

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) -- A Katyusha rocket hit an area in Baghdad's Green Zone, which houses government buildings and foreign missions, including the U.S. embassy, an Iraqi security source said Wednesday.

Reports said the American forces closed the doors of the U.S. embassy following the incident. Anti-American sentiments have been running high in Iraq since the US assassinated Iran's anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, and the deputy head of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, in Baghdad on January 3.

GENEVA (Dispatches) -- Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohsen Baharvand said Wednesday Tehran will move forward with its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as before. "The Islamic Republic of Iran continues its cooperation with the Agency, but there is a valid question to be raised: 'whether the JCPOA and the verification activities in accordance with this deal can resist the pressures exerted by the U.S. creating an extremely difficult situation for its viability?' the answer to this question could be both yes and no. Everything depends on the international community and remaining participants of the JCPOA," Baharvand said.

Viewpoint

Clumsy Clowns Stage Comedy of Errors in Washington

Islamic Experts Join Tehran Webinar Against Betrayal Deals



Late Khalilzadeh Goal Seals Persepolis Win over Al-Taawoun



UN: Yemen Famine Looms Large, Perpetrators Give Nothing



After Normalization Deals Signed With Zionist Regime: Rouhani Warns UAE, Bahrain of 'Consequences'

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said on Wednesday that the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain will be responsible for any "consequences" resulting from their normalization of relations with the occupying regime of Israel.

The remarks came a day after Zionist premier Benjamin Netanyahu and the foreign ministers of the UAE and Bahrain signed agreements at a ceremony at the White House — establishing full diplomatic ties (in the case of the UAE), and declaring an intention to do so (in the case of Bahrain).

Speaking at a cabinet meeting, Rouhani said that the Zionist regime is "committing more crimes in Palestine every day."

"Some of the region's countries, their people are pious Muslims but their rulers neither understand religion nor (their) debt ... to the nation of Palestine, to their brothers speaking their language," he said in televised remarks.

"How could you reach out your hands to Israel? And then you want to give them bases in the region? All the severe consequences that would arise from this are on you."

U.S. President Donald Trump said Tuesday that similar Washington-brokered deals were close between the occupying regime of Israel and several Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia.

"After decades of division and conflict we mark the dawn of a new Middle East," Trump said.

Iran had previously warned Bahrain that its deal made it a partner to Israel's "crimes" and accused the UAE of betraying the Muslim world.

In 2016, Bahrain cut diplomatic ties with Iran and the UAE downgraded relations amid rising tensions between Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic.

Rouhani also said the United States has suffered a "humiliating defeat" in its push to trigger the so-called snapback mechanism.

He said the weekend on which UN sanctions on the Islamic Republic will expire will mark a victory for the Iranian nation.

"Saturday and Sunday are the days of the Iranian nation's victory and America's humiliating defeat," the president said. "I congratulate the Iranian nation in advance on its great and historic victory in defeating America's attempts to trigger the snap-back mechanism."

On August 20, the U.S. formally notified the United Nations of Washington's demand for all UN sanctions on Iran to be restored, citing what he claimed to be Iranian violations of the 2015 nuclear deal.

However, the remaining signatories to the deal — named the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — maintained that Washington could not initiate the mechanism because it had already left the accord in May 2018.

"The whole world knows that the snapback mechanism belongs to the JCPOA members. The one who has considered the JCPOA to be treasonous, named it the 'worst deal ever,' withdrawn from it, heaped scorn on it, encouraged others to pull out of it and stood against the Security Council Resolution (2231), is not qualified for this job," Rouhani said, referring to the resolution that enshrined the nuclear deal.

Activating the snapback mechanism "is a one-month process, which fortunately the United States could not even start. It is one of Iran's historical victories and successes. America wants to conspire against the Iranian people but cannot even take a single step," he added.

The president also stressed that Security Council members as well as the European signatories to the JCPOA besides Russia and China have all opposed the U.S. push to invoke the snapback mechanism.

Washington wanted to portray this weekend as a victory for itself, but it could not "even get a member onboard and take a step to unleash (the snapback), so how would it succeed?" the president said.

Palestinian Missiles Tear Through Iron Dome Sirens, Rocket Fire Destroy Zionist Festivities



Security forces examine the scene where a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip hit in the southern occupied city of Ashdod (top); Zionist PM Benjamin Netanyahu, U.S. President Donald Trump, Bahrain's FM Abdullatif Al Zayani and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan pose for photos at the White House (bottom).

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) -- Thirteen Zionists were injured after two rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards Ashkelon and Ashdod in southern occupied territories on Tuesday, Israeli daily the Jerusalem Post reported on Wednesday.

Rocket sirens sounded as the occupying regime's premier Benjamin Netanyahu signed normalization deals at the White House with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

The paper claimed one of the rockets was intercepted. Asuta

Medical Center in Ashdod received 13 patients.

Before dawn Wednesday, the Israeli military, 13 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip, eight of which were allegedly intercepted by the Iron Dome system.

