

## 'Iran Ready to Resume All Nuclear Activities'

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOL) said Wednesday Tehran is totally prepared to resume its previous nuclear activities if the 2015 deal with the P5+1 group of countries is not fully preserved. "We can say that we have everything in order if we want to go back to the activities we had before," Behrouz Kamalvandi, the spokesman for the AEOL, said in a Press TV interview. "To analyze what the Trump administration has done, it is something for international politicians to judge, because it is something against the international law and of course it is something that is going to damage the reputation and credibility of the government of the United States," he added.

# Kayhan International



## Zionist, Saudi Regimes Massacre Civilians: Iran

UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) -- Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Gholam Ali Khoshroo has deplored continued massacre of Palestinians and Yemenis and said the Tel Aviv and Riyadh regimes keep slaughtering civilians with U.S. support. The Israeli and Saudi regimes continue to carry out attacks against civilians with the impunity provided by the U.S. as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Gholamali Khoshroo said, addressing a UNSC Open Debate on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict in New York on Tuesday.

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### Viewpoint

## Lessons of the Liberation of Khorramshahr as Iran Marches Forward

## Iran Opens First Autism Library



## Esteghlal, Persepolis to Face Qatari Giants in ACL Quarters



## 'Southern Damascus Liberated Due to Syrian Troops' Courage'



## Syria: Iran's Presence Not Up for Discussion

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad said on Wednesday that the withdrawal of Iranian forces from Syria was "not up for discussion," Lebanon's al-Mayadeen TV reported.

"Whether Iranian forces or Hezbollah withdraw or stay in Syria is not up for discussion because it's the (business) of the Syrian government," the channel cited him as saying.

Washington has demanded Iran make sweeping changes -- from dropping its nuclear program to pulling out of the Syria conflict -- or face severe economic sanctions.

In Syria's seven-year-old conflict, Iran has provided vital support to President Bashar al-Assad's military. Its advisory aid and resistance forces from the region, including Lebanon's Hezbollah, helped Damascus claw back control of major cities from terrorists.

Mekdad said those who demand the pullout of the Iranian military advisers and Hezbollah forces from Syria "are considering the possibility of intervention in all parts of Syria, including the support of terrorists in Syria and elsewhere in the region."

On Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo threatened Iran with the "strongest sanctions in history" if it does not comply with a list of 12 U.S. demands, including the withdrawal of "all forces under Iranian command throughout the entirety of Syria."

Russian President Vladimir

Putin also told Syrian President Bashar al-Assad earlier this month that foreign forces in Syria had to leave the Arab country because the Syrian government had succeeded in its fight against large-scale terrorism.

Russia runs a number of military bases and has been carrying out an aerial bombardment campaign on behalf of the Syrian government.

Mekdad said he "highly appreciates" the help of Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah in Syria's battle against terrorism.

Mekdad touched on a recent U.S. statement on the withdrawal of American troops from Syria, saying, "The main goal of such statements is to pump the money out of the Arab countries" which are opposed to such pullout.

The senior Syrian official also accused Washington of financing and supplying terrorists with arms.

He said the U.S.-led coalition operating illegally in Syria had deliberately bombed oil wells in the Arab country to render them useless for the Damascus government.

"I believe that the oxygen for terrorist groups comes from the United States," Mekdad said, urging Washington to "stop supporting terrorists and respect Syria's sovereignty and choice of the Syrian people."

The U.S. has been conducting airstrikes against what it calls Daesh targets inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate.

### Chief of Staff and IRGC:

## U.S. Has No Courage for Confrontation With Iran



A group of MPs huddle around Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Maj. Gen. Muhammad Baqeri during his appearance at parliament in Tehran, May 23, 2018.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- The chief of staff of Iran's armed forces dismissed on Wednesday U.S. demands for Tehran to curb its influence in the region, and said it would not seek permission from any country to develop defense capabilities.

"Iranian armed forces are now, thanks to God, more prepared than ever and will not wait for the permission or approval of any power to develop defense capabilities," Maj. Gen. Muhammad Baqeri said.

His statement came two days after U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Washington would impose

"the strongest sanctions in history" if Tehran did not curb its regional influence and limit its missile program.

Two weeks earlier, U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of an international nuclear deal with Iran that had lifted sanctions on the Islamic Republic in exchange for curbs to its nuclear program.

Baqeri called U.S. leaders "disloyal, cruel, criminal, isolated, angry, corrupt, and on the Zionist regime's payroll", and said Washington did not have the courage for a military confrontation with Tehran.

"This enemy (the United States) does not have the courage for military confrontation and face-to-face war with Iran, but it's trying to put economic and mental pressures on the Iranian nation," he added.

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) also warned that the U.S. government would be defeated like Iraq's deposed leader Saddam Hussein if it attacks Iran.

"The American leaders ... have got this message that if they attack Iran, they will encounter a fate similar to that of Saddam Hussein," the IRGC said in a statement.

Iran's Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif said Pompeo had repeated old allegations against Tehran "only with a stronger and more indecent tone".

