

Nobel winner in call to stop Syria violence

Tawakul Karman urges governments to stop ignoring the situation in Syria and calls for more action to prevent the escalating violence

By Peter Townson
Staff Reporter

Nobel Peace laureate Tawakul Karman, who has been called the 'Mother of the Revolution' in Yemen, has urged Western powers to "wake up again" and confront the violence in Syria, saying that the Arab people in general will support any decision that the Turkish government makes regarding the current regime.

Karman, who spoke at the US Islamic World Forum yesterday, said that she was shocked to see that Syrian diplomats have only been expelled from numerous countries in the past few days, despite the violence having been ongoing for over a year.

Speaking on the sidelines of the forum, she said that she had been pleased with the international community's support throughout the Arab Spring, and praised the US in particular for expressing solidarity with the cause of the people involved. But she urged governments to stop ignoring the situation in Syria and called for more action to prevent the escalating violence.

Although not condoning military intervention, she said that any decision which Turkey makes regarding Syria will be

widely supported because of its geopolitical position. She urged that sanctions be imposed as strongly and as soon as possible.

Karman has become famous around the world for her activism in Yemen, where she has opposed various social practices and customs on the basis of civil liberties and women's rights, which led to her being declared joint winner of the Nobel Peace Prize last year.



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"I believe it is important for women and young people to be involved in politics, especially after the revolution - it will not be allowed for them to not be involved," she said.

Her belief in political participation and communication led to her choosing to shed her niqab in 2006, a decision which was met with both pride and anger, she said. However, Karman has never shied away from difficult issues and she argued that women must be allowed to choose whether to wear the hijab or niqab, and should never be forced into a decision.

She expressed her support for US President Barack Obama's efforts to support Yemen's anti-terrorism work, noting that while he has performed a better job than his predecessor, George W Bush, he has failed to live up to the expectations which followed his election.

"We were wary of the US coalition with Saleh to fight terrorism as we knew he was supporting Al Qaeda and I warned the US many times," she said, adding "if he tricked the CIA then you need to ask why that happened."

She also highlighted the importance of the Yemeni people themselves in combating the influence and reach of Al Qaeda, saying that they are the strongest force in the war to eradicate the terrorist organisation.

"We have two ways to fight Al Qaeda, through soldiers and the president's work, but also through thoughts and changing the way that people think," she said, suggesting that the previous Yemeni regime bred extremism by creating an environment for terrorist ideologies to flourish.

Karman expressed her opposition to the use of drones, but said that the Yemeni people are fully behind the US efforts to remove elements of Al Qaeda from their country.

"We are fighting, and we will win - this is a goal of our revolution and we will succeed," she said, adding "I am so confident and I am so optimistic because this is not a dream anymore - the revolution has happened."

Kuwait delegation in talks



HE the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jabor al-Thani conferred yesterday with a visiting Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation led by Mohamed Jassim al-Saqr, head of the Foreign Affairs Committee. The meeting was attended by Advisory Council Speaker HE Mohamed bin Mubarak al-Kholeifi.

Activist stresses discussion of women's rights in Islam

By Peter Townson
Staff Reporter

When used to formulate a country's laws and social practices, Islam must be brought into the public space for debate, according to a visiting activist, who said that fear of discussing the Muslim faith and what it means can lead to the repression of women and an inability to change as the times require.

Zainah Anwar, founder of the Sisters in Islam or Musawah foundation was speaking at the US-Islamic World Forum yesterday, where she outlined the difficulties of addressing women's rights within Islam.

"There are many different challenges, one being that there are those in religious authority who believe that men and women are not actually equal

in Islam," she said, adding "the other challenge is about creating a public voice and debate with men and women speaking about women in Islam."

She explained that her organisation managed to engage the public in such a debate in Malaysia by raising the issue of polygamy through the media.

"People often argue that this is divine law and therefore cannot be challenged," she said, adding "the text from which it is derived is divine, but the laws which are derived are man-made."

