

Hamas: Zionist Regime to Meet Hunger Striking Prisoners Demands



Maher al Akhras, 49, a Palestinian who began a hunger strike 79 days ago against his detention without charge by the Zionist regime, lies in a hospital bed in Rehovot, the occupied territories, on October 13, 2020.

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – Former chief of Hamas’ Political Bureau Khaled Meshaal says his movement will force the Zionist regime to meet the demands of hunger striking Palestinian prisoners, the official Hamas website reported. According to the site, Meshaal spoke to the wife of Palestinian prisoner on hunger strike for 82 days Maher Al-Akhras, and

told her that the Palestinian resistance will not let him down. Meshaal hailed the “heroic steadfastness” of the Palestinian detainee who has been battling for freedom and dignity in spite of his critical medical conditions. “We raise our hats for the high spirit and steadfastness of Maher,” he continued. The father of six went on hunger strike

in late July to protest against his so-called administrative detention in the Zionist regime’s jails – being held without charge or trial.

Israeli rights group B’Tselem has warned that al-Akhras is “on the verge of death”. At the hospital, Akhras’s wife Taghreed told Reuters that he would continue the hunger strike for his immediate release despite a decision on Monday by the regime’s supreme court not to extend his four-month detention term beyond Nov. 26.

“The responsibility for what happens next lies with those who can prevent his further deterioration and even death,” the Israeli human rights group B’Tselem, which is monitoring the case, said in statement. “They can still stop this from happening.”

The Gaza-based Palestinian Center for Human Rights called on international rights groups to intervene immediately to “save the life of Akhras before it is too late.”

On Monday, about 40 people held a rally in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah to support him.

Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh demanded al-Akhras’s “immediate release”, according to a statement published by the official Wafa news agency.

There are around 5,000 Palestinians in the Zionist regime’s jails, 350 of them under administrative detention, Palestinian officials said.

Rouhani...

(Continued From Page One)

attain its goal to extend the UN arms embargoes against Iran to indicate that Washington has lost its power.

“The inadmissible arms restrictions which had been imposed will be removed and Iran will act within the framework of a responsible government in a defensive position and its international and regional responsibilities,” Khatibzadeh said.

UN...

(Continued From Page One)

violations. However, only four of the 15 spots were contested, all in Asia-Pacific.

In secret-ballot voting in the 193-member UN General Assembly on the race, Pakistan received 169 votes, Uzbekistan 164, Nepal 150, China 139 and Saudi Arabia just 90 votes. In 2016, the Saudis won a seat with 152 votes.

The HRW accused Saudi Arabia of “massive rights violations,” and targeting human rights campaigners and political dissidents. The New York-based organization also called Riyadh a “serial rights abuser” which has threatened to withdraw funding for the UN to force it into removing Riyadh from its annual list of child-killers.

Official figures show over 7,200 children have been either killed or wounded in the Saudi-led onslaught on Yemen since 2015.

“Rights abusers should not be rewarded with seats on the Human Rights Council,” said Louis Charbonneau, UN director at HRW. “It’s not good for human rights or for the rights council when the worst rights violators get elected.”

Since March 2015, when Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched a devastating Western-backed war on Yemen, Amnesty’s researchers have investigated dozens of airstrikes and repeatedly found and identified remnants of US-manufactured munitions.

According to a report by the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict research organization, the Saudi-led war has so far claimed the lives of around 56,000 Yemenis.

Armenia...

(Continued From Page One)

The spokesperson for the Iranian administration said on Tuesday Iran welcomes any move that would resolve the conflict between the warring sides.

Ali Rabiee said Iran welcomes a lasting ceasefire between the warring sides.

“As we have announced time and again, we welcome any initiative that can stop the war between Azerbaijan and Armenia and establish a ceasefire and prevent the killing of people,” he noted.

“I deem it necessary to express the Iranian government’s concern and regret over the killing of civilians and I stress the need to avoid a repeat of such incidents at a time when the region and the peoples of the regional countries need peace and tranquility more than ever,” said Rabiee.

However, according to exports data Turkey’s military exports to its ally Azerbaijan have risen six-fold this year, with sales of drones and other military equipment rising to \$77 million last month alone before fighting broke out over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The figures compiled by the Turkish Exporters’ Assembly, which groups more than 95,000 exporting companies in 61 sectors, show Azerbaijan bought \$123 million in defense and aviation equipment from Turkey in the first nine months of 2020.

