

Quarterly Review of International Relations July-September 2016

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July 1st:

In Dacca, Bangladesh, gunmen (supposed to be militants of the Islamic State) attack a restaurant in the diplomatic quarter and take hostages, including several foreigners. Police prepares to start an operation to rescue the hostages, according to Benjir Ahmed, the chief of Bangladesh special police force.

July 2nd-3rd:

Islamist militants kill 20 people, including at least nine Italians, seven Japanese and an American, inside a restaurant in Bangladesh capital, before security forces storm the building and end a 12-hour standoff. Islamic State claims it is responsible for one of the most brazen attacks in the South Asian nation's history but the government declares the militants are not fighting for the Islamic State and are coming from wealthy Bengali families.

July 4th:

The death toll from a suicide bombing in a Baghdad shopping district on July 3rd rises above 150, fuelling calls for security forces to crack down on Islamic State sleeper cells blamed for one of the worst ever single bombings in Iraq.

July 5th:

Hungary will hold a referendum on October 2nd 2016 on whether to accept any future European Union *quota* system for resettling migrants as Prime Minister Viktor Orban's government steps up its fight against the EU's migration policies.

July 6th:

A Syrian rebel alliance agrees to a three-day country-wide ceasefire announced by the Syrian army and, although fighting and air attacks continue, US Secretary of State John Kerry expresses hope a more significant truce can be achieved.

July 7th:

Syrian government forces take a step towards completely encircling rebel-held parts of Aleppo, capturing ground overlooking the only road into the opposition half of the city and effectively putting those areas under siege, during a 72-hour ceasefire announced by the Syrian army.

July 8th:

NATO leaders agree to deploy military forces to the Baltic States and Eastern Poland and increase air and sea patrols to reassure allies who were once part of the Soviet bloc following Russia's seizure of Crimea from Ukraine.

July 9th:

North Korea fires a ballistic missile from a submarine, failed soon after launch, which comes at the end of a period of sharply rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula, and only a



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day after the United States and South Korea have pledged to deploy an advanced anti-missile system to counter threats from Pyongyang.

July 10th:

Russia's Foreign Ministry declares that a NATO summit in Warsaw shows that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is focusing its efforts on containing a non-existent threat from the East.

July 11th:

South Sudan's President and Vice President order their rival forces to cease hostilities after days of fighting threatened to plunge the nation back into civil war and bring further instability to an impoverished region of Africa. Fighting had erupted on July 7th in the capital Juba between loyalists of President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, the former rebel leader who became Vice President under a deal to end a two-year civil war.

July 12th:

An arbitration court rules that China has no historic title over the waters of the South China Sea and has breached the Philippines' sovereign rights with its actions, infuriating Beijing which dismisses the case as a farce. A defiant China, which had boycotted the hearings at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, vows to ignore the ruling and declares its armed forces will defend its sovereignty and maritime interests.

July 13th:

The European Commission proposes more unified EU *asylum* rules, in a bid to stop people waiting for refugee *status* moving around the Union and disrupting its passport-free zone. The proposal should standardize refugee reception facilities across the bloc and unify the level of State support they can get, setting common rules on residence permits, travel papers, access to jobs, schools, social welfare and healthcare.

July 14th:

In Nice, France, during the Bastille Day fireworks, a French-Tunisian kills at least 84 people launching a truck into the crowds. French authorities declare the attack has the hallmarks of Islamist militants.

July 15th:

Turkish forces loyal to President Tayyip Erdogan largely crush an attempted military *coup* after crowds answered his call to take to the streets in support of the government and dozens of rebels abandon their tanks.

July 16th-17th:

Tension grows between Turkey and US, the President Erdogan accusing Fethullah Gülen, his former supporter who actually lives in the United States, to be responsible of the attempted military *coup* in the country on July 15th.

July 18th:

Turkey purges its police after rounding up thousands of soldiers in the wake of a failed military *coup*, and declares it can reconsider its friendship with the United States unless Washington hands over a cleric Ankara blames for the *putsch*. The sacking of thousands of police officers follows orders for the detention of thousands of judges and prosecutors in the aftermath of July 15th night's *coup*, in which more than 200 people had been killed when a faction of the armed forces had tried to seize power.

