

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The Syrian army opened heavy fire at the strongholds and movements of Tahrir al-Sham Hay'at terrorist group in northern Hama after the it targeted government forces' positions on Wednesday. Tahrir al-Sham and allied terrorists fired several rockets at the army positions in Halfaya and Batish checkpoint in northern Hama. The army's missile and artillery units, in response, opened heavy fire at the terrorists' movements and positions in Kafr Zita, Ma'arkabeh and its outskirts, al-Zakat, al-Latamina and al-Safsafiyeh regions in northern Hama.

Those are the fortunate people who adopt the Holy Qur'an and prayers as their guide and protector and like Prophet Jesus Christ (Isa) they forsake the world and its vicious pleasure.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

## PA Rejects Any U.S. 'Peace Plan' Excluding al-Quds, Palestinian Refugees



This file photo supplied by an activist group shows a Zionist trooper pointing a gun at a Palestinian woman.

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – The Palestinian Authority announced Wednesday that it rejects any future “peace plan” presented by the United States that excludes the questions of al-Quds and the Palestinian refugees.

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman of the PA presidency, said in an official press statement that “a peace plan which excludes al-Quds and the Palestinian refugees will never be an

introduction to a successful political peace process in the region.”

“As long as the United States carries on with acts that change the rules of the relationship with the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian people, we believe that the status of stalemate and political paralysis will go on,” he said.

Rudeineh stressed that “any incorrect or ill contacts with anyone that aim at harming the basic na-

tional Palestinian constants, will certainly lead to further disturbance of stability that is already fragile in the entire region.”

His remarks were made ahead of the arrival of a U.S. delegation headed by Jared Kushner, the adviser of U.S. President Donald Trump, and the U.S. envoy Jason Greenblatt to the region next week, according to Israeli media reports.

The media reports said that the visit of the two senior U.S. diplomats aims at discussing a date for launching a new Mideast peace plan, better known as the Deal of the Century, to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

The plan includes a limited sovereign Palestinian state on half of the West Bank and the entire Gaza Strip, with the Zionist regime retaining security responsibility for most of the West Bank and all border crossings, according to the reports.

The plan also includes the annexation of Arab neighborhoods in East al-Quds to the Palestinian state, with the exception of the Old City, which will be part of the “Israeli Jerusalem (al-Quds).”

The plan proposes Abu Dis neighborhood to be the capital of the Palestinian state.

Trump’s administration moved its embassy in the Israeli-occupied territories from Tel Aviv to al-Quds on May 14 after Trump’s recognition of the holy city as the capital of the regime, which sparked a strong Palestinian rejection.

The Palestinians then demanded a multilateral international mechanism to sponsor the so-called peace process with the regime, which has been stalled since 2014, as an alternative to the U.S. monopoly.

### Lebanon FM Escalates Refugee Row With UN Agency

BEIRUT (Reuters) – Lebanon’s caretaker foreign minister escalated his row with the UN refugee agency UNHCR on Wednesday, accusing it at a news conference of working to stop refugees from returning to Syria.

UNHCR has denied similar accusations, saying it supports the return of refugees when it is safe for them to go back to Syria and helps those who choose to return with their documentation. It had no immediate reaction to the latest accusation.

“Their policy is to forbid the return,” Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil said. “The Lebanese policy is to encourage the return. Forbid,

encourage. Stop, facilitate. That’s it,” Bassil said during the news conference in the town of Aarsal, where he spoke alongside Syrian refugees.

The UN has registered about a million refugees in Lebanon - nearly a quarter of Lebanon’s population. The Lebanese government, which puts the figure at 1.5 million, says it wants them to start going back to territory where fighting is over.

Bassil said on Wednesday the burden of hosting Syrian refugees seven years into the conflict that drove them to flee had grown “unbearable”, blaming the crisis for the collapse of the economy and

emigration of Lebanese citizens.

Last week, Bassil ordered a freeze on applications by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for residency permits for its staff, saying it was intimidating refugees into staying in Lebanon.

Some 19 UNHCR staff members are affected by the Lebanese residency permit freeze, she said, and the agency’s spokesman in Geneva said it hopes the decision will be reversed.

The UNHCR favored the return of all refugees when it was safe for them to go home, its Lebanon representative, Mireille Girard, told Reuters on Tuesday. It speaks

to refugees in all countries when they are preparing to return home to make sure it can give them enough support and protection, she said.

Another senior UN official, the deputy special coordinator for Lebanon Philippe Lazzarini, was quoted late on Tuesday as saying it would be “inconceivable” for the body to oppose refugees who wanted to go home.

“We respect refugees’ individual decision to return home and would never, never discourage the return from taking place based on their decision,” Hariri’s office quoted Lazzarini as saying during a meeting.

### Taliban Assure Afghans of Bright Future Once U.S. 'Invaders' Leave

KABUL (Dispatches) – The Taliban told “American invaders” to leave Afghanistan in an announcement marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, assured the people of a bright future under the militant group’s rule and said it had already liberated “vast areas” of the country.

