

# MID-EAST e-NEWS

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## Contexts

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## Welcome

The gradual takeover of southern Somalia by the Union of Islamic Courts has all but surrounded the official (but still interim) government in Baidoa. The map in issue 72 may help follow the story.

The two-page spread on Colonial Heritage (pages 2 & 3) may best be viewed by printing it, in which case it should be possible to connect the two pages. If this is not convenient, then in Acrobat Reader, select the View menu, and choose "Continuous – Facing." The magnification can then be adjusted to suit your screen.

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## Somalia update...

In time, the takeover of Somalia by the Union of Islamic Courts may have the effect of bringing a semblance of order to the troubled country. Whether or not this is the case, for us a may be a salutary reminder of the situation of those in North Africa who experienced the original 7<sup>th</sup> Century Islamic invasion.

News reports of the past two weeks alone may illustrate what the North African tribes (as well as northern Arabian, Persian, etc.) faced thirteen centuries ago.

- 17<sup>th</sup> Nun working in Mogadishu hospital is killed, in wake of protests against Pope's speech  
Sister Leonella's last words were "I forgive, I forgive" as she lay dying in the street.
- 18<sup>th</sup> Suicide car bomb attack on interim president – 12 are killed when car drives into motorcade & explodes
- 20<sup>th</sup> **Ibrahim Sherif Nur**. A 30-year-old Somali, now a refugee with his wife and family in Kenya. *The Somali people have their own way of life and these people [Islamic forces] have come to impose a way of life which is not compatible with Somali culture. The minority who are opposed to them are being oppressed. I do not want to live there [Mogadishu] any more. Yes, life is hard here [in the refugee camp], I have no job, food is scarce. I am suffering but at least I have security.*
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Public execution of murderer in Mogadishu – first in the country since UIC take control
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Refugees stream into Kenya at around 500 per day, primarily through Liboi border post
- 24<sup>th</sup> UIC Representatives visit the SOS hospital to pay their respects to Italian nun Sister Leonella Sgorbati.
- 25<sup>th</sup> UIC takes control of Kismayo – the local warlord quits the city without attempting resistance  
A immediate ban on the selling of Khat during Ramadan is implemented  
Women and children protest the Islamist takeover – 1 boy shot dead during protest
- 26<sup>th</sup> Further protests in Kismayo, and overnight curfew is imposed  
Hundreds of Ethiopian troops arrive to protect Baidoa  
(The Transitional Federal Government – TFG – now only controls a small area around Baidoa)
- 27<sup>th</sup> Local militias hand over their weapons and battle wagons ('technicals') to UIC forces  
**Yusuf Mire Mahmud**. A lawmaker and previously an aide to the warlord who controlled Kismayo. . He had handed over 18 technicals and 300 militia fighters. "It is a big relief for me," he said. "I'm a free man now I can do anything I want or go anywhere I want," he told Reuters at the field where Islamists then tested the machine guns.
- 28<sup>th</sup> Women lead demonstration against ban on Khat, shouting "we don't want the courts"  
The UIC arrived in their battle wagons ('technicals') at a local radio station and ordered it closed.  
The station was accused of broadcasting 'lies' about a boy being killed, and the women's demonstration
- 29<sup>th</sup> More than 200 refugees daily streaming into Kenya from Somalia, through Liboi & Amuma border posts  
These will join the more than 100,000 already in Dabaab camps, Kenya
- 30<sup>th</sup> Sheikh Sharif Ahmed hands over his territory, around Afgoye, to the Islamic Courts

### Colonial Heritage

Living in the Middle East, the colonial history of the country is always evident in the architecture and sometimes the dress, but also in the language. This may be why English speaking tourists prefer to visit Jordan, Cyprus or even Egypt, and why European tourists in Tunisia, Lebanon (when it had tourists!) and Syria are often from Francophone countries.

Because the local population (Arab, Persian, Turkish, Berber) expects foreigners to speak the *colonial* language, this has an interesting impact on visitors. However fluent the foreign resident is in Arabic (or Turkish, Farsi or Kurdish), one finds oneself being addressed in the second language of the country. If one is actually studying Arabic, for example, being addressed in French or English can be a frustration, since it gets in the way of learning the vocabulary. These *second languages* are a relic of history, but are frequently used in commercial transaction, legal documents, and particularly in higher education: in many of these countries universities usually teach in either English or French.

