

Yemen's Houthis Reject Kerry's Initiative for Peace

SANAA (Press TV) – Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement has rejected an initiative put forth by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to resolve the crisis in the war-torn country.

Mohammed Abdulsalam, the Ansarullah spokesman, said Saturday that the offer aims at depriving the Houthis of their arms in their fight of resistance against the Saudi invasion.

"Whoever has a greedy eye on our weapons, we will have a greedy eye on his life," Abdulsalam wrote in a message posted on Facebook.

Kerry earlier called on Houthis to hand over their weapons including ballistic missiles and

to pull back from the capital Sana'a. In return, the U.S. secretary of state said Houthis and allies can have a share in Yemen's future unity government.

The proposal comes amid reports that Houthis have stepped up missile attacks on border regions in Saudi Arabia over the past weeks. The attacks are carried out in reaction to deadly Saudi airstrikes that the regime in Riyadh says are meant to undermine Houthis and allies and to restore power to Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, Yemen's president who has resigned and fled the capital.

About 10,000 people have been killed across

Yemen since the Saudi campaign started in March 2015.

The conflict in Yemen re-escalated after peace talks mediated by the United Nations and held in Kuwait collapsed earlier this month. The talks hit a snag after Houthis rejected a similar initiative proposed by the U.N., saying it lacked any clear mechanism for transition of power.

Houthis had declared since the start of the talks in April that they were ready for disarmament and withdrawal from key areas they control in case a broad political agreement is reached in which Hadi would have no role.

Reviving...

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to make up for the years-long delay in completing the Chabahar project. He said the North-South Corridor and the key role of Chabahar port would lead to the development of transit projects and promotion of extensive economic interests for all countries in this region.

The Indian prime minister paid an official two-day visit to Iran on May 22 to boost economic and political ties with Tehran.

Concurrent with Modi's visit, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani also traveled to Iran to join the signing of a key trilateral deal, known as the Chabahar agreement, to establish a strategic transit and transport route connecting the three countries.

The agreement was signed in the presence of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, the Indian prime minister and the Afghan president in the Iranian capital of Tehran on May 23.

The Chabahar agreement is expected to create a regional trade, investment and transportation hub with links from the Indian Ocean to Central Asia.

In 2003, Iran and India agreed to develop the port, which sits on the Gulf of Oman. The project was, however, suspended following the imposition of sanctions against Iran over Tehran's nuclear program.

In May 2014, India and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding to jointly develop the port once the international sanctions against Iran were lifted.

Modi said terrorism and extremism pose the most pressing threat to humanity.

He stressed the importance of effectively fighting the Takfiri terrorism and added that in addition to the expansion of economic and political cooperation, Tehran and New Delhi should also put the campaign against terrorism on their agenda.

Iraq...

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pipeline would be increased to more than 100,000 bpd, not to the previous level of 150,000 bpd, he added.

Nema said about 20,000 bpd would be supplied to the refinery of Suleimaniya, in the Kurdish region, and 30,000 bpd would be refined locally in Kirkuk.

The pipeline carries crude to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan, where the Kurds have been selling it independently on the international market, along with oil produced in their northern region.

The Kurdish government has been calling on Baghdad since March to resume the pumping of Kirkuk crude in full to help Arbil fund its war against Daesh. Sources in Arbil have said splitting the Kirkuk flows would divide the Kurds and complicate the task of fighting the Takfiri militants.

A KRG spokesman in June told Reuters the Kurds are ready to strike an agreement with Baghdad if it guarantees them monthly revenue of \$1 billion, more than double what they make currently from selling their own oil.

The dispute revolves around Kurdish oil exports that Baghdad wants to bring under its control.

"If Baghdad comes and says 'OK, give me all the oil that you have and I'll give you the 17% as per the budget', which equals to 1 billion, I think, logically it should be the thing to accept," KRG spokesman Safeen Dizayee said in June.

"Whether this oil goes to the international market or first to Baghdad and then to the market, it doesn't make any difference," he added. "We are ready to enter dialogue with Baghdad."

