

# The Position Of The Lebanese Newspaper Al-Anwar On The October War And Its Repercussions 1973-1974

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*Date of publication- 13-06-2022*

## Abstract

The October 1973 war was one of a series of Arab-Israeli wars, the preparation for it began after the setback of June 1967, and plans were made for it with high coordination from Egypt and Syria. It surprised the enemy on October 6, 1973, on the Day of Atonement for the Jews, with a simultaneous attack on Israel, the Egyptian forces were able to penetrate and control more than 17 km from the eastern bank of the Suez Canal, and on the other front, the Syrian forces were able to liberate some areas in the Golan Heights, and the war between the Arabs and (Israel) continued until October 22, 1973, when the Security Council issued Resolution 338, which was approved by Egypt and (Israel) and rejected by Syria. It did not enter into force until the Security Council issued Resolution No. 339 and the arrival of the international forces on October 27, 1973, after which talks began between Egypt and Israel under American mediation, which culminated in the signing of the Agreement on Separation of Forces between Egypt and Israel at 101 km on January 18, 1974. While the signing of the disengagement agreement on the Golan front between Syria and (Israel) was delayed until May 31, 1974, when it was signed by representatives of Syria and (Israel) in Geneva.

## Introduction

October 1973 war is one of the most important wars in the history of the Arab (Israeli) conflict, given the brilliant victory that the Arabs achieved over the (Israeli) enemy. Syria is on the Golan and Sinai fronts alike.

This war has received the attention of the Arab press in general and the Lebanese press in particular, led by Al-Anwar newspaper, which worked to cover the event in all its aspects and to provide moral support by galvanizing determination and energies and recording victories in order to continue the fight until victory is achieved.

Through Al-Anwar newspaper, we tried to review (the October war and its repercussions 1973-1974) and give the newspaper's position and vision of all of that. The signing of the Egyptian and Syrian disengagement treaties with (Israel), and the study included three axes:

First: Al-Anwar newspaper's position on preparations and war plans

Second: The position of Al-Anwar newspaper on the course of the October 1973 war

Third: The position of Al-Anwar newspaper on the Egyptian and Syrian disengagement agreements with (Israel) 1974.

### **First: Al-Anwar newspaper's position on preparations and war plans:**

Planning for the 1973 October war began after the setback of June 1967 (Al-Shazly, 2003: pp. 24-27) and the accompanying Arab loss of the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Jawad, 2015: p. 53)

This planning came in line with the political, military, economic and moral situation that resulted from the defeat. At a time when the armed forces had been prepared and developed, the state's economy was being prepared to face the new situation, in addition to preparing the peoples militarily and morally to fight the coming war (Al-Jamsi, 2019: p. 209 ).

Al-Anwar newspaper had a major role in following up and monitoring the preparations that paved the way for the war against (Israel). In this regard, the newspaper followed the Egyptian-Syrian move, which resulted in the conclusion of a political and military cooperation agreement between the two parties on August 19, 1969, which called for coordinating political and military action to liberate the occupied territories in 1967. Al-Anwar, Issue 3163, 1969).

These preparations were accompanied by global and local efforts to find a peaceful settlement after the June 1967 war, all of which failed (Kaush, 1993: p. 65; Lafi, 2011: p. 140) to take the issue at the beginning of 1971 with the character of no war and no peace). Palestinian Documents, 1973: 331; Al-Yousef 1987: p. 59).

After the issue reached a dead end, Egyptian President Mohamed Anwar Sadat turned to preparations for military action through coordination with Arab countries in general and with Syria in particular (Ali, 2014: p. 73). Both Egypt and Syria put the battle national slogan into practice by relying on Arab support on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts facing the enemy, and on this basis, meetings were held under the auspices of the Arab League between 1971-1972 to develop unified plans for the two fronts (Al-Kilani, 1991: p. 350).

In light of these preparations, Al-Anwar newspaper quoted Egyptian President Sadat's statement at the Palestinian National Conference held in Cairo on April 6, 1972, in which he stated: "There is no way for Egypt but to fight, and that Egypt will fight on land, sea and air..." (Al-Anwar, Issue 4103: 1972).

