

Hamas: Captive Zionist Troops Only to Be Freed Via Swap Deal

GAZA (Dispatches) – A high-ranking official with the Hamas says the Palestinian resistance movement will release captive Zionist troops only through a comprehensive swap deal.

“Any captive Israeli soldier won’t be released until all Palestinians imprisoned in the Israeli jails will be freed,” said Fathi Hammad, adding that Hamas “is seeking for capturing more soldiers in case Israel postpones a swap deal.”

Two years ago, Hamas armed wing, al-Qassam Brigades, announced that it held four Zionist troopers in the Gaza Strip without saying anything about their fate or living situation.

The Zionist regime announced that two of the four Israelis are sol-



Palestinians demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners held in the Zionist regime’s jails, stage a demonstration in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Eastern al-Quds on March 26, 2019.

diers and they were killed during the large-scale offensive by the

Zionist regime that was waged on the Gaza Strip for 50 days in the

summer of 2014.

In 2011, Egypt brokered the first-ever prisoners swap deal between Hamas and the Zionist regime, where Hamas released a Zionist trooper for the release of more than 1,000 Palestinians, who were imprisoned in the occupying regime’s jails.

In another development, five Palestinian demonstrators were injured on Friday afternoon during clashes that broke out with Zionist troops in the eastern Gaza Strip, close to the occupied territories, according to medics in Gaza.

The five were shot and injured by Zionist troops’ gunfire in the rallies, which have been ongoing, organized by the Palestinians in Gaza since March 2018, known as the “Great March of Return.”

Three Saudi Soldiers Killed Near Yemeni Border



Saudi border guards stand inside a building which was hit in shelling by Yemeni Houthi fighters in al-Khubah, Jizan Province, near the border with Yemen, on October 3, 2017.

SANAA (Press TV) – Three Saudi soldiers have been killed near border with Yemen in what is believed to be retaliatory attacks launched by Yemeni fighters on the kingdom.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported on Saturday that one officer and two soldiers had been killed in Saudi Arabia’s southwestern Jizan

region. However, it did not provide details about the circumstances surrounding the deaths.

Yemeni fighters regularly target positions inside Saudi Arabia in retaliatory attacks against a protracted Saudi offensive on the import-dependent state.

Saudi Arabia launched the war on Yemen in March 2015

in an attempt to reinstall a Riyadh-backed former regime and eliminate the Houthi Ansarullah movement, which has been defending the country along with Yemeni armed forces.

The military aggression and a naval blockade have killed thousands of people and plunged Yemen into the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

Despite the dire situation in Yemen, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump is pushing for more arms sales to the Saudi regime.

In an interview with al-Thawra newspaper on Saturday, Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, chairman of the Supreme Revolutionary Committee of Yemen, said the U.S. is preventing the war from coming to an end.

The U.S. is killing the Yemeni nation and sabotaging the peace process, he said, adding Trump

is against peace as he believes that the war is necessary to sell arms to Saudi Arabia.

On Friday, Yemenis held protests in the provinces of Sana’a, Hudaydah and Ibb against Saudi and U.S. atrocities.

According to the al-Masirah TV channel, the demonstrators in Sana’a stressed that they will never surrender and foil the enemies’ plots.

They also called for the lifting of the Saudi siege on Sana’a airport and the resumption of flights.

In Hudaydah, protesters urged the UN to pressure Yemen’s warring sides into implementing the truce agreement reached in Sweden last December. They also denounced the Saudi blockade on Hudaydah’s al-Durayhimi district.

The demonstrators in Ibb, meanwhile, reiterated their support for Yemeni forces’ retaliatory attacks.

Turkey Adds Former Palestinian Politician to Most Wanted List

ISTANBUL (Dispatches) – Turkey has added exiled Palestinian politician Mohammed Dahlan to its “red list” of most-wanted terrorism suspects, offering a reward of up to 10 million lira (\$1.75 million) for information leading to his capture, the Interior Ministry says.

Arrest warrants have been issued for Dahlan on accusations of playing a role in the 2016 attempted coup in Turkey, seeking to change the constitutional order by force, and various spying-related charges, the ministry said in a statement.

