

Save the Children:

Civilian Casualties in Yemen's Hudaydah Rising

SANAA (Press TV) – Save the Children has voiced alarm over a “dramatic” rise in civilian casualties in Yemen’s Hudaydah since June, when the Saudi-led coalition of invaders launched an offensive to seize the lifeline port city.

“Between January and May this year, there were an average of 44 civilian casualties every month in al-Hudaydah. The subsequent three months (June-August) saw the figure jump to a monthly average of 116 – an increase of 164 percent,” the London-based NGO reported.

The civilian casualties in Hudaydah accounted for 51 percent of all civilian casualties in Yemen between June and August this year, it added, citing the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data monitoring group.

In the course of the three months, there had been at least 349 civilian deaths in the city, while the national total reached 685, the monitor’s figures showed.

“Save the Children field teams are meeting children who have

suffered severe and life-changing injuries caused by explosive weapons, from airstrikes to landmines. Treating these injuries is particularly challenging in Yemen, where the health system has all but collapsed, prosthetics are hard to come by, and there are few surgeons trained to treat traumatic injuries,” the fund said.

The body’s CEO Thorning-Schmidt said, “When children are targeted and killed or when hunger is used as a weapon of war, the world must speak out and do everything in its power to hold those responsible to account.”

He was speaking in New York, where the United Nations General Assembly is holding its 73rd session.

“Attacks on schools and hospitals are up – safe spaces that should never be targeted. This is a War on Children. The world seems to be accepting an outrageous disregard for the conventions of war, and children are paying the price. It’s shocking that in the 21st Century we are



In this Aug. 25, 2018 photo, a man feeds children Halas, a climbing vine of green leaves, in Aslam, Hajjah, Yemen.

retreating on a principle that is so simple – children should be protected,” he added.

He also urged that all the parties concerned to make earnest efforts towards bringing about a political solution to the conflict.

Yemen has been in turmoil since 2014 when former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi stepped down and then fled to Riyadh.

To reinstall the ex-Yemeni gov-

ernment, the Saudi regime and a coalition of its allies launched a war against Yemen months later in 2015 against its popular Houthi Ansarullah movement, which currently runs state affairs in the absence of an effective government.

The bloody war, the UN says, has led to the world’s worst humanitarian crisis in the poorest Arabian Peninsula state.

50,000 Syrians Returned to Syria From Lebanon This Year



50,000 Syria refugees have returned home from Lebanon so far in 2018.

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Fifty thousand Syrians have returned home from Lebanon so far in 2018 and the number could reach 200,000 in a year’s time if it continues at this rate, a top Lebanese official said on Tuesday.

Major General Abbas Ibrahim, head of Lebanon’s General Security directorate, told Reuters his security agency had organized the return of 25,000 Syrians in coordination with Damascus. Another 25,000 had made their own way

home. Lebanon is hosting 976,000 registered Syrian refugees, according to the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The government says the total number of Syrians in the country is around 1.5 million.

Lebanese politicians have been calling for Syrian refugees to go home as President Bashar al-Assad wins back more of the country, saying Lebanon cannot cope with hosting a number of refugees equivalent to a quarter of its population.

Ibrahim is coordinating with Damascus over the return of thousands of Syrians who want to go home.

Their names are first sent to Damascus for approval. Ibrahim said on average 10 percent of them are rejected by Damascus. Anyone wanted by the Syrian authorities is

told so they can decide whether to stay or go home to “settle their affairs”.

The conflict in Syria that erupted in 2011 has generated 5.6 million refugees in the Middle East.

Ibrahim expected the pace of returns to accelerate when the fate of terrorist-held Idlib province is settled, noting that many young men did not want to return for fear of being conscripted for a battle in Idlib. “When there are no longer big military battles in Syria, many young men will return,” Ibrahim said.

He said Syrians are given a six-month reprieve from military service “to organize their affairs”.

The UNHCR chief Grandi has said that for larger numbers to decide to go back, more confidence must be created by addressing issues of concern to refugees and UNHCR should have a presence in areas of return.

Spokesman:

Palestinian President’s Speech at UN Vital for ‘Peace’

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) – The upcoming speech by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at the UN General Assembly may be the last chance to realize ‘peace’, Abbas’ spokesman said Tuesday.

“The speech by President Mahmoud Abbas at the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday represents a crossroads and paves the way for a new stage in handling the serious challenges facing our people,” Nabil Abu Rudeineh was quoted by the official Palestinian news agency Wafa as saying in a statement.

