

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



September 04, 2018

Changes in a Political System

A political system is established within a state so as to safeguard the rights of its people and solve the socio-political issues that may hamper the better life opportunities. If a system fulfills the challenges and solves the problems that may erupt within a state, the system is said to be an ideal one. However, it is not possible to have an ideal system in practice but something near it may be achieved with the help of political prudence and continuous efforts. Moreover, it must never be forgotten that a political setup is a dynamic phenomenon; there have to be changes within the system so as to compensate for the ever-changing nature of human society. From the very earlier states the nature of political systems was not the same as they are today. Throughout the history of statehood, human beings have experienced different sorts of systems and setups. From monarchy to today's modern democracy, there have been myriads of political systems and political practices. The only common thing among them is that they keep on changing. Though some may take a longer time to change but, ultimately, they have to change as they do not have any other option.

There may be various reasons of changes within a political system. One of the basic reasons is that the human societies evolve, giving birth to new changes, which give rise to new challenges. To overcome those changes, the systems have to introduce changes. The need for changes may also arise when the system is not on the track to stability and fails to address the basic problems of the people. In other words, it can be said that the perceived dissatisfaction from a system is directly proportional to the demands in change. The great political and social changes in the history of mankind have their roots in the same phenomenon. It can also be said that the standard of living of the subjects and their perceived satisfaction of socio-political scenario is one of the best ways of gauging the effectiveness of a political system.

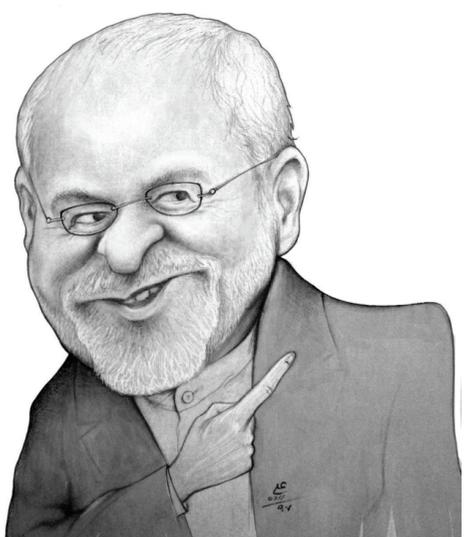
There are two ways of introducing changes within a system. The first one is through amendments, i.e. bringing about necessary changes within the present system while keeping the basic nature of the system intact. Most of the changes within democratic systems take place through the same process. One of the qualities of democratic systems is that they keep on inviting changes. Moreover, the democratic system proceeds in such a way that the changes become inevitable. The example of elections within a democracy is one of the most important processes in this regard. The elections guarantee government change after every specific period of time. If elections are held regularly the system keeps on moving ahead. On the other hand, there can be changes within the overall system that actually tend to change the basic nature of the system. Such a change is basically referred to as a 'system change' and is brought about by a revolution or a military coup.

The change in system becomes inevitable when all the possibilities of changes within a system are lost. The people start suffocating so much that they start demanding for a change in the entire system. Meanwhile, it should be mentioned that most of the revolutions are not very much peaceful and they involve blood-shed.

Amendments within a system are very much normal and there should not be a very strict stand on these sorts of changes within a system because it would bring a society to a halt and would hamper its natural growth. Moreover, a democratic system is always a dynamic system and keeps on checking the possibilities of positive changes. It is the characteristic of a dictatorial government that dislikes changes and strives to maintain the status quo. The dictatorial systems are also characterized by being personality centered. The changes within the system are highly dependent on the personality of the ruler.

Currently, Afghan political setup does not seem to be compensating for the growing demands of time and has basic problems that do not let the system represent all the people within the Afghan society appropriately, especially the poor masses. At the same time, the current setup does not let the people out of troubles that they face. No doubt, we cannot expect Afghanistan to have a well-developed system as the democratic history in Afghanistan is very short, yet it must never be forgotten that in order to have a better system, changes have to be brought continuously as per the demands.

There are many concerns about the political development in Afghanistan; the most important among them is the development of political institutions. Afghanistan, in this regard, has been suffering much. The Afghan society is basically a very diverse society; people from different ethnic backgrounds live here. A democratic system, truly representing people is best suited for the country; however, the development of political institutions is pivotal in this regard. In great modern democracies, it is the well-established democracies that run the state, establish order and provide the people their basic requirements. Afghan politicians, political parties and civil society members can all work together to guide the country towards the same sort of democracy; all they require is commitment and dedication.