The Kurdish government stopped delivering crude oil to the central government about a year ago, a decision taken when Baghdad's payment fell under \$400 million a month, Dizayee said.

It is also in a dispute with the central government over Kirkuk, where North Oil produces its crude and which the Kurds claim as part of their territory. The Kurds took control of the region two years ago, after the Iraqi army disintegrated when Daesh overran a third of the country.

Turkish...

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engagement despite the losses we suffer," said YPG Derik Command, on the YPG's official Twitter account.

"To stabilize the north of the country, the goal remains fighting DAESH and not Turkish forces."

The U.S. has supported the SDF in northern Syria. However, on Wednesday, speaking at a press conference in Turkey alongside the prime minister, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden said that the YPG would lose U.S. support if they continued to spread westwards across the Euphrates river.

YPG spokesperson Redur Xelil said, "We are in our own land and we will not leave it as per some request. We will not act in line with the request of Turkey or some other power."

Iran...

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He added that the Iranian armed forces are capable of upgrading a missile in a period of 3-4 months if required.

The minister noted that Iran has managed to digitize all its communication systems and added that the country seeks to manufacture helicopters and civil airplanes.

In recent years, Iran has made major breakthroughs in its defense sector and attained self-sufficiency in producing important military equipment and systems.

Iran has also conducted other major military drills to enhance the defense capabilities of its armed forces and to test modern military tactics and state-of-the-art army equipment.

The Islamic Republic maintains that its military might poses no threat to other countries, stating that its defense doctrine is merely based on deterrence.

Bahrain Starts Sentencing Top Cleric Supporters to Prison



Protesters hold Bahraini flags and placards with the images of Bahrain's leading Shia cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim during a rally after Friday prayers in the village of Diraz.

MANAMA (Press TV) – Bahraini authorities have started handing down prison sentences to those holding sit-ins in protest at the regime's decision to revoke the citizenship of prominent Shia Muslim cleric Sheikh Isa Qassim.

Two protesters were sentenced to one year of imprisonment each last week for attending protests in the restive Diraz village,

the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR) said on Friday.

The first verdict was pronounced on August 19, when Shia cleric Sheikh Ali Humeidan was sentenced to jail.

The second verdict was issued three days later when Shia eulogist Abdullah Subah was convicted on charges of "holding unlawful gatherings" in Diraz.

The center said Shia clerics Sheikh Ali Naji also known as al-Himli, Sheikh Mounir al-Maatouk, and Sheikh Imad al-Shaala, together with eulogist Mullah Habib al-Dirazi are facing trial on similar charges.

The center strongly condemned the persecution of peaceful protesters in Diraz, and the Al Khalifah regime's violation of public right to peaceful gathering.

The BCHR further expressed concerns over the safety of demonstrators protesting the regime's decision to strip Sheikh Qassim of citizenship.

The BCHR called upon the ruling Al Khalifah regime to immediately release all those detained for holding peaceful gatherings and drop charges brought against them.

It also urged Bahraini rulers to end restrictions on holding peaceful demonstrations, and allow protesters to rally without any fear of interrogation, arrest

or any form of reprisal.

Bahraini authorities revoked Sheikh Qassim's citizenship in late June. They later dissolved the main opposition bloc al-Wefaq National Islamic Society, as well as the Islamic Enlightenment Institution, founded by the 79-year-old cleric, besides another opposition movement, the al-Risala Islamic Association.

Since February 14, 2011, thousands of anti-regime protesters have held numerous demonstrations in Bahrain on an almost daily basis, calling on the Al Khalifah family to relinquish power.

Troops from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have been deployed to the country to assist the Bahraini government in its crackdown on peaceful protests.

Scores of people have been killed and hundreds of others injured or arrested in the Bahraini crackdown on the anti-regime activists.

ISIL Executes Own Senior Commander in Syria's Deir Ezzur

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The ISIL terrorist group gunned down one of the most notorious security commanders of the Takfiri group in al-Sho'eitat region.

