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In the Name of the Most High Viewpoint

America's Afghan Imbroglia

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

During a visit to Afghanistan this week, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis said "it's going to be a tough year" for America's longest war.

"A tough year" goes without saying in the U.S. war on Afghanistan, and is really an understatement, with the Taliban's mounting gains across the country giving it control of more territory than at any time since the 2001 U.S. invasion, and the Pentagon regime sending more troops to try to slow the losses from ISIL and Taliban attacks.

Notwithstanding, it is time to end the longest war in U.S. history. Begun less than a month after the 9/11 attacks, the war aimed to destroy the Al-Qaeda network led by Osama bin Laden and take out the Taliban government that had provided them with safe haven. President Bush's focus, however, was anything but narrow: "Our war on terror begins with Al-Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated."

After 16 years, there are few genuine successes war-party Washington can claim as validation for its efforts. While an American withdrawal won't remedy the problems of Afghanistan entirely, there's good evidence to suggest its continued presence is making things worse.

After 16 years of death and destruction, not to mention billions of dollars down the drain, the warmongers have to admit the military option is not working. Their bogus war on terror in Afghanistan has not made that country better off or the world safer.

Nor is that all. The warmongers must recognize that an American military presence and constant war undermine humanitarian and reconstruction efforts. In Afghanistan, as elsewhere, U.S. military occupation and regime change have led to deliberate, some unintended, terrible consequences.

War-party Washington mustn't forget this truth. They are responsible forever for what they have done to Afghanistan. They are responsible for its destruction and chaos – just as they are responsible for the ongoing bloodshed in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. They have to stop complaining about the "malign influence" of Russia in Afghanistan or the "malign influence" of Iran in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

They should also refute allegations of Russia shipping weapons to the Taliban or Iran shipping weapons to the Houthis. They offer no evidence that this is the case, and not any plausible reason why Iran and Russia would conceivably do this, as they are fighting materially the same foreign-backed insurgency and terrorism in Syria and Iraq.

As is, the United States and its allies have caused evil to Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, not only by their actions but by their inaction, and in either case they are justly accountable to these unfortunate nations for the injury. Moreover, Iran and Russia have had nothing to do with this never-ending mess. If they are trying to clear it, it is because they have to. The United States and its allies never allow the international community, chiefly the United Nations, to step in and fix these problems. For the warmongers the show must go on – not for Iran and Russia, which want peace and security both for themselves and their neighbors.

As per international law, nothing is wrong with that. But everything is wrong with the United States and its endless war on the Muslim world on the pretext of fighting terror. The world community's higher souls can do anything, if their higher will is present.

Iran Slams Turkish Airstrike in Northern Iraq

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- The Iranian Foreign Ministry on Wednesday denounced Turkey's air raid in northern Iraq, saying any violation of countries' national sovereignty will lead to instability in the region.

"Violating the national sovereignty of other countries with any purpose or under any pretext is an infringement of internationally recognized rules and regulations and will pave the way for further instability in the region," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said.

Qassemi said Turkey's air raid in Iraq's Sinjar region was a breach of the Arab country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

On Tuesday, a Turkish military statement said it had carried out pre-dawn strikes on Sinjar Mountain, adding that the raids were meant to hit the positions of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) in Sinjar area.

The PKK has established a presence in Sinjar, where Kurdish Peshmerga fighters battling the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group, are also present.

Ankara has long claimed that the area was becoming a hotbed for the PKK.

Sinjar Mayor Mahma Khalil said the strikes had killed five members of Peshmerga fighters and wounded nine.

The statement said that Turkish planes had also hit north-eastern Syria on Tuesday.

Expats Able to Vote in Over 103 Countries



An Iranian woman casts her ballot to vote for both parliamentary elections and Assembly of Experts at a polling station in the holy city of Qom on February 26, 2016.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Foreign Ministry on Wednesday said expatriates can cast their ballots in the country's upcoming presidential elections in as many as 103 foreign countries.

Hassan Qashqavi, the ministry's deputy for consular, parliamentary, and expatriates' affairs, said there will be 279 polling stations in Iranian missions abroad, including embassies and consulate generals, where the foreign-based Iranian nationals would be able to vote.

He said the number includes 12 stations in the United Kingdom and 19 in the United Arab Emirates, while 30 ballot boxes will be available in various U.S. cit-

ies, adding that there are some 2.5 eligible Iranian voters residing in foreign countries.

