again after about 6 months. **Israel** retained a hold on the south, as before, in an attempt to prevent cross-border raids by **Palestinian commandos**. During 1985 a new group began to grow in impact. **Hezbollah** (means *Party of God*) was formed from Lebanese Shia organizations with the approval of **Syria** and support (financial, logistical and a detachment of revolutionary guards) from **Iran**. (Another Shia group, the **Amal** militia, had been formed in 1975, at the beginning of the civil war. Their primary aim was to ensure that the Palestinians of the **PLO** did not take control of Beirut. Amal was on the defensive during 1986, being faced with a united front of Palestinian, **Druze** and socialist factions.)

**1987 February 2** After the departure of **Israel** from Beirut, though not from the south, anarchy reigned in the capital city. This was the period of hostage taking, assassinations, and general lawlessness. On Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1987, **Terry Waite** was kidnapped by **Islamic Jihad**. He, aide to the Archbishop of Canterbury, was finally released in 1991 along with **Thomas Sutherland**, an American kidnapped in 1985.

**1989 Nov. 4** In 1989 two Christian leaders and former allies, **Kataib** commander **Sammy Geagea**'s and army general **Michel Aoun** fought each other's forces in pitched battles across Beirut. Aoun had been appointed Prime Minister, but the **Muslim** and **Christian** factions failed to agree on a new president to replace Amin Gemayel, and formed their own breakaway administrations. The TA'IF AGREEMENT was finally settled in October, and ratified in November of 1989. As part of the Agreement a new president was elected, **Rene Mouwad**. He was assassinated on November 21<sup>st</sup>, to be succeeded by **Elias Hrawi**. **Michel Aoun** rejected the agreement and continued to fight against the **Syrian** forces in an attempt to drive them from Lebanon.

He was finally subdued by the new president **Elias Hrawi**, supported by the **Syrian** military, and exiled to France.

As many as 100,000 may have been killed during the 15-year conflict, but the tensions still exist in the country. **Hezbollah** participates in elections, as in the recent municipal elections around the country, but still stands for the creation of an Islamic republic, along the Iranian model.

**President:** Renee Mouwad

**President:** Elias Hrawi

**Gallery**

On page 4 is a review of the Balkans conflict of the 1990s. As a result of the Dayton Accord, UN peacekeepers have been stationed in Bosnia – and the adjacent 'Serbsk Republic' – since 1996.

In Mostar, the main city of the Herzegovina province, Muslims and Croats fought together against the Serbs, defeating them in 1992.



The arch, before it collapsed into the Neretva

After the Serbs had been forced out, Croats declared a state, named Herzeg-Bosnia, intending to unite with Croatia. Fighting broke out between Croats and Muslims in 1993, and in November 1993, during the conflict, the Mostar Bridge was destroyed by Croat forces. In 1994 the Federation between Croat and Bosnian Muslims put an end to the conflict, but the bridge was an emblem of a divided city, Croats on one side and Muslims on the other. Since 1996 the bridge has been undergoing restoration, with the original stone blocks that had been retrieved from the river bed.

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, this year, the completed bridge was re-opened with great ceremony, but the chasm between Croat and Muslim is still as wide.



The reconstructed bridge

### Islamic Interface - Yugoslavia

Muslims within a non-Muslim nation do not readily accept government by “infidels”. At the same time, non-Muslim nations do not always accept the presence of minorities in their midst, and may stir up trouble by allowing ethnic prejudices room to grow. In the example of Yugoslavia, the people of the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo are primarily Muslim. Bosnia was until 1992 an autonomous republic, while Kosovo was a province of the Serbian republic, both part of Yugoslavia. These were all ruled by Jospet Tito from 1944.

When Tito died in 1980 the succeeding government did not continue his policies of de-emphasizing ethnicity. To the contrary, Slobodan Milosevic emphasized Serbian nationalism. In protest, the various other republics that comprised Yugoslavia withdrew from the federation – by this

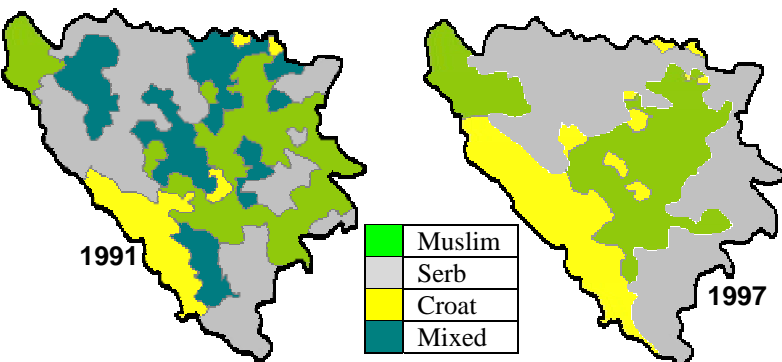


Republic	Population (millions)											% Slovenes	% Croats	% Serbs	% Bosniaks	% Hungars	Montenegrin	% Albanian	% Slavs
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11								
Slovenia	█	█											88	3	2				
Croatia	█	█	█	█	█								90						
Bosnia	█	█	█	█									17	31	44		6		
Serbia	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			63		5	17	3	
Kosovo	█	█														90			
Vojvodina	█	█												60	17				
Montenegro	█																		
Macedonia	█	█														22	65		

time known as the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia. Additionally, in Kosovo, a province of Serbia – the dominant partner in the Republic as it existed up to that point – a political strike led by the miners caused Milosevic to abolish the autonomy that the province had been granted by Tito as early as 1948. Kosovo is predominantly Albanian Muslim, whereas elsewhere Serbia is overwhelmingly Orthodox.

By 1992 Slovenia, Croatia and Macedonia had declared their independence from Yugoslavia - and fought briefly to successfully defend it. The conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina was more protracted, since the ethnic groups were dispersed throughout the country. Serbs that had been scattered through the country fought to control contiguous territory, deliberately moving from towns they occupied, and taking control of towns that would bring them together. It wasn’t until the intervention of the EU, and the signing of the Dayton Agreement in 1995, that a kind of peace was brought to the republic. Since then the EU has had a significant role in the government of the ex-republic of Yugoslavia. A significant event, in 1994, was the decision of the Bosniaks (90% Muslims) to cooperate with the Croats (88% Roman Catholic) in the sharing of territory. Without this willingness the Dayton Agreement would not have been possible.

The consequence of the various wars within Yugoslavia (and even Serbia has ceased the use of that name now!) has been that the UN force KFOR has maintained an uneasy peace between the Serbs and Albanian Muslims in Kosovo, and the ‘Dayton Line’ has established the perimeters of the Muslim Bosniak territory within Bosnia-Herzegovina. The grey area is known as *Republica Srbska*, though it is not recognized by the international community.



The maps below show how the ethnic makeup of Bosnia-Herzegovina changed in the 1990s. In the 1997 map, the Dayton Line is shown in white. Notice that the ‘mixed’ areas, which were ethnically diverse in 1991, are now homogenous. This involved a large movement of population during the conflict between 1991 and 1994.

In this case, the conflict between ethnic groups did include Muslims, though they were not the aggressors, but rather the victims of the rise of Serbia nationalism during the 1980s and 90s. For all groups, the consequence was partitioning of the region into ethnic enclaves.