“Forcibly attempting to change the constitutional order, exposing state secrets for espionage purposes, obtaining state secrets for political or military espionage, revealing secret information related to state’s security or political interest, and international espionage” are among the charges against Dahlan, according to the statement.

Dahlan has also recently been an outspoken critic of Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan.

Turkey accuses U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen and his followers of carrying out the failed putsch of July 2016, when rogue soldiers commandeered warplanes, tanks and helicopters in a bid to seize power in which some 250 people were killed.

A Turkish official familiar with the issue told Middle East Eye at the time that a Turkish prosecutor was readying an indictment against Dahlan. “It would be a comprehensive paperwork. It would include lots of things you see on the media and his insults against Turkey. It is in the pipeline,” the unnamed official said.

Dahlan has lived in the United Arab Emirates since he was driven out of the Palestinian territories in 2011 after a row with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

He was formerly an elected member of Abbas’ Fatah party central committee, and was a fierce foe of Hamas, the resistance movement in the Gaza Strip.

Afghan Election Challenger Allows Recount

KABUL (AFP) – Afghan presidential challenger Abdullah Abdullah has ended his opposition to a recount in seven provinces after the September 28 election, which has been mired in fraud allegations.

The vote results have been repeatedly delayed -- officially due to technical problems -- as the incumbent, President Ashraf Ghani, and Abdullah wrangle for power.

Abdullah had refused to allow the recount in seven northern provinces, demanding that the electoral commission first invalidate about 300,000 “fraudulent” ballots out of a

total of 1.8 million.

But, Abdullah, who currently serves as the country’s chief executive, said the recount could go ahead -- potentially ending one obstacle to results finally being released.

“I call on the dignified people of Afghanistan to let the recount take place in seven provinces (out of a total of 34),” he told a press conference.

“Today the conflict and problem is between fraud and transparency -- one side committed fraud and the other side wants transparency.”

The election was meant to be the cleanest

yet in Afghanistan’s young democracy, with a German firm supplying biometric machines to stop people from voting more than once.

But nearly a million of the initial votes were purged owing to irregularities, meaning the election saw by far the lowest turnout of any Afghan poll.

The ongoing uncertainty has raised the risk of a repeat of the crisis that followed the last presidential election in 2014.

Then, Ghani and Abdullah fought a close race that sparked widespread allegations of fraud.

U.S. ...

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tensions after Washington’s deployment of additional forces and military assets to the waters.

The Global Hawk shot down by Iran can remain in flight for up to 30 hours, potentially covering around 9,000 miles, hitting 65,000 feet in height.

Former Pentagon chief Jim Mattis said Friday that Iran should be met with “some sort of retaliation” for taking the U.S. aircraft out of the sky.

President Donald Trump boasted that he pulled back potential “retaliatory” strikes for the downing of the American drone.

Mattis on Friday admitted that the decision to “retaliate” is not an easy choice to make. “Once you enter into this, you’re entering into a fundamental unpredictable phenomenon. It is war, or a war like act,” he said.

Following the shoot down of a U.S. drone in 2011, Mattis, then head of U.S. Central Command, wanted a strong, direct response to the Iranian military.

“I proposed to Washington that we launch another drone on the same track, position a few F-18 aircraft out of sight, and shoot down the Iranian aircraft if it attacked the drone,” he wrote in his new book “Call Sign Chaos.” “The White House refused to grant permission.”

Mattis was ultimately relieved from that post in part because of his aggressive stance towards Iran, in contrast with Obama administration policies.

Fears...

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Friday gained guarantees from the government of salary reviews which would cost the state 10 billion euros. The details were not revealed.

Policemen meanwhile ended their protest on Friday after managing to get assurances that their early retirement scheme would be maintained, owing to the “dangerous” nature of their job.

Both Paris operas, the Garnier and the Bastille, cancelled Friday performances, and more through the weekend.

President Emmanuel Macron’s government insists the changes will make for a fairer system and help erase pension system deficits forecast to reach as much as 17 billion euros (\$19 billion) by 2025.

