

OMRAN for Strategic Studies Annual Report 2016

www.OmranDirasat.org



عمران
للدراسات الاستراتيجية
OMRAN
FOR STRATEGIC
STUDIES

A Message from Omran's Team

Omran for Strategic Studies was founded in **2013** as a **policy research center** focusing on Syria and the region in three tracks: **politics** and **international relations, economic development,** and **local administration & promotion of democratic practices.** Omran's work is **uniquely characterized** by a perspective of **state institutions preservation,** utilizing **field-based research,** analysis, scenario projections, and **high credibility** with relevant actors on the ground.

In **2016,** we were able to develop **proposals** and **stabilization programs** and **recommendations** through a number of publications, maps, and seminars. We also issued **editorials** and **briefs** on political transition, local administration, security sector reform and economic development. We continued to **expand our local** and **regional network** and relations with **key Syrian** and **non-Syrian stakeholders** to collaborate and develop practical solutions that empower and assist decision-makers.

In **2017,** we will focus on Security Sector Reform, DDR processes, Syrian Kurdish affairs, and local administration councils to **restore stability** and **develop the necessary tools** to deal with the forthcoming political phase.

Ammar Kahf, Ph.D.
Executive Director

About Omran

Our Vision

An independent think tank and **policy center** focusing on presenting an **objective understanding** of Syria and the region striving to become a **reference point for public policies impacting the region.**

Our Mission

- **A research institution** that serves as an essential reference on Syrian and regional affairs in **political, Local Administration, and development sectors.**
- Omran Center publishes **studies** and **policy briefs** that empower relevant actors and institutions working on Syrian affairs, supports **decision-making mechanisms**, and assess a complex set of data to present **analytical maps** and **recommendations.**
- Omran's studies carefully analyze all aspects of a situation, **efficiently identifying immediate** needs and **aspirations**, and promoting **effective plans** to meet them.

Omran Core Values

- Adhere to **professional** standards in describing and analyzing complex realities.
- Adopt vigorous **research methodology**.
- **Enrich** and **develop** our research team.
- **Adapt to changing conditions** and needs.
- **Localize** and **adapt concepts** and **solutions** to the Syrian and regional cultural and political contexts.
- **Open to different orientations** and methodologies through dialogue and bridge building.

Objectives

- Support decision-making mechanisms and **presenting strategies** on Syrian affairs.
- Provide practical solutions and **policy recommendations to decision-makers**.
- **Publish policy studies** that identify **challenges** within the **Syrian context** and **the region**, and foresee scenarios and alternative solutions.
- Publish papers in **several languages** to facilitate interaction with international actors.
- Contribute to the **accumulation of knowledge** that best serves the Syrian issue.

Why Omran

Quality Readership

Advises key opinion leaders and networks; more than **95** Arab and international websites republish Omran products with over **63,000** readers.

In-Depth Assessment

Conducts **up-to-date analysis** of political and social developments in Syria and the region using a **dynamic** and **objective methodology** based on direct access to information on the ground and abroad.

Bridge-Building Platform

Provides a platform for **Syrian policy makers**, human rights activists, local council members, and thinkers to **exchange** and **develop new ideas** and **solutions** faced by Syrians.

Multilingual

Issues original products in **Arabic, Turkish** and **English**.



Omran Units



Research Unit

- Economics and Development
- Politics and International Relations
- Local Administration and Promotion of Democratic Practices



Negotiations Support Unit

- Political Track
- Public Services Track
- Military and Security Track



Information Unit

- Monitoring and Map Production
- Public Opinions Polls and Surveys



International Affairs Unit

- Turkish Affairs Department
- US Affairs Department
- EU Affairs Department



Research Unit

The Research Unit focusses on **analyzing the Syrian scene** through political, military, economic and local administration dimensions, and assessing the impact of changes within it on **regional** and **international affairs**. It presents **recommendations** and **projections** for decision-makers in Syria. Researchers strive to put forward an accurate, realistic and objective assessment of the **challenges** and **opportunities faced by Syria** and circulate it to experts on Syrian affairs. **The Research Unit focusses on three tracks:**



Politics and
International Relations



Local Administration & Promotion
of Democratic Practices



Economics and
Development



Information Unit

The Information Unit specializes in **collecting data** that is key for a better understanding of Syrian and regional affairs. It also offers support to the research unit by constantly **monitoring** and **archiving** news and information received from the ground and abroad, **producing special reports, bulletins, and maps**. Furthermore, it tracks **products by think tanks** and **policy centers** relating to Syria and the region.