She argued that in societies where Islam is used as the inspiration for providing a legal framework, people must be able to discuss the issues in question.

"We want to see the justice that is in the Qur'an," she said. "Many religious authorities use religion to justify patriarchy

and male dominance which is very convenient and an easy way to silence the voice of the women."

She said that she finds a major challenge for feminists in the Arab region is addressing religion at all, stating that women often feel like they have to work around their religion as opposed to directly tackling the issues which affect them.

"This is the biggest difference we often find - in Malaysia we are very comfortable with speaking about our religion, but many feminists in the Arab world try to avoid speaking about it," she said, arguing "if the source of your repression or discrimination comes from religion then you need to address it"

However, she expressed her hope that "reality is catching up" saying the fact that there

are women in positions of authority throughout the Muslim world, and the realisation that conservative religious rules are no longer realistic, will hopefully lead to reform in the future.

"I think it is extremely important to have role models," she said, explaining that this is why her group pushes for quotas of females involved in the decision making process.

"It is important to show that there are women at the top, like here in Qatar, who are strong, who have vision, who are driven by a mission in the public space - these are very important models to show young women that with the right qualifications, attitude and drive then you can get to the top - nothing is stopping you and especially not a misogynistic interpretation of your religion," she added.

قطر للبترول Qatar Petroleum

The Small, Limited and General Tenders Committee requests Tenders for the following Works/Services:

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Title	Tender Issue Date	Tender Closing Date	Tender Bond	Bond Curr.	Tender Fee	Fee Curr.
1.	LT12106800	EGS FOR MIC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS	28.05.2012	24.06.2012	45,000.00	QAR	200.00	QAR
Tender Collection Location:			Contracts Dept. - Corporate Division Royal Plaza, G Wing, 4th Floor Rm G11, Doha					
Mid-Tender Meeting Location:			To be advised if required					
Mid-Tender Meeting Date & Time:			To be advised if required					
2.	GT12107800	EPIC FOR INJ OF KHUFF GAS TO ARAB D GAS CAP USING NFIS	28.05.2012	01.07.2012	2000,000.00	QAR	500.00	QAR
Tender Collection Location:			Contracts Dept. - Engineering Division Fareej Bin Dirham, Al-Handasa Complex, Mezzanine FI, Room A-M03, B-Ring Rd, Doha					
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4.	LT12107300	REPAIRS FOR TANK NOZZLES, ROOF AND PIPELINE AT HALUL	27.05.2012	17.06.2012	50,000.00	QAR	200.00	QAR
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Mid-Tender Meeting Location:			To be advised if required					
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6.	LT12107500	EPIC FOR UPGRADE OF DIESEL FIRE WATER PUMP CONTROL PANELS AT NFA	29.05.2012	24.06.2012	35,000.00	QAR	200.00	QAR
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For more information about QP and its Tenders, please visit our website: <http://www.qp.com.qa>

Indian classical music concert celebrates rich legacy

Noted singer Kalapini Komkali presented a treat of superb Indian classical music at a concert organised by the Music Lovers Group.

With a rich and resonant voice, she took the audience through a memorable musical journey in an inimitable style that celebrated the rich legacy of her father the legendary Kumar Gandharva.

Milind Kulkarni on the harmonium and Prashant Pandav on the tabla lent excellent support as accompanists as well as showing their class in the solo interludes.

Indian ambassador Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa was the guest of honour. Sujata Zinzuwadia, head of marketing and sales, Enterprise Banking at Commercialbank, the key sponsor for the event, presented a memento to Kalapini. Binu Tony, head of NRI Banking, Commercialbank, was also present.



Komkali in concert with Pandav on tabla and Kulkarni on harmonium.

PM meets US official

QNA
Doha

HE the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabor al-Thani met yesterday with US Deputy National Security Adviser

Denis McDonough and his accompanying delegation.

McDonough and the delegation are visiting Qatar to participate in the 9th US-Islamic World Forum.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and means of bolstering and developing them.

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