The predawn attacks, it said, triggered sirens at least five times over a half-hour period — from roughly 4:30 a.m. to 5 a.m. — in the town of Sderot and communities in the Eshkol and Sha'ar Hanegev regions early Wednesday. It was not immediately clear where the other five rockets struck.

Netanyahu and his war minister Benny Gantz held security consultations on Wednesday morning about the rocket fire, the Times of Israel reported.

Both Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad put out statements in support of the attacks. The rocket fire was the first attacks since the occupying regime submitted to a ceasefire with Palestinian resistance groups in the Gaza Strip late last month and the largest barrage since February.

The occupying regime of Israel's military said it struck the Gaza

Strip early Wednesday.

The barrage against Zionist targets began Tuesday night just as the ceremony in Washington was getting underway to formalize the new agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

The renewed exchange offered a stark reminder that the festive events in Washington would likely do little to change Israel's atrocities against the Palestinians.

The Palestinians are opposed to the agreements with the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, viewing them as a betrayal of their cause by the Arab countries, which agreed to recognize Israel without securing territorial concessions. They vowed that the agreements, and any others that may follow, will not undermine their cause.

Neither President Donald Trump nor Netanyahu mentioned the Palestinians in their remarks at the signing ceremony.

The occupying regime of Israel and the Palestinians have fought three wars and several smaller skirmishes since 2007. Egypt and Qatar have brokered an informal ceasefire in recent years in which Hamas has reined in rocket attacks in exchange for economic aid and a loosening of the blockade, but the arrangement has broken down on a number of occasions.

Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem responded to the normalization deals shortly after the rockets were fired from Gaza, saying that "the normalization agreements between the UAE and Bahrain with

(Continued on Page 7)

For Third Day: UK Factory Building Drones for Zionists Occupied

LONDON (Dispatches) -- Direct action protests against the Zionist regime of Israel's largest weapons company have escalated in the United Kingdom, with an occupation of a factory building engines for drones used by Israel's military entering its third day on Wednesday.

Protests were also held outside Elbit System UK's London headquarters and at its landlord's main offices, as new solidarity group Palestine Action escalated its campaign to shut down the company's operation in the UK.

Elbit Systems UK is part of the high-tech weapons group that supplies more than 80 percent of the occupying regime of Israel's military drones, including the Hermes 900 and Hermes 450, used extensively in the 2014 assault on Gaza, in which 2,200 Palestinians, including 500 children, were killed.

Three activists were arrested on Monday after locking themselves onto the gates of the UAV Engines factory in Shenstone, Staffordshire, central England. Other activists scaled the building, smashed win-

dows, daubed the brickwork in red paint, and remain on the roof of the factory, which is now draped in Palestinian flags.

Police have confiscated supplies of food brought by supporters of the activists, who say they are determined to continue occupying the site for as long as possible.

Staffordshire Police Assistant Chief Constable Scott Green told local newspaper The Express and Star that officers were called to the scene at around 6 am on Monday and arrests were made.

On Wednesday, activists also targeted Elbit Systems HQ in Holborn and their landlord - LaSalle Investment Management - in Mayfair.

Palestine Action is calling for all Elbit Systems sites to be shut down in the UK, and an end to the kingdom's complicity with the Zionist regime's illegal occupation of Palestinian lands, apartheid legal system and documented human rights abuses of Palestinian civilians.

Michael Fabricant, the Conservative MP for Lichfield, told the Express and

(Continued on Page 7)

U.S. Paper Recounts Ordeals of 'Honorable' Iranian

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -- A U.S. report says an Iranian scientist, who was wrongfully arrested and accused upon arrival in the U.S. in 2017, squarely rejected an FBI proposal to spy on Iran in exchange for money.

The report by The New Yorker magazine said that in April 2013, Sirous Asgari was asked by two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to engage in espionage activities against the Islamic Republic.

The magazine identified the operatives as Special Agents Matthew Olson and Timothy Boggs.

Olson, who had lured Asgari into a café by sticking his business card inside the door of the scientist's apartment "offered him five thousand dollars—if he would sign a paper, which he could get from another man in the café." The man with the paper was Boggs, a counterintelligence officer at the FBI's Cleveland, Ohio field office, whose focus was Iran, it added.

Asgari is a professor of material sciences at Iran's Sharif University of Technology, who has studied and attended research projects for long in the U.S., fathered one child in the

country, and sent two more to educate there. "Asgari realized that he'd walked into a trap. Olson was not there to arrest him. He was trying to recruit him as an informant," the report said.

"Asgari looked at the man with the paper to sign and felt sick. He wouldn't sign anything, he said, or take a penny from the FBI. Honorable people didn't entertain such offers," it noted.

"The FBI had reason to be interested in a man like Asgari. Sharif University was Iran's premier technical institution, and the instruments and insights of materials science could be used to build missiles and centrifuges..." The New Yorker wrote.

In 2015, Asgari and his wife applied for U.S. visas to be able to visit their children. Their visas were strangely approved in the spring of 2017 after U.S. President Donald Trump banned visits from Iran.

Upon arrival in the U.S., the FBI placed him under arrest, while his visa was yet to be stamped and his passport returned, something that gave U.S. officials an excuse to

(Continued on Page 7)