The average French person retires at just over 60, years earlier than most in Europe or other rich OECD countries.

Philippe on Friday struck a combative note, saying he “has absolutely no fear of implementing this reform”.

Macron, who has maintained a studied silence since the protests began, told reporters in Brussels on Friday that it was a “historic reform”, while expressing solidarity with those affected by the fallout.

Tens...

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Facebook page of the Roman chapter of the Sardines announcing the rally about 15 days ago.

“The following day, there were 10,000 people who wanted to join in,” he said. “The next day 20,000.”

Ahead of Saturday’s rally, Ogongo said the “important thing is to see many people take to the streets to say ‘we are weary of this culture of hatred. We will no longer tolerate language that is racist, fascist, discriminatory or sexist’.”

Ogongo received threats and insults when he got Facebook to erase racist messages from an account bearing Salvini’s name with the title Prime Minister.

Salvini, he said, had “allowed the worst forms of racism” to flourish. Many Sardines also rally against climate change, the mafia and poverty.

The movement is turning its attention to the small towns they say are “fragile territory”, susceptible to “simplistic ideas and populism”.

The Sardine Movement was a response to the growing strength in the north of

the right-wing coalition led by Salvini’s League.

In late October, the League won a historic victory in regional polls in central Umbria, which had been led by the left for half a century.

Salvini is now campaigning hard to try to capture another leftwing stronghold, the wealthy northeast region of Emilia Romagna.

Regional elections there are set for January 26 and the polls suggest the League’s candidates are running neck and neck with the current centre-left governor.

Salvini has said he wants to conquer the regions one by one to bring down the current coalition between the Five Star Movement and the centre-left Democratic Party, and thus force early elections.

Economic...

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by elements “within or outside the country”.

“Observations show that this has been a purposeful attempt to disturb public opinion and the police and security forces are following up on the matter,” Azizi said.

The mysterious emergence of inserted drugs in various Iranian confectionery products comes as Iran’s food industry is regarded as one of the country’s booming industries, enjoying exports to a wide range of countries despite U.S.-imposed sanctions.

Iran’s sweet exports account for half of the Iranian food industry exports, according to reports.

The Iranian government has so far also been relatively successful in shielding the food industry from sanctions and ensuring that vital food product prices remain low and accessible for the general public.

The developments come as Washington, along with its regional allies, seeks to pressure Iran by waging a campaign of “maximum pressure” primarily by imposing a robust sanctions regime against the country following the Trump administration’s withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal last year.

Earlier this year, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that Tehran had to listen to Washington “if they want their people to eat”.

Pompeo...

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concerns and doubts about Washington’s backing for Riyadh.

A possible rapprochement between Riyadh and Tehran is deemed by Washington as a threat to American interests because it takes away the pretext for the United States to project Iran as a threat and milk Saudi Arabia, observers say.

“Riyadh’s newfound interest in better relations with regional rivals comes as Saudi officials question how much backing it has from the U.S. and other allies,” the Journal said.

Washington was quick to point the finger at Tehran when Yemeni forces attacked Saudi oil facilities earlier this year.

On Friday, UN chief Antonio Guterres said the United Nations has not been able to independently corroborate that the cruise missiles and drones used in attacks earlier this year on an airport and oil facilities in Saudi Arabia were allegedly of Iranian origin.

The UN chief said in a report to the council that the UN also can’t confirm that the missiles and drones were transferred from Iran “in a manner inconsistent” with the Security Council resolution that endorsed the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six key countries.

On the Saudi attacks, Guterres said UN experts were able to examine debris recovered by the Saudis from a June 12 attack on the Abha international airport in the southwest, from attacks on Saudi Aramco oil facilities in Abqaiq and Khurais on September 14, from a second attack on the Abha airport in August, and an attack on another oil facility in Afif in May.

Yemen’s Houthi fighters claimed responsibility for the Aramco drone attack on the world’s largest crude oil processing plant in Saudi Arabia at Abqaiq that dramatically cut into global oil supplies.