

Diplomacy for Peace, Dead in US, Blossoms Elsewhere

Writes premature Obit for Diplomacy as it thrives in the Middle East

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"Global Power Struggles Signal An End to An Era of Diplomacy." So ran a page one headline to New York Times April 11 print edition for an article marking Joe Biden's ceremonial visit to Ireland to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Accords.

The commemoration served as an "unspoken reminder that such diplomatic breakthroughs remain a thing of the past," [bemoaned](#) reporter Peter Baker.

Certainly, he is correct if one confines one's view to the record of the US and its vassal states on the Ukraine crisis. Sec. of State Blinken has made it abundantly clear that the US wants nothing to do with negotiations to end the US proxy war in Ukraine.

Likewise, the US and its allies cynically used negotiations over the Minsk Accords for eight years as a cover for war preparations. Then the US and UK [torpedoed](#) the very promising negotiations between Russia and Ukraine to end the war in April of 2022.

But to declare diplomacy dead simply because US diplomacy is a corpse indicates a blinding tunnel vision. If we look at nations outside the West, the future of diplomacy looks brighter all the time. The Middle East provides a clear example, one among too many to be considered here.

China Brokers Saudi Arabia, Iran Deal

Early in March, Iran and Saudi Arabia [restored diplomatic relations](#) after a seven year lapse, a deal brokered by China and announced at a meeting of foreign policy officials of the two countries in Beijing in early April. This followed a visit by **Xi Jinping** to Riyadh in December and a visit of Iran's **President Raisi** to Xi in Beijing in February. By early June the countries

will [reopen embassies and consulates](#) and they look to cooperate on trade, technology, and combatting terrorism.

Wang Yi, China's top foreign policy official [summed things up](#) as follows: "This is a victory for dialogue, a victory for peace, and is major positive news for the world which is currently so turbulent and restive, and it sends a clear signal."

The antagonism between Riyadh and Tehran has shaped much of the conflict in the Middle East including the horrific war in Yemen, a [humanitarian catastrophe](#) that has consumed 230,000 lives in fighting and famine. There is now movement to get a "[permanent ceasefire](#)" and end the war, perhaps the first dividend of the "clear signal," Wang Yi mentioned.

As *The Intercept* [remarked](#), "To help end the Yemen war, all China had to do was be reasonable. With Joe Biden nowhere to be found, China's diplomacy set the stage for Saudi concessions and cease-fire talks." As this is written, there comes [news](#) of a swap of [nearly 900 prisoners](#) over three days between the warring Yemeni factions, unimaginable just weeks ago.

Moscow Mediates Syria-Saudi Reconciliation

Diplomacy seems to be spreading like a contagion in the region. In the wake of the Syrian-Saudi agreements mediated by Beijing, [Moscow has moved](#) to broker a reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Syria which is leading to Syria's [rejoining the Arab League](#). The Saudis plan to invite **Bashar al-Assad** to an Arab League Summit on May 19. This is something that [Washington has worked to prevent](#) for over a decade by threat and sanctions.

It is clear that the Moscow-Beijing "no limits" partnership facilitated the reconciliation between Syria, a Russian ally, and Saudi Arabia, the newfound friend of Beijing. A hint of things to come perhaps.

Much of this diplomatic effort is simply to undo the damage inflicted on Syria after the Arab Spring unrest of 2011 which the US turned into a full-scale regime change op and civil war. As part of its anti-Syrian vendetta, the [US has used](#) any and all means to keep Syria down and isolated from its Arab neighbors for the last 12 years.

It has also left nearly 1000 US soldiers (the official count) fighting in Syria to this day in an [undeclared war unknown](#) to most of the American people. Those troops occupy a region that is the agricultural breadbasket and source of oil for Syria which is starved for food and energy after the great damage caused by years of war.

The claim has always been made that US troops are there to fight ISIS or its latest incarnation, but as Aaron Mate has [demonstrated](#) most persuasively, the real purpose remains regime change in Syria. (As the wise [Jimmy Dore](#) often asks, If Syria is fighting ISIS, why is the US fighting Syria?)

Diplomacy for Peace, an alien idea in Washington

All these diplomatic moves in such a short time are almost dizzying. They were opened up by China's masterful initiative with Iran and Saudi Arabia. And they are designed to bring

stability and peace to the region which the developing nations there desperately need if they are to move forward. And that development can help the economies of the world.

The US made its own unique contribution to the process by dispatching CIA Director William Burns in an unannounced visit to Saudi Arabia with a complaint that the [US was “blind-sided’ by the move](#) to reconcile with the Saudis. Some see the Burns visit as a warning or perhaps even a threat. Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud will want to beef up his security detail.

To return to the New York Times account of Biden’s failure at diplomacy, one success in the eyes of the Times was mentioned: “Mr. Biden and Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken have successfully unified NATO against Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and won support from other countries as well.” This may be a premature announcement of success, if one examines the situation in the EU more closely. But whatever the case, this is a “diplomatic” initiative to further Biden’s cruel proxy war to bring down Russia, cynically using Ukrainians as cannon fodder. Diplomacy for war.

Quite a contrast. Diplomacy for war versus diplomacy for peace.

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