- Public Opinions Polls and Surveys
- Syrian Kurdish Affairs
- Islamist and Jihadist Groups
- Security and Military Affairs
- Local and Shiite Militias
- International Forces In Syria



Negotiations Support Unit

This technical unit includes **Syrian** and **international experts** that **empower Syrian actors** and **decision-makers** with the tools, information and **analysis** necessary for any negotiation process. It focuses on political, military, security and public services tracks.



International Affairs Unit

This unit includes Syrian and international **academics** and **experts** who **focus on reaching out** to think tanks and policy centers with similar interests to build partnerships. It also **provides decision-makers in other countries the latest studies** and **analysis** of the political and military situation in Syria. **The Turkish Affairs Department** was established and operates in Turkey. We also hold functions and briefings in the US and Europe.

KRİZİ VE GÜVENLİK TEHDİTLERİ

SETA | İstanbul
info@setav.org www.setav.org
setacanli setavakfi

25 Mart 2016
Cuma
10.30 - 12.30

Sasha Al Alou
Araştırmacı,
Omran for Strategic Studies

Can Acun
Araştırmacı,
SETA

Murat Yeşiltaş
Güvenlik Araştırmaları Direktörü,
SETA



Fields Covered By Omran Studies

- **Societal Security**
- **Reconstruction**
- **Security and Military**
- **The Political Process**
- **Refugees Resettlement**
- **Public Opinions Polls**
- **Local Economic Development**
- **Legal and Human Rights Studies**
- **Regional and International Studies**
- **Decentralized Local Administration**

Omran's Outcomes 2016

- **Publications:** Books, studies, research papers and briefs, editorials, analysis, strategy alerts, maps, infographs.
- **Events:** Conferences, seminars, workshops, forums, discussion panels.
- **Training materials:** developed training materials based on identified needs for customized training.
- **Consultations:** Provided recommendations to local, regional, and international entities with Syria interest.
- **Interactions:** Connected with many think tanks and policy makers.

Omran

Accomplishments in 2016

Research Unit

Publications		Conferences & Events		Media Appearances	
11	Studies	26	Workshops	20	Press Interviews
83	Research Papers	18	Research Seminars	3	Press Commentaries
14	Editorials	5	Conferences	47	Television Interviews
1	Books	6	Training Courses		

