

February 17th and 18th, 2010

LEA COLLET
NIDAA AL-SHRAIDEH
DR. MARTIN BECK
www.kas.de/amman

Failed States in the Arab World? Lebanon, Iraq, Morocco and Yemen

Event: Roundtable Discussions

Date/Place: February 17th and 18th, 2010, Crown Plaza Hotel Beirut

Organizers: Mr. Oussama Safa, Dr. Martin Beck

Organisation: KAS Amman, Lebanese Center for Policy Studies

1. Program

Wednesday, February 17th, 2010

Opening session and welcome speeches

Director of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Lebanon Oussama Safa

Resident Representative of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Amman, Jordan Dr. Martin Beck

Session I: The Weakness of Security in Iraq

President of the Third Way Institute, Jordan Dr. Yasar Qatarneh

Director of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Lebanon Oussama Safa

Professor of the Mohammed V University, Morocco Dr. Abderrahim El-Manar Esslimi

Session II: The Widespread Corruption in Yemen

Associate Professor of Sana'a University, Yemen Dr. Adel Mugahed Al-Sharagabi

Economic Researcher, Lebanon Dr. Khalil Gebara

President of the Third Way Institute, Jordan Dr. Yasar Qatarneh

Thursday, February 18th, 2010

Session III: Authoritarianism in Morocco

Professor of the Mohammed V University, Morocco Dr. Abderrahim El-Manar Esslimi

Treasurer of The Lebanese Transparency Association, Lebanon Dr. Yehya Hakim

Professor of the Institute of Social Sciences, Lebanese University, Lebanon Dr. Shawket Ehtay

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Session IV: State Building in Lebanon

Professor of the Institute of Social Sciences- Lebanese University, Lebanon	Dr. Shawket Ehtay
Treasurer of The Lebanese Transparency Association, Lebanon	Dr. Yehya Hakim
President of the Third Way Institute, Jordan	Dr. Yasar Qatarneh
Associate Professor of Sana'a University, Yemen	Dr. Adel Mugahed Al-Sharagabi

Session V: State Failure as a Security Challenge on the National and Global Level

Professor for International Politics, Univer- sity of the German Federal Armed Forces, Munich, Germany	Dr. Carlo Masala
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General discussion of findings

Deputy Director of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Lebanon	Zeina El-Helou
Resident Representative of the Konrad- Adenauer-Stiftung, Amman, Jordan	Dr. Martin Beck

2. Objective

Since the emergence of the failed states concept in the 1990s the subject of failing states has gained in importance.

More and more countries, especially in post colonial Africa and Latin America, loose attributes of sovereign statehood or show deficits in the ambit of security and welfare. failed states have reached the stage of inability to perform nation state tasks such as border protection, security of individual freedoms and property and the exercise of power. This model of failed states is applicable in the Arab World where it helps understanding conflicts as in Yemen to explain why states decay and which effects this has on society.

During the roundtable discussions on February 17th and 18th, 2010, organized by KAS Amman and the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), high ranking experts from the science, economic and political sector

shed light on experiences of Lebanon and selected Arab countries in state failure and state building process. They discussed the reasons and possible means and measures of state failure and building exemplifying the cases of Lebanon, Yemen, Morocco and Iraq. In this context they also focused on the definition of weak, failed and collapsed states to give an overall idea of the different aspects of the failed states theory.

The nature of state failure varies from place to place, sometimes dramatically. State failure or collapse depends on a nation's geographical, physical, historical, and political circumstances. In a collapsed state the political and public order has broken down whereas the leadership in a failed state remains in power due to its control of the coercive powers, the armed forces, police, security and intelligence.

The roundtable discussions witnessed the participation of highly experienced Arab

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speakers from Jordan, Morocco, Yemen and Lebanon. Each speaker presented a working paper describing the situation in their countries. In addition **Dr. Masala** presented an analysis from the perspective of international relations.

Mr. Oussama Safa, Director of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, and **Dr. Martin Beck**, Resident Representative of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung opened the first of five workshop sessions. **Dr. Beck** highlighted the two main features which characterize state failure, i.e. the loss of the legitimate use of physical power over its territory and the inability of the state to provide reasonable public services. Comparative studies on failed states are in this context useful to elucidate the causes and impacts of collapsing political systems.

First Session

Dr. Qatarneh gave a speech on the local community situation in Iraq. He focused on how to rebuild Iraq through increasing security and stability underlined the importance of setting a fair allocation system of oil resources among different communities and regions. According to **Dr. Qatarneh** Iraq has failed to develop sustainable strategies to deal with existent threats to the political community such as the ethno-sectarian conflicts. He then emphasized that though the new government in Iraq grants a wide array of political liberties, it is still unable to offer a security structure to allow the citizen to practice these liberties. Moreover, the fractured Iraqi military has failed to deal decisively with transnational terrorist organizations or local militias that seek to undermine the democratization process in Iraq.