The Taliban, who announced a surprise three-day ceasefire over the Eid holiday, except against foreign forces, also denounced the U.S. relocation of its Zionist embassy to al-Quds, which “further exposes the absolute hatred of American officials towards Islam”.

Taliban leader Sheikh Haibatullah Akhunzada said in the statement that Afghans’ salvation lay in “American and other occupying forces” leaving and repeated a call for talks with the United States.

“If the American officials truly believe in a peaceful end to the Afghan imbroglio, then they must directly present themselves at the negotiation table,” Akhunzada said.

“We also assure our nation (of) a bright future for our country accompanied by peace and prosperity,” he added.

The Taliban are fighting U.S.-led NATO forces, combined under the Resolute Support mission, and the U.S.-backed government to restore their strict law, after their ouster in 2001.

“The American invaders have not desisted from any brutality and severity in pursuit of subduing our nation. They bomb our villages, cities, mosques, madrassas and other events, murder innocent civilians, forcibly displace them and torment thousands of Afghans through

unimaginable torture in prisons,” Akhunzada said.

Resolute Support said in response it was hopeful that the Taliban stick to their ceasefire “and we hope that pause leads to dialogue and progress on reconciliation”.

“Considering more than 90 percent of the casualties in Taliban high-profile attacks in Kabul this year are civilians, which is up from more than 80 percent in 2017 and 60 percent in 2016, peace for Afghanistan is overdue,” spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Martin O’Donnell said.

The Taliban banned cinema, TV and music during their five-year rule and insisted that women wear all-enveloping burqas. They inflicted harsh punishments for those who did not adhere to their rules.

### U.S. Airstrike Kills Four Civilians in Syria



A picture taken on April 3, 2018 shows a vehicle of U.S.-backed coalition forces driving in the northern Syrian town of Manbij.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Four civilians have been killed after the U.S.-led coalition purportedly fighting the Daesh terrorist group conducted an airstrike against Syria’s northeastern province of Hasakah.

Local sources, requesting anonymity, told Syria’s official news agency SANA that the aerial attack targeted residential buildings in al-Hardan village, which is located in the southeastern part of the province, on Wednesday, causing the fatalities.

A dozen civilians lost their lives and several others sustained injuries on Tuesday, when U.S.-led military aircraft bombarded Tal Shayr village in the same Syrian province.

The U.S.-led coalition has been conducting airstrikes against what are said to be Daesh targets inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate.

The military alliance has repeatedly been accused of targeting and killing civilians. It has also been largely incapable of achieving its declared goal of destroying Daesh.

Syria’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, in two separate letters addressed to United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the rotating President of the UN Security Council Vasily Nebenzya on June 5, condemned the continuing attacks by the U.S.-led coalition against inno-

cent Syrians, and its assaults on the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the conflict-plagued Arab country.

The letters further noted that the “illegal” U.S.-led coalition continues to perpetrate massacres against Syrian civilians, leaving scores of people, including elderly people, women and children, dead over the past few days and destroying homes as well as civilian properties and infrastructure in targeted villages.

The developments came after the Syrian army reinforced its anti-aircraft defense systems in the country’s southwest near the border areas of Golan Heights against potential attacks from the Zionist regime.

A pro-Syrian government commander, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told Reuters on Tuesday that the army plans to deploy additional defenses in the coming days.

The Syrian army has stationed Russian-made Pantsir S1 weapon in an attempt to “renew the air defense system against Israel in the first degree,” the commander said.

Meanwhile, the Syrian army forces are gearing up for an offensive against terrorist groups at the border with the Zionist regime and Jordan.

The commander noted that grounds are fully prepared for the offensive in the southwest, but government forces currently focus on eliminating a pocket of Daesh terrorists near the government-held southern town of Sweida.

### 2 Killed, 5 Injured in Bomb Attacks in Iraq’s Diyala

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – Two people were killed Wednesday and five soldiers wounded in two bomb attacks in Iraq’s eastern province of Diyala, a provincial police source said.

In one incident, a man and his wife were killed when a roadside bomb went off near their vehicle outside the ethnically-mixed town of Khanaqin, near the border with Iran, Major Alaa al-Sa’idi told Xinhua.

Separately, five soldiers were wounded when several mortar rounds landed at an army base near the ethnically-mixed town of Qara-Tappa, in north of the provincial capital Baquba, which located some 65km northeast of Baghdad, Sa’idi said.

The areas of the two incidents are part of disputed areas claimed by both Baghdad government and

the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan.

The Kurds in the region consider the northern Kirkuk province and parts of Nineveh, Diyala and Salahudin provinces as disputed areas and want them to be incorporated into their region, a move fiercely opposed by the Arabs, Turkomans and the central government in Baghdad.

No group has so far claimed responsibility for the attack in the areas where the two ethnically-mixed towns, which also suffer from attacks by remnants of Daesh terrorists.

Daesh has been regrouping in rugged areas in the eastern part of Diyala, as well as in Himreen mountainous area in northern the province, and carries out attacks against civilians and Iraqi forces from time to time.