

# Syrian Army Ready to Liberate Palmyra from ISIL Control

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Syrian Army forces are reportedly preparing to fully liberate the ancient city of Palmyra, located in the country’s west, from the clutches of the ISIL Takfiri terrorist group.

The Lebanon-based al-Mayadin television reported on Monday that the Army and popular forces have made some advances around Palmyra. The Army forces were now only five kilometers away from the city, readying to fully liberate it from the terrorists’ control.

On May 21, ISIL terrorists overran Palmyra, which is an ancient city on the list of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)’s World Heritage sites and is situated about

215 kilometers northeast of the Syrian capital, Damascus. The occupation promptly raised fears that the terrorists would once more destroy historical world heritage sites and artifacts there, like what they did months ago in the city of Mosul, Iraq.

The television reported that the Syrian Army had also neutralized an attack by the ISIL against Tal (Hill) Sheikh Khattab in Idlib province, situated likewise in western Syria, killing tens of the terrorists, among them some Chechens.

Syria has been battling foreign-sponsored militancy since March 2011. The violence fueled by Takfiri terrorist groups has so far left over 230,000 people dead.



Syrian soldiers get in position during clashes with ISIL terrorists in the historical city of Palmyra in western Syria.

## Female Palestinian Lawyer Recounts Prison Ordeal

WEST BANK (Press TV) – Female Palestinian lawyer Shireen al-Eesawy, currently incarcerated at HaSharon prison in central parts of the occupied territories, says she has suffered harsh conditions in solitary confinement, describing Israeli guards’ behavior as inhumane.

Eesawy told defense lawyer Hanan al-Khatib of the Palestinian Detainees’ Committee, who recently managed to visit her, that she was moved into solitary confinement two months ago, after an argument erupted between a number of Palestinian detainees and prison guards at HaSharon detention facility.

The imprisoned lawyer added that she went on hunger strike be-

tween June 15 and June 22, and that she was also placed in solitary confinement, when she was being held in Ramla prison.

“The cell was too small. Its door sealed shut. They even sealed the door with plastic,” Eesawy said, adding, “I couldn’t breathe and fell unconscious before they removed the plastic to allow some air through.”

“I had no sheets or covers. I had to sleep on the ground; they even confiscated all of my belongings,” the detained Palestinian lawyer said.

“The cell has no sink and is completely unfit for human use. Whenever they took me to see my lawyer, or whenever I was shortly

allowed into the prison yard, the soldiers always cuffed me, and chained my legs,” Eesawy noted.

She added that Zionist prison guards start the transfer of detainees to the court at around 3 a.m. local time (0000 GMT), and return them back to prison at around one after midnight the following day.

“They make sure the entire process is very exhausting to us,” the detained Palestinian lawyer stated.

“They deliberately deny us the right to sleep, or even to rest.”

Eesawy was kidnapped from her house in East Jerusalem al-Quds on June 3, 2014, and since then the Israeli High Court has refused to release her on bail.

Israeli forces routinely abduct

Palestinians in the West Bank and put them behind bars based on the so-called administrative detention, which allows the Israeli regime to imprison Palestinians without charge or trial for months or years.

Over 7,000 Palestinians are reportedly incarcerated in 17 prisons and detention camps of the Zionist regime.

The Palestinian Prisoners’ Center for Studies (PPCS) says administrative detention orders in the first three months of 2015 have witnessed a sharp increase over the similar period in 2014.

According to the PPCS, Zionist troops have arrested 78 Palestinian females, including minors, in the first quarter of 2015.

## Turkey Ex-President Reacts to Successor’s Accusations



Turkey President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (L) and his predecessor Abdullah Gul (R).

ANKARA (AP) – Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has re-

portedly reacted to his predecessor’s accusations about the country’s

flawed foreign policy.

Turkish newspaper Today’s Zaman described Erdogan’s Sunday remarks about abuse of power by some former government officials as a veiled criticism directed at Abdullah Gul who served as president from 2007 to 2014.

“There were certainly some who betrayed, who were overwhelmed by their ambitions, who were afraid, who became victims of their egos and who fell short of breath. We left them in their place and continued our way,” Erdogan said.

The Turkish paper said these remarks were directed at Gul.

Erdogan’s remarks came following Gul’s criticism that the government’s foreign policy was unrealis-

tic. Gul also urged Ankara to revise its policies with regard to the Middle East and Arab countries.

Erdogan and Gul are both founders of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP).

The two allies started parting ways last year when Erdogan was elected president and tried to isolate Gul by naming Ahmet Davutoglu as his prime minister.

Davutoglu, viewed as Turkey’s foreign policy spin doctor, introduced the “zero problems with neighbors” policy when he was serving as the country’s foreign minister.

Now, Turkish media analysts say the promised policy of detente has backfired, resulting in a “zero neighbors” policy for Turkey.

## US Delivers First F-16 Fighters to Iraq

BAGHDAD (Press TV) – The United States has delivered the first batch of F-16 fighter jets to Iraq to be employed in the fight against the ISIL Takfiri terrorists.

