

NATO, Syrian Refugees, Warships

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

NATO plans to send warships to the Aegean Sea to intercept refugees trying to reach Europe and force them instead to land in Turkey.

The EU has repeatedly demanded that Turkey both allow refugees into their country from Syria, and ensure that none of the refugees are able to get further north into European Union member nations like Greece. Turkey has threatened to open the floodgates of refugees if the EU doesn't offer them more help managing them.

It's surprising that NATO was able to so quickly get behind this plan, particularly since Turkey is a member, and has been objecting to European efforts to make the entire refugee crisis their problem. However, this deployment will center on refugees from Syria, but is likely to lead to pushes for more deployments across the Mediterranean to keep other refugees from trying to make the trip by sea to Italy and other southern European nations.

Meaning, the European Union's official response to the boatloads of refugees continues to be anything but inadequate and shameful. The appalling policy is driven by the same warped logic: Satisfying the baseless fear of the 'other'.

The global poor did not come about by accident. It is the result of centuries of colonization, imperialism and the current corruption that has allowed a handful of regimes and people to steal natural resources and pilfer public goods.

In more recent times, these inequalities have been reinforced by a global trade system that operates according to the golden rule – that those who have the gold make the rules. Europe is rich because other nations are poor.

A large number of refugees and migrants are displaced by wars. The top three nations from which maritime refugees to the EU come are Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. In other words, many are running for their lives through countries the West has bombed and destroyed.

Put bluntly, European governments must, at the very least, acknowledge how much of this misery they are responsible for. Amid talk of sending warships to stem migrant flows, therefore, European governments should stop passing off responsibility for refugees to neighbours. They must stop making jingoistic overtures toward attacking the trafficking industry, seeking to "identify, capture and destroy vessels before they are used by traffickers."

The fact that they seem more enthusiastic about deploying gunships than stopping wars and extending asylum underscores the colonial nature of this crisis: European governments respond with violent tactics when international cooperation for peace, humanitarian assistance and social justice are what's actually needed in war-torn countries.

The human tragedy in the Mediterranean is indeed immense and disgraceful. It is worsened by Europe's refusal to learn from its past mistakes. The great humanitarian ideas that once inspired the European Union seem to have lost their attraction.

Iran Warns of Terrorism Rise in Yemen



People gather at the site of a Saudi airstrike in a residential area in Sana'a.

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- A senior Iranian official has warned against rising terrorism in Yemen, calling for more concerted efforts to open di-

alog and end the war in the violence-wrecked country.

In a telephone conversation on Saturday, Iran's Deputy Foreign Min-

FM Zarif: Certain Sides Have Illusions About Syria

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- Iran's Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif stresses the importance of pursuing a "political solution" to the Syria crisis, warning against entertaining "illusions" about the situation in the Arab country.

"I think what is important for everybody is to focus on a political solution and not on complicating factors particularly boasting about situations that are more illusions than reality," Zarif said on the sidelines of a meeting of the International Syria Support Group (ISSG) in Munich.

On the eve of the Munich talks, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry told The Washington Post that in case of lack of seriousness by Russia and Iran for the resolution of the crisis in Syria, "then there has to be consideration of a Plan B."

He added that "Plan B" would consist of "a coalition against (the Daesh Takfiri terrorist), and also to support the opposition against Assad."

Zarif further said despite the agreements during the Syria talks in Munich, the sides faced "conceptual" disagreements.

"Whether some of the countries in the region continue to believe that these terrorist, extremist organizations constitute a bargaining chip for them, whether they can even provide short term advantage or whether they can wake up and see that these are threats first and foremost against them before they are even a threat against the rest of the region," the Iranian foreign minister pointed out.

"But the agreement generally is to have a comprehensive humanitarian assistance and comprehensive cessation of hostilities which if implemented is a step in the right direction," he said.

He added that there are currently "major challenges" to the Syrian is-

sue because it would be "very difficult" to distinguish some of these organizations from "known terrorist and extremist organizations."

"Everybody agrees that known terrorist and extremist organizations are not going to be a part of the ceasefire," Zarif said.

The Iranian foreign minister reiterated the Islamic Republic's stance, saying, "As I said, again, first and foremost it is important for everybody to realize that there is no military solution to the problem in Syria."

"That terrorists and extremists are no leverage for anybody against others and everybody should cooperate and abandon the wishes that they could impose a solution on the Syrian people and should allow the Syrians and facilitate for the Syrians to engage in a negotiation to end this crisis," Zarif added.

Hopes for 'Wise' Solution

In a televised interview, Zarif expressed hope that the outcome of the Munich meeting on the Syrian crisis will lead to a wise approach that would end the suffering of people.

"I hope that the Munich negotiations will lead to a wise solution through the acceptance of realities by those who have kept, with their illusions, the Syrian people in pain and suffering and killing and homelessness," he said.

He also hoped that the meeting would manage to end the "humanitarian catastrophe" in Syria.

In a Friday meeting between Zarif and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov on the sidelines of the Munich meeting, the two foreign ministers stressed the importance of further development of relations in favor of mutual interests.

"They discussed topical issues of

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The Holy Qur'an

O Prophet! strive hard against the unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell,- an evil refuge indeed.

The Holy Qur'an (9:73)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	12:18
Evening (Maghreb)	18:02
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:28
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:52

The UN envoy, for his part, praised Iran's constructive approach toward fighting terrorism and supporting a political trend in Yemen.

Ahmed said the UN has launched a fresh round of efforts to broker peace talks among Yemeni groups.

The UN attempts to settle the crisis in Yemen through political approaches have so far failed. In December 2015, Houthi Ansarullah movement and members of the former Yemeni regime held inconclusive talks in Switzerland, which was coincided with the implementation of a UN-brokered truce that was mainly violated by Saudi Arabia.

Riyadh has been pounding Yemen since March 2015 to undermine Ansarullah and reinstate former Yemeni president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

The Ansarullah fighters say Saudi Arabia and the former regime's loyalists used the negotiations as a cover to intensify their attacks and kill more civilians. They say Riyadh has even stepped up its aggression following the ceasefire.

More than 8,278 people have been killed and over 16,000 others injured since the onset of the Saudi attacks.

Press Digest

Cracks

VATAN EMROOZ: Unlike what corporate media would like to suggest, and despite the ongoing crimes being committed against humanity, there is no indication that cracks in the relationship between Washington and Riyadh are beginning to show. Washington never urges the Saudis to abide by international humanitarian law governing conflicts in Yemen. It never says America would withdraw its support, or that the war is turning into a political liability for Washington.

Fantasies

AFTAB: The U.S. has been bombing Syria for years to affect regime change and the nation is shedding millions of refugees as a result. Despite efforts to couch America's involvement as a humanitarian contribution, it consists pretty much exclusively of regime-change fantasy, all while arming moderate terrorists and allowing U.S. bombers to be at the service of ISIL, Al-Qaeda and other proxies.

Restrictions

MIZAN: Europe cannot, and should not, impose further restrictions on its borders, in direct breach of international law. It shouldn't allow far-right political parties and opportunistic politicians across the continent to ratchet up their Islamophobic and racist rhetoric in response to the worst crisis of global displacement since World War II.

Signs

HEMAYAT: The War Party and its NATO-Arab allies are not willing to stop their support for moderate terrorist groups in Syria. As a consequence, the war in Syria shows no signs of ending. People continue to die or flee, and refugees in neighbouring countries are now losing hope that they can ever return. This is driving yet more desperate people to leave the neighbouring countries, with a profound impact on those who have already escaped to Europe.