

Kayhan Group of Newspapers

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In the Name of the Most High

Viewpoint

U.S. Killing of Civilians Continues Apace

By: Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

The Pentagon regime's latest massive under-count of the civilian death toll in coalition airstrikes against Iraq and Syria has shown a significant spike in the death toll, putting the latest official count at 603 civilians between the start of the air war and the end of May.

The figure is rising a lot faster than it used to, growing by scores now instead of single digit numbers, reflective of the general trend of soaring death tolls as U.S. strikes concentrate on densely populated civilian targets.

They're still wrong, however, and wrong in a big way. The official 603 killed is less than one seventh the figure by the Air Wars NGO, which put the civilian deaths through the same period at 4,354. This is because incidents with hundreds killed are often revised downward by the Pentagon to just a handful, and smaller incidents, where only a dozen or so are killed, tend to be ignored altogether.

It is noteworthy to consider the following:

-Just like in Afghanistan, Iraq and Yemen, U.S. forces are providing support for military intelligence and "targeted killing" in Syria. From faraway locations they are providing such services to the Pentagon regime ranging from surveillance equipment and weapons to precision-guided bombs, propaganda experts, and imagery analysts. These forces and contractors are taking part in making decisions as to who to kill and are allowed to fire missiles. They play a key role in military missions on the "kill list" by the very nature of their analytical work.

-Drones are also the War Party's tool of choice for taking out militants inside Syria. The idea is not to put American troops in harm's way. Drones aren't the exclusive weapon though - traditional airstrikes (with help from the Israeli air force), "direct action" by the secretive, elite Joint Special Operations Command, and other attacks by ground troops and allies have also been reported, with deadly consequences for civilians on the ground.

-The U.S. is targeting people whose names they don't know. The so-called "signature strikes" that we now know only target civilian objects began under Obama and have already been expanded by Trump. As previously, this is all about the civilian tally. To this end, President Trump has given a series of speeches broadly outlining the security underpinning for strikes, but he never talks about specific legal cases. In fact, he doesn't officially acknowledge the escalation of the illegal conflict at all, let alone the new drone warfare.

Long story short, this is not about international law on America's right to self-defense which provides sound legal basis for targeting terrorists in Syria. This is not about "due process" either. Taking into account the realities of the U.S.-led regime change campaign, Trump is unable to come clean when it comes to specific questions like civilian casualties or the reasons they were killed in airstrikes. Instead, the Trumpsters change the story AND the statistics, until they eventually admit responsibility and promise to investigate - followed by no accountability. Emphasis here.

The Pentagon regime has a history of initially denying involvement in such atrocities. This doesn't change the fact that people are still getting killed and no one is ever being held to account. Under Trump's insatiable mandate, these war criminals do not have to respond to international requests seeking more information about their crimes against humanity in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and beyond.

Iran Strongly Backs Nuclear Disarmament Treaty



Countries voted to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations in New York on July 7, 2017.

VIENNA (Dispatches) -- Iran's ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says the Islamic Republic, as a major victim of weapons of mass destruction, fully supports the first global nuclear disarmament treaty.

Reza Najafi's remarks on Saturday came after 122 countries endorsed the legally binding Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the UN headquarters in New York despite a boycott by nuclear powers and their allies.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly supports the objective of the treaty which bans possessing,

using or threatening to use nuclear weapons in the world," Najafi said.

Iran is itself a victim of weapons of mass destruction, he said, highlighting the religious decree (fatwa) issued by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei describing any use of nuclear arms as forbidden.

He also hailed the UN conference negotiating the treaty for making a reference in the document's text to the contribution of religious leaders to efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

The Netherlands opposed the

treaty and Singapore abstained from voting.

Elayne Whyte Gomez, president of the UN conference, said the vote was "historic," emphasizing that the treaty was "the first multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty to be concluded in more than 20 years."

"It's been seven decades since the world knew the power of destruction of nuclear weapons and since day one there was a call to prohibit nuclear weapons," she noted.