Dr. Qatarneh concluded that Iraq can only resolve its state building dilemma through a national reconciliation initiative that would bring in all Iraq's ethno-sectarian parties to a power sharing agreement.

In the following **Dr. Manar Esslimi** discussed the paper of **Dr. Qatarneh** with the audience and came to the conclusion that Iraq, despite all the challenges it is currently facing it still presents some positive aspects such as the substantive improvement in the security situation. **Dr. Esslimi** considered at the end that it is impossible to build a state under the occupation situation in Iraq.

Second Session

Dr. Adel Al Sharagaby introduced Yemen's case by presenting a paper on widespread corruption in Yemen. He considered Yemen a failed state because of tribal political system which leads to the emergence of conflicting sects and the destabilization of the political order.

Dr. Adel Al-Sharagabi urged the government to take measures in order to found more public schools with a high education system and skilled teachers.

Dr. Khalil Gebara stressed the importance of the rent seeking concept in connection with the failed states theory. He argued that it is difficult to have a discussion on failed states while at the same time avoid delving into the theoretical concept of the state. Corruption weakens the state institutions and accelerates the polarization of the society. Therefore one can define corruption as a primitive version of rent-seeking. In this context rent-seeking is understood as a different source of income when the state restricts the operations of the market and creates different forms of rents over which people start to compete. This competition can be either legal by lobbying or illegal through bribes.

Third Session

Dr. Esslimi presented a paper on authoritarianism in Morocco. He explained that the Moroccan political system is undergoing, for the past ten years, a great development and that the country has witnessed several patterns of progress. Though Morocco is

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currently trying to dismantle some aspects of the old conservative tradition in various spheres, such as the family code and the freedom of expression, it appears that the aim of the reform projects is still not clear enough. The state building process is still facing difficulties at the institutional level and at the level of wealth distribution capabilities.

Dr. Hakim discussed the paper presented by **Dr. Esslimi**. He then debated some questions on combating corruption, the regulations governing human organs in the public sector, the financing of political parties, the independence and transparency of the judiciary and the role of civil society in promoting human development. Afterwards he answered to questions that were raised by the audience with regards to the possibility of democratization of the Moroccan political system.

Fourth Session

In the final roundtable **Dr. Shawkat Esh-tay** tackled the situation of Lebanon as a case of State failure in various aspects, including failure of the security sector, widespread corruption and shortcomings of the political system. He gave a historical overview of Lebanon's formation, its independence and the civil war. He stated that the existence of multiple religious groups such as Islam and Christianity as well as the existence of many political parties and the existence of discrimination among them cause the division of Lebanon into conflicting groups. He pointed also out to the external factors as foreign interference that affects the stability of the country.

The paper of **Dr. Esh-tay** was discussed by **Dr. Hakim** and **Dr. Qatarneh** who concluded that the Lebanese should act more future-oriented and should be less affected by the past.

Dr. Qatarneh highlighted then the concept of threat perception and stated that Arab

countries should identify the sources of threat in order to enhance the state building process.

Fifth Session

Dr. Carlo Masala delivered a speech on state failure as a security challenge on the national and global level. He said that in the light of the 9/11 attacks state failure and failed states are considered the breeding ground for violent extremism and extremist groups. Hence the political and academic interest in the concept of state failure should focus more intensively on the reasons and impacts of collapsing political systems and examine the possibilities to preventing states from failing. He also stated that special attention has been generated to quantify state failure. The Failed State Index (FSI) reveals that 132 out of 194 analysed countries are already classified as failed states and 96 states are on their way to fail. **Dr. Malasa** stated that the Index and its classification of failed states or states in the process of failing is so broad that it includes every type of failure, ranging from states where the central government is unable to maintain the monopoly on the use of force to countries where governments have no budget to keep infrastructure running. Such a broad range of state failure definition is problematic for research purposes. He suggested using instead the classical notion of state – population, state territory and state authority – according to the international law. If governments are not able to exert their authority over their populations within the boundaries of their territories they are indeed in the process of failing.

4. Conclusion

Over 40 high ranking participants including employees from public and private sectors, distinguished public figures and scholars, politicians, and religious leaders, attended the roundtable discussion. The participants helped creating a spirit of interaction and a meaningful dialogue. The participants were

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engaged actively in the discussions due to their diverse cultural and ideological background. The conference outcome was highly important because of the excellent contribution of the different speakers. Many participants asked for future joint activities of KAS and LCPS. Thanks to the comparative approach the experts could promote a better understanding of the failed state and state building concepts. The comparison of the four case studies showed the differences in the state failure process in the countries such as Lebanon and Yemen. The event provided the participants with a qualified policy consulting on state failure and state building processes in Yemen, Lebanon Iraq and Morocco.