Information Unit

322	Military Maps
244	Published and Unpublished Reports
3	Surveys and Polls

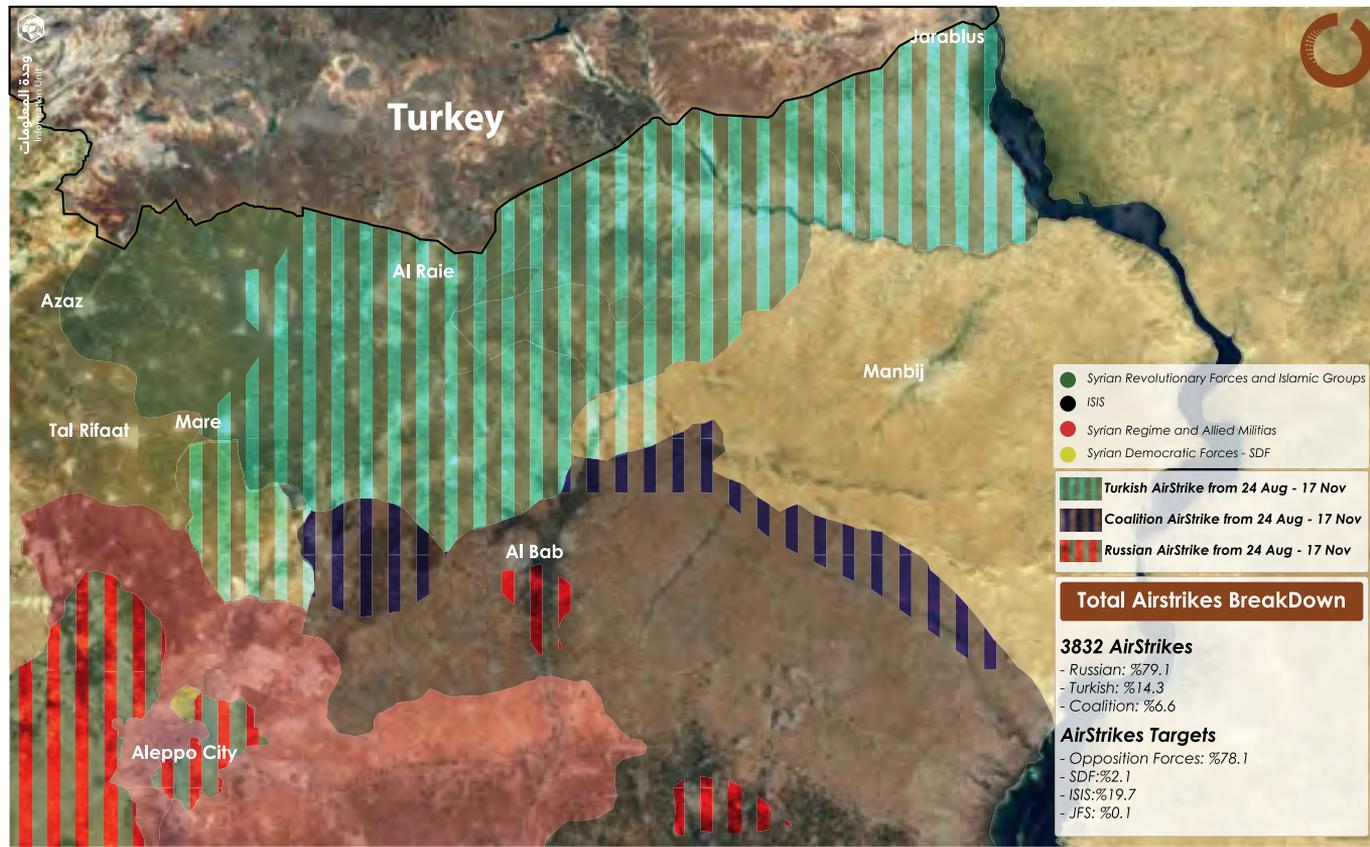
- **The Security Apparatus** and the Need for Structural and Functional Changes.
- **The Saudi-Iranian Conflict** and Delayed Confrontation.
- Aleppo Rebels Face Off **Against the Russia-Iran Front**.
- **The Saudi-Turkish Alliance** and the Syrian Test.
- **China's Role in the Syrian File:** Reasons and Motives.
- The Current and Future **Role of Local Councils:** Analysis of Survey Results.
- The Changes in **Al-Qaeda's Rhetoric** in Syria.
- Turkey: **The Sudden Turn and the Big Change**.
- The Current and Future **Role of Local Councils in Service and Administration:** Analysis of Survey Results.
- Military Control of **Water Resources** during the Syrian Revolution.
- Analysis of the Social Contract of the **"Federation of the North"**.
- Local Councils **Mechanisms in Handling People's Complaints:** Efforts and Hopes.
- **Self-Administration** in Syria's Northern Region, July **2016**.
- **Governance** in Areas of **Self Administration** during August **2016**.
- Special Monitoring Report: **The Political and Military Reality** in Regions of Self Administration, August **2016**.
- **Education** in Regions of Self Administration.
- **Syrian Opposition Challenges** after Losing Aleppo and the "Moscow Declaration".

