

# Closure of Crossing Threatens 400 Factories in Gaza

GAZA (Dispatches) – Closure of the sole commercial crossing point of Kerem Shalom by the Zionist regime is threatening 400 factories in the Gaza Strip, a senior Palestinian official has warned.

Sami al-Amassi, president of the General Federation of the Palestinian Trade Union, said in a press statement that his union warns of the repercussions of the closure.

He said that the Zionist regime has closed the commercial crossing in the southern Gaza Strip and banned the shipment of construction materials and fuels. This caused paralysis in the construction industries and public transport sectors.

He said the paralysis would indirectly cause harm to more than 40,000 workers who work in construction and metal industries.

The Zionist regime has recently tightened the blockade it has been imposing on the Gaza Strip since 2007.

The occupying regime’s authorities also cut fishing range off the Gaza Strip coast from 15 nautical miles to 8 miles.

Under the Oslo Accords signed in 1993, the regime is obligated to permit fishing up to 20 nautical miles, but this has never been implemented.

The regime maintains a heavy naval presence off the coast of the impoverished Palestinian enclave, severely affecting the livelihood of some 4,000 fishermen and at least 1,500 more people involved in the fishing industry.

Over the past few years, Zionist troops have carried out more than a hundred attacks on Pal-



*This photo taken on May 13, 2018 shows the gate of the Kerem Shalom crossing in the southern Gaza Strip town of Rafah.*

estinian boats, arresting dozens of fishermen and confiscating several boats.

The economy of Gaza has also suffered from years of blockades by the occupying regime and also Egypt.

“This is a collective punishment because the commercial crossing point is the main artery for life in the Gaza Strip, mainly the labor sector,” al-Amassi said, adding that around 150,000

workers are part of this sector.

The occupying regime also targeted fuel supplies to Gaza as well. The Palestinian Islamic Resistance movement, Hamas, strongly condemned the regime’s decision to stop fuel shipments into the Gaza Strip, describing the measure as a “grave act of aggression” that would toughen economic hardship in the besieged enclave.

## Lebanon Receives More Donations

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Lebanon received on Saturday more support and donations from foreign countries, following the explosions that rocked Beirut’s port on Aug. 4, LBCI local TV channel reported.

Lebanon received three aircraft carrying food and medical equipment from Egypt, while one aircraft arrived in Beirut from Iraq with tonnes of humanitarian assistance.

Russia sent on Saturday two aircraft carrying medical, health and humanitarian support.

Also, Turkey offered on Saturday to rehabilitate Al-Amin mosque and Mar Gerges Cathedral as stated by Turkish Ambassador to Lebanon Hakan Cakil following his visit to these two religious landmarks.

On the other hand, a num-



*A woman sweeps at a damaged hospital following a blast, in Beirut, Lebanon August 5, 2020.*

ber of Lebanese expatriates sent donations to owners of trucks working at Beirut’s port to compensate them for their losses after the destruction of their vehicles due to the blasts.

Two huge explosions rocked Port of Beirut on Aug. 4, shak-

ing buildings all over Lebanon’s capital, while killing nearly 200 people and wounding 6,000.

The explosions posed a great challenge to Lebanon especially that the country is already facing its worst economic cri-

sis in its history.

Secretary General of the Union of Arab Banks (UAB) Wissam Fattouh announced on Saturday that the Arab League will launch a fund in cooperation with the UAB to support Lebanon in reconstructing Beirut after the deadly explosions in the Lebanese capital, the National News Agency reported.

“Arab banks and financial institutions that are members of the union will finance this fund to support the Lebanese population and reconstruction in Beirut,” Fattouh said, referring to the Arab Relief and Support Fund for Lebanon.

The money will be at the disposal of relevant institutions, civil society associations and individuals according to a list obtained from Lebanese authorities about the affected people, he noted.

## Turkish Troops ‘Neutralize’ More Militants in Iraq

ANKARA (Dispatches) – Turkish security forces “neutralized” at least nine more PKK militants in northern Iraq, the defense ministry said on Saturday.

Three of the militants were neutralized in air-backed operations in Haftanin, and six other militants in the Zap and Avasin regions, the ministry said on Twitter.

