



الكتلة الوطنية
NATIONAL BLOC

**The Foundation for Defense of Democracy (FDD)'s
Recommendations to the Biden Administration on how
to Deal with Lebanon, the region and Europe:**

A summary

19/01/2021

This document summarizes the main FDD recommendations to the Biden administration concerning Lebanon, the region and Europe. FDD bills itself as “a non-partisan policy institute”, but it is known that it is a Republican and neo-conservative backed organization that reflects the growing political polarization in Washington.

The document encompasses harsh recommendations related to Lebanon despite the amalgam of crises the country’s facing.

1. Lebanon

FDD recommends to the Biden administration the following measures related to Lebanon:

- Biden not to deal with a government in which there is Hezbollah because it would mean that it is financing the latter indirectly.
- More sanctions on Hezbollah
- More sanctions on other ruling party members to highlight the fact that HA and the current Lebanese state are not dissociable.
- More pressures on Europe to recognize that HA as a terrorist organization, which could hinder the French initiative.
- Biden not to provide international reconstruction and development assistance to Lebanon bilaterally or even through an international conference as long as the state is sectarian.
- Biden to suspend the American assistance to the Lebanese army due to its collaboration with HA.
- Possible veto to suspend Lebanon's mandate in the UN; the UNIFIL cannot perform its duties because of HA's control of its area of action.
- Possible stop of the Israeli Lebanese maritime demarcation talks

2. The region

FDD recommends to the Biden administration the following measures related to region:

A- Russia:

- New START (Strategic Arms Reduction treaty) could be extended (its validity ends in February 2021) in the context of a mutual nuclear arsenal freeze.
- Biden could restore the transatlantic unity and strengthen NATO's Eastern flank

B- Iran:

- No sanction reliefs could be offered to Iran before implementing an agreement addressing all Iran malign activities.
- US could require from Iran to account for its past and present undeclared nuclear activities.
- If Iran refuses the latter, accuse Tehran of breaching the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at the UN Security Council
- Possible sanctions on Iran's financial sector to address international money laundering and terror finance.
- Possibility of blocking Mahan Air's flights to Europe and the Gulf
- Maintained efforts to prohibit shipments of arms to Iraq, Yemen, and Syria
- US to build on the Abraham Accords (the joint accord between the UAE, the US and Israel) to continue the normalization of relations between Israel and Arab countries + use the latter to strengthen the alliance against Iran's malign activities in the region.



C- Iraq:

- US to keep a small military presence in Iraq to fight ISIS and Iran's malign activities.
- US to discreetly help Kadhimi resist the Iranian pressure and ensure fair elections.

D- Israel

- US to continue encouraging regional normalization.
- US solutions for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be regenerated (e.g., like Trump's two-states solution)
- Establishment of incentives for trilateral relationships with the US and Israel mainly targeting Oman and Saudi Arabia to 'expand' the Israeli-Arab relation
- Increased relation between the US and the countries that normalized their relations with Israel.
- Combatting the anti-Israel bias within UN organizations.
- Military support to the Arab countries that have normalized their relations with Israel without hindering Israel's military edge.
- Preparation to the potential succession crisis after Abbas

E- Saudi Arabia

- Reduced support to Mohammed bin Salman's actions while keeping a balanced relation with Saudi Arabia.
- Restore normal order to the conduct of US-Saudi relations by re-establishing congressional consultations and process of interagency dialogue instead of private conversations on WhatsApp between Kushner and Mohammed Bin Salman
- Saudis to be consulted on Biden's Administration's will to revive the nuclear deal.



- An increased focus to end the Yemen war.

F- Syria

- Maintenance of US troops in Syria to prevent an ISIS resurgence.
- Continuance of the US support to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)
- Application of the Caesar Act
- Increased humanitarian aid to Syrians by the US
- Enforcement of the US red line on Syrian use of chemical weapons

G- Turkey:

- Rising US support to the Turkish civil society organizations & Global Magnitsky sanctions on the violators of human rights
- Rising US pressure on Erdogan to release hostages.
- Pressures on Ankara to abandon the Russian S-400 air defense system.
- Sanctions in cooperation with the EU against Turkey's violations of its neighbors' maritime borders
- Encouraging Turkey to pursue the Kurdish peace process.
- US support to Turkey's economic and governance reforms

3. Europe

FDD recommends to the Biden administration the following measures related to Europe:



- Ensure the longevity of NATO + prove that its Eastern members are as important as its Western members (e.g., Biden Administration to promote a negotiated solution to Libya's civil war)
- US to develop a common strategy with Europe to mitigate the problems resulting from the rise of China (e.g., Beijing's predatory economic statecraft, the One Belt One Road Chinese strategy (see picture below), the Chinese Communist Party's influence, China's rising technology, etc.)
- Resolving trade disputes between the US and the EU to restore freedom of movement between the two powers.
- US to seize the Brexit opportunity to have stronger political and economic relations with the UK.
- US to be the lead on mediating Eastern Mediterranean disputes, mainly between Turkey, Cyprus, and Greece
- US to seek European consensus on addressing the weaknesses of the JCPOA as well as to counter the Iranian malign non-nuclear activities.
- Support the European countries bordering Russia (e.g., Belarus, Ukraine, etc.) in their democratic movements to reduce Russia's influence on them.

In conclusion, US' only concern with Lebanon, according to Tony Badran, researcher at the FDD, should be focused on Hezbollah and its international aid must be conditioned by whether Hezbollah will profit of it or not.

The FDD gives great importance to the normalization of the Arab countries with Israel.

Countering Hezbollah and Iran's "malign" activities constitutes a focal point in FDD's recommendations for US' foreign policy.