The Climate Fight's Next Turning Point

By Patricia Espinosa and Anne Hidalgo

Next month, the Global Climate Action Summit – one of the largest international gatherings on climate change the world has seen – will be held in San Francisco. The event, whose theme is "Take Ambition to the Next Level," aims to serve as a launchpad for accelerated action that will enable the world to meet the goals set by the 2015 Paris climate agreement. It is a golden opportunity to make progress in the effort to combat global warming, but it can be seized only with the involvement of all stakeholders.

With the Paris climate agreement, the international community agreed to limit the rise in average global temperature to 2° Celsius – and ideally 1.5°C – above pre-industrial levels. To that end, national governments were tasked with developing their own climate-action plans, called Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

But national governments cannot do it alone. Everyone – including those at all levels of government, as well as business leaders, investors, and civil society – must contribute. This calls for a new form of inclusive multilateralism – one that can also be applied to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which complement the Paris agreement's commitments.

It is a tall order, but there is plenty of reason for optimism. There is unprecedented global momentum to build a low-carbon, climate-secure future, characterized by a dynamic green economy, a thriving society, and a healthy environment.

Globally, renewable power accounted for 70% of net additions to power-generating capacity in 2017, according to the Renewables 2018 Global Status Report. Moreover, as part of the Under2 Coalition, over 200 states, regions, and local authorities have committed to cut their greenhouse-gas emissions by at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

Urban centers are also proving their capacity for climate innovation and leadership. New York City has mandated the retrofitting of 14,500 of the city's most polluting buildings. Shenzhen has become the first city in the world with a fully electric bus fleet. Curitiba, Brazil, has introduced a new model of urban food production. And Oslo has created a climate budget to guide financial decision-making.

At the business level, more than 700 companies with a total market capitalization of over \$16 trillion have made far-reaching climate commitments, according to the We Mean Business Coalition.

And 289 investors, holding nearly \$30 trillion in assets, have signed on to Climate 100+, a five-year initiative to engage with the world's largest corporate greenhouse-gas emitters to improve governance on climate change, curb emissions, and strengthen climate-related financial disclosures. As a result, global green bond issuance could reach \$300 billion this year.

Yet we are far from being in the clear. Scientists agree that global carbon dioxide emissions must reach a turning point in 2020 if we are to achieve carbon neutrality (with emissions low enough to be safely absorbed by forests, soils, and other natural systems) by mid-century. So far, nearly 50 countries have or may have reached their emissions peaks, and more may soon join their ranks. This is progress, but it is not enough.

In fact, greenhouse gases in the atmosphere are still accumulating at a rate that will soon take us well above the 1.5°C threshold, beyond which some of the worst effects of climate change cannot be staved off. Extreme weather already is becoming more common, as exemplified by record-high temperatures worldwide this year. On current trends, average global temperatures could well rise by 3°C, imperiling vital natural systems like coral reefs, rainforests, and the polar regions.

All relevant stakeholders need to strengthen their climate commitments. To kick-start that process, the Global Climate Action Summit and its partners have issued a wide array of new challenges, including zero-waste goals in cities, a target of 500 companies adopting science-based targets, and initiatives to accelerate uptake of zero-emission vehicles.

Such efforts would not just protect our environment; they would also boost our economies. A recent report by the New Climate Economy suggests that, in transportation alone, a low-carbon transition would create 23 million jobs worldwide annually.

Perhaps more important, a show of climate-action ambition from leaders across sectors would likely inspire national governments to increase their own NDCs ahead of this December's United Nations Climate Change Conference in Poland, where governments will finalize the implementation guidelines of the Paris agreement. Acting alone can be difficult. Acting in concert can inspire and enable all participants to do more. And if we are to leave a healthy planet to future generations, more is what we need.

Patricia Espinosa is Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Anne Hidalgo is Mayor of Paris and Chair of C40 Cities.

The long shadow of the Gulf crisis: Qatar emerges as key player in Gaza crisis

By James M. Dorsey

Dug in for the long haul in its increasingly bitter dispute with the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, Qatar is emerging as a key player in efforts to prevent tension between Israel and Hamas, the Islamist group that controls Gaza, from spinning out of control.

Qatar's increasing role counters Saudi and UAE efforts to shape Palestinian politics in their mould. It further underlines the two Gulf states' 15-month old failed effort to force Qatar to bow to their will by imposing a diplomatic and economic boycott.

The Qatari role takes on added significance in the wake of the Trump administration's cancellation of all funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and a US-Israeli effort to terminate the UN body's mandate and rejigger the definition of a Palestinian refugee in a bid to restrict Palestinian rights.

The Qatari role is also likely to be a litmus test of the willingness of Gulf states to support US-Israeli policy with the Trump administration asserting that Qatar, Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern and European states would only be allowed to fund UNRWA for the time being.