**Morocco** 1956  
A Constitutional Monarchy led by King Mohamed VI (since 1999)

**Tunisia** 1956

**Algeria** 1962  
A Republic led by Pres. Abdul Aziz Bouteflika (since 1999)

**Libya** 1951  
The Jamahiriya of Libya has been controlled by Muammar al Qadhafi (since 1969)

**Mauritania** 1960

**Mali** 1960  
Mali: A Republic led by Pres. Amadou Toumani Toure (since 2002)

**Niger** 1960

**Chad** 1960  
Chad is a Republic led by Pres. Idris Deby Itno

Ahmed Ben Bella, first president of Algeria in 1962, deposed (1965), exiled (1980-1990) to Switzerland.





Abdul Aziz ibn Saud being greeted in 1957 by King Idris I, king of Libya 1951-1969.

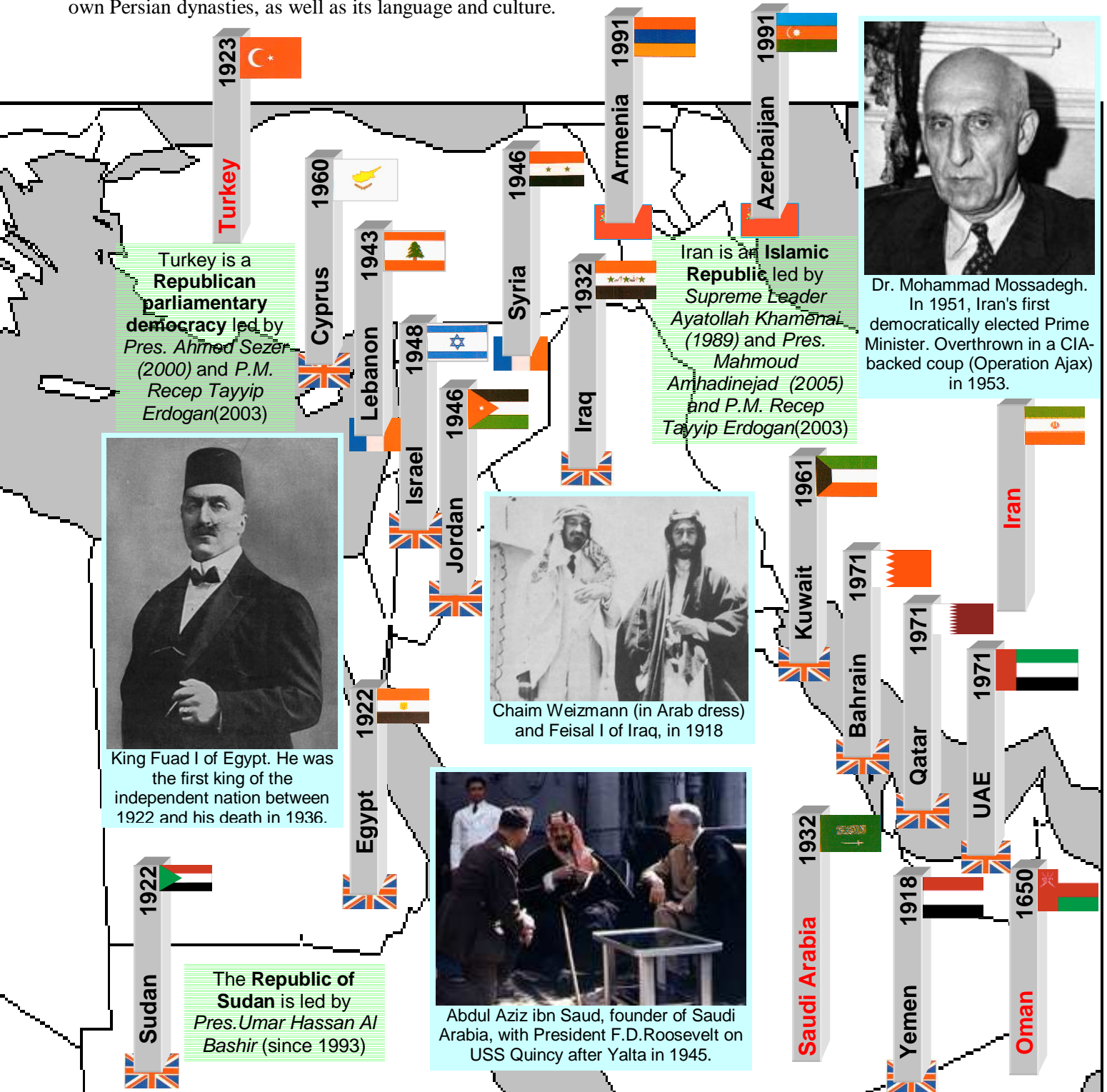
Idris I was king of of Libya 1951-1969

The map below illustrates the variety of languages of the Middle East and North Africa. The flags of the colonial rulers are shown below, and the date of independence is also given.

For the four countries indicated in red there was no colonial occupation. Turkey arose out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire (apparently, rather to the surprise of the Western powers). Saudi Arabia was formed as Abdul Aziz ibn Saud united the various tribes of the Nejd and conquered the Hejaz from the Hashemites. Oman has maintained its independence since the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, with cooperation from Britain. Iran, throughout the age of the Islamic Caliphates, maintained its own Persian dynasties, as well as its language and culture.

