

Kayhan Group of Newspapers

Editorial Dept. Tel.: 33911561, 33110251-9
Ext.: 2334, 2336, 2337
Advertising Dept.: 33110251-9 Ext. 2336
Subscription Ext.: 2322
Facsimile: 33114228 & 33111120
Website: www.kayhan.ir/en
E-mail: kayhanintl@yahoo.com
P.O. Box: 11365/9631
Address: Martyr Shah Cheraghi Street, Ferdowsi Avenue,
Tehran – Islamic Republic of Iran

In the Name of the Most High

Viewpoint

U.S. Adding Fuel to Fire in Syria

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

U.S. military officials say the Trump administration may soon authorize sending combat troops to Syria.

The U.S. has already sent several hundred of its special operations forces to Syria. The Pentagon claims their operations have been limited to training and assisting Kurdish fighters in their battle against ISIL and other terrorist groups. This is far from the truth.

U.S. airstrikes in Syria have killed many civilians already - though the Pentagon is officially denying any deaths. The U.S. warplanes have also attacked and destroyed civilian targets like hospitals, silos, schools, oil refineries, and airports. The new push seems to be aiming for these sorts of targets again.

Little wonder Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says the U.S. occupation of Iraq is to blame for the creation of ISIL, and that any bid by the U.S. to dispatch ground troops to Syria to allegedly fight ISIL forces will fan the flames of extremism in the Middle East, and adversely impact the security of the whole world. He couldn't be more accurate.

The whole world knows that the war party has designed the War on terror to last forever. This is all about endless bombings, endless wars, and endless occupations. The Pentagon's over \$1.5 billion-a-day budget is designed to acquire the U.S. the needed leverage to control every aspect of global affairs. Military spending accounts for nearly a third of the country's overall budget, which runs into trillions. Someone needs to spend that money somewhere. Why not in Syria!

Certainly, the U.S. didn't invade the Middle East to destroy Al-Qaeda, Taliban and ISIL. This was never the intention. The U.S. occupying troops are here to stay and to protect America's alleged interests. No matter what the outcome is in the war, and no matter how much more suffering it causes, the official policy says, "stay, bomb, and occupy." Mind you, they have already built military bases deep inside the Syrian territory on the pretext of protecting their "moderates", which we all know - and they themselves admit - are linked to Al-Qaeda.

So no matter what is the outcome of the current conflict or ceasefire, war remains the default setting. It's endless. The U.S. will never stop occupying the Muslim world. It will never stop "democratizing" the "undemocratic" Muslim nations. It will continue to bomb and kill innocent civilians, directly or indirectly, in Syria.

It's been said before and here it is again: President Donald Trump has striking similarities with Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Trump typically rails against American troops involvement around the world, but he is not alone in calling for ground troops in Iraq and Syria. In essence, his anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant foreign policy agenda is similarly based on Pentagon's yet more "humanitarian" interventions and wars. He will carry on with much of what Obama started in Syria and Iraq. Expect nothing less.

At a time when a nationwide ceasefire in Syria is largely working, it doesn't make any sense for President Trump to insist that Syria needs more U.S. bombing runs, and that America should go to Syria and stand shoulder to shoulder with its regional vassals and head-chopping moderates "on behalf of our common security."

That said, including the House of Saud and the mere extras in a bogus coalition to fight the very sectarian monster they helped create is yet another reason why the new mission creep into Syria and the clear case of aggression against Syrian people and sovereignty to affect regime change is illegal under international law, and hence destined for failure.

In sum, if Washington is really serious about fighting terrorism and helping to relieve the human suffering of the Syrian population, there are immediate non-military means by which it should act more intensely, such as by not sending arms to its Al-Qaeda-allied proxy forces and by hugely sending U.S. aid to the at least 2 million people who have fled with their families for refuge in Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey, and several other countries.

The billions of dollars that the Trump administration would spend on the new military engagement would be more wisely used to increase humanitarian aid to the Syrian refugees in these countries.

Snow Storms, Floods Hit Iranian Cities



Cars are stranded in a flooded street in a city in Kerman province.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Blizzard, avalanches, and flooding have hit cities in several Iranian provinces, cutting off access to many villages in other areas.

Incessant snowfall in the northern city of Rasht over Friday and Sunday blocked the highway linking it to the city of Qazvin. The

situation also caused authorities to ban heavy trucks from the roads leading from Gilan Province — of which Rasht is the capital — and also prevent people from leaving the province for the capital, Tehran.

Meteorologists forecast that the skies will clear over Gilan by Saturday night but say the province

is then expected to be gripped by blizzard for the next two days.

In Iran's south, flooding has taken over entire neighborhoods in the city of Shiraz and eight counties belonging to Bushehr Province.