Through Sadat's statement, Egypt seems determined this time to take military action to liberate its land first and to stir up the issue after it has reached a state of no war and no peace.

The newspaper did not stop there, but followed with great interest Sadat's decision to end the work of the Soviet experts and dispense with their services. The newspaper commented on this that Egypt is fully determined to rely on its own capabilities in cooperation with Syria, after it found that the Soviet Union was procrastinating in meeting Egypt's military demands (Al-Anwar, Issue 4205: 1972).

Thus, we can say that Sadat's decision stems from not providing all his requirements of Soviet weapons, but there remains an important issue that must be referred to, which is that the presence of Soviet experts hinders military work and coordination

between Egypt and Syria, and this in turn made Sadat hastened to end the mission of Soviet experts.

On April 21, 1973, the chiefs of staff of the armies of the Arab countries met at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo, to follow up on the commitments of the Arab countries towards preparing for war and to know the decisions of the Joint Arab Defense Council and their outcomes (Awad, 1974: p. 24-25).

On this basis, Al-Anwar newspaper had a prominent presence in the transmission of their meetings held between (21-22) April in Cairo, as we mentioned, so the newspaper wrote the final statement of the meeting of the chiefs of staff, which stated: ((The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Lieutenant-General Ahmed Ismail Ali, Chairman of the Joint Arab Defense Council He focused on confronting the Israeli enemy on all Arab lands with the necessity of work and coordination among the Arabs (Al-Anwar, Issue 4476: 1973).

As part of the preparations for the war, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad secretly met with Egyptian President Sadat on April 23, 1973, and they held secret talks in Burj al-Arab, west of Alexandria, during which the two parties reached an agreement on the main plans for the war (Al-Saadi, 2019: pp. 52-53).

In the same context, the Egyptian and Syrian military leaders met in August 1973 and agreed to set the zero hour on Yom Kippur, October 6, 1973 (Sabri, 1975: pp. 365-366).

Then Sadat went to Saudi Arabia at the end of August 1973 to meet King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz to prepare the atmosphere for war (Al-Qara Ghouli, 2007: p. 251).

Al-Anwar newspaper was also present in covering Sadat's visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and it monitored the most important discussions that took place between the two parties and the results that the two sides reached through which the two sides reached an Egyptian-Saudi plan to use oil as a political weapon in the battle (Al-Anwar, Issue 4600: 1973).

It seems that the goal of using oil as a weapon in the battle comes in the context of the Arabs' efforts to harness all the weapons available in their hands and use them positively in the upcoming Arab conflict with (Israel).

After Sadat finished his visit to Riyadh and returned to Cairo, Al-Anwar newspaper continued the visit of the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah to meet Sadat in Cairo at the beginning of September 1973. (Al-Anwar, Issue 4607: 1973).

The newspaper continued to continue all that was new for preparations for war, as it monitored the points that emerged from the mini-meeting held in Cairo on September 10, 1973, which included the confrontation countries Egypt, Syria and Jordan, and among the most important of them, that the responsibility of confronting the Zionist enemy is a joint Arab responsibility with an emphasis on Supporting Arab solidarity in general and the confrontation countries in particular (Al-Anwar, Issue 4614: 1973).

After completing the preparations to fight the battle, a meeting was held on October 1, 1973, at the highest military level, in the presence of President Sadat (Shalaby, 1975: p. (Al-Anwar, Issue 4682: 1973) Then the Egyptian forces will attack the Bar Lev Line with the aim of destroying it, provided that the implementation is as previously agreed

upon on Yom Kippur, October 6, 1973 (Al-Maghari, 2008: pp. 31-32).

For its part, (Israel) was following the Egyptian-Syrian military activity on the borders, and in turn ruled out that both Egypt and Syria would take military action against it, justifying those military reinforcements on both fronts with defensive operations only (F.R.U.S, 1973:p281).

It is clear that (Israel) has erred in those arrogant predictions that the Arabs cannot take military action against it at the present time, due to its conviction of its military superiority.

The matter changed quickly on October 6, 1973, after the (Israeli) intelligence services had information indicating that military action had taken place against it from Egypt and Syria at four o'clock in the morning on October 6, 1973. As a result, Prime Minister Golda Meir held meetings with Senior officials and ministers, held consultations with the (Israeli) Chief of Defense Staff, and issued orders to mobilize reserves (I.M.F.A, 1973:p2).