“After years of preparation & training in the US, Iraqi pilots today landed the 1st squadron of Iraqi F16s in #Iraq,” tweeted Brett McGurk, the administration’s deputy special presidential envoy to the coalition against the ISIL, on Monday.

The four jets were delivered to the Iraqi military at the Balad air base, confirmed an Iraqi air force official.

US State Department spokesman John Kirby has said the US would help the Iraqi government to prevent the jets from ending up in the hands of the terrorists.

“Of course we’re concerned about the security situation on the ground, and not just with respect to aircraft, but any other equipment that could be damaged ... by ISIL,” he said during a press briefing.

“F-16 jets are a little bit different,” Kirby noted, adding ISIL “has no air force and has no capability or ability to fly advanced fighter aircraft.”

Kirby said, “If they are going to be flown in combat over the skies of Iraq, they will be flown by Iraqi pilots.”

Iraq has previously ordered 36 of the fighter aircraft worth \$65 million. However, the US has delayed delivering the fighter jets due to security concerns that ISIL forces might overrun Balad, which is located about 45 miles from Baghdad.

“The aircraft are designed and were purchased by Iraq for their self defense. The fight inside Iraq right now is against ISIL. And our expectation is that if and when they start flying missions and combat sorties in Iraq, that’s what they’ll be used for: not to go after -- not to contribute to any sectarian issues inside Iraq,” Kirby added.

The ISIL group started its terrorist activities in Iraq in early June 2014. The heavily armed terrorists took control of Mosul before sweeping through other parts of the country.

## President: All ...

(Continued From Page One)

first speech on the nuclear case in 2013, where he called on the global powers to stop bullying and put an end to the sanctions regime and instead speak with the Iranian nation through the language of respect.

He said the Tuesday conclusion showed that the global powers had come to terms in that regard.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rouhani elaborated on some details of the conclusion, including the number of Iran’s centrifuges in operation, saying that Tehran had convinced its negotiating partners to have 6,000 centrifuges in operation, although the other side initially wanted only 100 machines to remain in place.

The Iranian president said the other side accepted Iran’s right to research and development, adding that Tehran also convinced the other side to have IR6 and IR8 machines and have UF6 gas injected to IR8.

He said Iran’s right to have the heavy water reactor in Arak is now recognized and work will be done in the future for the reactor to be completed.

The Fordow nuclear facility will also continue operations with 1,000 centrifuges, Rouhani stated.

Rouhani said the Tuesday statement benefits not only Iran and the Iranian people, but all the resistant nations in the region.

Israel’s efforts to push the nuclear talks of the past nearly two years into failure have led to the defeat of the Tel Aviv regime, the Iranian president stated.

President Rouhani once again appreciated all those contributing in the course of the negotiations, most notably Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei for his guidance and the Iranian people for resisting the inhumane pressure over the past years.

## Greek...

(Continued From Page One)

“We have squandered an enormous degree of likeability with a communications disaster,” said Constanze Stelzenmueller, a German-born fellow at the Washington-based think tank Brookings Institution.

Just two years ago, a BBC survey pronounced Germany to be the world’s most popular country, with 59% of people surveyed around the globe seeing it favorably.

In the meantime, Germany’s status as an economic powerhouse, gentle diplomatic giant and soccer World Cup champion projected an image of success, a social conscience and even coolness a quarter century after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

But former foreign minister Joschka Fischer said the Greek crisis had given rise to a rebirth of nationalism and accused Merkel of failing to use her considerable power to persuade Germans to look beyond their pocketbooks for the sake of Europe.

Merkel, who in November will celebrate a decade in power and enjoys nearly 70% approval ratings, “has not argued or acted politically but as a bookkeeper”, he said.

Stelzenmueller agreed that while Germany had many backers in Europe for the tough line it championed with Greece, a lack of apparent empathy had incurred immeasurable damage.

“I would have liked the German position to be somewhat more acknowledging of the fact that normal Greeks really have suffered more than others in Europe,” she told AFP.

“I think there is a great deal of damage done on all sides including to Germany’s stance as a benign hegemon.”

Stelzenmueller said that the horse-trading in Brussels had been “incredibly ugly” and Merkel often seemed to forget she was on the world stage.

“One often gets the impression that Merkel is speaking to her own party’s backbenchers and for everybody else in Europe it’s ‘take it or leave it,’” she said.

Stelzenmueller warned, however, that Germany’s unique role in Europe meant that even skilful diplomacy would not ensure its popularity.

“I think that’s the price of power.”

## Scientists...

(Continued From Page One)

Pluto’s diameter also affects the size of its atmosphere, which New Horizons has learned is bleeding off into space at a faster rate than expected.

Most of New Horizons’ data will be stored on the spacecraft and transmitted back to Earth after the probe passes beyond the Pluto system. Flight controllers expected to receive just a short message from New Horizons around 9 p.m. on Tuesday that it survived the Pluto encounter.

Lead scientist Alan Stern said there was a one-in-10,000 chance that a debris strike could destroy New Horizons as it nears Pluto.

“We’re flying into the unknown,” Stern said. “I don’t lose sleep over this, but fact is, tomorrow evening is going to be a little bit of drama.”