Latest Development in Syrian War

One of the latest sieges being undertaken by the Syrian government is an attempt at reclaiming Ghouta, which is a suburb that is currently held by Syrian rebels next to the capital Damascus. This is one of the last major enclaves for rebel factions and a reclamation of it by government forces would be the biggest victory since the capture of Aleppo in 2016. Pro-Syrian forces, along with Russia, have a pattern of laying siege to a rebel held area, bombarding it, entering it, then offer safe passage for rebels who agree to leave. Regarding the current situation for the population, negotiators from the rebels are meeting with Russian diplomats to discuss how to end suffering to the population of Ghouta. The Syrian Observatory for human rights has reported that over 100,000 people have fled Eastern Ghouta due to the siege. This is just another example of how war has negatively harmed a population and will have wider economic implications once the siege is over.

Iran’s Baha’i Problem

The Islamic Republic of Iran holds close its identity as an “Islamic Republic”. Although it recognizes Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian minorities, the country struggles with its large Baha’i minority. Because the Baha’is follow a prophet that came after the Prophet Muhammad, many in Iran believe that it is against Islamic teachings to recognize the Baha’is as a legitimate religion. Despite Baha’is showcasing their values of patience and nonviolence in Iran, they continue to be targeted. Some moderate voices in Iran have been calling for reconciliation between the two groups and for the release of prisoners of conscience.

Did Apartheid End in South Africa?

South Africa continues to celebrate the monumental civil rights achievement of the end of Apartheid, economically however, some would argue that Apartheid never really ended. For most Black South Africans, they continue to struggle in a country where they are the majority. According to a paper by Anna Orthofer, titled, “Wealth Inequality”, ten percent of South Africans, most being White, own 90 percent of the country’s wealth. And 80 percent, most being Black, own none of the wealth. If South Africa is to resolve its economic challenges, investing in its Black population will be vital to its future growth.

Syria: Post-war Reconstruction Booming in Jarablus

A city in northern Syria called Jarablus has been able to rebound significantly from the impact of the war. It was originally a city held by ISIS until they were defeated by Turkey and their allies. The city’s population has grown from 25,000 to 70,000, which is unlike other cities attempting to recover from the war. Local councils have been able to restart schooling, health, and sanitation services. All of this seems possible because most of everything in the city is underneath Turkish administration and NGOs from Turkey are also providing assistance. The civilians seem content with the situation because they no longer feel as though they are in danger. This sense of security is also couple with the fact that Turkey is providing training and money to support a local security force.
Links to Articles

End of Apartheid in South Africa? Not in Economic Terms

Iran’s Baha’I Problem
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/irans-bahai-problem_b_10100320

Syrian rebels, Russians to negotiate end to Ghouta suffering-rebel group

Syria: Post-war Reconstruction Booming in Jarablus