July 19th:

A young Afghan attacks passengers on a train in Bavaria with an ax shouting «Allaha Akbar» (God is Great), wounding four Hong Kong residents on the train, then injuring a local woman after fleeing, before police shoots him dead. The case is likely to deepen worries about so-called 'lone wolf' attacks in Europe.



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July 20th:

One of the ruling AK Party's most senior figures, Mustafa Sentop, a close ally of President Tayyip Erdogan, declares the Constitution allows for a state of emergency to be declared, though he says he do not know if such a step will be taken.

July 21st:

Turkey assures its citizens and the outside world that there will be no return to the deep repression of the past, even as President Tayyip Erdogan imposes the first nationwide state of emergency since the 1980s.

July 22nd:

Gunmen attack a busy shopping mall in the German city of Munich, spraying bullets as people flees in horror for safety from what police confirms to be a terrorist attack.

July 23rd:

The German-Iranian teenager who shot dead nine people in Munich in July 22nd is a deranged lone gunman obsessed with mass killings who has drawn no inspiration from Islamist militancy, according to German police.

July 24th:

The world's biggest economies will work to support global growth and better share of the benefits of trade, policymakers of G20 declare after a meeting in China dominated by the impact of Britain's exit from Europe and fears of rising protectionism.

July 25th:

The Syrian who had blown himself up in South Germany, wounding 15 people, has pledged allegiance to Islamic State on a video found on his mobile phone, according to the Bavarian Interior Minister.

July 26th:

Assailants loyal to Islamic State force an elderly priest to his knees before killing himself and take several worshippers hostage in a French church before police shoots the attackers dead.

July 27th:

European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker selects Gaullist Michel Barnier, a French politician who had introduced many European financial regulations after the financial crisis, to represent Brussels in negotiations on Britain's exit from the European Union.

July 28th:

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan wants the armed forces and national intelligence agency brought under the control of the presidency after the failed *coup*.

July 29th:

The United States are trying to determine whether a Russian plan for a humanitarian operation in Syria is sincere, Secretary of State John Kerry retains, adding that if it proves a 'ruse' it may ruin cooperation between Moscow and Washington

July 30th:

Many Islamic State leaders leave Mosul with their families towards Syria ahead of a planned offensive by US-backed Iraqi forces on the city, Iraq's Defense minister Khaled al-Obeidi declares

August 1st-2nd:

President Tayyip Erdogan accuses the West of supporting terrorism and standing by *coups*, questioning Turkey's relationship with the United States and saying «the script for

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an abortive *putsch* in July 2016 has been written abroad» and exactly by charter schools in the United States which are the main source of income for the network of US-based cleric Fethullah Gülen, who, he says, masterminded the July 15th putsch.

August 3rd:

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) declares it has been the worst week for attacks on medical facilities in the Aleppo region since the beginning of Syria's five-year conflict, which has killed more than 250,000 people.

August 4th:

Egypt's military declares it has killed Abu Duaa al-Ansari, whom it had identified as the leader of the Sinai branch of Islamic State.

August 5th:

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu calls Wien the «capital of radical racism» after on August 4th Chancellor Christian Kern had suggested ending European Union accession talks with Ankara.

August 6th-7th:

Syrian forces break through besieged opposition-held areas in Eastern Aleppo.

August 8th:

A suicide bomber in Pakistan kills at least 70 people and wounds more than a hundred in an attack in Quetta.

August 9th-10th:

Russia declares it has thwarted two armed Ukrainian attempts to get saboteurs into Crimea and has dismantled a spy network inside the annexed peninsula, accusations Ukraine dismissed as «fake information».

August 11th-12th:

A series of blasts hit three of the most popular tourist resorts as well as towns in southern Thailand, killing four people and wounding dozens, after the country voted on August 7th to accept a military-backed charter in a *referendum*.

