

Saudi ‘Entities’ Funding Terrorist Groups

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – The United States has praised Qatar’s “strong partnership” in the fight against “terrorism,” but accused individuals and “entities” in Saudi Arabia of channeling money out of the country to “terrorist” organizations.

The State Department made the remakes in its annual “Country Reports on Terrorism” released on Wednesday, Al Jazeera reported.

Qatar had “maintained a strong partnership in the fight against terrorism in 2016 and collaborated to foster closer regional and international cooperation on counterterrorism, law enforcement and rule of law activities,” the State Department noted.

Thought for Today

Time wears out bodies, renews hopes, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever gets anything from the world lives in anxiety for holding it and whoever loses anything passes his days grieving over the loss.

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Oxfam:

Yemen’s Cholera Epidemic World’s Worst



A woman takes care of her son at a cholera treatment center in Yemen’s capital city of Sana’a on June 6, 2017.

SANAA (Dispatches) – **The cholera epidemic in Yemen, which is the subject of a Saudi Arabian war and total embargo, is the largest recorded in modern history, the Oxfam charity group says.**

The international charity organization said on Friday that more than 360,000 suspected cases of cholera had been sighted in a three-month period, topping Haiti’s 340,000 after an earthquake in 2011.

“It is quite frankly staggering that in just three months more people in Yemen

have contracted cholera than any country has suffered in a single year since modern records began,” said Nigel Timmins, Oxfam’s humanitarian director.

Since its outbreak in Yemen in April this year, 2,000 people have died from the disease, according to Oxfam.

“This is a massive crisis needing a massive response... So far, funding from government donors to pay for the aid effort has been lackluster at best, less than half of what is needed,” he added.

Saudi Arabia, which has been waging a

deadly war on Yemen since March 2015 and has also laid siege to the already-impooverished country, has been largely blamed for the cholera epidemic.

Just earlier this month, the United Nations said the “cholera scandal is entirely man-made.”

Saudi Arabia launched the invasion of Yemen in an attempt to reinstate a Saudi-friendly former president who had resigned. Riyadh also aimed to eliminate a popular Yemeni group known as the Houthis.

But the Riyadh regime has failed to meet either of the objectives and continues to engage in a military campaign that has killed at least 12,000 civilians, seriously damaged the country’s infrastructure, and led to the cholera outbreak.

The Saudi war has also left more than 17 million people in the country food-insecure, with some 6.8 million of them in need of immediate aid.

Charity organizations have called on the UN to blacklist the Saudi-led coalition over serious violations of children’s rights in Yemen as statistics reveal massive child fatalities caused by the ongoing war against the impoverished nation.

According to a joint report prepared by Save the Children and Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, the Saudi-led coalition committed “grave violations against children” in a series of 23 attacks on civilian sites, including hospitals and schools, in 2016, the Guardian reported on Thursday.

The campaigners urged the UN to highlight the crimes committed by the Saudi-led alliance, including massive killing and maiming of Yemeni children, in its annual report on child rights violations in conflict, expected to be released in August.

The annual UN report incorporates a blacklist of countries and groups that have committed violations such as killing or maiming children, recruiting children, abduction, sexual violence, or attacking schools or hospitals.

Syria Army, Hezbollah Attack Terrorist Positions in Border Areas

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The Syrian army and resistance fighters with Lebanon’s resistance movement have launched a joint operation against terrorist groups in border areas between the two countries.

The operation, which started on Friday, is targeting terrorists in the Juroud Arsaf area on the outskirts of the Lebanese town of Arsaf, and in areas of the western Qalamoun mountains in Syria, a Syrian commander told Reuters.

Nearly 3,000 terrorists, two-third of which are from Daesh and al-Nusra Takfiri groups, have been using the barren area in the mountains between Syria and Lebanon as a base to organize attacks inside Syria.

According to Hezbollah’s al-Manar TV, the offensives in Juroud Arsaf and in areas near the Syrian town of Fleita target terrorists with the Takfiri Jabhat Fateh al-Sham terror group, better known as al-Nusra Front.

The Lebanese army has also enhanced its deployment on the outskirts of Arsaf town to prevent terrorists from fleeing

into Lebanon, a Lebanese security source said.

Recently, there were speculations that Hezbollah resistance movement and the Syrian military were preparing to mount a major operation against the terrorists on the Syrian side of the border.

Earlier in July, Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah gave an ultimatum to the terrorists along the border near the country’s northeastern area of Arsaf to reach an agreement with Syrian officials, warning that it was “high time to end the threat of militant groups in Arsaf.”

On Tuesday, Lebanese Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri said the Lebanese army would launch an operation against terrorists in Juroud Arsaf, noting that the government has given the army the “freedom” to take action.

Hariri, however, said “there is no coordination between the Lebanese and Syrian armies.”

The Arsaf area was hit by the spillover of the Syria crisis in 2014, when the terrorists managed to overrun the town for a brief period.

Infighting Hits Terrorists in Syria’s Idlib

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – **Heavy infighting has erupted between two major terrorist groups in Syria’s northwestern Idlib Province, with the clashes spreading to a border crossing with Turkey.**

The battles between Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and Ahrar al-Sham, a coalition of terrorists supported by Turkey and Saudi Arabia, erupted earlier this week, director of the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR) Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP on Friday.

So far, 15 civilians, including four children and a media activist, and 50 terrorists have been killed during the conflict.

