

Saudi Arabia Boosts Troop Levels in South Yemen

ADEN (Dispatches) – Saudi Arabia has deployed more troops in southern Yemen to try to contain clashes between nominal allies in the Saudi-led military coalition fighting in the country that risks further fragmenting the country.

Saudi Arabia has reinforced its positions in Shabwa and Aden as Riyadh called for talks to resolve the crisis and refocus the Western-backed coalition on battling the Houthi Ansarullah movement that has stepped up retaliatory missile and drone attacks on Saudi cities.

“Saudi forces arrived in Shabwa and started working with the local government for a de-escalation and a ceasefire. All parties responded positively to the coalition’s calls,” coalition spokesman Colonel Turki al-Malki said.

The fight for the south of the country has opened a new conflict, focused around the port of Aden, in a multifaceted war that has killed tens of thousands and pushed the long-impo- verished Arabian Peninsula nation to the brink of famine.

Saudi troops and armed vehicles arrived over the weekend in the capital of the oil-producing Shabwa province where the United Arab Emirates-backed separatists have been battling forces of Yemen’s Saudi-backed government for control, two local officials said.

The two sides are part of the coalition, led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, that intervened in Yemen in March 2015.

But the separatists, who seek to restore the former South Yemen republic, turned on the former regime in early August and seized control of Aden, interim seat of Hadi’s regime.

They have since been trying to extend their reach to nearby Abyan and Shabwa, clashing



Militants from the UAE-backed separatist Southern Transitional Council (STC) ride a pickup in Aden, Yemen, on August 8, 2019.

repeatedly with former regime forces.

Meanwhile, a bipartisan group of lawmakers in the U.S. Congress have joined forces to end Saudi Arabia’s deadly war against the people of Yemen, amid international outrage over the Riyadh regime’s bombing of a Yemeni prison that killed over 100 people.

The lawmakers are seeking to protect an amendment to the annual U.S. defense policy bill, which prohibits the Pentagon from providing the spare parts that Saudi Arabia needs to keep its warplanes, which are mostly U.S.-made, in operational status.

The measure also ends certain forms of intel-

ligence-sharing between Washington and Riyadh.

The amendment, first presented by Democratic Representative Ro Khanna of California, has already been adopted by the House of Representatives in its version of the military authorization bill, and now the bipartisan group, which features members of both Congress chambers, are trying to prevent the amendment’s omission.

“We strongly urge you to include the House provision that prohibits military support for the Saudi-led coalition’s war” the lawmakers said in a letter obtained by The Washington Post.

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An Iranian delegation was in Paris on Monday, including oil and finance officials, for talks.

“The question is to know whether we can reach this \$15 billion level, secondly who will finance it, and thirdly we need to get at the very least the tacit approval of the United States. We still don’t know what the U.S. position is,” a source aware of the negotiations told Reuters.

Reuters quoted an unnamed Iranian official as saying: “Although the EU and particularly France have goodwill, they should convince the U.S. to cooperate with them .. If not, Iran is very serious about decreasing its nuclear commitments. There is no logic to respect the (2015) deal, if it has no benefits for us.”

Reports said French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire was in Washington on Tuesday in part to discuss the credit mechanism.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said on Tuesday that Iran was capable of resuming enrichment of uranium to 20% fissile purity within two days.

Reuters said talks for now did not go into how the credit lines would be repaid, although it would require Iranian oil exports to resume eventually. Certain countries were discussing with France possible involvement in such a mechanism, it added.

“Importing the oil at some point is essential, but we need to have the agreement of the Americans. We are trying to persuade them (the Iranians) not to do more (reductions in commitment to the nuclear deal), but it’s not the end of the story for the mechanism if they do,” the news agency quoted an unnamed source as saying.

Iran has asked for \$3 billion a month to extend the proposals beyond the end of this year, the source said.

Dorian... (Continued From Page One)

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said. Efforts to reach officials in the Bahamas by phone on Tuesday were unsuccessful.

Houses in a neighborhood in Freeport on Grand Bahama Island were engulfed by 6 feet (1.8 m) of water. “It looks like they’re boats on top of the water,” said Rosa Knowles-Bain 61, a resident who fled two days ago to an emergency shelter.

Dorian was expected to churn toward Florida by day’s end, before bringing its powerful winds and dangerous surf along the coasts of Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina by late Thursday.

Forecasters have told Floridians not to become complacent because the storm is now predicted to stay off the coast.

Dorian could drive seawater inland as it approaches, with parts of the northern Florida and Georgia coasts seeing as much as 7 feet (2.1 meters), said NHC Director Ken Graham, urging residents of coastal areas to obey any evacuation orders.

Hurricane-force winds extended 60 miles (100 km) from the storm’s core, with still-dangerous tropical storm-force winds felt for 175 miles (280 km) from its center.

Nine counties in Florida have issued mandatory evacuation orders. They included parts of Duval County, which includes Jacksonville, one of Florida’s two biggest cities, and some areas in Palm Beach County, home to Trump’s Mar-a-Lago resort.

After days of warnings to flee a storm that at its peak was rated at the top of the scale of hurricane strength, many residents of Florida’s coast remained unsure whether to wait it out or evacuate.

Further north, the streets of Sea Island, Georgia, were largely empty on Tuesday after many visitors heeded evacuation orders, said Kathryn Ross, owner of the Pelican Market grocery store.

