

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkey says it has paid a deposit as part of an agreement with Russia for the purchase of the Russian air defense system. “Our friends have already signed [an agreement on] S-400s. A deposit has also been paid, as far as I know,” President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was cited by Turkey’s Hurriyet Daily News as saying. “The process will continue through a transfer of a credit from Russia to us. Both Mr. Putin and myself, we are determined on this issue,” he added, referring to the Russian president.

There is no greater wealth than wisdom, no greater poverty than ignorance; no greater heritage than culture and no greater support than consultation.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Saudi Airstrikes on Yemen Amount to War Crimes



A man carries a child rescued from the site of a Saudi-led air strike that killed eight of her family members in the Yemeni capital city of Sana'a on August 25, 2017.

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Human Rights Watch has denounced the air raids conducted by Saudi Arabia and its allies in Yemen as “war crimes,” calling on the United Nations to launch an investigation into the fatal strikes.

The rights organization cited on

Tuesday five “apparently unlawful” Saudi aerial assaults in Yemen between June 9 and August 4, which killed 39 civilians, among them 26 children.

“The Saudi-led coalition’s repeated promises to conduct its airstrikes lawfully are not sparing Yemeni

children from unlawful attacks,” said Sarah Leah Whitson, the Middle East director at HRW, adding that the attacks “are still wiping out entire families” in Yemen.

“These latest airstrikes and their horrible toll on children should galvanize the Human Rights Council to denounce and act to investigate war crimes, and ensure that those responsible are held to account,” she noted.

The period examined in the HRW report does not cover a deadly Saudi air raid on August 23 against a Sana’a hotel, which left some 60 civilians dead.

Call for Probe Into Saudi Atrocities

Meanwhile, the UN’s human rights chief has called for urgent investigation into Saudi Arabia’s airstrikes against civilians in Yemen.

Zeid Ra’ad al-Hussein made the remarks during a Monday speech to the UN Human Rights Council

in Geneva after the global body attributed over 5,000 civilian deaths to Saudi Arabian airstrikes.

“The minimal efforts made toward accountability over the past year are insufficient to respond to the gravity of the continuing and daily violations involved in this conflict,” he said.

The latest call for an investigation was the third of such made by the UN’s rights chief.

Last week, his office stressed that 47 countries on the Human Rights Council were not taking their responsibilities seriously, and called on them to probe the “entirely man-made catastrophe.”

More than 12,000 people have been killed since the onset of the campaign more than two and a half years ago. Much of the Arabian Peninsula country’s infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and factories, has been reduced to rubble due to the war.

The Saudi war has also triggered a deadly cholera epidemic across Yemen.

Iraq Urged to Sue U.S. Coalition Over Civilian Deaths



Cars drive along a damaged street in west Mosul on July 12, 2017, a few days after the government’s announcement of the liberation of the embattled city from Daesh terrorists.

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Iraq’s official High Commission for Human Rights has urged the Iraqi government to sue a U.S.-led coalition operating in the Arab country over the death of civilians in the northern city of Mosul.

Wahda al-Jumaili, a member of the parliament-affiliated commission, said U.S.-led airstrikes had destroyed “numerous buildings in western Mosul — residential and commercial,” and that “nearly 2,000 bodies” had been recovered from under the rubble.

She said that more bodies were expected to be found.

“We are therefore calling on Iraqi prosecution authorities to file an official lawsuit against coalition commanders for these violations of humanitarian law and a failure to discriminate between Daesh criminals and civilians,” she said.

Jumaili also urged Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi to launch an investigation “to determine who is responsible for the loss of innocent lives” in Mosul.

In July, Iraqi forces liberated the city of Mosul, the provincial capital of in Nineveh, from the control of

the Daesh terrorists.

Separately, Hussam Eddin al-Abbar, a member of the provincial council of Nineveh, said that the coalition’s fierce airstrikes had caused “widespread destruction” in the district of Old City in western Mosul in particular.

Health officials in Nineveh said on Monday that 2,650 bodies had been recovered from Mosul since the city’s liberation two months ago.

“Local medical facilities have received some 2,650 bodies,” Laith Hababah, head of the Nineveh Health Department, said.

He said most of the bodies had been pulled from the rubble of destroyed buildings in the Old City district.

The United States and its allies launched a campaign of airstrikes against what they say are Daesh positions in August 2014 after the terrorist group overran parts of Iraq’s north and west, including Mosul.

The military alliance has repeatedly been accused of targeting and killing civilians. It has also been largely incapable of fulfilling its declared aim of destroying the Daesh terrorist group.

Saudi-Led Quartet Trying to Turn Qatar Into ‘Trusteeship State’

DOHA (Dispatches) – Qatar says the “illegal” blockade imposed on Doha by the Saudi-led quartet of countries is aimed to force the peninsula Persian Gulf nation to become a “state of trusteeship.”

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani made the remarks in a speech before the United Nations Human Rights Council in the Swiss city of Geneva, strongly denouncing the “illegal siege which clearly violates international laws.”

The widening rift in the region occurred 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 totally closed its land border with its tiny neighbor, through which much of the country’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.

Qatar, however, firmly 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.

On July 21, Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani said in a live TV address that the blockade against Doha was “a pre-planned smear campaign.”