Overnight, fierce battles spread to several parts of the province, including the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, previously controlled by Ahrar al-Sham.

“The fighting is now inside the crossing. It has become a battlefield, with part of it under Hayat Tahrir al-Sham’s control, and part under Ahrar al-Sham’s control,” Abdel Rahman said.

AFP also reported heavy battles on the outskirts of the town of Binnish and HTS attempts to break into the village of Ram Hamdan.

The two terrorist groups were

once the key parts of Jaish al-Fatah (Army of Conquest) umbrella group for terrorists that captured most of Idlib Province from the Syrian government in 2015.

The news comes as Iraqi forces have managed to retake a village, situated south of the recently-liberated city of Mosul, in their latest push to rid the whole country of Daesh terrorists.

Iraqi Police Colonel Kareem Aboud announced on Thursday the full recapture of the Imam Gharbi village by the government forces.

The bodies of two Iraqi journalists, who were executed by terrorists, were also discovered during the liberation operation, he said, noting that the Iraqi troops were now searching Imam Gharbi for remaining Takfiri elements.

Stripped of Mosul, the Daesh terrorists are now resorting to different tactics to block the Iraqi soldiers’ advances.

The Iraqi forces liberated Imam Gharbi several months ago, but earlier this month, dozens of Daesh terrorists armed with machine guns and mortars crossed the Tigris River and attacked the village.

An Iraqi security source estimated lately that Daesh held 60 percent of Imam Gharbi.

Qatar Vows ‘Appropriate’ Response to Hacking From UAE

DOHA (Dispatches) – **Qatar has officially accused the United Arab Emirates of hosting controversial hacking attacks on its national news agency in May, saying Doha is pondering an appropriate response.**

General Ali Mohammed al-Mohannadi, who presides over an investigation into the May 24 hacking of the Qatar News Agency (QNA), said that state prosecutor was expected to take “the appropriate measures” in response to the findings of the probe, which indicated that the UAE was behind the hacking.

Mohannadi told a news conference in Doha that the “hacking” was undertaken “from two sites... in the Emirates”. He did not elaborate on what measures Qatar could take in response to the UAE’s alleged role in the issue.

“The hacker took control of the agency’s network, stole the accounts on its electronic site and uploaded fake information,” Mohammadi said.

The alleged hacking, which led to the release of remarks attributed to Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al

Thani on the QNA website, sparked an unprecedented row between Qatar and Arab neighbors in the Persian Gulf region. The remarks, denied by Doha, covered sensitive issues of politics in the Middle East region. The row later evolved into a full-scale diplomatic dispute after Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt cut their diplomatic ties with Qatar over accusations such as Doha’s support for terrorism, among others. Qatar has denied the allegations while maintaining that it is paying the price for its independent foreign policy.

‘Conflicting Statements’

Qatar has slammed the Saudi-led quartet of boycotters for their “disorganized” conduct and “conflicting statements” after they apparently backed down from a number of the terms on their list of demands aimed at ending the dispute with Doha.

On Wednesday, Sheikh Saif bin Ahmed Al Thani, director of Qatar’s government communications office,



(L to R) Qatar’s deputy director of security, Othmane Salem al-Hamoud, head of the Interior Ministry’s technology division, Mohammed al-Mohannadi, and the director of Public Relations Department, Abdullah Khalifa al-Muftah, attend a press conference at the ministry’s headquarters in Doha on July 20, 2017.

told The Associated Press that the four Arab countries have “regularly issued conflicting statements” since the outbreak of the diplomatic crisis in the Persian Gulf region last month.

“These latest comments are another example of the dangerous and disorganized manner in which the

illegal blockade has been conducted,” said Sheikh Saif.

“At first there were no demands, but following pressure from mediating countries, the blockaders leaked a list of demands that was quickly deemed neither reasonable nor actionable,” he added.

U.S. Lawmakers Introduce New Sanctions Against Hezbollah

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – U.S. lawmakers in Congress have introduced legislation seeking to increase sanctions on the Lebanese resistance movement, Hezbollah.

The Republican and Democratic lawmakers introduced the bill over accusations that the resistance movement is involved in violence in Syria and has transferred rockets along the Syrian border.

The measure, an amendment to an existing sanctions law on the anti-Israeli group, seeks to

further restrict Hezbollah’s ability to recruit and fundraise.

The bill also seeks to increase pressure on foreign banks that do business with Hezbollah, and put pressure on countries that support it, including Iran.

Officials in Lebanon say the U.S. efforts to expand sanctions would damage the Arab country’s important banking industry.

Versions of the legislation were introduced in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

“These sanctions will severely limit Hezbollah’s financial network and transnational activities, as well as crack down its backers, most importantly Iran,” Representative Ed Royce, the Republican chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said in a statement.

The U.S. Congress, as well as President Donald Trump’s administration, are eager to curb Iran’s support of anti-Israeli resistance movements in Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East.

This week, the Trump administration added new

sanctions on Iran over Tehran’s ballistic missile program.

During the past six years that the foreign-backed crisis has been raging on in Syria, Hezbollah and the Lebanese military have been defending the country, especially along its northeastern frontier, against spillover of foreign-backed terrorist groups.

Hezbollah fighters have fended off several Daesh attacks inside Lebanon as well. They have also been providing assistance to Syrian army

forces to counter the ongoing foreign-sponsored terrorism.

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

The regime, 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 terrorism since 2013.