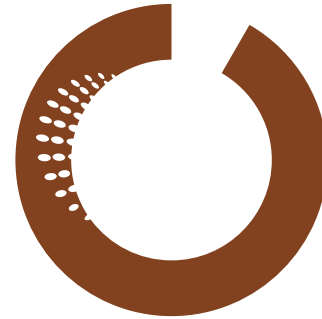


Annual Report

2017



عمران
للدراسات الاستراتيجية
OMRAN
FOR STRATEGIC
STUDIES

Omran Statement

Omran is an independent policy research center dedicated to the study of Syria and the surrounding region. Through our extensive network in Syria and Turkey, our team collects and analyzes direct data on the ground. We publish in-depth papers and reports on political, economic, and social issues in Syria and its regional and global impact. We also lead dozens of intensive workshops and roundtable discussions with scholars, lawmakers, and activists from Syria and beyond.

In 2017, we presented a number of research papers related to politics, security, local administration, and other prominent issues in Syria. Through our work, we remain focused on a paradigm of rebuilding state institutions from the bottom up in order to drive real change.

We have a lot more planned for 2018. We recently opened a new office in Washington, DC, and we expect to open new offices in Europe in the near future. Through these new offices, we will present a national vision for the Syrian cause through which the Syrian people will play a central role in building their future.

About Us

- Established in November 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey
- Conducts intensive research and publishes in-depth studies, analytical maps, and policy recommendations on Syrian politics, economics, and local governance
- Hosts conferences, workshops, and seminars, bringing together scholars from around the world
- Serves as a reference on Syrian affairs for institutions addressing the humanitarian crisis

Our Vision

An independent policy research center that presents an objective understanding of Syria and the region and serves as a reference for policymakers around the world

Our Mission

- To become an essential reference on Syria and the region on political and security affairs, local governance and administration, and economic development.
- To publish policy studies and briefs that empower relevant actors and institutions working on Syrian affairs, support decision-making mechanisms, and assess a complex set of data to produce analytical maps and recommendations.

Why Omran



We provide **accurate information** through an extensive network of researchers and partner organizations in Syria and Turkey.



We **inform decision makers** in Syria and around the world, and provide regional and international organizations with analysis and commentary.



We **conduct in-depth assessments** on current political and social issues in Syria and the surrounding region through direct access to information on the ground.



We provide a platform for Syrian leaders, human rights activists, local council members, and scholars to **exchange** and **develop new ideas** and **solutions** in Syria.



We publish in **Arabic, Turkish, and English**.



Our Core Values

- Adhere to professional standards in analyzing and reporting on complex issues
- Implement an appropriate research methodology
- Cultivate and develop the skills of the research team
- Adapt to changing conditions and needs
- Offer tailored solutions to unique problems in diverse cultural and political contexts
- Embrace research approaches and disciplines through dialogue and bridge building

Our Objectives

- Support decision-making processes and develop strategies and policies for Syrian regional and international stakeholders on rebuilding state institutions
- Provide practical solutions and policy recommendations to Syrian and non-Syrian decision makers.
- Publish policy studies that identify challenges in Syria and the surrounding region and outline possible solutions
- Publish papers in Arabic, English, and Turkish to facilitate interaction with stakeholders around the world
- Contribute to policy discourses on reconstruction and local governance in Syria



Empowering Local Councils in Syria:
Opportunities and Challenges



Omran's Units

Studies Unit



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

Information Unit



- Monitoring and Maps Production
- Public Opinion Polls and Surveys

Negotiations Support Unit



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



AMEC



منتدى الشارقة
ALSHARQA FORUM





Studies Unit

The Studies Unit researches and analyzes Syrian politics, economics, security, and local administration. The unit also assesses the broader impact of Syrian affairs on regional and international actors.

The unit presents recommendations and projections for decision makers in Syria. Researchers strive to inform experts on Syrian affairs by providing an accurate and objective assessment of the challenges and opportunities facing Syrians.



Information Unit

The Information Unit collects data in order to better understand current issues in Syria and the surrounding region. The unit also offers support to the Studies Unit by constantly monitoring and archiving news and information related to Syrian affairs and by producing special reports, bulletins, and maps.