He said Abbas’ speech will outline a comprehensive national strategy “that will leave a profound impact on events in the region and in the world.”

Abu Rudeineh slammed the upcoming U.S. plan for the Middle

East, known as Deal of the Century, saying “there is no legitimacy to any deals, decisions or actions rejected by our people and their legitimate national leadership.”

The spokesman also stressed that “the legitimate Palestinian leadership headed by Abbas will continue to reject dubious deals.”

The Palestinians have boycotted the U.S. administration under President Donald Trump since it recognized al-Quds as the Zionist regime’s capital last December and moved the U.S. embassy in the occupied territories to the disputed holy city in May.

The last round of the U.S. sponsored Zionist-Palestinian talks collapsed in April 2014, after nine months of negotiations.

Trump...

(Continued From Page One)

officials. The UAE and Saudi Arabia have been boycotting Doha since last year as part of a political dispute tearing apart the typically clubby Persian Gulf Arab nations. The laughter in the first moments of the address evoked a campaign line Trump frequently deployed against his predecessor Barack Obama - who embraced international engagement - suggesting that due to weak American leadership, “the world is laughing at us.” In 2014, Trump tweeted “We need a President who isn’t a laughing stock to the entire World. We need a truly great leader, a genius at strategy and winning. Respect!”

In addition to the keynote speech, Trump is to chair a meeting of the UN Security Council on the topic of countering nuclear proliferation on Wednesday. His four days of choreographed foreign affairs were to stand in contrast to a presidency sometimes defined by disorder. Appearances on the global stage tend to elevate the stature of presidents both abroad and at home. But even before his arrival for the annual gathering of world leaders and diplomats, the desired image was being overshadowed at home by domestic political troubles, with Trump forced to confront the salacious and embarrassing.

The fate of his second Supreme Court nominee, Brett Kavanaugh, was cast into fresh doubt over the weekend amid a second allegation of sexual misconduct. Drama also swirled Monday around the status of his deputy attorney general. Rod Rosenstein was reported last week to have floated the idea of secretly recording Trump last year and to have raised the idea of using the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office. The man overseeing special counsel Robert Mueller’s Trump-Russia probe and a frequent target of Trump’s ire offered to resign and perhaps expected Monday to be fired. He received a stay of punishment at least until Thursday, when he is to meet with Trump at the White House. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is in New York to attend UN meetings. U.S. officials said Trump is not opposed to talking if Iran requests a session. “Iran has not requested a meeting,” Alireza Miryousefi, spokesman for Iran’s UN mission, told Reuters. The top adviser to Leader of the Islamic Revolution also rejected a U.S. offer for top-level meetings. Asked about the offer of talks also by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Ali Akbar Velayati said “Trump’s and Pompeo’s dream would never come to reality”.

Minister ...

(Continued From Page One)

supply an S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria in two weeks despite strong Israeli objections, a week after Moscow accused the Zionist regime of causing the downing of a Russian military jet in Syria. Russia has said Syrian anti-aircraft batteries shot its IL-20 surveillance plane down by mistake shortly after the occupying regime of Israel’s jets hit a nearby target. Moscow accused Israel of creating dangerous conditions that caused the incident. Netanyahu spoke by telephone with Russian President Vladimir Putin Monday. In his remarks Tuesday, Netanyahu said he had agreed with Putin that the working teams from the Zionist military and the Russian army will meet soon. He made the remarks after convening his security cabinet to discuss the tensions with Moscow. The occupying regime of Israel has long lobbied Moscow not to provide the S-300 to Syria, fearing this would hinder its aerial capability to strike Syrian targets viewed as a bid to prop up terrorists in the country.

Oil Surges...

(Continued From Page One)

OPEC nations of “ripping off the world” and said he wants the group to stop raising prices.

The so-called “OPEC+” group, which includes the likes of Russia, Oman and Kazakhstan, met at the weekend to discuss a possible increase in crude output, but the upshot of the gathering was that the group was in no rush to do so. The International Energy Agency forecast strong oil demand growth of 1.4 million barrels per day (bpd) this year and 1.5 million bpd in 2019, and said in its most recent report that the market was tightening. “After the weekend’s meeting, the voices of those who foresee \$100 a bar-

rel and compare the current backdrop to the 2007/2008 bull run are getting louder,” said PVM Oil Associates strategist Tamas Varga. “Undoubtedly the oil market is expected to be tight in coming months and, if OPEC’s own numbers are to be believed, global oil inventories are to fall during the remainder of the year.” Trump had been counting on the Saudis to pump enough oil to keep prices in check ahead of midterm elections in November. The economic fallout from Trump’s trade disputes with China, Canada, Mexico and the European Union is already making consumers increasingly worried about higher prices. Fresh U.S. tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese imports which took effect Monday are expected to translate into higher prices for consumers and special pain for low- to middle-income voters who make up much of Trump’s base. The uptick in crude prices began after Trump decided to leave the nuclear deal with Iran in May and reimpose sanctions on the country which is OPEC’s third largest producer.