### **Second: The position of Al-Anwar newspaper on the course of the October 1973 war:**

After the completion of the Egyptian and Syrian plans and preparations, the war broke out at approximately two and five minutes on Saturday, October 6, 1973, with the Egyptian and Syrian forces launching a simultaneous attack on (Israel) (F.R.U.S, 1973:P316), in which the Egyptian forces managed to control (17) km From the eastern bank of the Suez Canal, in addition to its control of (15) vital points in the Bar-Lev line, and on the other side, the Syrian forces were able to liberate some areas in the Golan Heights (Al-Shammari, 2015: pg. 200)

In light of this, Al-Anwar newspaper devoted its first pages to reporting and analyzing the course of the war. It wrote about the beginning of the war: "The attack process transformed Israel's dream of absolute security into rubble and rubble, and that the plan proved its effectiveness from the first air strikes, then artillery fire, the first crossing waves, and the incursions into the Bar-Lev Line." All of that was a wonderful victory) (Al-Anwar, Issue 4682: 1973).

In the context of the war, the (Israeli) counterattack was delayed until October 8, 1973, when a large number of (Israeli) planes participated in it, which continued until October 9 without achieving any significant goals (Bir: 2004: pp. 129-133; Heikal, 1993: Pg. 376) In turn, Al-Anwar newspaper continued to cover the developments of the war, as it wrote about the Defer Suwar breach, which began at one o'clock and five minutes in the afternoon on Saturday, October 13, 1973, at that moment C-71 aircraft penetrated the Egyptian airspace at an altitude of 25 How fast, up to three times the speed of sound, passed over the Egyptian front, so I saw a gap between the second and third Egyptian armies (Al-Anwar, Issue 4661: 1973).

As a result, the (Israeli) forces launched the attack that began on the night of October 15-16, 1973 in the Al-Difr Suwar area (Nabawi, 2013: p. Al-Masry (Ayad, 2014: p. 19; Al-Ayoubi: p. 33-34). The reason for this gap was because the Egyptian army developed the attack to the east of the canal towards the straits (Amin, 1977: p. 133-114; Youssef, 2012: p. 18).

Al-Anwar newspaper continued to follow the developments of events and wrote an article entitled "The Fruit of Victory" in which it stated: "With the beginning of the third week

of the war, the fighting is no longer confined to aircraft, missiles and artillery, but rather has moved to the weapon of economy, money and diplomacy. Then she continued by saying, "In the face of the many winning Arab papers, Israel has only one card, which is the American aid card" (Al-Anwar, Issue 4655: 1973).

It seems that the newspaper neglected an important aspect that supports and supports (Israel), which is the American diplomatic effort.

Al-Anwar newspaper did not stop there. In addition to its moral support for the Arabs, it provided another support, which is material support to be side by side with moral support. With the works of the Egyptian embassy, an amount of (100,000) thousand pounds was donated by an Arab citizen through Al-Anwar (Al-Anwar, Issue 4655: 1973).

After the start of the talks and efforts to end the war, Al-Anwar newspaper, in turn, continued to cover the US-Soviet negotiations for a ceasefire (Al-Anwar, Issue 4655: 1973; Abed, 2009: pg. 137), which resulted in the Security Council meeting and the issuance of Resolution No. 338 (Security Council Documents, 1973) in October 22, 1973, in which he called the warring parties to a cease-fire (Al-Anwar, Issue 4661: 1973), which was approved by Egypt and (Israel) (F.R.U.S, 1973:P661) and Syria rejected it, so the fighting stopped for half a day, then it was breached by (Israel), and after Egypt informed the Security Council of this, the Security Council re-issued Resolution No. (339) (UN Resolutions, 1993: p. 210), and despite that (Israel) continued to violate Security Council resolutions, and did not stop except with the arrival of international forces to disengage in October 27, 1973 (Al-

Hadithi, 2010: pp. 199-129; Al-Majdoub, 1999: p. 219).

From all of the above, it becomes clear to us the role played by the newspaper in providing material and moral support on the one hand, and in reporting the war events first-hand on the other hand.