The news put the number of militants neutralized by the Turkish Armed Forces over the last 10 days at 143, the statement added.

Turkish authorities often use the word “neutralize” to imply the terrorists in question surrendered or were killed or captured.

Turkey says it will continue its cross-border operations against Kurdish militants in northern Iraq despite Baghdad’s strong opposition to the move.

Ankara has regularly attacked Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militants, both in its mainly Kurdish southeast and in northern Iraq, where the group is based.

In June, Ankara launched a new ground offensive that saw Turkish troops advance deeper into Iraq.

Since mid-June, the Turkish military has been engaged in a ground and aerial campaign against PKK positions in northern Iraq.

Baghdad has, on several occasions, summoned Ankara’s envoy to protest the operation.

On Tuesday, a Turkish air raid in northern Iraq killed two members of Iraq’s border guard and their driver, Iraq’s military said, calling the attack a “flagrant aggression”.

Iraq’s foreign ministry cancelled a visit by the Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar to the country, following condemnation of the Turkish drone strike.

The Turkish ambassador in Iraq was summoned to Baghdad after the Turkish attack.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry said Baghdad “categorically rejects and strongly condemns the blatant Turkish drone attack in the Sidakan area of Erbil province in the Iraqi Kurdish region, which resulted in the deaths of two officers and a soldier from the heroic Iraqi armed forces.”

It said, “Iraq considers this act a violation of the sovereignty and dignity of the country, and a hostile act that violates international charters and laws that regulate relations between world countries. It also infringes upon the principle of good neighborliness, which should be the basis to carry out participatory security work in the service of both sides.”

in the Khan Sheikhun area in the countryside of Idlib, SANA said.

Two of the wounded are in critical condition, it added.

Landmines have so far killed dozens in the formerly terrorist-held areas amid government-led efforts to remove them for the safety of civilians.

## Landmine Explosion Kills 4 in Syria’s Idlib

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Four civilians were killed and five others wounded on Saturday when a landmine exploded in the northwestern Syrian

province of Idlib, state news agency SANA reported.

The landmine left by the terrorists ripped through a workshop for harvesting pistachios

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majority of council members “believe the U.S. attempt has no legal basis.”

“Should the U.S. insist regardless of international opinion, it is doomed to fail like today,” Zhang said in a statement, adding that the vote showed “that unilateralism receives no support and bullying will fail.”

Iranian Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi hit out at the U.S. for seeking to use the arms embargo “as a pretext of killing the JCPOA forever through the snapback mechanism.”

“As we have already stated, imposition of any sanctions or restrictions on Iran by the Security Council will be met severely by Iran and our options are not limited. And the United States and any entity which may assist it or acquiesce in its illegal behavior, will bear the full responsibility,” he said.

While voting on the U.S. draft resolution was under way, Russia said President Vladimir Putin called for a meeting of leaders of the five permanent members of the Security Council along with Germany and Iran to avoid escalation over U.S. attempts to extend the Iranian arms embargo.

In a statement released by the Kremlin, Putin said “the question is urgent,” adding that the goal of the video conference would be “to outline steps to avoid confrontation and exacerbation of the situation in the UN Security Council.”

“If the leaders are fundamentally ready for a conversation, we propose to promptly coordinate the agenda,” Putin said. “The alternative is to further build up tension, to increase the risk of conflict. This development must be avoided.”

French President Emmanuel Macron’s office confirmed France’s “availability in principle” to Putin’s proposal. “We have in the past deployed initiatives in the same spirit,” it said.

Whether Trump and the others agree to participate in the meeting remains to be seen.

On Thursday, U.S. envoy Craft said in an interview with The Associated Press that the United States is “keeping the space open” for talks with Britain, France and Germany, as well as Russia and China.

She urged the three European nations that support the nuclear deal — Britain, France and Germany — to put in writing their ideas to extend the expiring arms embargo on Iran, indicating the Trump administration may be willing compromise on its demand for an indefinite extension. She said they had mentioned a six-month or one-year extension.

European diplomats said the three countries share the U.S. goal of maintaining the arms embargo but need to find a compromise with Russia and China. The diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity because discussions have been private, said the Europeans had offered a compromise proposal but the U.S., Russia and China showed no willingness to compromise.