"Mr Pompeo and other U.S. officials in the current administration are prisoners of their wrong illusions, prisoners of their past and have been taken hostage by corrupt pressure groups," he told state television.

In Paris, France's foreign minister said the U.S. decision to scrap the Iran nuclear deal and implement a tough strategy on the country would endanger the region.

"We disagree with the method because this collection of sanctions which will be set up against Iran will not enable dialogue and, on the contrary, it will reinforce the conservatives and weaken President Rouhani. This posture risks endangering the region more," Jean-Yves Le Drian told France Inter radio.

He said Paris would continue to implement the agreement even if it did agree with the United States that Iran's ballistic missile activity and regional role needed to be curbed.

Deputy foreign ministers of the remaining parties to the accord - Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia - will meet their Iranian counterpart on Friday in Vienna.

The meeting will assess what can be done to keep the deal and circumvent extraterritorial American sanctions that are impacting foreign business appetite for Iran.

## Netanyahu Goes to Underground Bunker for Session

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) -- The occupying regime of Israel's security cabinet, a forum of senior ministers headed by Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu, has begun holding its weekly meetings in a secure underground bunker in occupied Jerusalem Al-Quds, Israeli revealed.

The facility, known as the "national management center", was first used by the security cabinet in 2011 to rehearse a crisis scenario. It was carved out beneath the regime complex in occupied Al-Quds and includes living quarters as well as command facilities.

Israeli media said reports of the move come amid a rise in tensions with Iran.

The Zionist regime this month accused Iran of firing rockets from Syria into the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and used it as a pretext to carry out what it called its heaviest airstrikes in Syria since the start of the Syria war in 2011.

According to Russia's Defense Ministry, Israel used 28 warplanes in the attack and fired 70 missiles. Both Damascus and Moscow said the Syrian army had managed to shoot down more than half of the missiles.

Israel has stepped up its attacks on Syrian military positions in what is considered an attempt to prop up terrorist groups that have been suffering heavy losses and retreating on multiple fronts, most recently from their strongholds in Damascus suburbs.

The Zionist regime has been acting as a de facto air force of the militants for some time but its extensive raids on May 10 were its most brazenly direct engagement in Syria's fight on terrorism.

Meetings of the council, hitherto mostly at the prime minister's office in the occupied Jerusalem Al-Quds, are already generally held out of the public eye.

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## Sadr Bloc Denies Contact With U.S.

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) -- A top member of Iraqi Shia leader Muqtada al-Sadr's bloc quashed media rumors that his Sairoon alliance has had contacts with the United States after victory in the recent parliamentary election.

In an interview with al-Sumaria news, Dhiaa al-Asadi, head of the political bureau of Sadr's bloc, denied reports of contact between his coalition members and Washington.

It came after Reuters quoted Asadi as saying that the U.S. has contacted members of Sadr's political bloc and that intermediaries had been used to open channels with members of the Sairoon alliance.

"Some media outlets have quoted me as saying that Washington and members of Sairoon list are in contact. Such reports are totally baseless," Asadi said.

Dismissing any channel between the Sadr party and Americans, he noted that Sairoon has

rejected negotiations or cooperation with the U.S. even through intermediaries.

Muqtada al-Sadr's Sairoon coalition took 54 out of 328 seats in the May 12 parliamentary election in Iraq.

With no bloc winning the 165 seats required for an outright majority, negotiations to form a coalition government in Iraq are expected to drag on for weeks.

Sadr cannot be prime minister himself since he did not run in the election, but has been meeting the leaders of other blocs and setting conditions on his support for candidates for prime minister. He says he wants someone who rejects sectarianism, foreign interference and corruption in Iraq.

"We remain open to meet and work with the government that is formed and given that Sairoon won the plurality of seats and they'll certainly make up a part of this government," said a U.S.

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## U.S. Envoy Poses With Poster of Obliterated Al-Aqsa

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) -- U.S. envoy to Occupied Palestine David Friedman has posed next to a poster of Jerusalem Al-Quds' skyline with a computer-generated rendition of the Third Jewish Temple placed over Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest site.

Washington's embassy in Occupied Palestine, which moved from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem Al-Quds last week, claimed that Friedman was not aware of the details of the poster when he was photographed.

"The U.S. policy is absolutely clear: we support the status quo on the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount," the embassy said in a statement.

The photo was taken during a visit by Friedman to the Zionist city of Bnei Brak near Tel Aviv.

Right-wing Zionist activists have long called for destroying Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock

to make space for the Third Jewish Temple.

Oren Hazan, a suspended Knesset member from PM Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party, has pledged to demolish Al-Aqsa.

"It would not be responsible at this point in time to tell you how we would do it (destroying Al-Aqsa), but I will say it clear and loud, when I have the opportunity to do it, I will," he was quoted as saying by Mondoweiss in 2016.

Friedman, a former lawyer for the Trump Organization, supports the expansion of illegal settlements in the West Bank. He has repeatedly made provocative statements in favor of Israel, once even comparing liberal Jewish American group, J Street, to Nazi collaborators.

In a column published by Fox News on Sunday, Friedman accused U.S. "liberal media" of siding with Hamas to undermine the

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