Furthermore, the unit tracks products by think tanks and policy centers relating to Syria and the region.



Negotiations Support Unit

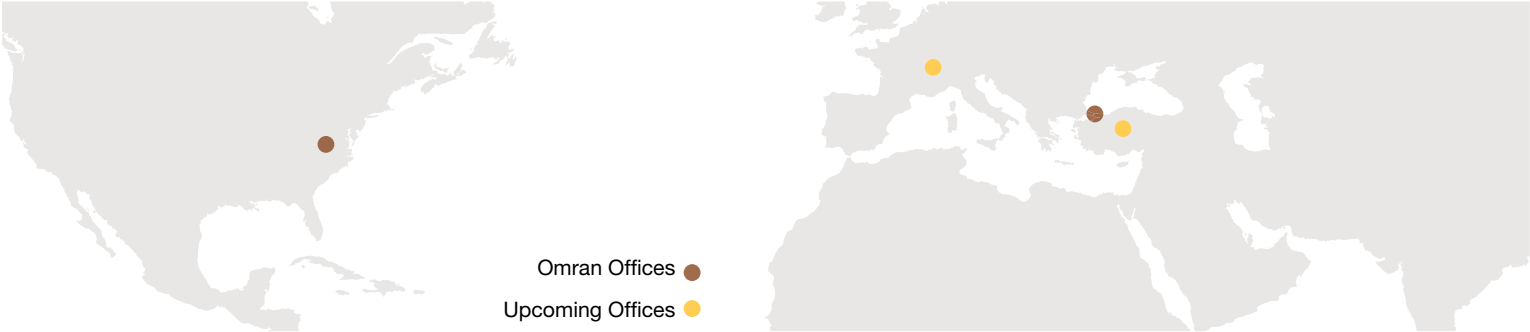
This technical unit comprises Syrian and international experts, who provide Syrian actors and decision makers with the tools, information, and analysis necessary for negotiations processes.

NEW
AMERICA



Offices Worldwide

Omran seeks to facilitate better communication among policy centers that focus on the study of Syria and the surrounding region. With offices around the world, we provide local and global experts with the latest studies and analyses on political, economic, and military issues in Syria. In January 2018, we opened an office in Washington, DC, and we look forward to opening new offices in Geneva and Ankara in the near future.




Fields of Study

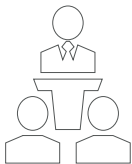
- Security and Military
- The Political Process
- Public Opinion Polls
- Decentralized
- Local Administration
- Local Economic Development
- Rebuilding Syria
- Education
- Healthcare
- Societal Security
- Refugee Resettlement
- Regional and International Studies
- Rule of Law
- Kurdish Affairs
- Terrorism and Extremism

Omran's Outcomes

- **Publications:** Produced books, research papers, in-depth analyses, policy briefs, editorials, maps, and infographics
- **Events:** Organized and participated in conferences, seminars, workshops, and discussion panels
- **Training Resources:** Developed materials for training sessions based on the participants' needs
- **Consultations:** Provided recommendations to local, regional, and international entities engaged in Syria
- **Engagements:** Connected with numerous research centers and policy makers around the world
- **Surveys and Polls:** Conducted surveys and polls on pertinent Syrian issues

Accomplishments 2017

112 
Media Appearances

68 
Conferences and Events

57 
Research Papers

25 | Editorials

7 | Studies


2 | Books

147 | Published and Unpublished Reports

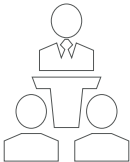
122 | Military Maps

5 | Surveys and Polls

Accomplishments since Establishment through 2017

275 

Media Appearances

185 

Conferences and Events

274 

Research Papers

86 | **Editorials**

41 | **Studies**

7 | **Books**

Highlights

Studies and Research Papers

- The Role of Local Councils in Regional Security
- Idleb's Civil Council Elections: A Tough Transition
- Operation Euphrates Sword: Potential Scenarios
- De-escalation Zones: A Cloak to Refocus on the East
- The Security Situation in Syria and Ways to Manage It
- Protecting Local Councils in De-escalation Agreements
- The Role of Jihadi Movements in Syrian Local Governance
- Restructuring Displaced Local Councils in New Environments
- ISIS and the Strategic Vacuum- The Dilemma of Role Distribution- The Raqqa Model
- Factors Impacting the Development of Syrian Refugees' Livelihood in Turkey: Analysis
- The Battle over "Useless" Syria: The Syrian Desert as a Prelude to the Deir-ez-Zor Battle
- Managing the dossier of the internally displaced in Idleb, as well as the externally displaced