**Colonial Powers**

-  Italy
-  United Kingdom
-  France
-  USSR





This Month

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	28	29	30	
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	W	T	F	S	
<p><b>Sep</b></p>																														
<p><b>Africa</b></p>																														
<p>Darfur army begins new offensive in Darfur</p>																														
<p>Sudan new man killed, protests grow</p>																														
<p>Army bombs Darfur villages</p>																														
<p>Al Qaeda allies with Algerian Salafist Group</p>																														
<p>Nun killed in Mogadishu-3 suspects held</p>																														
<p>Car bomb attack on Somali president-12 killed</p>																														
<p>Darfur fighting keeps food aid from refugees</p>																														
<p>Interim gov calls for foreign troops</p>																														
<p>Wazir tribes capture 10 Taliban</p>																														
<p>Karzai &amp; Musharraf disagree over war on Taliban</p>																														
<p><b>Pakistan</b></p>																														
<p>Kyrgyz forces raid Islamists, militant killed</p>																														
<p>Baluchistan bomb kills 6</p>																														
<p><b>Afghan.</b></p>																														
<p>3 UK soldiers die as result of Helmand action</p>																														
<p>Musharraf visits Karzai in Kabul</p>																														
<p>Assault on Taliban kills 180+ in 2 days</p>																														
<p>4 Al Qaeda held in Kabul</p>																														
<p>19 workers killed in truck attack</p>																														
<p>Saudi FM proposes peace plan</p>																														
<p>Saudis celebrate National Day</p>																														
<p><b>Arabia</b></p>																														
<p>Ex-Saddam intelligence office killed</p>																														
<p>Bomb in Baghdad market kills 3</p>																														
<p>Attacks on police kill 4</p>																														
<p>2 US marines killed in Anbar</p>																														
<p>3 US (2 marines &amp; sailor) killed in Anbar</p>																														
<p>14 insurgents killed, 6 bodies found in Mosul</p>																														
<p>47 dead in various incidents on pilgrims thwarted</p>																														
<p>27 executed for terrorism offences in Anbar prov.</p>																														
<p>2 US marines killed in Anbar prov.</p>																														
<p>8 Shia killed at Karbala festival</p>																														
<p>3 US (2 marines &amp; sailor) killed in Anbar</p>																														
<p>Suicide bomber on bus, 11 recruits killed</p>																														
<p>Pipeline sabotaged in Balaad</p>																														
<p>Booby-trapped body kills 2 Iraqi soldiers</p>																														
<p>Sadr aide arrested during Ramadan</p>																														
<p>Shia politicians protest cleric's arrest</p>																														
<p>2 houses burned during clashes in Hurririya, Baghdad</p>																														
<p>US soldier killed in Diwaniya</p>																														
<p>Sadr City car bomb kills 26</p>																														
<p>Ansaar at Sunna leader captured</p>																														
<p>Reports of ex-soldiers from Iraq training Kurd security</p>																														
<p>Basra mayor claims police tried to kill him</p>																														
<p>EU talks on nuclear issue resume</p>																														
<p>Ocalan calls for PKK ceasefire</p>																														
<p>Turkey asks PKK give up arms</p>																														
<p>PKK declares ceasefire</p>																														
<p><b>Syria</b></p>																														
<p>Israel lifts blockade of Lebanon</p>																														
<p>Israel in Amman amphitheater, 5 wounded</p>																														
