

## Netanyahu Suspends Judicial Overhaul

Zionists woke up to chaos on Monday, 27th March, as protests over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's judicial overhaul engulfed the country. Flights were grounded at Ben Gurion International Airport, while the Jewish entity's embassies across the world stopped work in solidarity with demonstrators. More than 80,000 anti-government protesters gathered outside the Knesset in Jerusalem and former defence minister and opposition figure Benny Gantz said: "We don't have another country, we don't have another homeland. We don't have another path, only a Jewish and democratic country." By Monday evening, however, Netanyahu blinked. Netanyahu announced he was delaying his government's contentious remake of the country's courts. Ben Gvir the national security minister agreed to the delay in return for allowing the creation of a "national guard" loyal to his ministry. Ameer Makhoul, a Palestinian analyst based in the city of Haifa, told Middle East Eye that Netanyahu's promise to Ben-Gvir of a "national guard" was a bigger win for the far-right than the reforms themselves. The pause comes as many warned 'Israel' was on the brink of civil conflict. The Jewish entity's army chief of staff warned that a "storm is brewing at home" as thousands of military reservists threatened not to serve in the military if the reform passes.

## White House says US Troops in Syria are There to Stay

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby confirmed that President Biden is committed to staying in Syria following a series of attacks on US bases and US airstrikes in the country. "Here's what's not going to change ... the mission and ISIS is not going to change. We have under 1,000 troops in Syria that are going after that network, which is, while greatly diminished, still viable and still critical. So we're going to stay at that task," Kirby said on CBS News's Face the Nation. When asked if President Biden was committed to keeping US troops in Syria, Kirby replied, "That's right. Absolutely." The US airstrikes provoked more attacks on multiple US bases in Syria on Friday night that wounded at least one US soldier.

## China Bailouts Focus on Belt and Road Participants

A new report from research lab AidData shows that China devoted \$240 billion to bailing out distressed countries between 2008 and 2021, primarily through central bank swap lines that must be paid back. Around 80% of those bailouts occurred between 2016 and 2021, and most of them were concentrated in a handful of middle-income countries that owe much of their debt to China's development banks and borrowed extensively for Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) infrastructure projects. China's bailout activities are heavily focused on keeping the BRI afloat and protecting Chinese banks' balance sheets. This practice of throwing good money after bad raises the risk of repeat debt crises in debtor nations in the coming years. It is also unsustainable for Beijing. The BRI has for long been presented by China as a global game changer whilst many in the West have viewed it as a power play by China. But many of the projects were problematic and are causing a massive strain on Chinese finances.

## Russia to Deploy Tactical Nuclear Weapons in Belarus

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russia plans to deploy tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus. Putin compared the arrangement to U.S. nuclear deployments in Europe. Russia is already capable of basing multiple types of nuclear weapons in its Kaliningrad exclave and the annexed Ukrainian region of Crimea. The deployments are likely a political gesture intended to prompt security dialogue with the US by threatening NATO and further eroding the European security architecture. The move contradicts a joint statement Putin and Chinese leader Xi Jinping made following their recent meeting in Moscow. It's likely this move by Moscow was in response to the UK announcement last week that it would supply anti-tank rounds containing depleted uranium to Ukraine. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has hinted at the possibility of Russian nuclear weapons deployments in his country since 2021. Nuclear weapons were removed from Belarus under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, as multiple types of Soviet nuclear weapons were based on Belarusian territory during the Cold War.