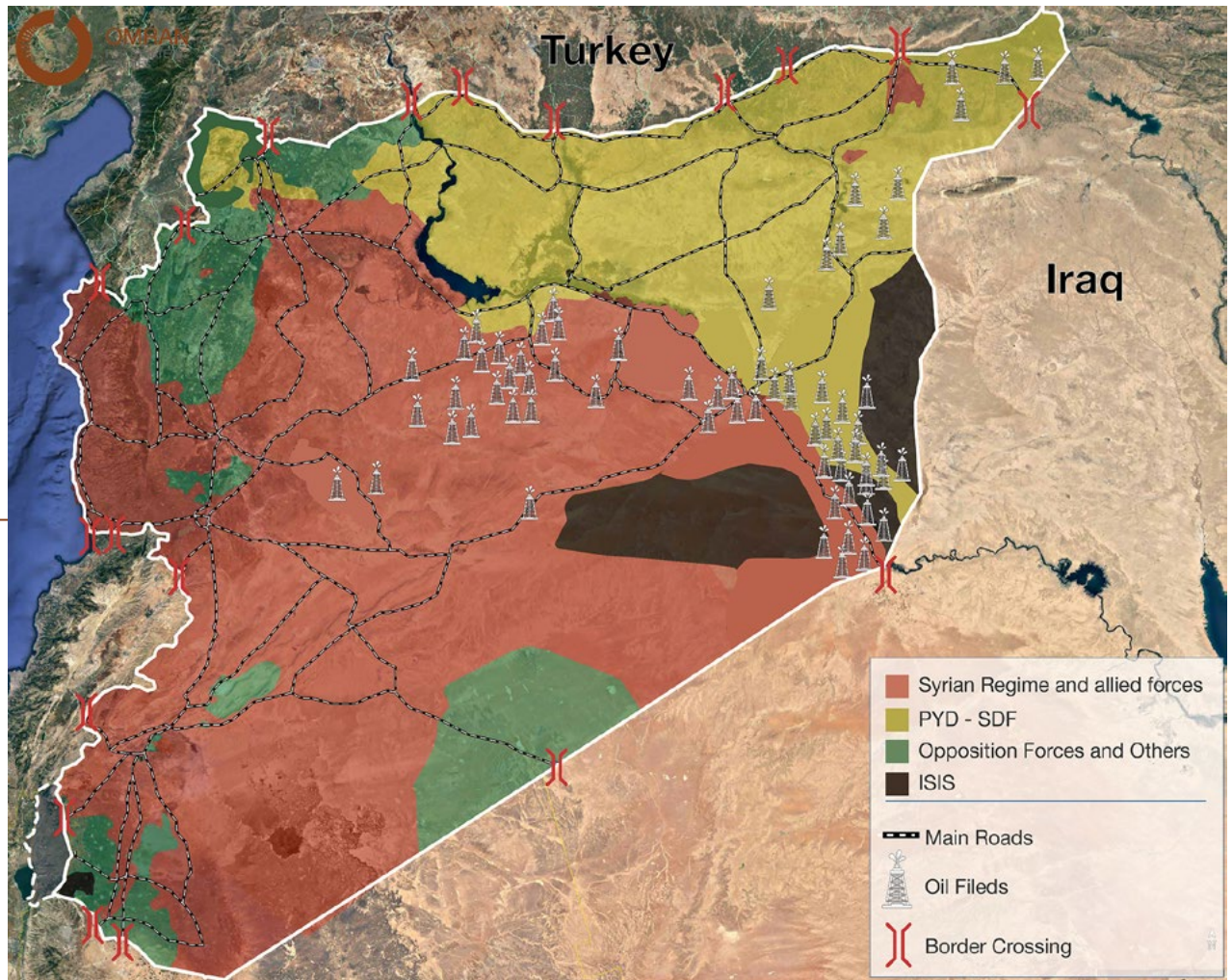
Editorials

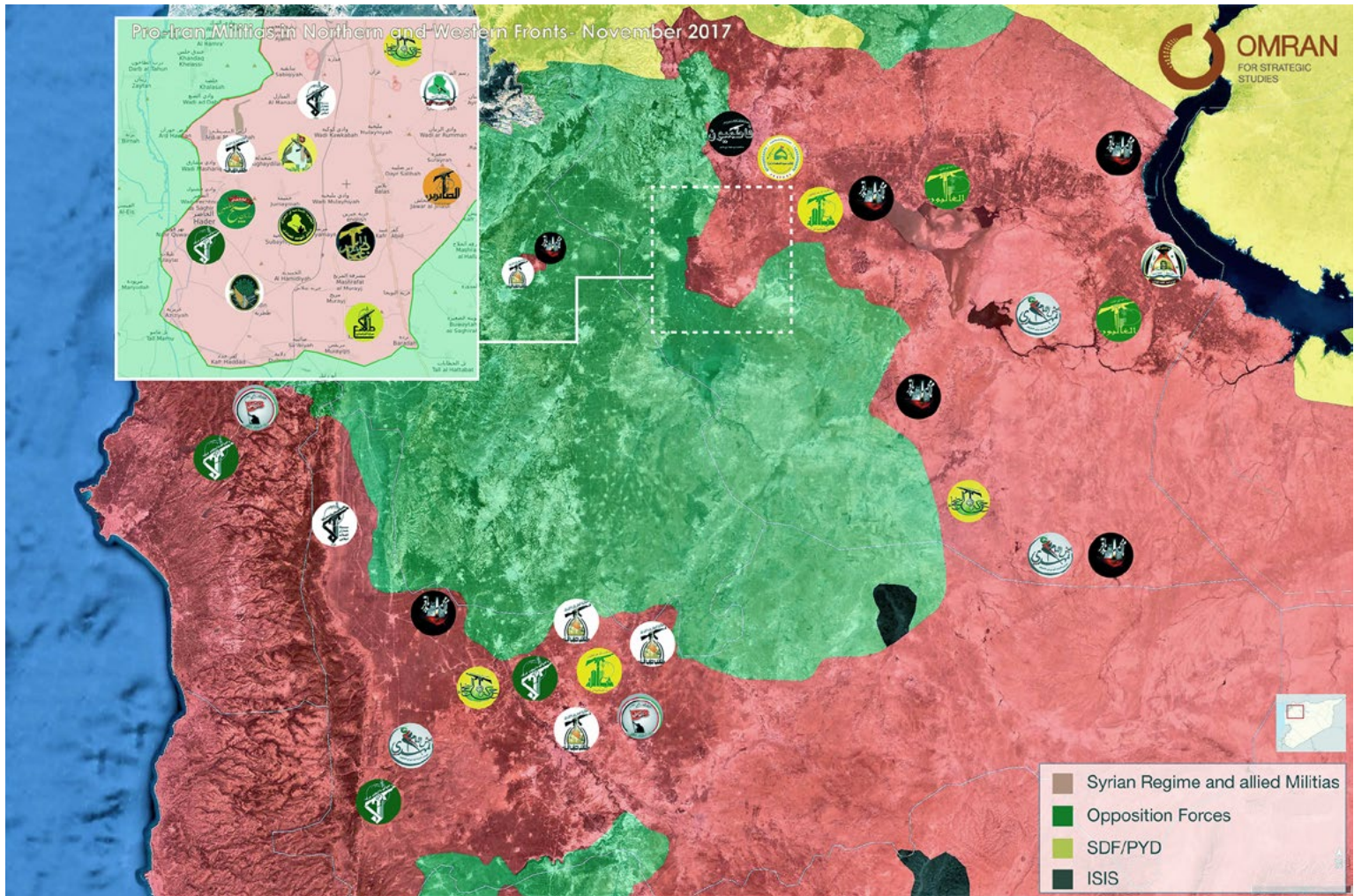
- The Syrian Opposition: Lost In Politics
- The Syrian Opposition: To be, or not to be
- The Battle of Idleb and National Challenges
- Civil Administration In Idleb: Last-minute Initiative
- De-Escalation Zone Agreements: Toward Reshaping Syria
- Legal and Constitutional Views on Decentralization in Syria
- Post-Astana Arrangements of the Political Solution by Russia
- Border-Crossing Agreements and their Concerns: Old and New
- The War of Demographic Change and the Role of Local Councils
- What Moscow Wants Local Councils to Do in De-escalation Zones
Toward Reclaiming Sovereignty
- Decentralization in Syria and Aspirations of Regional and Global Powers
- The Battle between Hay'at Tahrir Al-Sham and Ahrar Al-Sham to Draw
the Future of the North