August 13th:

Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim declares his country will not compromise with Washington over the extradition of the Islamic cleric Fethullah Gülen it accuses of orchestrating a failed *coup*, warning of rising anti-Americanism if the United States fails to extradite him.

August 14th:

Libyan forces, fighting to oust Islamic State from their former North African stronghold of Sirte, declare they have made advances in a coastal neighborhood after staging attacks by land, sea and air.

August 15th:

A car bomb kills six people including four police officers and a child outside a police station in Southeastern Turkey, according to senior government officials who blame the attack on Kurdish militants.

August 16th:

From Hamadam, in Iran, Russia organizes airstrikes on Aleppo's province to oust ISIS and Jabhat-al-Nusra militants.

August 17th:

North Korea says it has resumed plutonium production and has no plans to stop its nuclear tests.

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August 18th:

Russia declares it will support a 48-hour ceasefire in Aleppo, a move the UN Syria envoy declares will allow aid to reach besieged areas soon, as long as all sides respect the temporary truce.

August 19th:

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's party members agree that women will be banned from wearing the face veil in schools and universities and while driving, according to the Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere.

August 20th:

Fighting between the Syrian army and Kurdish forces intensifies in Northern Syria creating the risk of yet another front opening in the multi-sided civil war.

August 21st:

A suicide bomber, aged between 12 and 14, likely militant of ISIS, carries out an attack on a wedding party in the Turkish city of Gaziantep, killing at least 51 people.

August 22nd:

During a meeting in Ventotene, with the leaders of Germany and France, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi declares that Europe needs to invest in defense, education and culture while breaking free of bureaucratic rules.

August 23rd:

The Nigerian army announces on Twitter that Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau was killed during an aerial raid.

August 24th:

Syrian rebels backed by Turkish special forces, enter one of Islamic State's last strongholds on the Turkish-Syrian border, Jarablus.

August 25th:

Brazil's Senate starts the trial of Dilma Rousseff, its first female President, who is charged with breaking budget laws.

August 26th-27th:

The UN Security Council condemns a series of missile launches by North Korea, the last one realized on August 24th thanks to a ballistic missile which had flown about 500 km (300 miles) in the direction of Japan.

August 28th:

Germany, Poland and France vow to reinvigorate the Weimar Triangle group, formed after the end of the Cold War, to help deal with the many challenges now facing Europe, including Britain's vote to leave the European Union.

August 29th:

A suicide bomber kills at least 54 people with a car bomb in Aden, Yemen, and another one acts in Karbala, Iraq, causing 18 victims. The Islamic State claims both attacks.

August 30th:

Press agency Associated Press documents the existence of 72 mass graves made by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, also declaring that more will be discovered on the basis of ISIS's withdrawal.

August 31st:

Brazil's Senate removes President Dilma Rousseff from office for illegally using money from State banks to boost public spending.



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September 1st:

The President of Libyan Presidential Council Fayez al Sarraj goes to Sirte in the areas freed from ISIS also to meet the leaders of the military operation al Bunyan al Marsous, the Libyan armies of Misurata and Tripoli.

September 2nd- 3rd:

At the G20 in Hangzhou, China, PRC and the United States ratify the Paris agreement to cut climate-warming emissions.

September 4th:

The G20 in China aims to stimulate the inclusive, sustainable economic growth and occupation, according to a draft of the meeting's final statement.

September 5th:

During the G20 taking place in China, North Korea fires three ballistic missiles into the sea off its east coasts, hitting Japan's air defense identification zone.

September 6th:

The Syrian Civil Defense, a volunteer civil defense organization that operates throughout opposition-controlled Syria, declares government helicopters have dropped barrel bombs containing chlorine on the Sukari neighborhood in Eastern Aleppo. The Syrian government denies previous accusations it has used chemical weapons during the five-year-old civil war.

September 7th:

At least 12 people killed and dozens wounded is the death toll of a car bombing attack in Baghdad, claimed by ISIS.

September 8th:

The road of Brexit must start as soon as possible, according to the President of the European Council Donald Tusk, in London for meeting with the British Prime Minister Theresa May and for discussing the time and the opportunity of Great Britain's exit from the EU.