Fars News Agency cited the governor of Bushehr's Dashtestan county as saying that flooding had

Iran Warns U.S. Against Sending Troops to Syria

MUNICH, Germany (Dispatches) -- Sending U.S. ground troops to Syria will fan flames of extremism in the region that will impact the security of the whole world, Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif has told CNN.

He also said that the agreement with Iran to limit its nuclear program -- brokered in 2015 by the U.S., Iran and five other world powers -- will stay in place, despite noises to the contrary from members of U.S. President Donald Trump's administration.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference, Zarif said there was an international consensus not to let the agreement -- which took two years to negotiate -- unravel.

"I believe everybody, including experts in the United States, know this was the best deal possible for all concerned, not just Iran but the U.S. too," he said.

"It was a triumph of diplomacy over coercion, because coercion doesn't work any more."

Regarding Syria, where Iran is in alliance with Russia in supporting the government of President Bashar al-Assad, the 57-year-old Iranian diplomat said it was the

U.S. "occupation" of Iraq that had created Daesh.

Zarif said that a nationwide ceasefire in Syria -- brokered by Russia and Turkey in December -- was largely working, and said that sending U.S. soldiers would add fuel to the fire.

"We cannot commit to solutions that are part of the problem," he said. "I believe that the presence of foreign troops in Arab territory is a recipe for those extremists to rally behind and gain new fighters from disenfranchised youth."

Regarding the global effort to destroy Daesh, Zarif pointed out that Trump himself had accused then-President Barack Obama of creating Daesh, and repeated criticisms of the U.S. policy to arm militant groups in Syria.

Shortly after Trump took office, the White House put Tehran "on notice," applying sanctions on 25 individuals and companies connected to Iran's ballistic missile program and those providing support to Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps' Quds Force.

Zarif said that sanctions won't work with Iran.

"Everybody (in) the past who has tested Iran know we don't respond

well to threats. We respond well to mutual respect and mutual interests."

Zarif said the Obama administration tried to use economic sanctions to curtail Iran's nuclear program, but eventually failed, with

Iran increasing their number of nuclear centrifuges tenfold in that period.

"The reason Obama came to the negotiating table was because sanctions did not work," Zarif told CNN.

Press Digest

Banking Restrictions

KAYHAN: European governments insist that unless the U.S. allows them to use its banking system, they won't do business with Iran. Other statements say the same. Our government gave many incentives under the nuclear deal but got nothing in return. The Europeans are also following suit. The United States and its allies are afraid of a rising Iran. They have failed to contain Iran on many fronts, and the story goes on.

Creating Tensions


AFTAB: Trump seeks to create tensions with Iran. This is aimed at preventing Iran from normalizing trade and economic relations with the world community. Trump may not be after a military confrontation with Tehran. His priority is fixing the failing U.S. economy and public welfare. Any new war will have new economic costs for Washington. Trump seeks to ensure Iran will never benefit from the nuclear deal.

Lack of Accountability

RESALAT: President Rouhani says, "who is supposed to fix the economy?" He then answers his own question: Social scientists and management elite are supposed to answer this question. The truth is this is a responsibility for the president and his cabinet members. The constitution makes that absolutely clear that it is the duty of the government to improve the economy and public welfare.

Sanctions Policy

VATAN EMROOZ: President Trump's foreign policy is based on imposing new sanctions against Iran. He is doing what all previous presidents have done vis-à-vis Tehran. For him, all options are also on the table. But he maintains that he is not after military confrontation. He has no intention to end the sanctions regime. Military option has no place in his foreign policy doctrine. He believes he could use the war money to build his country.



The Holy Qur'an

And there are those of them who made a covenant with Allah: If He give us out of His grace, we will certainly give alms and we will certainly be of the good.

The Holy Qur'an (9.72)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	12:18
Evening (Maghreb)	18:07
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:23
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:47

claimed the life of a young female from a village there.

On Friday, Iranian First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri issued directives to relevant disaster management authorities for the provision of prompt relief services to those afflicted in Bushehr and Fars provinces, where Shiraz is the capital.

Across the two provinces, as well as the western Iranian Kurdistan Province and the northern West and East Azerbaijan Provinces, many villages were, meanwhile, isolated by accumulated floodwaters.

EU, IAEA Reaffirm Support for JCPOA

GENEVA (Dispatches) -- The European Union and the UN nuclear agency have reaffirmed their support for the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and six other countries.

The two sides communicated the stance in a joint statement a day earlier following the fifth meeting of their senior officials, reports said.

The deal, officially titled the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA),

was reached after hard diplomatic work by the Islamic Republic and the P5+1 group of countries, comprising the U.S., the UK, France, Russia, China, and Germany. Under the accord, all nuclear-related sanctions on Iran were terminated, and Iran in return agreed to apply certain limits to its nuclear program and provide enhanced access to international monitors to its nuclear facilities.

(Continued on Page 7)