Special Reports

- Military and Security Structures of the Autonomous Administration
in Syria
- March 2017 Russian Analyses: Highlights on Regional Issues
- Women's Labor and Education in Liberated Areas: Between Hope
and Reality
- April 2017 Russian Analyses: Highlights on Regional Issues
- July 2017 Russian Analyses: Highlights on Regional Issues
- Report on the most important Russian analyses of regional
issues from August 15 to September 29, 2017

Maps





Books



Challenges to National Rebuilding after the Russian Intervention

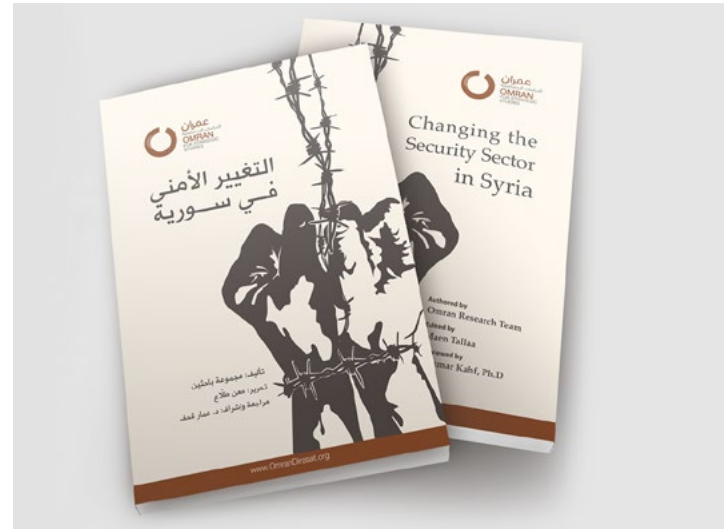
As the crisis in Syria entered its seventh year, Omran released its third annual book, providing a systematic overview of the most significant changes in Syria in 2016. In the book, the authors examined Russian influence in the region, including the country's impact on the stagnation of economic and development activities in opposition areas. The authors also analyzed local administrative bodies and their potential to implement political transition and tighten security in Syrian communities.

The book emphasizes the importance of empowering Syrian civil society, especially the local councils, as a legitimate representative body. Despite the disparity in performance, local entities should fill the administrative void and counter the imbalance between the political views of the people and those of militant factions and traditional political bodies.

Changing the Security Sector in Syria

This book presents the technical, political, and social factors that drive change in the security sector in Syria. In the book, the authors outline a vision to achieve security sector reform and to rise above political competition among regional and international powers. They offer objective solutions, clear analysis of the current security situation, and recommendations on how to change it.

The book is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter outlines key concepts and policies required to achieve effective change within the security sector. The concepts include disarmament, reintegration, restructuring the sector, and learning from post-conflict management efforts in other countries. The second chapter examines the security situation in both regime- and opposition-controlled areas, as well as areas of self-governance. The third chapter explains the anticipated challenges and presents a practical approach to restructuring the security sector in Syria, from pre-transition (known as the peace-building phase) to stability.



Conferences and Events

Workshop: The Role of Local Councils in Security Sector Reform and its Anticipated Challenges

Omran organized this workshop as a continuation of its project on security sector reform in Syria. During the workshop, participants discussed the role of local councils in the process of democratization, as well as its role in rebuilding post-conflict security structures. Additionally, participants analyzed the security situation in the areas of regime control and self-administration, focusing on the role of transitional justice in the process of security change.

