

# ‘Sanctions on Qataris Must Be Lifted’

DOHA (Dispatches) – France has called on a Saudi-led quartet of Arab countries to immediately lift sanctions on Qatari nationals as an unprecedented diplomatic rift between the so-called siege states and the Persian Gulf’s peninsular country increasingly deepens.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian made the remarks in a joint press conference with his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in the Qatari capital, Doha, in an attempt to heal the month-long rift in the Persian Gulf region.

“France calls for the lifting, as soon as possible, of the measures that affect the populations in particular, bi-national families that have been separated or students,” the minister said.

The growing crisis unfolded on June 5, when Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt severed ties with Qatar, officially accusing Doha of supporting “terrorism” and destabilizing the Middle East, allegations that Qatar says are unjustified and stem from false claims and assumptions.

To further pressure Qatar, Saudi Arabia has totally closed its land

border with its tiny neighbor, through which much of Qatar’s food supply crossed.

Later in June, the four Arab countries urged Qatar to abide by a 13-point list of demands if it wanted the crippling blockade lifted. The demands included shutting down the Doha-based Al Jazeera broadcaster, scaling back cooperation with Iran, closing the Turkish military base in Qatar, and paying an unspecified sum in reparations.

The defiant Doha government, however, strongly refused to comply, calling the wide-ranging demands “unrealistic, unreasonable and unacceptable.” In return, the four feuding countries vowed to impose further sanctions on Doha.

Le Drian, who arrived in Qatar a few hours before the press conference, intends to begin a Persian Gulf tour aimed at defusing the unprecedented crisis through holding talks with leaders of the involved countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Meanwhile, Turkey and Qatar have insisted Ankara will keep a new military base in the emirate, rejecting demands from other Persian Gulf countries for the facility to be closed.



*French Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian (L) speaks during a press conference with his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani in the Qatari capital, Doha, on July 15, 2017.*

“No country has the right to raise the issue of the Turkish base or the military cooperation between Qatar and Turkey as long as this cooperation respects international law,” Qatar Foreign Minister Sheikh Muhammad bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told reporters in Ankara.

Speaking after meeting Al Thani, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said the demands to close the base “go against the two countries’ sovereignty.

“A third country has no right to

say something to Qatar or Turkey. Everyone must respect this,” he added.

Cavusoglu added that until now, there had been “no objections” over the base, Turkey’s first military facility in the Persian Gulf region.

The crisis has put Turkey in a delicate position since Qatar is its main ally in the Persian Gulf, but Ankara does not want to antagonize key regional power Saudi Arabia.

## Zionist Troops Shoot Dead Palestinian Man in West Bank



*Zionist troops stand guard at one of the entrances to the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in al-Quds’ Old City on July 14, 2017, following a deadly shootout.*

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Zionist troops and policemen have fatally shot a Palestinian in the West Bank, alleging that the man

attempted to open fire on them.

The incident took place in the village of Nabi Salih, northwest of the city of Ramallah, early on

Sunday. Israeli police identified the victim as 34-year-old Amar Halil.

“The forces encountered the suspect, who attempted to open fire at them. In response to the immediate threat forces fired towards the attacker resulting in his death,” the occupying regime’s army said in a statement.

It further accused the victim of having shot at Israelis in two separate incidents in Nabi Saleh and the Israeli settlement of Ateret on Saturday.

During Sunday’s gunfight, another Palestinian was lightly wounded and arrested, the army statement went on to say.

Also on Friday, Zionist troops raided the Dheisheh refugee camp, south of the West Bank city of Bethlehem, and clashed with Palestinian residents dur-

ing which Bara Hamamdah, an 18-year-old Palestinian, was shot dead.

Additionally on Friday, a shooting happened at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Old City of al-Quds, leaving three Palestinians and two Zionist policemen dead.

Tensions have hit the occupied lands ever since Zionist troops imposed restrictions on the entry of Palestinian worshippers into the al-Aqsa two years ago.

Tel Aviv has been trying to change the demographic makeup of al-Quds through constructing settlements, destroying historical sites and expelling the local Palestinian population.

Over 300 Palestinians have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli forces since October 2015, when the tensions flared up.



*Pro-Palestinian activists shout anti-Israeli slogans during a protest in Paris on July 15, 2017.*

national law.