Va'el Kassb al-Quweider, known as the right hand of senior commander of ISIL in Deir Ezzur Jafar al-Khalifeh, was killed by the group's security forces in the village of al-Kashkiyeh.

"Al-Quweider was notorious among the region's civilian for his atrocities against innocent people while occupation of villages of al-Sho'eitat region in 2014," local sources said, adding, "There is no any new about the cause of his execution."

On Friday, Russian Warplanes carried out several air raids on ISILs' military positions and gathering centers in Deir Ezzur province, inflicting heavy losses on the terrorists.

The ISIL's military positions came under Russian fighter jets' strikes in the surrounding areas of al-Thardah Mountain to the south of Deir Ezzur airport and also two villages of Ayyash and al-Baqaliyeh in the Northern part of the province.

Scores of ISIL terrorists were killed and wounded in the Russian airstrikes on their military positions.

'Turkish Troops Provide Terrorists With Arms'

Syria's U.N. Ambassador Bashar Jaafari said that the Turkish military

built arms depots in the Syrian province of Aleppo and supplied terrorists groups with arms and munitions.

The Turkish military built arms depots in the Syrian province of Aleppo and supplied terrorists groups with arms and munition, Syria's U.N. Ambassador Bashar Jaafari said, Sputnik reported.

"On 1 August 2016, Turkish troops were observed entering Syrian territory. Those troops assembled opposite the village of Bikah... in the Northern countryside of Aleppo governorate, and built weapons depots. They handed over those depots, filled with weapons and ammunition, to the Army of Conquest, the Nusra Front and Ahrar al-Sham terrorist groups," Jaafari said in identical letters addressed to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and to UN Security Council President Ramlan bin Ibrahim.

He added that the Turkish troops also delivered rockets and ammunition from Turkey to terrorist groups in Aleppo. Aside from that, a convoy carrying terrorists was observed entering Syria from Turkey, the diplomat said.

"Syria also calls on the Security Council to compel the Turkish regime to close its borders to armed terrorist groups and to stop arming and funding such groups," Jaafari said.

Jaafari has repeatedly reported to the U.N. Secretariat that Ankara as well as Riyadh and Doha were supporting terrorist groups active in Syria.

Hezbollah Strikes Terrorists on Lebanon-Syria Border

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Hezbollah fighters have ambushed a group of terrorists belonging to the Jabhat Fateh al-Sham Takfiri terrorist group in northeastern Lebanon, killing and wounding a number of them.

They outflanked the terrorists on the outskirts of the town of Aarsal, the Lebanese resistance movement's War Media Center said.

The attack killed at least one terrorist and injured several others, according to Hezbollah's Al-Manar television channel.

The center released a brief vid-

eo showing fighters firing mortar bombs and a rocket at targets in the barren area.

Lebanon has been affected by the spillover from the foreign-backed militancy, which has been afflicting Syria since 2011.

The terrorists briefly overran Aarsal in August 2014, taking several Lebanese army and police forces hostage, some of whom were executed. In December last year, most of the captives were released as part of a prisoner swap deal.

Ever since, Lebanese border ar-

reas have come under intermittent attacks by Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, formerly known as al-Nusra Front or al-Qaeda's Syria branch, which recently splintered from the group, as well as ISIL, another Takfiri terror group.

Hezbollah fighters have fended off several ISIL attacks inside Lebanon. They have also been providing counterinsurgency assistance to Syrian army forces in neighboring Syria.

The movement has accused Israel of supporting Takfiri terrorists operating in the Middle East.

Israel, which continues to occupy Lebanon's Shebaa Farms and Syria's Golan Heights, is widely reported to be offering medical help to Takfiri terrorists injured in Syria. In December 2015, British newspaper the Daily Mail said Israel had saved the lives of more than 2,000 Takfiri terrorists since 2013.

Also on Friday, it was reported that Lebanon's army had arrested a man suspected of being the leader of a ISIL smuggling ring in Lebanon, near the northern border town of Wadi Khaled.