It seems that what Sadat was looking for has already happened, which is to move the issue and then pave the way for peaceful solutions through diplomatic effort, to start a new stage of the Arab (Israeli) conflict, the stage of talks.

Al-Anwar newspaper kept up with its monitoring of the talks between Egypt and (Israel), which were known as the 101 Kilo negotiations, to complement its coverage of the events.

On October 28, 1973, the Egyptian and (Israeli) delegations met at the 101st kilometer, and the most important thing that was discussed was defining the ceasefire lines on October 22, 1973, and discussing the means of supplying the third Egyptian army. This round of talks continued until the first of November 1973 (Al-Hasnawi, 2015: p. 76).

In the same context, the newspaper monitored the visit of US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Cairo in November 1973. Not allowing the enemy to keep the lands it infiltrated after violating the cease-fire, respecting Security Council resolutions, and linking the lifting of the siege on Bab al-Mandab to the issue of prisoner exchange (Al-Anwar, Issue 1973:4670).

At the end of the visit, Al-Anwar newspaper quoted Sadat's statement on Kissinger's visit by saying (it was fruitful and constructive and included everything) (Al-Anwar, Issue 4673: 1973). In another article, Bassam Freiha

commented on the visit by saying: Arab circles confirm the existence of American-Israeli complicity aimed at encouraging the current situation in an attempt to make the situation develop in the interest of Israel) (Al-Anwar, Issue 4674: 1973).

This seems clear that Kissinger's diplomatic effort to persuade Sadat to accept the six-point American project, and it actually happened, when Sadat approved the project and set a date for signing an agreement with (Israel) on the basis of this project.

On November 11, 1973, representatives of Egypt and (Israel) signed the aforementioned six-point agreement at the kilometer (101) point on the Cairo-Suez road, which means Sadat accepted the negotiation with (Israel) (Heikal, 1996: p. 192).

After concluding the agreement, several meetings were held in the 101st kilometer, but they reached a dead end because of Israel's intransigence to withdraw to the lines of October 22, 1973 (Al-Anwar, Issue 4683: 1973).

At the end of November, Al-Anwar newspaper wrote, "Egypt's announcement to stop the Kilo (101) talks due to Israel's continuous evasion." This decision was accompanied by clashes with tanks and artillery between the two parties (Al-Anwar, Issue 4693: 1973). blocked as mentioned earlier.

After the talks collapsed, US President Richard Nixon sent on December 13, 1973 his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, who met with Sadat and agreed to hold a peace conference in Geneva, Switzerland at a later time (Al-Anwar, Al-Addan, 4706, 4710: 1973).

Indeed, the Geneva Conference was held on December 21, 1973, in the presence of the delegations of Egypt, Jordan, (Israel), the Soviet Union, the United States, and the United Nations as an observer (I.M.F.A, 1973: P21). In the conference (Al-Anwar, Issue 4715: 1973).

Al-Anwar delegation was present at the conference, so she wrote: ((The peace experiment in Geneva failed and the conference did not reach solutions. Israel ignored the issue of withdrawal to the borders of October 22, 1973, as well as the Palestinian issue)) (Al-Anwar, Issue 4715: 1973).

It seems that the Geneva conference has already failed, as the newspaper mentioned, to achieve tangible results with regard to the withdrawal, in addition to that, the conference has led to a crack in the Egyptian-Syrian relations due to the latter's refusal to participate in the conference, because participation from the Syrian point of view will weaken the main issue, which is the (Israeli) withdrawal. all of the territories it occupied in 1967.

### **Third: Al-Anwar newspaper's position on the 1974 Egyptian and Syrian disengagement agreements with Israel:**

The United States of America took advantage of the Egyptian-Syrian dispute and began to convince Sadat of unilateral solutions, and this is what Henry Kissinger achieved when he visited Egypt in January 1974, when Anwar Sadat met him in the city of Aswan, and they decided that the eighteenth of January should be the date for signing the Separation of Forces Agreement The first is between Egypt and (Israel) on the Egyptian side (Al-Atrash, 1987: p. 123).