Research Unit | Most Important Editorials 2016

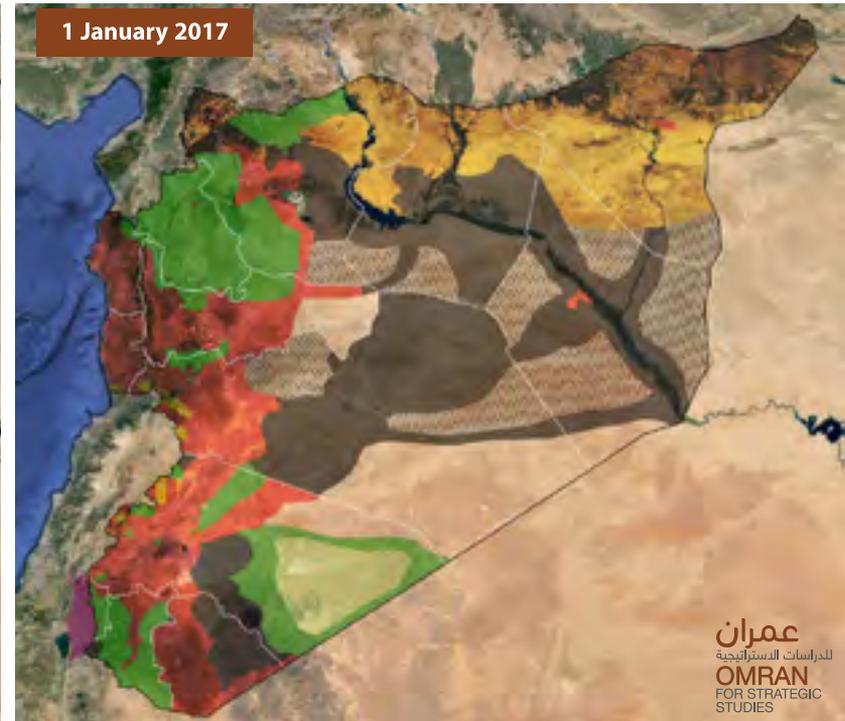
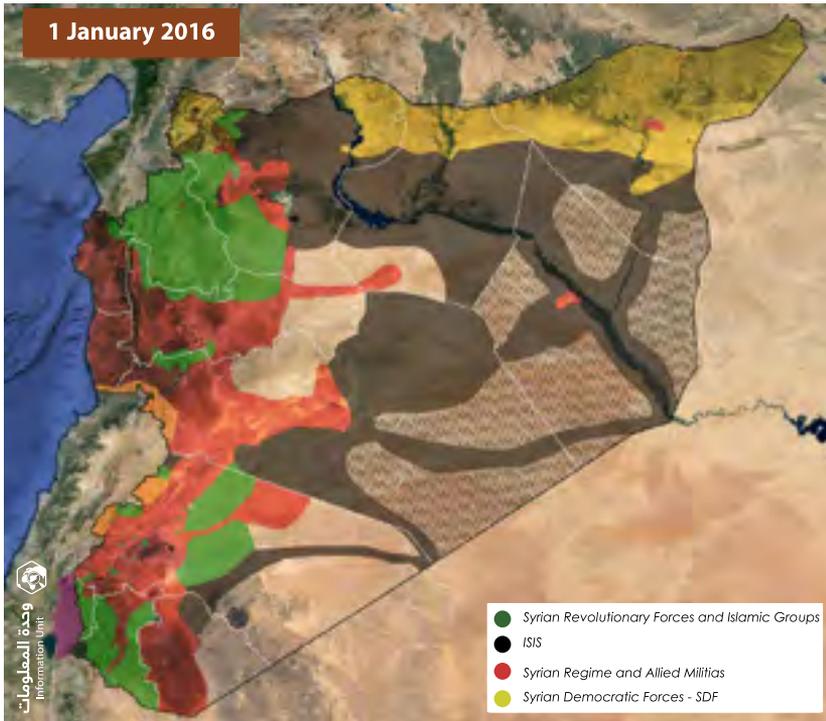
- The Promises and Challenges Facing the **High Council of Syria's Local Councils**.
- **The Russian-American Ceasefire Agreement** in Syria.
- **Syria After the Ceasefire: A Reality Being Shaped**.
- **The Battle of Mosul** and the Possible Outcomes.
- Aid Organizations and **the Lack** of their **Role In Development**.
- **Health Security** in Syria: On the Cusp of Collapse.
- Lest **Local Councils** Become Local Agents.
- **The Leading Role Moscow** Plays Through Syria.
- **The Anticipated Role** of Local Councils.
- Evaluating **Negotiation Basics** and The **Transitional Period** As Shaped By De Mistura.
- **Local Councils** Moving towards a **Unique Centralized Role** in Local Communities.
- Syria After the **Dissolution of Local Councils**.
- **The Turkish-Russian Rapprochement: The Ceasefire in Syria**.

Information Unit

Maps Production Samples



International coalition airstrikes in Aleppo (August 24th 2016 through January 17th 2017)



Shifting lines of control in **2016** and **2017**

Most Important Media Outlets Referencing Omran



Second Annual Book Seminar - Gaziantep

Organized by Omran to present the Second Annual Book “**National Options for Overcoming Political Fluidity in Syria**”, the seminar also discussed four research papers related to the **current situation in Syria**.

