

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran will not negotiate with the United States while sanctions on Tehran are still enforced by Washington, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani told his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron in a phone call on Wednesday.

"From the perspective of Iran's government, parliament and people, with the sanctions still in place, negotiations with America have no meaning," Rouhani said, quoted by the state broadcaster IRIB.

LONDON (FT) -- Oil prices fell sharply on Wednesday, reversing early gains to trade 2 percent lower, after a report that U.S. President Donald Trump discussed easing sanctions against Iran. Brent crude, the international benchmark, was down 1.88 per cent at \$61.21 a barrel by 5pm London time, having earlier traded as high as \$63.27 a barrel. US crude was down 2.06 per cent at \$56.22 a barrel. The report by Bloomberg said Trump has discussed reducing sanctions against Iran this week.

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Viewpoint

Bozo Bolton Burns Out on Anniversary of 9/11 Lie

Officials Dismiss Meeting With Trump

Rouhani to U.S.: Abandon Warmongering

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran's President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday urged the U.S. to "put warmongers aside" after the dismissal of John Bolton as national security adviser, with tensions remaining high in the Persian Gulf.

Speaking at a cabinet meeting, Rouhani further urged Washington to "abandon warmongering and its maximum pressure policy" on Iran and said Tehran would cut its commitments to a 2015 nuclear deal further if necessary.

"The United States should understand that militancy has no profit and must abandon its policy of maximum pressure on Iran ... Iran's commitments to the nuclear deal is proportional to other parties and we will take further steps if necessary," he said.

Rouhani has called the use of faster centrifuges a "third step" away from the nuclear deal. On Wednesday, he said that "if necessary, we will take other steps in future".

"Iran's policy of resistance will not change as long as our enemy (the United States) continues to put pressure on Iran," said Rouhani.

Rouhani's remarks came as Iran again rejected the possibility of a meeting between him and U.S. counterpart Donald Trump, after the White House signaled it was open to such an encounter.

Two of Trump's top lieutenants on Tuesday indicated he was ready to meet the Iranian president without preconditions, after the U.S. leader sacked Bolton.

But Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin stressed the United States would maintain its campaign of "maximum pressure" against the Islamic Republic.

Iran's representative at the United Nations reiterated that a meeting could take place only if Washington ends its "economic terrorism" by lifting all of its sanctions against Tehran.

The Iranian envoy said any meeting must also be held in the framework of the group of major powers that negotiated the 2015 nuclear deal.

"As long as the U.S. government's economic terrorism and such cruel sanctions are imposed on the Iranian people, there is no room for negotiations," he was quoted as saying by IRNA.

The diplomat said Trump's decision to dismiss Bolton -- a hard-liner accused of pushing Trump towards war against Iran -- was a matter for the Americans.

"The removal of John Bolton is an internal affair and we don't take stands on domestic issues," said Takht-Ravanchi.

Asked about the impact of Bolton's sacking on long-fraught relations between Iran and the United States, he said it was "too

soon" to make any judgments.

"Whether the extremist policy of the U.S. changes or not depends on various factors in US foreign policy," he told ISNA.

Bolton is a controversial figure closely linked to the 2003 invasion of Iraq and other aggressive U.S. foreign policy decisions.

He had been seen as one of the main driving forces in the White House's muscular approach to Iran, North Korea and Venezuela among others.

An Iranian government spokesman on Wednesday called Bolton "the symbol of America's hawkish policies and its animosity toward Iran", but said his dismissal was an internal U.S. issue.

For his part, Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif again used Twitter to write about what he calls the #B_Team, which included Bolton, Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu, Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Zayed Al Nahyan, all hawks on Iran.

Zarif said "the world -- minus 3 or 2 panicked cohorts -- was breathing a sigh of relief" after Bolton's ouster. "Thirst for war -- maximum pressure -- should go with the warmonger-in-chief," Zarif wrote.

Other officials, however, urged caution.

Gen. Mohsen Rezaee, a commander in the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps and its former chief, said in a tweet: "We will not be deceived by the sacrificing of Bolton."

Bolton was a longtime hard-liner on Iran who favored regime change and took money for speaking engagements from the anti-Iran Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO), a notorious terrorist group. Bolton famously wrote in 2015, before Iran's nuclear deal was struck, an op-ed in The New York Times headlined: "To Stop Iran's Bomb, Bomb Iran."

In Occupied Palestine, Zionist party leader Naftali Bennett said he was very worried about Bolton's dismissal.

Speaking at the Maariv-Jerusalem Post conference on Wednesday, Bennett was asked how worried he was by these recent events. Bennett responded that he was "very" worried that Trump was seeking to come to terms with Iran.

"We should be very worried. Trump is obviously a big friend of Israel, but at the end of the day our interests are not identical, he has his interests we have our interests," said Bennett.

"Our situation is much better than it should be, in Syria and Iraq. In Lebanon it is so-so. And with Iran, the situation is not far from lost but I am very, very troubled," the former cabinet member said.

Iranian Title Joins Lineup at Iraqi Kurdistan



Iran Pocket Three Medals at Track Asia Cup 2019



Zionist Regime Strikes Gaza After Rocket Scares Netanyahu Off



Citing Trump's Support, Netanyahu Brazenly Announces:

Annexation of West Bank



Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu shows a map of the Jordan Valley and West Bank settlements.