Qashqavi reminded that the lack of diplomatic relations between Iran and Canada, which hosts at least 400,000 Iranians, has hindered their electoral participation.

The Islamic Republic has submitted a formal note through its mission to the United Nations to the Canadian Embassy in New York, urging Ottawa to enable the process by respecting democracy and civil rights, he said.

The official said the Canada-based Iranians can also reach U.S.-based ballot boxes during the elections.

U.S. Measures Can Lead to 'Uncontrollable' Fallout

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Hussein Dehqan has warned of the potential "uncontrollable" consequences of the measures taken around the world by the new administration in the United States.

"The decisions made after the inauguration of Donald Trump and repetition of those approaches, which have already been tested, can lead to uncontrollable consequences," Dehqan, who is in Moscow to attend a Conference on International Security, told reporters on Tuesday.

He said the new developments in the Middle East and other parts of the world as well as issues related to cyberspace would be on the agenda of the two-day security meeting, scheduled to open on Wednesday.

The Iranian defense minister said ways to counter Takfirism and terrorism in Syria, Yemen and across the Middle East would also be discussed at the meeting.

He noted that the participants aimed to reach a common stance on ways to achieve convergence and solve regional issues.

Dehqan also said that on the sidelines of the Moscow conference, he would hold talks with his Russian and Syrian counterparts, Sergei Shoigu and Fahd Jassem al-Frej, respectively.

"During the trilateral talks, different issues and the developments in Syria such as the campaign against terrorism will be discussed so that the result of all measures will benefit Syrians and lead to a Syrian-Syrian solution," he added.

Dehqan is scheduled to deliver a speech at the VI Moscow Conference on International Security on Wednesday and hold talks with a number of his counterparts.

Iran has been providing Syrian military with advisory support against the foreign-backed militancy, which has been plaguing the country since 2011.

The Holy Qur'an



And of the dwellers of the desert are those who believe in Allah and the latter day and take what they spend to be (means of) the nearness of Allah and the Apostle's prayers; surely it shall be means of nearness for them; Allah will make them enter into His mercy; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

The Holy Qur'an (9.99)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:02
Evening (Maghreb)	19:48
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	04:45
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:17

sible to eliminate administrative corruption in the country?" he said in a speech in the city of Birjand, South Khorasan Province.

He expressed grief over the lack of initiatives to fight corruption in the country, saying the presence of the scourge is not becoming of the Islamic administration in Iran.

The presidential contender added that if elected president, he would inform the nation and Parliament of the breeding grounds for corruption within the first six months of his term and present any solutions to eliminate it, "so that the people will not witness cases of corruption in the country anymore."

He also noted that with the country's present income, extreme poverty can be eliminated and cash subsidies could be doubled or tripled for the low-income deciles.

Press Digest

100 Days

KAYHAN: President Rouhani has promised to fix the existing economic problems within 100 days of his second term in office. This is while four years ago he came up with the same hollow promise that never saw the light of day. He however claims he never made a promise as such which is strange. He refers to it as a big lie, designed by his opponents to undermine his presidency. This is while his recorded sound and picture on this is available for all to see.

National Gridlock

HAMSAHARI: The nation is in gridlock and it's all because of the current government of President Rouhani. MP Zakani says the government promised to decentralize itself and privatize state-owned companies. What it did was to privatize some and that's all; high unemployment is still there. The biggest task for the next government is to privatize these entities at the earliest. This way it can create jobs and boost production.

Record Recession

VATAN EMROOZ: Because of four years of record economic recession many production companies and factories have gone bust. This has forced President Rouhani's own cabinet ministers to write him a letter to warn him that something needs to be done urgently before it turns into a major crisis. Rouhani still claims there is no recession and that it only exists in a small section of the economy. He denies he made a promise to fix the situation within 100 days.

Revolutionary Diplomacy

SIASAT ROOZ: The government's diplomacy of smile policy in the past four years showed it is not enough to stand against pressures by the United States and its allies. What we need now is a revolutionary diplomacy both in the region and beyond. Pundits after pundits are of the opinion that given the past four years of diplomatic mistakes by the administration of Rouhani, it is about time we came up with a new roadmap that is based on honor, wisdom and expediency. The diplomacy of smile and retreat in the face of Western pressures and excessive demands will get us nowhere.