Israeli media reports said the Trump administration was insisting that funders ultimately would have to align themselves with the US goal of closing down the agency and redefining who is a Palestinian refugee.

The redefinition would exclude the descendants of Palestinians originally displaced in 1948 and reduce the number of recognized refugees from five million to an estimated 500,000. It would undercut long-standing Palestinian insistence on the right of return of the 1948 refugees and their descendants – a demand viewed by Israel as an assault on its existence as a Jewish state and an undermining of its claim to the right of the land.

It remains unclear whether any of the multiple countries stepping in to compensate for the US shortfall are willing to accept US conditions.

But in a possible indication of a shifting playing field, Palestine Authority President Mahmoud Abbas appeared to move away from his insistence on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel by saying that he would entertain a US suggestion for a confederation of Israel, Palestine and Jordan.

Mr. Abbas said he had said as much when asked by US Middle East peace negotiators Jared Kushner, a senior advisor to President Donald J. Trump and his son-in-law, and Jason Greenblatt whether he would be interested in a confederation.

Mr. Abbas did not say when the exchange took place. The Palestinian leader broke off all contact with the Trump administration after Mr. Trump last December recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

Israeli forces have since killed at least 166 Palestinians and wounded 18,000 others who participated in recent months in regular protests along the Gaza Israel border in demand of their right to return.

Israel and Hamas agreed in July to a ceasefire, mediated by Qatar, Egypt and the United Nations, to prevent Hamas rocket attacks and protesters flying kites with incendiary devices into Israel to which Israel responded with air strikes from spiralling out of control.

To make the ceasefire sustainable, economic support for Gaza where growth has been severely stunted as a result of a more than a decade-long Israeli-Egyptian blockade and now further aggravated by the

US-Israeli assault on UNRWA is crucial.

Israeli media reported that Israeli defense minister Avigdor Lieberman met in recent months in Cyprus separately with Qatari foreign minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani and Qatar's ambassador to the Palestinian territories Mohammed al-Emadi to discuss economic support for Gaza. Qatar, beyond financial muscle, has the longest-standing relations among the mediators with Hamas.

Qatar has also been negotiating the return by Hamas of two Israeli nationals held captive as well as the remains of two Israeli soldiers killed in 2014 in Gaza.

Speaking in a series of interviews, Mr. Al-Emadi suggested that Qatari funding would depend on Israel and Hamas agreeing on a sustainable ceasefire. "It is very difficult to fund the reconstruction of Gaza in an event of yet another destructive war," Mr. Al-Emadi said. He said he had "discussed a maximum of five- to 10-year cease-fire with Hamas."

Mr. Lieberman's discussions ironically constitute recognition of the utility of Qatar's long-standing relations with Islamists and militants that the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Bahrain cited as the reason for their diplomatic and economic boycott.

With exception of recent pledges to support UNRWA, countries like Turkey, the UAE and Saudi Arabia have focused on gaining political influence in Palestine rather than on economic development.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE have concentrated on the purchase in Jerusalem of real estate adjacent to the Temple Mount or Haram al-Sharif, Islam's third most holy site, according to Kamal Khatib, an Israeli Palestinian Islamist leader, as well as Arab media reports.

For its part, Turkey has sent thousands of supporters of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Justice and Democracy Party (AKP) to visit the city. Turkish activists allegedly participated in last year's protests on Haram al-Sharif.

Saudi Arabia's position, moreover, on the US-Israeli effort to undermine UNRWA and redefine the Palestinian issue is muddied by apparent differences between King Salman and his son, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who has been vocal in his support for M. Trump and empathy with Israeli positions.

Laying down the law, King Salman King Salman denounced the "invalidity and illegality" of the US decision to recognize Jerusalem. He told an Arab summit in Dhahran in April that he was donating \$150 million to support Islam's holy places in Jerusalem.

King Salman's moves ironically brought the kingdom closer to the outright condemnation by Qatar, Turkey and other Muslim nations of Mr. Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem. This, however, has more to do with King Salman's own views as well as domestic politics in kingdom. It does little, if anything, to prevent the Gulf crisis from muddying efforts to resolve the Gaza crisis.

"A bumpy road seems to be lying ahead of Qatar...as it faces strong internal and external obstacles that impede its management of the Palestinian dossier and stops it from communicating with the rest of the regional and international parties so long as its opponents keep their veto on its movements," said Gaza-based Palestinian historian Adnan Abu Amer.

Dr. James M. Dorsey is a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, co-director of the University of Würzburg's Institute for Fan Culture, and co-host of the New Books in Middle Eastern Studies podcast.

Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Moh. Reza Huwaida

Vice Chairman / Editor: Moh. Sakhi Rezaie

Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019

www.outlookafghanistan.net



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