Most of the purchases of drones, rocket launchers, ammunition and other weapons arrived were after July, when border clashes between Armenian and Azeri forces prompted Turkey and Azerbaijan to conduct joint military exercises.

Fighting between Azeri and ethnic Armenian forces broke out on Sept. 27 over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountain enclave which is recognized internationally as part of Azerbaijan but is governed and populated by ethnic Armenians.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan has backed Azerbaijan and said Armenians must withdraw from Nagorno-Karabakh.

Ankara, which wants a role in ceasefire talks, says it is not directly involved in the fighting. But Azeri officials have touted their use of Turkish armed drones, which have spearheaded Ankara’s military operations in Syria, Iraq and Libya.

Pompeo Pushes Saudi Arabia to Consider Normalization

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday urged the Saudi regime to consider normalizing relations with the Zionist regime as he met with the Saudi foreign minister, also saying that Washington supports a “robust program of arms sales” to it.

Pompeo said he raised the so-called Abraham Accords, a U.S.-brokered controversial agreement to normalize diplomatic ties with the Zionist regime, with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud at a meeting at the U.S. State Department.

“We hope Saudi Arabia will consider normalizing its relationships as well, and we want to thank them for the assistance they’ve had in the Abraham Ac-



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo looks at Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud during a meeting in Washington on October 14, 2020.

ords so far,” Pompeo said. The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain last month signed agreements toward normalizing rela-

tions with the Zionist regime which triggered a flurry of criticism from the Muslim world and the Palestinians.

The United States is trying to persuade more Arab regimes to strike similar accords with the occupying regime, as the UAE and Bahrain did at the Sept. 15 ceremony in Washington.

Riyadh has quietly acquiesced to the UAE and Bahrain deals – though it has stopped short of endorsing them – and has signaled it is not ready to take action itself.

Palestinians, who seek an independent state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, with East al-Quds as its capital, have condemned the deals as a betrayal of their cause against the regime’s occupation.

Erdogan Urges Parl’t Act Against Medical Group Critical of COVID Response

ANKARA (Reuters) – President Tayyip Erdogan urged Turkey’s parliament on Wednesday to legislate to curb the influence of medical associations and other institutions that have criticized his government’s response to the coronavirus pandemic.

His broadside against the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) came after months of warnings by the group that official figures underplay the true scale of the pandemic, especially Ankara’s decision to report only symptomatic cases of COVID-19.

The TTB has called for more transparency and coordination from the government, as well as more aggressive measures to contain the outbreak and protect medical workers.

The government has defended its response and said the public sees the key case figures.

In a speech to members of his AK Party, Erdogan said the TTB and other professional associations “are clearly acting in a way that is against the constitution” and the matter has “reached an unbearable level”.

He proposed a regulatory change similar to one in July that allowed multiple bar associations in a single city. Lawyers criticized the move as the latest in a series of steps to erode the judiciary’s independence.

Erdogan said on Wednesday the regulatory change would allow better representation of doctors than through solely the TTB, and should be enacted swiftly as a top priority for parliament.

His AK Party has a majority with the support of the nationalist MHP whose leader, Devlet Bahceli, last month accused the TTB of treachery and called for it to be shut down.

UNRWA: \$130m Budget Deficit a Threat to Peace, Stability

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – Philippe Lazzarini, Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), has warned that the \$130 million funding gap the organization is experiencing threatens core services and programs.

Lazzarini said that the total number of Palestine refugees infected by COVID-19 has surged from fewer than 200 cases in July to more than 10,000 last week. Beyond the health crisis, COVID-19 is

also unleashing a brutal pandemic of abject poverty that is making Palestine refugees feel hopeless, Lazzarini warned. “Despair is a threat to peace and stability,” he added.

He said that rising poverty among refugees is leading a growing number of them to rely solely on UNRWA’s services, stressing that maintaining quality services requires adequate resources.

The top UNRWA official reported that the agency’s funding gap is \$130 million, while UNRWA is appealing for support for its CO-

VID-19 response.

The organization also needs \$40 million to sustain its humanitarian operations, including food and cash assistance for more than 1.4 million conflict-affected refugees coming from Syria or living in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Failing to raise the necessary funds will impact both the salaries of 28,000 staff and the delivery of critical services, including schooling for more than half a million pupils, he continued.