<p>Tourist killed in Amman amphitheater, 5 wounded</p>																														
<p><b>Lebanon</b></p>																														
<p>Israeli missile fired at house in Gaza</p>																														
<p>Tony Blair visits PM Olmert, Israel Arab MKs condemned for visiting Syria</p>																														
<p>Israeli raid on Beit Hanoun, 2 killed in crossfire, 4.4 earthquake in Jordan Valley</p>																														
<p>&gt;100,000 strike against lack of wages &amp; Hamas</p>																														
<p>Olmert tells Blair he is ready to meet with Abbas</p>																														
<p>Minister claims militants have acquired anti-aircraft missiles</p>																														
<p>Military holds MPs until appeal hearing</p>																														
<p>6 rockets hit Sderot from Gaza</p>																														
<p>2 rockets hit Sderot</p>																														
<p>2 IDF injured by grenade thrown during Nablus raid</p>																														
<p>RAFah crossing opens for 48 hrs</p>																														
<p>At UN FM Livni talks with Abbas on reviving peace talks</p>																														
<p>Appeal upholds order to free Hamas MPs</p>																														
<p>Rocket hurts 1 in Sderot</p>																														
<p>Charges in Gaza (on 15<sup>th</sup>), Nablus (2 on 16<sup>th</sup>), Tubas &amp; Tulkarim (17<sup>th</sup>) set on fire after Pope's speech</p>																														
<p>Abbas to form Government of national unity</p>																														
<p>Gunmen attack Abbas' Gaza news agency</p>																														
<p>Strikers mob PM's car in Gaza</p>																														
<p>Quartet calls for govt. of National unity</p>																														
<p>Hamas refuses to recognize Israel</p>																														
<p><b>WB &amp; Gaza</b></p>																														
<p>UN meeting pledges \$500m for reconstruction</p>																														
<p>EU begins payments to Palestinians</p>																														
<p>Churches attacked in reaction to Pope's speech</p>																														
<p>Unity govt. talks called off after Hamas refuse to honor previous peace agreements or recognize Israel</p>																														
<p><b>Iran</b></p>																														
<p>Concerns over Iran/Turkey invasion of Kurdistan</p>																														
<p>Bomb outside govt. office</p>																														
<p>4 Al Qaeda arrested in Istanbul</p>																														
<p>Kurds protest against violence in Diyarbakir</p>																														
<p>Car bomb attack on Damascus US embassy fails, 4 attackers killed by guards</p>																														
<p>The separate document, <b>Israel in Lebanon</b>, will not be updated beyond October 1<sup>st</sup>. Download the final edition now from the web site.</p>																														
<p><b>Turkey</b></p>																														
<p>PKK kill 5 Turkish soldiers</p>																														
<p>EU talks on nuclear issue resume</p>																														
<p>Turkey asks PKK give up arms</p>																														
<p>PKK declares ceasefire</p>																														
<p><b>Jordan</b></p>																														
<p>Israeli inquiry suspects suicide bomber involvement</p>																														
<p>Deputies pardoned by king for Zarqawi visit</p>																														
<p><b>Israel</b></p>																														
<p>Cabinet minister agrees Hezbollah's Nasrallah should be assassinated</p>																														
<p>Most IDF troops leave Lebanon by midnight. (About 200 remain at divided village of Ghajar)</p>																														
<p>14-yr-old girl killed in S Gaza air strike</p>																														
<p>Air strike kills 2 in Beit Hanoun, N Gaza</p>																														
<p>Israel frees Hamas deputy PM, Nasser al Shaer</p>																														

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