

Headlines:

- **How Low Can Oil Go? Goldman Says \$20 a Barrel Is a Possibility.**
- **Drone Strikes by UK and Pakistan Point to Obama's Counter-Terror Legacy**
- **US House Rejects Iran Nuclear Deal**

Details:

How Low Can Oil Go? Goldman Says \$20 a Barrel Is a Possibility.

The global surplus of oil is even bigger than Goldman Sachs Group Inc. thought and that could drive prices as low as \$20 a barrel. While it's not the base-case scenario, a failure to reduce production fast enough may require prices near that level to clear the oversupply, Goldman said in a report e-mailed Friday while cutting its Brent and WTI crude forecasts through 2016. The International Energy Agency predicted that crude stockpiles will diminish in the second half of next year as supply outside OPEC declines by the most since 1992. "The oil market is even more oversupplied than we had expected and we now forecast this surplus to persist in 2016," Goldman analysts including Damien Courvalin wrote in the report. "We continue to view U.S. shale as the likely near-term source of supply adjustment." [Source: Bloomberg]

Given that Iran will soon add extra barrels of oil to a market that is oversupplied, China's economy is slowing down, Europe is facing economic stagnation and the growth in America is taped at best, is the world facing another economic crisis. The economic policies pursued by world powers hitherto have not yielded any growth that merits success.

Drone Strikes by UK and Pakistan Point to Obama's Counter-Terror Legacy

Two drone strikes by two different countries nearly 3,000km apart this week represent the proliferation of Barack Obama's signature mode of counter-terrorism. When the UK and Pakistan announced on Monday that they had each carried out lethal drone strikes against their own citizens, they followed a template sketched by Obama over the past seven years – one that critics have warned risks greater destabilization and legal abuse. While a few other nations, particularly Israel, have conducted drone strikes in the past, experts have long warned that the proliferation of drone strikes would be inevitable after the US embraced them so enthusiastically early in Obama's presidency. The UK and Pakistan conducted their drone strikes in the US style: secretive attacks on an undeclared battlefield, rather than as part of a declared war. "Those of us who have criticized the Obama administration's targeted killing policy have long warned that other states cite it to attempt to justify their own legal violations. The concerns were, however, over Russia, China, and North Korea, not the United Kingdom," said Mary Ellen O'Connell, a law professor at the University of Notre Dame. David Cameron confirmed on Monday that the RAF conducted a drone strike on 21 August that killed two British citizens who had joined the Islamic State (Isis). The strike was taken outside the current US-led coalition targeting Isis in Iraq and Syria, making it an exclusively UK operation – and Cameron's prerogative. Cameron acknowledged that he ordered the strike in Syria despite parliament rejecting UK airstrikes on the country in 2013, albeit against a different enemy. But in language reminiscent of Obama's, he told MPs that

an assessed need to “prevent a very real threat to our country” was a prevailing factor, particularly after the attorney general issued a secret ruling blessing the strike as legal. All these factors distinguished the targeted killing operation from the drone strikes the UK has previously carried out on the declared battlefield of Afghanistan. Pakistani politicians have for years railed against the US strikes, even as Pakistan secretly provided the CIA with access to its Shamsi airfield. Bilateral acrimony grew so bad in 2011, particularly after the US raid to kill Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, that Pakistan kicked the US out of Shamsi. But neither US drone strikes in Pakistan nor Pakistani anger over them have ceased. “The drone strike announcements were made before any public policy debate or discussion, and officials from both [Pakistani and British] governments have refrained from answering questions directly or providing clarifying information to know if their practice is aligned with their policy justifications,” said Micah Zenko, an expert on drones at the Council on Foreign Relations. The Pakistani and UK strikes have vindicated the warnings of former officials that the US use of drone strikes “outside of hot battlefields is likely to be imitated by other states”, as a Stimson Center task force found in 2014. The task force, which included several retired military and intelligence officers, warned that such proliferation “may cause or increase instability, and further increase the risk of widening conflicts in regions around the globe”. [Source: The Guardian]

The world is moving dangerously towards a new way of punishing citizens without due process. Assassination by drones that act as prosecutor, judge and executor can only be termed as "automated" extra-judicial killings. All that is required to invoke a death by drone is to declare citizens as terrorists.

US House Rejects Iran Nuclear Deal

A day after the Senate secured President Barack Obama's Iran nuclear deal, blocking a Republican resolution to scuttle it, the GOP-led House pressed forward with a pair of votes designed to show a majority of the chamber disapproves of the agreement. The votes come at the same time that the White House announced a visit from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is in the works. Netanyahu has strenuously opposed the deal and appeared before Congress in March to lobby against it. The Prime Minister will probably visit the White House in "early November," White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest said in a press briefing Friday. No specific date was given. The fresh House votes can't prevent the administration from starting to implement the agreement later this month, but Republicans want to send a political message. Obama released a statement after the House votes stressing that the vast majority of House Democrats went on record supporting the deal. "As we conclude the most consequential national security debate since the decision to invade Iraq, I am gratified that the lawmakers, led by Democratic Leader (Nancy) Pelosi, who have taken care to judge the deal on the merits are joining our allies and partners around the world in taking steps that will allow for the implementation of this long-term, comprehensive deal," he said. [Source: CNN]

President Obama's administration is a step closer to bringing Iran formally back into the comity of nations. No doubt, Tehran will not disappoint, and work in cohorts with Washington to safeguard American interests in the region.