Nine nuclear powers — the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan,

Envoy Slams Saudi Hostility Toward Iran

NEW YORK (Press TV) -- A senior Iranian diplomat has slammed Saudi Arabia's hostility towards Iran, saying the Islamic Republic's regional influence originates from its "wisdom" in dealing with its neighbors rather than its military power.

In an exclusive interview with Press TV, Gholamali Khoshroo, Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the United Nations, said Iran is a "stabilizing factor in the region" due to its contribution to the fight against the Daesh terrorist group.

On the contrary, he said, Saudi Arabia has adopted "destructive" policies in the region over the past years through attacking Yemen, helping the emergence of militant

groups such as Taliban and Al-Qaeda, and supporting Daesh and former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

"They (the Saudis) are thinking that they are counter-balancing Iran's influence, but Iran's influence is not because of its military force, but because of its wisdom on how to deal with its neighbors and radicals in the region," Khoshroo said.

The official was further asked about remarks by Saudi's now Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman Al Saud who said in May that the regime "will work to have the battle in Iran rather than in Saudi Arabia" as well as the deadly Daesh-claimed terrorist attacks in Tehran.

Khoshroo said the Saudis are organizing, supporting and providing logistics to some groups following the Wahhabi ideology, but they have been unable to do anything against Iran.

The Iranian official also denounced bin Salman's statement as against the international law and "clear intervention in Iran's affairs" showing Riyadh's support for terrorism and extremism.

The remarks indicate that "whatever is taking place ... under the ideology of Wahhabism has roots in Saudi Arabia in one way or another," he said.

On June 7, gunmen mounted assaults on Iran's parliament and the mausoleum of the late founder of the Islamic Republic Imam

Khomeini, killing 18 people and wounding over 50 others.

In response to the assaults, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) fired six medium-range ground-to-ground ballistic missiles at the Daesh-held Syrian town of Dayr al-Zawr on June 18, killing more than 170 Takfiri terrorists.

Khoshroo described the Tehran attacks as a "blind action" by Daesh and the missile strike as "a retaliation based on self-defense."

Foreign military intervention as the root cause of terrorism and extremism in the region, from Afghanistan to Syria and Iraq, underlined the need for a comprehensive plan of action against the challenges, he pointed out.

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:09
Evening (Maghreb)	20:43
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	04:13
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	05:56

North Korea and the occupying regime of Israel — boycotted the treaty.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Najafi reminded the threat posed by Israel's nuclear weapons to the Middle East.

He said Iran's proposal for the establishment of a region free of nuclear weapons is an example of the country's efforts to rid the Middle East of the threat.

Israel is estimated to have 200 to 400 nuclear warheads in its arsenal. It has refused to allow inspections of its military nuclear facilities or to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The U.S. is the only country which has used atomic bombs against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II.

IRGC Intercepts Trespassing Saudi Boat

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) intercepted Friday a Saudi boat for violating Iranian territorial waters, and arrested four persons on board, Fars news agency reported.

The boat sailed from the Saudi port of Darin and was stopped by the IRGC in waters off Bushehr,

Fars quoted an informed source as saying. It said the four persons on board the boat were being questioned.

The source said Iranian security forces see it as a principle to safeguard the Islamic Republic's

territorial waters and will not allow anybody to trespass into Iran's waters.

Last month, the Iranian Interior Ministry's director general for border affairs Majid Aqa-Babaei said Saudi Arabia's coastguard had opened fire on Iranian fishing boats in the waters south of Iran and killed a fisherman.

The incident happened after two Iranian boats fishing in the

Persian Gulf strayed from their course due to big sea waves.

Relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia worsened after a deadly human crush occurred during Hajj rituals in Mina, near Mecca in September 2015.

Iranian officials blamed the incompetence of Saudi officials for the incident, which killed

4,700 people, including 465 Iranian nationals.

Earlier the same month, a massive construction crane had collapsed into Mecca's Grand Mosque, killing more than 100 pilgrims, including 11 Iranians, and injuring over 200 others, among them 32 Iranian nationals.

Relations deteriorated further when Riyadh executed prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr in January 2016. Saudi Arabia unilaterally severed its diplomatic ties with Iran after protests in front of its diplomatic premises in the cities of Tehran and Mashhad against Nimr's execution.