September 9th:

North Korea conducts its fifth and biggest nuclear test, causing a fresh wave of global condemnations, *in primis* by USA, China, South Korea and the United Nations Security Council, which is considering new sanctions against Pyongyang.

September 10th:

The United States and Russia reach a breakthrough deal to try to restore peace in Syria, but air strikes hours later add doubts that any ceasefire can hold.

September 11th:

North Korea declares a push for further sanctions following its fifth and biggest nuclear test is «laughable», and vows to continue to strengthen its nuclear power.

September 12th:

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad vows to take back all of Syria, hours before the start of a Russian and American-backed ceasefire.

September 13th:

A new ceasefire in Syria brings a full day with no combat deaths in the conflict between President Bashar al-Assad and his opponents.

September 14th:

In his annual speech on the state of the Union, addressed to the European Parliament, EU chief executive Jean-Claude Juncker warns Europeans that the Union is in an «existential crisis» after Britain's vote to quit and says leaders must pull together to stop it.



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September 15th:

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Francois Hollande declare that it is crucial an upcoming European Union summit, the first since Britain voted to leave the bloc, addresses the EU's weaknesses with a plan for reforms.

September 16th:

EU leaders, meeting without their British counterpart in Bratislava, say they have come up with a road map of strategies for rebuilding public trust in the European Union after the shock of Britain's vote to leave.

September 17th:

European Council President Donald Tusk declares, citing a talk with British Prime Minister Theresa May, that she has said to be ready to launch formal Brexit negotiations in January or February 2017.

September 18th:

In New York police works on the scene of an explosion that wounded 29 people in Manhattan, attempting to establish if there are any links to international terrorism.

September 19th:

An Afghanistan-born American sought in connection with a series of bombings that wounded 29 people in the New York City area is in custody in New Jersey after a gun battle with police.

September 20th:

During his last speech at the UN General Assembly, the American President Barack Obama attacks Russia, declaring that «is trying to rebuild his lost glory through strength».

September 21st:

At the UN Security Council in New York, US Secretary of State John Kerry demands that Russia and the Syrian government immediately halt flights over Syrian battle zones, in what he calls a last chance to salvage a collapsing ceasefire and «find a way out of the carnage in the country».

September 22nd:

A joint statement at the end of the summit on Libya between the Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni and the US Secretary of State John Kerry asks to the Libyan government to prepare in 2017 a pacific transition to a permanent, elected government and to the Constitutional Assembly to finish its work and to present the project of a Constitution for 2017 *referendum*.

September 23rd:

Warplanes bomb Aleppo, described by residents of unprecedented ferocity, after the Russian-backed Syrian army has declared an offensive to fully capture Syria's biggest city.

September 24th:

Suspected ISIS leader in Lebanon is arrested in a Palestinian refugee camp. He was preparing attacks in commercial centers and resorts.

September 25th:

In New York, during an annual UN gathering of world leaders, Libya's Prime Minister Fayez Seraj calls for a national reconciliation initiative to repair the divisions in the country.

September 26th:

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and Marxist rebel leader Timochenko sign in Cartagena an agreement ending a half-century conflict, turning the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) *guerrillas* into a political party.



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September 27th:

The United States declare the new, strong assault on the opposition-held sector of Aleppo is proof that President Bashar al-Assad and his Russian and regional allies have abandoned an international peace process to pursue victory on the battlefield after nearly six years of civil war.

September 28th:

Wilbert Paulissen, chief investigator with the Dutch national police, declares that Malaysia Airlines flight MH17, en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, was shot down in July 2014 by a missile fired from a launcher brought into Ukraine from Russia and located in a village held by pro-Russian rebels.

September 29th:

The United States are close to suspend talks with Russia on a ceasefire in Syria, according to US Secretary of State John Kerry, as the Kremlin vows to continue a joint assault with the Presidential forces on the city of Aleppo.

September 30th:

Russia sends more warplanes to Syria to ramp up its air campaign on Aleppo even though the United States said they have not yet given up on finding a diplomatic resolution.