“Syria and Security Threats” Symposium

Organized by Omran and Turkish Center for Political, Economic, and Social Research (**SETA**) in Istanbul. Two research papers were reviewed: Maen Talla’s “**Security Repercussions of International and Regional Actions in Syria**”, and Sasha Alalou’s “**Terrorism as Prelude to Killing the Syrian Revolution**”.

“Good Governance and Public Accountability” Training Program

Omran researcher Hadia Alomari was one of the trainers in this program on **community engagement** and **governance planning**, held by the local councils unit in cooperation with **Canada’s Department of State**.

“The Future of Syria” Workshop

Omran’s Executive Director, participated in this workshop hosted by **EuroMesco** research network and sponsored by **GPoT Center**, Istanbul.

“Chaos in Syria” Symposium

Omran’s Executive Director presented a paper in this symposium held by the **Turkish Center for Political, Economic, and Social Research (SETA)** in Istanbul.

“Political Assumptions Impacting Security Sector Reform” Workshop

The workshop was held as part of the research project launched by Omran on “**Security Changes in Syria**”. Topics discussed included the **political** and **military** events in Syria, as well as the **international/regional vision** for a solution in Syria and its effects on security. In addition, participants discussed the security situation in areas under regime control and areas under the control of militant opposition forces, and reviewed **similar experiences** that other countries went through to create the **methods** and **mechanisms** most compatible with people’s aspirations, along with the **security concerns** imposed specifically by the geography of Syria.

“Tackling Challenges in Education for Syrian Refugees in Istanbul” Seminar

Omran’s economist Mohammed Al-Abdullah participated in this seminar held by the Istanbul Province and the Turkish Organization for Emergency and Crisis (**AFAD**) to deliberate the **education problems** faced by Syrian refugees in Istanbul.

“Kurdistan after the Battles of Mosul and Raqqa” Conference

Omran’s researcher Maen Talla gave presentation titled “**The Battle of Raqqa and Its Repercussions on the Scene in Syria**” at this conference organized by Rudaw Research Center.

Seminar by the Carnegie Center on Decentralization and Self Administration in Syria

Omran’s Executive Director presented a paper on survey results and assessment on the performance of local councils during this event held by **Carnegie Endowment** for **International Peace**.



Printed Publications 2016

Book: National Options for Overcoming Political Fluidity in Syria

Omran released its second annual book focusing on the **most prominent changes** and **challenges** in the Syrian file. Researchers from three units in Omran contributed to the book: the international affairs unit, the local administration and democratic practices unit, and the economy and development unit. The book examines the following topics:

- **Security Repercussion of Actions** in Syria by International and Regional Players, by Maen Talla.
- **Terrorism as A Prelude To Killing The Revolution** in Syria, by Sasha Alalou.
- **Decentralization Options** and the Test of State Rebuilding in Syria, by Hadia Alomari, Ayman Aldisouqi, and Mohammed Munir Alfaqeer.
- **Local Economic Development** as a Requirement for Societal Stability in Syria, by Mohammed Al-Abdallah.

Research Study: The Syrian Security Services and the Need for Structural and Functional Change

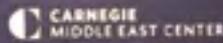
The study presents a realistic assessment of the **security situation** in Syria by deconstructing the philosophy behind deploying the current form of security apparatus. It also presents the basis for the **required changes** after examining the **results of security reform** in countries of the **Arab Spring**. The study closes with recommendations for a **series of actions** that would ensure a solid security sector.

مركز الأبحاث العالمي

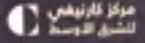
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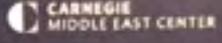
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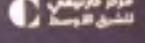
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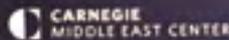
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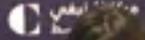
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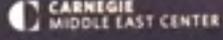
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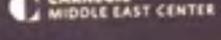
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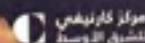
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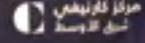
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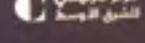
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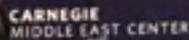
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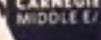
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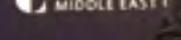
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Wahid Al-Khatib

Wahid Al-Khatib

Samir Khatib

Samir Khatib

Omran Accomplishments since Establishment through 2016

34	Studies
217	Papers & Briefs
61	Editorials
117	Conferences & Events
163	Media Appearances
5	Books



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