“Unfortunately, we have seen - half an hour later - retaliation from their side by issuing a statement that what we have issued is a lie,” Al Thani told reporters on the sidelines of the rights council, adding that his respective country was taken aback when Riyadh disputed a readout of the “posi-

tive” call.

However, he expressed his country’s readiness to enter into dialogue with the siege states in a bid to end the crisis.

“We are willing to talk to them, we are ready to engage if it is based on principles, which are not violating the international law and respect the sovereignty of each country,” he added.

A number of attempts to heal the rift have so far been made, but all to no avail, including those of U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Kuwaiti Emir Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber Al Sabah, whose country has been playing the role of a key mediator since the beginning of the crisis.

Russia, Jordan Agree to Speed Up De-Escalation Zone in Syria

AMMAN (Dispatches) – Jordan says it is working with Russia to roll out a plan to end fighting in southwestern Syria “in the fastest possible time” - part of a peace pact for the border area brokered by Amman, Moscow and Washington.

Jordan and Russia’s foreign ministers met in Amman to discuss progress in setting up a “de-escalation zone” in the particularly sensitive region that includes Syrian territory adjacent to the Israeli-occupied territories.

Neither side gave details on any sticking points, but diplomats told Reuters they have included the final positions of fighting forces, U.S. unease about Russian involvement in policing the deal, and when to reopen a key border crossing.

Russia, which backs Syria’s government in the civil war, and the United States, which backs rebel forces seeking to topple President Bashar al-Assad, met secretly in Jordan in June and announced a ceasefire in Syria’s southwest a month later.

Meanwhile, Syrian army soldiers and allied forces are getting ready to fully liberate the eastern part of city of Dayr al-Zawr from the

clutches of Daesh terrorists.

“Huge military reinforcements, including equipment, vehicles and fighters have arrived in Dayr al-Zawr ahead of an attack to push Daesh from the city’s eastern neighborhoods,” the head of the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), Rami Abdel Rahman, said on Monday, adding, “Russian and Syrian warplanes are striking Daesh positions in the city and on its outskirts.”

On Sunday, Syrian army soldiers and pro-government fighters recaptured Dayr al-Zawr’s power station, which lies to the west of the city’s air base, following intense clashes with Daesh terrorists.

Moreover, Syrian soldiers managed to wrest control over the highway linking Dayr al-Zawr to the city of Sukhnah, and advanced on the Brigade 137 base as well as Panorama district. Scores of Daesh terrorists were killed and injured during the operations and their military hardware destroyed.

Syrian troops and fighters from the popular defense groups had earlier managed to break a nearly three-year siege by Daesh terrorists on

Dayr al-Zawr air base.

Syrian government forces and their allies launched a new push on September 8 towards the besieged military air base, as part of a multi-pronged offensive to retake the entire Dayr al-Zawr, located 450 kilometers northeast of the capital Damascus, from Daesh terrorists.

Meanwhile, the Russian Defense Ministry announced on Monday that a demining unit comprising more than 40 experts and special equipment had been sent to Hmeimim Air Base, southeast of the Syrian coastal city of Latakia, to be sent to Dayr al-Zawr “in the nearest future.”

“The sappers will first demine roads leading to the city’s social infrastructure facilities, hospitals, schools, houses, water and power supply facilities and historical cultural monuments,” the ministry’s statement said.

In another development on Monday, tribal figures linked to US-backed militiamen from the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) announced in a statement the establishment of “a preparatory committee that will discuss the basis and starting points for a civil council for Dayr al-Zawr.”

Zionist Troops Destroy Muslim Graves in al-Quds

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime’s bulldozers have reportedly demolished several Muslim graves in addition to a wall at a cemetery in occupied Old City of al-Quds as the Tel Aviv regime goes ahead with its total disrespect for human and religious values.

The head of the Committee for the Preservation of Islamic Cemeteries in al-Quds, Mustafa Abu Zahra, told Arabic-language Wafa news agency that the occupying regime’s bulldozers rolled into Martyrs’ Cemetery near the Lions’ Gate to the al-Aqsa Mosque, tearing down a wall and destroying a number of graves there.

Abu Zahra noted that the cemetery contained the remains of 400 Palestinians, who were killed during the Six-Day War fought on June 5-10, 1967 between the regime, on the one side, and Egypt, Jordan, and Syria, on the other.

He explained that work had been suspended in the area, while his committee would take all necessary legal measures to prevent the desecration of the cemetery again.

There are reports that regime authorities are planning to seize parts of the cemetery for a national

park trail.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority spokesman, Tariq al-Rishmawi, has strongly condemned the Zionist regime’s desecration of Martyrs’ Cemetery, describing the move a terrible crime against the Palestinian nation as well as all humanitarian principles and religious laws.

In a press statement, Rishmawi said that this crime came as part of the regime’s land expropriation policies and Judaization plans for al-Quds.

He stressed that the Tel Aviv regime was violating all international resolutions on the Palestinian issue, the most recent of which was the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, which called on Israel to “immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem” al-Quds.

He stressed that the Palestinian Authority would continue all efforts to protect al-Quds and the Islamic and Christian sanctuaries there until the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital.