

Zionist Regime Says Will Intensify Raid on Syria

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime says it will step up its fire to the Syrian territory in what it claimed to be a retaliatory attack against Syrian projectiles.

The Syrian military said it came under attack in Quneitra province, which sits near the Golan Heights territory that the Zionist regime captured from Syria in the 1967 Middle East War.

“The Israeli enemy assaulted one of our military positions this morning, which led to material damages,” it said.

In a statement released on Saturday, the Zionist regime’s army said it had “targeted three artillery cannons” of the Syrian government in the Golan Heights in what it claimed to have been a “response to the [firing of] projectiles that hit Israel.”

If confirmed, the Saturday attack would be the second strike by the Zionist regime on Syria this week. On Thursday, the occupying regime struck a Syrian artillery position near southwestern town of Quneitra.

The regime regularly hits positions held by the Syrian army in the Golan Heights, sometimes describing the attacks as “retaliatory.” Syria says the raids aim to help terrorists fighting against government forces.

On several occasions, the Syrian army has confiscated Israeli-made arms and military equipment from terrorists fighting the government forces. The regime has also been providing



The picture, taken from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, shows smoke billowing from Syria on June 26, 2017.

medical treatment to the terrorists wounded in Syria.

Back in June, The Wall Street Journal reported that Israel had been providing terrorists in Syria’s Golan Heights with a steady flow of funds and medical supplies.

The regime seized the Golan Heights from Syria during the 1967 Six-Day War and has con-

tinued to occupy two-thirds of the strategically-important territory ever since, in a move that has never been recognized by the international community.

The regime has built tens of illegal settlements in the area since its occupation and has used the region to carry out a number of military operations against the Syrian government.

Iran’s... (Continued From Page One)

U.S. troops in the region actually serves to support the “proxy warfare” that Washington is waging.

Iran has repeatedly insisted that its military capabilities are solely for defense purposes and pose no threat to other countries. But it has stressed that if it is invaded by another party, it will unleash destructive power on it.

Washington has on several occasions introduced sanctions against Iran over its missile program.

The United States claims that Iran’s missile tests and rocket launches violate UN Resolution 2231, which was adopted in July 2015 to endorse the nuclear agreement.

But that resolution does not prohibit Iran from engaging in missile activity. And the U.S. has thus failed to get other Security Council members on board with its sanctions, resorting to unilateral sanctions only.

Araqchi... (Continued From Page One)

“We would have a serious problem.” The nuclear deal, he said, would collapse without the U.S. “Imagine the U.S. quit. Can we continue our work with the EU? We’re not there yet, but I personally believe that the whole deal would collapse and fall apart without the U.S.,” the website of Russia’s RT television quoted him as saying.

“Everyone says that Iran should comply with the deal, but the Americans don’t comply with their part of the bargain which is totally unacceptable,” he said.

The U.S., he said, has repeatedly violated the deal, adding that everything President Donald Trump says against the deal is already “a violation.”

The diplomat also said the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers can’t be renegotiated Trump’s objection to the terms.

That includes all annexes, clauses and proposed additions, Araqchi was quoted by the Islamic Republic News Agency as saying. The U.S. has already violated the accord through actions that undermine its implementation, he said.

“We say clearly and unequivocally, no possibility exists for any negotiations regarding the nuclear deal or its annexes or any additions,” the minister said.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warned against breaking up the Iran nuclear agreement, saying it is “vital for strategic stability.”

Speaking to the same conference, Lavrov said any unilateral changes to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) “could bury this agreement, which is vital for strategic stability and nuclear non-proliferation.”

Lavrov described any prospect of returning to the pre-JCPOA situation as “impossible,” saying, “Restoring the UN Security Council sanctions [on Iran] is out of the question.”

The Russian foreign minister rejected the need for further inspection of Iran’s nuclear sites beyond the JCPOA requirements, noting that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) “performs regular checks and confirms their strict fulfillment of obligations.”

Touching on U.S. demands for renegotiating the JCPOA, Lavrov stated that any changes to the deal would require the approval of all the parties to the accord, including Iran.

U.S. ... (Continued From Page One)

been strained by a series of diplomatic rows, prompting both countries to cut back issuing visas to each other’s citizens.

Haberturk did not name the six banks potentially facing the fines. One bank will face a penalty in excess of \$5 billion, while the rest of the fines will be lower, it said.

U.S. officials will notify the banks of their penalties in the coming days and

the banks are likely to be able to negotiate down the fines, Haberturk said.

U.S. authorities have hit global banks with billions of dollars in fines over violations of sanctions with Iran and other countries in recent years.

U.S. prosecutors last month charged a former Turkish economy minister and the ex-head of a state-owned bank with conspiring to violate Iran sanctions by illegally moving hundreds of millions of dollars through the U.S. financial system on Tehran’s behalf.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has dismissed the charges as politically motivated, and tantamount to an attack on the Turkish Republic.

The charges stem from the case against Reza Zarrab, a wealthy Turkish-Iranian gold trader who was arrested in the United States over sanctions evasion last year. Erdogan has said U.S. authorities had “ulterior motives” in charging Zarrab, who has pleaded not guilty.

The charges also come as the Trump administration is ramping up its bellicose measures against the Islamic Republic.

The House will vote next week on a bill sanctioning Iran over its ballistic missile program, GOP leaders said Friday.

Lawmakers plan to quickly pass the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act. The bill won unanimous approval from the House Foreign Affairs Committee earlier in October and is expected to be considered under special rules limiting debate time and requiring two-thirds majority for passage.

The measure would expand sanctions against Iran, which has continued to expand its missile program in the face of U.S. and Israeli threats.

It would also sanction Hezbollah, which bill sponsor Ed Royce, R-Calif., the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, said “has thousands of fighters in Syria, well positioning itself to intensify its original mission, the destruction of Israel.”

The bill comes as House and Senate Republicans seek additional ways to punish Iran over its missile program and supporting resistance movements without purportedly undercutting the nuclear deal with Iran, which Trump declined to recertify earlier this month, leaving the fate of the deal in the hands of Congress.

Royce last month denounced the agreement. He did not call on Congress to walk away from it but rather to “enforce the hell out of it,” with the new sanctions bill serving as a first step.

The bill would sanction foreign persons and entities who knowingly help Iran expand its ballistic missile program.

“It is Congress’s responsibility to work with the executive branch on a clear-eyed strategy to stop Iran’s reckless behavior,” Royce and Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, said in a statement provided to the Washington Examiner.

President... (Continued From Page One)

Turkey has also been enraged by Washington’s support for the Syrian Kurdish YPG militants. Turkey regards the YPG as an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).

On Friday, Erdogan criticized the United States over a huge banner of jailed Kurdish militant leader Abdullah Ocalan unfurled in Syria’s Raqqah by U.S.-backed Kurdish forces. The banner was raised at a ceremony to mark Raqqah’s capture from Daesh in a campaign spearheaded by the YPG.

“How can the U.S. explain the poster of Ocalan in Raqqah? Is this the way they are cooperating with us in the struggle against terror?” Erdogan said. “You are not standing by us against terrorism.”

Ocalan has been in jail in Turkey since 1999 on a treason conviction. More than 40,000 people, most of them Kurds, have died in the fighting since the PKK took up arms against the state in 1984.

The PKK is considered a terrorist organization by the United States, Turkey and the European Union.

Turkish Hunger Striker Released for Remainder of Trial



Nuriye Gulmen, a literature professor, and Semih Ozakca, a primary school teacher, who have been on hunger strike after they both lost their jobs in a crackdown following a failed July coup against President Tayyip Erdogan, take part in a protest against a government purge in Ankara, Turkey, May 11, 2017.

ANKARA (Reuters) – A Turkish teacher who has been on hunger strike for months to protest about losing his job in the government’s purge since a failed coup attempt last year, has been released from jail pending her trial on terrorism-related charges.

Defense lawyers said primary school teacher Semih Ozakca, 28, was released, but another detainee, literature professor Nuriye Gulmen, 35, who has also survived for seven months on water, herbal tea and sugar and salt solutions, was remanded in custody.

The Ankara court released Ozakca on condition that he wears an ankle monitor. Gulmen, who has been hospitalized due to her worsening health, was ordered to remain in custody until the trial, which resumes on Nov. 17.

The pair began their hunger strike

before being jailed. A court ordered their detention pending trial after ruling that their protest was being conducted on behalf of an outlawed far-left group, DHKP-C. Both deny any links to the group.

The teachers said their hunger strike aimed to highlight the plight of some 150,000 state employees - including academics, civil servants, judges and soldiers - suspended or sacked since the abortive coup in July 2016.

Turkish authorities blame the coup attempt on U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen and his supporters. Gulen denies involvement.

Human rights groups and the European Union have said President Tayyip Erdogan is using the crackdown to stifle dissent in Turkey, something he denies.

Two Soldiers Killed in Iraq’s Altun Kupri Clashes

BAGHDAD (Xinhua) – The Iraqi military on Saturday said that two of the federal troops were killed and five others were wounded in the clashes that erupted when the Iraqi forces recaptured the town of Altun Kupri from the Kurdish Peshmerga forces.

A statement by the Iraqi Joint Operations Command (JOC) said the Iraqi federal forces, which had orders not to open fire, approached the town of Altun Kupri, some 40km north of the city of Kirkuk.

The Peshmerga force used mortar rounds and the German Milan-guided anti-tank missiles, and destroyed an Iraqi army tank, leaving two soldiers killed and five others wounded, the statement said, adding that the Peshmerga forces blew up the bridge of Altun

Kupri. After the federal troops took control of the town, the Peshmerga forces took new positions 3 km away, and continued their fire by mortar rounds and heavy machine guns, the statement said.

The troops advanced to Altun Kupri were not paramilitary Hashd Shaabi brigades, according to the statement, but were the Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS) forces, Federal Police and a force from the 9th Armored Division.

After the troops entered the town of Altun Kupri, only the 20th Infantry Division secured the town, the statement said, dismissing the Kurdish allegations that the Hashd Shaabi brigades carried out the redeployment operations in Kirkuk province.

U.S. Embassy in Turkey Slams Display of Banner of PKK Leader

ANKARA (Xinhua) – The U.S. Embassy in Turkey on Saturday slammed the display of banner of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan after capture of Syria’s Raqqah, saying he was “not worthy of respect.”

“Our attitude towards the liberation of Raqqah as a gain for all Syrians is clear. We expect all parties to avoid acts that may increase tension or be seen as aggressive,” the embassy said in a written statement.

The embassy underlined the U.S. government works closely with Turkey in the fight against terrorism and increase regional stability.

Heather Nauert, the U.S. State Department spokesperson, also emphasized on Friday night the importance of counter-terrorism cooperation between Turkey and the United States.

The statement came after Turkey slammed the United States over the move which would further harm the already-fraught relations between Ankara and Washington.

“How can the United States explain the poster of Ocalan in Raqqah? Is this the way they are cooperating with us in the fight against terror?” Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Friday.

“You are not standing by us against terrorism. You wouldn’t allow this if you were.” he said.

The PKK, listed as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States, and the European Union, resumed its 30-year armed campaign against the Turkish state in July 2015 after a brief reconciliation period.

Ocalan, who founded the PKK in 1978, was jailed on a treason conviction in Turkey in 1999.

Ankara has repeatedly denounced the continued U.S. support to the Democratic Union Party, the Syrian affiliate of the PKK, as its ally on the ground in combating Daesh in Syria.