President Hassan Rouhani said Iran can withstand US economic sanctions and called Washington’s threats to choke off Iranian oil exports an “empty promise”. “The United States is not capable of bringing our oil exports to zero,” he told NBC News in New York Monday. “It’s a threat that is empty of credibility. Perhaps on this path, we will sustain certain pressures but certainly the United States will not reach its objective,” he added.

EU...

(Continued From Page One)

Iran’s exports, including oil,” European Union foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told reporters after a meeting of senior officials from Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and Iran. “In practical terms this will mean that EU member states will set up a legal entity to facilitate legitimate financial transactions with Iran and this will allow European companies to continue to trade with Iran in accordance with European Union law and could be open to other partners in the world,” she said. “The key is to keep all possibilities open so that we can signal to the Iranians that the door isn’t closing,” said a senior French diplomat. The European Union has so far failed to devise a workable legal framework to shield its companies from U.S. sanctions that go into effect in November and that, among other things, seek to choke off Iran’s oil sales, diplomats said. On Monday, French state-owned bank Bpifrance abandoned a plan to set up a financial mechanism to aid French firms trading with Iran. Bpifrance’s Chief Executive Nicolas Dufourcq said the lender had put on hold a project to finance French companies that wished to export goods to Iran despite U.S. sanctions. The plan was to establish euro-denominated export guarantees to Iranian buyers of French goods and services and avoid the extraterritorial reach of U.S. legislation by structuring the financing through vehicles without any U.S. link. Swiss oil trader Vitol also said Tuesday it will stop doing business with Iran after the United States reimposes sanctions on Tehran’s oil trade from Nov. 4. Senior executive Mike Muller, however, said the commodity merchant looked forward to returning to Iran when problems are sorted out. “We have a longstanding relationship with Iran and clearly I look forward to when trade can be resumed, but for now, one needs explicit waivers from the US, and not just the U.S. but the global banking community and everything else,” he was quoted as saying in Singapore. A spokesman for AB Volvo said the Swedish truckmaker had stopped assembling trucks in Iran because U.S. sanctions are preventing it from being paid. “With all these sanctions and everything that the United States put in place, the bank system doesn’t work in Iran. We can’t get paid. So for now we don’t have any business in Iran,” Reuters quoted Volvo spokesman Fredrik Ivarsson as saying. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said last month that Iranian officials should stop pinning their hopes on Europe to save the international nuclear deal. “There is no problem with continuing relations and negotiations with Europe, but hope should be abandoned regarding matters such as the nuclear deal,” he said in a meeting with President Rouhani and members of his cabinet. Ayatollah Khamenei is the champion of a resistive economy which seeks to counter sanctions through increasing the country’s resilience to outside pressures by boosting domestic production.

Lebanese Parl’t Approves \$120-Million World Bank Loan for Health Sector

BEIRUT (Xinhua) – Lebanon’s parliament on Tuesday endorsed the 120-million-U.S.-dollar World Bank loan for the health sector after a heated debate.

“We should benefit from these loans at low interest rates since our revenues are very limited,” caretaker Finance Minister Ali Hassan Khalil was quoted as saying by the National News Agency.

This loan is part of the World Bank’s broader strategy to support the Lebanese government’s efforts to reduce the social

and economic impact of the Syrian crisis on vulnerable communities.

Interest rate on the loan stands at only 0.25 percent and the health care projects will be implemented within 5 years.

The services offered by the medical centers of the Health Ministry and public hospitals will improve thanks to the loan, local news agency Almarkazia reported.

The Kataeb Party expressed its reservation about the loan, citing that it will contribute to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in

Lebanon, as they will never think about returning to their homeland as long as favorable living conditions are provided to them in Lebanon.

Prime Minister-designate Saad Hariri said that the loan will mostly benefit Lebanese citizens.

“Syrian refugees will also benefit from this program. We have absolutely no problem with that. We don’t want these people to die in Lebanon and this issue is not political but purely economic,” he said.