BEIRUT (Dispatches) -- Arab and Muslim countries Wednesday led a wave of outcry after Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to annex a key part of the occupied West Bank if re-elected.

Netanyahu's controversial pledge involves extending Tel Aviv's "sovereignty" to the Jordan Valley and the northern Dead Sea which account for one-third of the West Bank if he wins next week's elections.

The pre-election promise late Tuesday drew immediate condemnation from Arab powerhouses with many warning of disastrous consequences for the so-called Is-

raeli-Palestinian peace process.

"The announcement constitutes a dangerous development and a new Israeli aggression," Arab foreign ministers said after an Arab League meeting in Cairo.

They also warned in a statement of "the ramifications of these dangerous, illegal and irresponsible" moves saying it would "undermine the chances of progress in the peace process".

Jordanian and Palestinian officials said any such measure risks "killing off" and "destroying" the entire "peace" process, which has failed to make any progress for years.

Damascus "strongly condemned" Netanyahu's vow, with a Syrian foreign ministry source telling the state news agency SANA that it was an "expansionist" plan which would be a "flagrant violation" of international treaties.

The Zionist regime occupied the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War in a move never recognized by the international community. It also seized -- and later annexed -- part of the Golan Heights from Syria, and the two sides remain technically at war.

Saudi Arabia flagged the announcement as a "dangerous escalation", calling for an "emergency

meeting" of the foreign ministers of the 57 member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Beyond the Arab world, Turkey slammed Netanyahu pledge as "racist".

Turkey would "defend (the) rights and interests of our Palestinian brothers and sisters till the end," said Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu.

The United Nations remonstrated that Netanyahu's plan would have no "international legal effect." Meanwhile, the European Union said the pledge undermines any prospects for "peace".

"The policy of settlement construction and expansion... is illegal under international law and its continuation, and actions taken in this context, undermine the viability of the two-state solution and the prospects for a lasting peace," an EU spokesperson said in a statement.

When announcing his pledge, Zionist prime minister said he would take the step in coordination with his ally, U.S. President Donald Trump.

The occupying regime of Israel has enjoyed a strong U.S. support under the Trump administration which in a highly controversial move overturned decades of U.S. policy to recognize the holy city of Jerusalem Al-Quds as the so-called capital of the Zionist regime in 2017.

Earlier in 2019, Trump also declared Israeli control over the Golan Heights, which the occupying

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U.S. Marks 9/11 With Taliban Stronger Than Ever

KABUL (Dispatches) -- A day after President Donald Trump declared the entire Afghan peace process dead, new reports are suggesting this was a folly, as Taliban officials say they are fully prepared to go back to a war footing.

Taliban spokesmen made clear this was something of an obvious move, after Trump scrapped an apparently near-finalized peace deal, and said they always considered the war to have two avenues for them, diplomacy or jihad.

Since the Taliban have been gaining ground nationwide, they are expressing comfort with the U.S. trying to force a military solution, and the latest reports suggest the Taliban are stronger than they have been at any time since before the 2001 war began.

Reports have shown the Taliban's strength mounting for years now, as they take more territory and gain more confi-

dence in the ongoing conflict. The war, however, seems to be one of choice for President Trump, who decided to back out of the peace deal over a car bombing last week.

Trump on Wednesday marked his third 9/11 anniversary as president mid his growing frustration about what he calls the "endless war" in Afghanistan, where Al-Qaeda allegedly conceived the deadly 2001 attacks.

It has been 18 years since Al-Qaeda hijackers allegedly commandeered four U.S. commercial airliners and crashed them into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Like Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush, Trump marked the day with the war still raging.

With the American flag flying atop the White House at half-staff, Trump participated in a moment of silence on the South Lawn with first lady Melania

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Plan First Yuan-Denominated Bonds Russia, China Unite in Trade War With U.S.

MOSCOW (Press TV) -- Russia plans to issue its first yuan-denominated bond as the country is working with China to cut reliance on the U.S. greenback, Russian broadcaster RT reports.

China and Russia are drawing increasingly close amid a changing global landscape marked by President Donald Trump's "America First" policy and his trade war which involves multiple battles with U.S. allies and others alike.

Beijing and Moscow have been planning yuan bonds since 2016, but the plan has been postponed several times. According to RT, Russia now expects to issue its first sovereign debt in the Chinese currency, officially called renminbi, by the end of the year or early next year.

Both countries are concerned about "the dollar hegemony" and see the launch as a stepping stone in their bid to break the dominion

up, the network said. "It's a step towards de-dollarization," investment strategist with Premier BCS Anton Bakhtin told RT. "Secondly, it's an additional bridge between us and the Chinese investors."

As tensions escalate with the U.S., world countries are becoming increasingly worried about Washington using global reliance on the dollar as a weapon.

However, it will take much more time to fully shift away from the greenback and countries are looking for additional financial instruments as protection.

Both China and Russia have been stockpiling gold. Since December, the People's Bank of China has reportedly added about 100 tonnes of gold to its reserves. Russia has bought 106 tonnes of the precious metal this year.

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