Orlando International Airport ceased commercial operations because of the storm, it said in a statement.

The governors of Georgia and South Carolina had ordered evacuations of some coastal counties.

Dorian was tied with Gilbert (1988), Wilma (2005) and the 1935 Labor Day hurricane for the second-strongest Atlantic hurricane on record, based on maximum sustained winds. Allen in 1980 was the most powerful, with 190-mile (306-kph) winds, the NHC said.

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right now there’s a lot more talk about it and recognition that it is unsustainable. And there are economic statistics that verify this. And there are certainly foreign policy problems that we are facing that indicate that we are not the powerhouse that we used to be,” he said.

“And I know that we heard a lot of propaganda how great the economy is and there are statistics that are you know at least they are better than what they could be but there is no indication that there is real growth. If you look at the growth in this country compared to the debt, guess what, that is going up five or six times faster than manufacturing,” he noted.

Turkish Minister Threatens Istanbul Mayor Over Ousted Kurdish Mayors

ANKARA (Reuters) – Turkey’s interior minister on Tuesday threatened “to devastate” the mayor of Istanbul over his support for three Kurdish mayors who were replaced by state officials over alleged terror links less than five months after the trio were elected.

Last month, Turkey replaced pro-Kurdish Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) mayors in Diyarbakir, Van and Mardin with state officials, and detained more than 400 people over suspected militant links, in a move sharply criticized by the opposition.

Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu - who dealt President Tayyip

Erdogan the biggest defeat of his career when he defeated the ruling AK Party (AKP) in June local elections - has slammed the move as illegal and undemocratic and called for it to be reversed.

At the weekend Imamoglu - of the main opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP), who was backed by HDP when he was elected in June - visited Kurdish town of Diyarbakir and met with two of the ousted mayors.

Erdogan and his government accuse the HDP of links to the PKK militant group that is designated a terrorist group by Turkey, the European Union and the United

States. The HDP denies such links.

Speaking in the northeastern province of Bursa on Tuesday, Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu said the dismissals of the three mayors, who were elected in late March, were in line with the law.

“Ignorant. Know your place and your limits,” Soylu said of Imamoglu. “This country has been handling this terrorist organization for 40 years... If you meddle in things that are not your job, we will devastate you.”

The minister added: “This is very clear... While there are people who have suffered from terror for years, such a support for men

who mourn at terrorist funerals will hurt our hearts and those of our people.”

The comments come a week after Imamoglu’s announcement that the Istanbul municipality canceled the transfer of more than 350 million lira (\$61 million) to some pro-AKP foundations, in one of his first moves against Erdogan since being elected.

Erdogan has previously said that his government would also replace mayors in other parts of the country if they were found to be linked to militants. But Imamoglu has dismissed those comments as meaningless and saddening.

Lebanon to Announce State of Economic Emergency

BEIRUT (Reuters) – Lebanon will declare an economic emergency and the government has begun work on a plan to accelerate public finance reforms, the country’s prime minister says.

Saad al-Hariri also said the policy of keeping stable the Lebanese pound, which is pegged to the dollar, would continue.

Cabinet ministers, politicians and lawmakers who met on Monday reached consensus on an outline for a plan that would put public finances and the economy on a more sustainable path, Hariri said.

“There is agreement to announce a state of economic emergency,” Hariri said.

“This difficult economic situation requires us taking speedy measures such as finishing the budget on time and reducing the deficit” Hariri told reporters after the meeting that President Michel Aoun also attended to address a worsening economic situation.

The government would hold more meetings to speed up the work,

he said.

Lebanon is grappling with one of the world’s heaviest public debt burdens at 150% of GDP and years of low economic growth.

Government finances, plagued by corruption and waste, are strained by a bloated public sector, debt-servicing costs and subsidizing the state power producer.

Hariri said accelerating reforms would avoid a crisis similar to Greece, which fell into a debt crisis nine years ago and had to adopt tough austerity measures under tight supervision by foreign creditors.

“We don’t want this to happen to us. So we are taking measures to save the country,” the prime minister said.

Hariri said Lebanon’s credit rating downgrade by Fitch to CCC 10 days ago was a warning to take the needed measures to shore investor confidence before it was late.

Iraqi FM Meets Arab League Chief

BAGHDAD (Xinhua) – Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed al-Hakim on Tuesday met with Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul-Gheit over Arab and regional issues, ahead of a meeting for Arab foreign ministers on Sept. 10.

In a joint press conference after their meeting, al-Hakim told reporters that “we have discussed the Arab situation in general, and the security of the (Persian) Gulf and navigation, and we clarified Iraq’s

position on efforts to ease the tension between the U.S. and Iran in the (Persian) Gulf.”

“We have explained ... Iraq’s position on the Israeli attacks against Arab countries,” al-Hakim said, adding that they also discussed other significant regional issues.

Aboul-Gheit told the press conference “my presence here in Baghdad came to prepare for the meeting of foreign ministers of the League of Arab states in Cairo,

which will be chaired by Iraq and scheduled to be held on Sept. 10.”

Aboul-Gheit arrived at Baghdad airport earlier in the day.

The visit comes amid tensions in the Middle East region between the United States and Iran, and the explosions of arms depots of the Hashd Shaabi popular forces’ bases in Iraq, as well as the recent bombardments on positions in Syria and Lebanon.