Seminar: Iranian Presence in Syria: The Present and the Future

Omran experts delivered a presentation on Iranian military policy in Syria during this seminar, which was organized by the Center of Iranian Studies (IRAM) in Ankara. The seminar included a group of Arab and Turkish academics and experts.

Roundtable Discussion: Engaging displaced local councils and organizations in new environments

This roundtable discussion was organized by Omran and hosted by Local Administration Councils Unit focused on the following:

- The legal context of displaced local councils
- The most significant roles that displaced people can assume in their new environments
- The relationship between displaced local councils and host societies

Research Meeting: Local Councils and Security Sector Reform in Syria

In cooperation with the ORSAM, Omran held a meeting to discuss ways of empowering local councils by investing opportunities and responding to challenges, in addition to the principles of security sector reform in Syria and the security management scenarios in the different areas of control in Syria and the ways to govern them to achieve stability, which is the basis for the success of the transition process.

Workshop: Cooperation on Institutional Reform and Restoring Stability in Syria

Omran organized the workshop in partnership with the Geneva Center for Security Policy (GCSP). Thirty-five experts from the US, Russia, as well as Arab and European countries examined the potential for international cooperation on necessary institutional reform to restore stability in Syria. The discussion focused on institutional reforms in specific sectors during political transition.

Panel Discussion: Elections in Syria (UN Security Council Resolution 2254)

In response to UN Security Council Resolution 2254, Omran participated at a panel discussion hosted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The purpose of the meeting was to draft a research paper, detailing future elections in Syria in accordance with the program's vision. Participants also presented a framework for the election process to address potential challenges following a political solution to the conflict.

Workshop: The Role of Civil Society in Security Sector Reform and Related Challenges

Building upon Omran's project to analyze security sector reform in Syria, the team conducted a workshop to discuss the role of civil society in Syria's transition to democracy, as well as its role in building a framework for security in post-conflict countries. Participants also discussed the security situation in regime-controlled areas and self-administration territories. This part of the discussion focused on the importance of transitional justice in the process of reforming the security sector.

Seminar: The Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies in Bangkok, Thailand

The seminar focused on new approaches to fighting violent extremism. In addition to Omran's experts, a number of scientists, military officers, diplomats, government officials, consultants, and lawmakers attended the event to discuss long- and short-term measures in fighting violent extremist groups.

Conference: 2nd International Conference on Syrian Refugees: Syrian Refugees between Hope and Reality

Organized by Adiyaman University and the Scientific Renaissance Association, Omran's team presented a research paper titled "The Reality of Syrians' Living Conditions in Turkey and How to Improve Them."

Conference: International Conference for Syrians' Education

In response to UN Security Council Resolution 2254, Omran participated at a panel discussion hosted by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). The purpose of the meeting was to draft a research paper, detailing future elections in Syria in accordance with the program's vision. Participants also presented a framework for the election process to address potential challenges following a political solution to the conflict.



Conference: Toward a New Security Apparatus Structure in the Middle East



Omran attended a conference, organized by Al-Sharq Forum, to discuss the need for restoring stability to Syria in terms of security. The conference emphasized the importance of a "bottom-to-top" approach, empowering local and governorate councils to restore security to their communities.

Media Coverage



TRT WORLD



The Washington Times



L'Orient LE JOUR

Le Monde

the japan times



Daily Mail

GULF NEWS



يومية سياسية مستقلة تأسست عام ١٩٧٢



الشرق الأوسط (Al-Sharq Al-Awsat) logo



Cooperation Agreements

CHATHAM HOUSE
The Royal Institute of
International Affairs



CARNEGIE
MIDDLE EAST CENTER

 Konrad
Adenauer
Stiftung

giz



 **IRAM**
İran Araştırmaları Merkezi



“hd | Centre for
Humanitarian
Dialogue


Atlantic Council

 **istanbul**
Za'im
Universitesi

 **T.C.**
İSTANBUL
KÜLTÜR
ÜNİVERSİTESİ




Hope
for Relief and Development

هيئة شام الإغاثية
SHAAM RELIEF
FOUNDATION 



DCAF
a centre for security,
development and
the rule of law



وحدة المجالس المحلية
Local Administration Councils Unit





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