Thus, the United States succeeded at last in splitting the unity of the Arabs and weakening them, by keeping Egypt away from Syria and then persuading it to sign a separate agreement for the separation of forces with (Israel).

On January 18, 1974, Egypt and (Israel) signed the Agreement on the Separation of Forces at the 101st kilometer. In the most important terms of the agreement, Egypt and (Israel) are strictly committed to a cease-fire on land, sea and air, and the Egyptian military forces and (Israel) are separated. (I.M.F.A, 1974:P23) Egypt and (Israel) do not consider this agreement a final peace agreement, but rather a step towards a final peace (I.M.F.A, 1974:P23). Disengagement shall begin within 48 hours and no later than seven days after the signing of the agreement (F.R.U.S), 1974: p94).

Al-Anwar newspaper commented on the signing of the agreement with its own column (a clear step towards an ambiguous peace) and then commented that this agreement is a step that helps implement the Security Council resolution that paves the way for a political or peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, but this peace is still ambiguous and far and the way to it unclear (Al-Anwar, Issue 4740: 1974).

After the success of the disengagement on the Egyptian side, Al-Anwar newspaper began following the moves made by the United States of America in order to achieve the same success on the Syrian front, relying on Kissinger's diplomacy and his ally Sadat on the other hand to persuade him to find a formula for disengaging on the Syrian front. Al-Anwar, Issue 4741: 1974).

Despite the diplomatic efforts made, the battles continued on the Syrian side, amid interest

The newspaper followed it up, and these battles focused on the Golan Heights with their extension to Jabal al-Sheikh, in which fierce battles took place (Al-Anwar, Issue 4841: 1974).

As the battles of attrition intensified on the Syrian side between March and the end of May, US Secretary of State Kissinger resumed his rounds to find a formula for rapprochement, and after hard talks, an agreement was reached to separate the forces on the Golan front on May 29, 1974 (Al-Anwar, Issue 4868: 1974).

On May 31, 1974, it was signed in Geneva by representatives of Syria and (Israel) (F.R.U.S, 1974:P371), and the most important thing included was the commitment of both Syria and Israel to a cease-fire by land, sea and air, from the time of signing the document, in implementation According to Security Council Resolution No. 338, the forces between the two sides will be separated in accordance with the follow-up to the United Nations, which considers this agreement not a peace agreement, but rather a step towards lasting peace on the basis of Security Council Resolution No. 338 of October 22, 1973 (I.M.F.A, 1974).

Commenting on the separation agreement, Al-Anwar wrote an article entitled (and Syria won) ((on the eighty day of the war of attrition after the October war, Israel yielded and Syria won)) and then continued by saying: "If Damascus agreed to the principle of a cease-fire, it would open the way for a political endeavor to achieve An Israeli withdrawal, for it is able at every moment to resume the fighting, to impose by force what

it does not achieve through politics) (Al-Anwar, Issue 4869: 1974).

The newspaper tried, through its previous presentation, to clarify the extent of Syrian steadfastness in the confrontation line with (Israel), especially since it remained alone in the battle in light of Egypt's signing of the disengagement agreement with (Israel) previously.

From all of the above, we can clearly see the extent of the effort made by Al-Anwar newspaper through its coverage of the events of the October war first and foremost, and the subsequent coverage of the Egyptian and Syrian disengagement agreements.

### Conclusions

Following the data contained in the study, the following conclusions are reached:

1- Al-Anwar newspaper followed the preparations for the October 1973 war and the plans for it by reporting on the meetings that took place between the Egyptian and Syrian leaders and the resulting coordination and setting the zero hour for the battle.

2- Al-Anwar newspaper had a supportive role for the Arabs in the October 1973 war, which was embodied by providing material and moral support, by collecting financial donations and presenting them to the countries of confrontation with (Israel), and morally through encouragement, support and singing of Arab victories.

3- Al-Anwar newspaper followed up the Egyptian-Israeli talks and the signing of the disengagement agreement between them, and it had a critical stance on the agreement because it offered a vague and unclear peace.

4- Al-Anwar newspaper was supportive and supportive of Syria after its steadfastness in

the face of (Israel) after Egypt signed the disengagement agreement with (Israel) and it continued to support it until it signed the disengagement agreement with (Israel) on May 31, 1974.

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