The U.S. administration wants to end the Iran nuclear agreement before the American elections Nov. 3, the Europeans said, pointing to the time pressure the U.S. is exerting since the arms embargo doesn’t expire until October and there would still be time for negotiations.

Germany’s deputy UN ambassador, Günter Sauter, said after the vote that Germany remains committed to the nuclear deal, but remains deeply concerned about Iran’s alleged transfers of weapon to Yemen, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq in violation of the 2015 council resolution.

He said Germany has been engaging with council members and is ready to continue discussions “in order to find a pragmatic way forward, which addresses our collective concerns.”

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Rouhani also strongly lambasted the UAE-Israel deal, warning Abu Dhabi about the consequences of allowing the Tel Aviv regime to secure a foothold in the region and wield influence.

UAE rulers, he said, have taken a wrong path to think that their security and economic growth would be ensured if they sided with the United States and the Zionist regime.

He denounced the normalization agreement as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause, Muslim world as well as the issue of the occupied Jerusalem Al-Quds.

The Iranian president said UAE officials

agreed to the normalization deal with Israel in order to please Trump and improve his chances of garnering more votes in the forthcoming U.S. presidential election scheduled for November 3.

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official would lead the team. The Ynet news site said this would be the director of Mossad spy agency, Yossi Cohen, who is said to have led normalization bids over the past year.

Netanyahu’s office said in a statement that the occupying regime’s security adviser, Meir Ben-Shabbat, would lead preparations for the talks “in coordination with all the relevant parties.”

Channel 12 said some aspects of the normalization agreement may be signed during the visit. The two sides would also schedule a meeting between Emirati and Zionist leaders to take place within the next few weeks.

U.S. President Donald Trump said on Thursday he believed a deal-signing ceremony could take place at the White House in about three weeks.

In his interview, Gargash stressed that his country’s normalization deal with Israel was not a symbolic measure, and that Abu Dhabi wanted wide-ranging bilateral relations with the occupying regime.

The agreement, he said, would involve opening embassies and that he hoped cultural exchanges would begin taking place “soon”.

“This is not something we are talking about being gradual, we need to get things moving, we need to start, so I hope soon and Israel is going to be part of Expo Dubai, so clearly this is important that we also see Israeli visitors coming to Dubai,” he said.

On Thursday, the UAE, the Zionist regime and the U.S. issued a joint statement announcing an agreement on “the full normalization of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates”.

The Emirates presented the move as an achievement for West Bank Palestinians, in that it halts Israel’s plans to annex parts of the territory, but Palestinians castigated the new accord as “despicable” and a “betrayal”.

Secretary-General of the Palestine Liberation Organization Saeb Erekat said on Friday the agreement is a stab in the back of the Palestinian nation.

“I never expected this poisonous dagger to come from an Arab country,” Erekat said as he addressed UAE rulers.

“You are rewarding aggression ... You have destroyed, with this move, any possibility of peace between Palestinians and Israelis,” the senior Palestinian official and a veteran negotiator added.

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and inhuman government of the United States, is one of the greatest historical betrayals against the Palestinian cause that inflicted a poisonous dagger on the body of the Islamic Ummah, especially on the resistance and legitimacy of the oppressed Muslim nation of Palestine,” the statement said.

“This treacherous act has multiple goals, including legitimizing the fake Zionist regime, weakening the Palestinian resistance front, consigning the issue of Jerusalem Al-Quds and Palestine to oblivion, paving the way for the implementation of the so-called deal of century and the new Middle East project and creating conditions for the Arab world to engage with the occupying regime,” the IRGC’s statement added. “It is an evil move and doomed to failure.”

The IRGC said, “The United States as well as regional and trans-regional supporters of the infamous Abu Dhabi-Tel Aviv agreement know that this heinous act will not serve the interests of the Zionist regime, and contrary to their expectations, it will spell a dangerous future for them.”

The UAE-Israel deal has already drawn condemnation from various Palestinian groups as well as their supporters across the world.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas referred to the deal as an “aggression” against the Palestinian people and a “betrayal” of their cause. The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas described it as “a stab in the back of the Palestinian cause.” And Palestinian people staged protests against the deal in the occupied West Bank and the besieged Gaza Strip on Friday.