Countries that have typically been supporting Israel in the past seem to be growing restless with Tel Aviv because of its defiant settlement activities on occupied territories. Such impatience was displayed in the passing of the UN Security Council Resolution 2334 in 2016, during which the United States — Israel’s staunchest ally — uncharacteristically decided not to wield its veto power and allowed the adoption of the text with a mere abstention, much to the chagrin of Tel Aviv.

The resolution calls on Israel to immediately and completely cease all settlement activities on occupied Palestinian territories, including the West Bank.

## Zionist...

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measures on Saturday, saying they gave the occupying regime “almost complete control over what goes on” in the compound, to prevent future attacks.

Earlier in the day, Kiswani told Voice of Palestine radio station the additional security measures were part of a “dangerous and unprecedented move” by Israeli authorities “to impose control over Al-Aqsa Mosque”.

The Zionist regime’s unilateral decision also triggered anger from authorities in Jordan, the custodian of the holy site.

The Jordanian government released a statement on Friday demanding Israel immediately open the mosque and warning against steps that could “change the historic status quo in Al-Quds and the mosque”.

Proposals to change security measures at the compound have sparked controversy in the past. Palestinians have long feared what they see as Israeli moves to change the status quo at the holy site.

Daoud Kuttab, columnist at Al Monitor, told Al Jazeera that he expects the tensions to escalate.

“This is a very worrisome change,” Kuttab said of Israel’s decision not to consult Jordanian authorities of its decision to impose new security measures.

“It sounds like it is going to be troublesome for the days to come,” he said. “Those who killed the soldiers are not from the West Bank or Jerusalem Al-Quds.”

Daniel Levy, a former Israeli negotiator, told Al Jazeera that the occupying regime’s unilateral response was only “exacerbating” the situation.

“But what are you doing with regards to the broader conflict that leads to this situation in the first place,” he asked. “In that respect, what we have is a situation, where for good reason neither the Palestinians or the Jordanians have faith in the Israeli side.”

Since the Zionist regime occupied East Al-Quds in 1967, Israeli authorities have maintained an agreement with the Islamic Endowment that runs the mosque compound. Non-Muslims are allowed to visit the site, but are not allowed to pray.

The mosque compound is known to Muslims as Haram al-Sharif while Jews call it Temple Mount.

## Erdogan...

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for Gulen’s network - and the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

“We know who is behind FETO, the PKK and all of them,” he said. “We cannot defeat the queen, king, or sheikhs without defeating the pawns, knights and castles. Firstly, we will rip the heads off of these traitors.”

He also said that alleged members of Gulen’s network would be forced to wear jumpsuits like those worn by prisoners at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, after one detainee showed up to a court hearing wearing a T-shirt that said “Hero”.

## All Parties...

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The statement by the UN chief came after European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini also urged all sides to the JCPOA to remain committed to their obligations under the deal.

“This deal belongs to the international community, having been endorsed by the United Nations Security Council, that expects all sides to keep the commitments they took two years ago,” Mogherini said in a statement on Friday.

## Activists Protest Zionist PM’s Planned Visit to France

PARIS (Dispatches) – French activists have launched a protest rally against the planned visit by Zionist Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Paris, slamming his human rights violations across the occupied Palestinian territories.

The protesters gathered in Place de la Republique square in Paris, wearing T-shirts and holding portraits of Netanyahu with signs reading (in French) “fascist,” “murderer,” “racist” and “torturer.”

The activists also chanted slogans against Israel’s continued settlement construction in the Palestinian occupied territories and the blockade of Gaza. President Emmanuel Macron has invited Netanyahu to visit France.

Addressing the gathering, President of EuroPalestine Olivia Zemor lashed out at Macron for “rolling out the red carpet” for “a criminal, a torturer - the torture of men and children exists - a land thief, to someone who does not respect international law and human rights, which is embarrassing.”

“How can Macron invite such a person? Netanyahu is someone who, if you even only take into consideration the international convention on torture, should be brought to justice the moment he sets foot in France. Because France has signed this convention, which states that anyone who is suspected of committing acts of torture, or to turn a blind eye to these acts, or ordering them, must be brought to justice. So what is he doing here?” she asked.

“He is not being brought to justice, we are rolling out the red carpet for him, what kind of image of France do we want to give?” Zemor pointed out.

In late June, pro-Palestinian campaigners from the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement and Les Désobeissants (the disobedient) held another protest rally in Paris to express their solidarity with the Palestinians.

The activists called for an immediate arms embargo against Tel Aviv until it ends its occupation of the Palestinian territories and complies with inter-