

DUBAI (Middle East Eye) – The United Nations has sought a meeting with the ambassador of the United Arab Emirates in Geneva over the condition of Dubai's Princess Latifa and her sister Shamsa, a UN spokeswoman said on Friday.

UN human rights spokeswoman Marta Hurtado said at a briefing in Geneva that the organization was "very worried" about the plight of the women, according to AFP, adding that a meeting between senior UN officials had in principle been agreed.

Man is a wonderful creature; he sees through the layers of fat (eyes), hears through a bone (ears) and speaks through a lump of flesh (tongue).

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### Popular Forces Outraged Over American Presence

# No Timetable for U.S. Troops Pullout From Iraq: Pentagon



This handout picture released by the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) on March 17, 2020, shows U.S. troops in the western Iraqi town of Qa'im.

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – U.S. Assistant to the Secretary of Defense John Kirby says there are no agreements with Baghdad regarding a timetable for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.

Kirby's remarks contradict a joint statement issued on Wednesday, after the end of the third round of strategic talks between U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein that took place via closed-circuit television, indicating that the troops'

evacuation process is underway.

During his daily press conference, Kirby stated that what was mentioned in the joint statement about: "Reaching a consensus regarding the continuation of the process of withdrawing U.S. combat forces in Iraq" does not in actuality mean that the evacuation will begin.

On Wednesday, the U.S. and Iraq announced in a joint statement that they have agreed on the eventual withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Iraq, while a remaining mission of U.S.

troops will be focused on what was called "training" Iraqi troops.

The statement, however, said the two governments have not yet worked out the timing of the American forces' withdrawal and would hold discussions on the matter.

About 2,500 U.S. troops are in Iraq on the pretext of fighting Daesh terrorists.

A faction of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), also known as Hashd al-Sha'abi, has rejected as offensive the presence of U.S. troops in Iraq under the pretext of "protecting" the Arab country, calling the existence of U.S. bases in Iraq a violation of the country's sovereignty.

"To say that Iraq needs foreign forces to defend its territory is an insult to the Iraqi military and security institutions, including the army and Hashd al-Sha'abi," Qais Khazali, who leads the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq resistance group, wrote in a tweet.

Khazali said it was the Iraqi fighters who managed to defeat the Daesh terrorist group and its sponsors without needing the assistance of foreign troops.

Khazali said since Daesh elements have become a security threat rather than a military threat, the U.S. air force is no longer needed and Iraq should rely on its own air force.

He called on the Iraqi negotiating team not to allow Americans to find new excuses to extend their presence on Iraq's soil, adding that the Americans are seeking "permits" to stay in Iraq through justifying their presence.

## Yemenis Conduct Retaliatory Attack on Saudi Airbases



A young girl stands amidst the ruins of a building destroyed in Saudi airstrikes, in Amran Province, Yemen, July 6, 2019.

SANA'A (Dispatches) – Yemeni forces have conducted a new retaliatory drone attack on King Khalid airbase in the southwestern Saudi city of Khamis Mushait, as well as Jizan Airport, a spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces said.

Brigadier General Yahya Saree said in a tweet on Friday that the Air Force of the Yemeni Army and Popular Committees carried out drone attacks against Jizan Airport in Saudi Arabia with a number of drones.

He revealed that a Qasef-2K was used in the attack, adding that the raid was accurate and the designated target has been hit with high precision.

Brigadier General Yahya Saree said the attack was legitimate and a natural response to the continuing Saudi aggression and siege of Yemen, Yemeni Al Masirah News reported.

The attack comes a day after another Qasef-2K was used in the attack on King Khalid airbase in Khamis Mushait.

In recent months, Yemen's Air Force has increased its retaliatory attacks on Saudi Arabia, stating that the strikes will continue as long as Riyadh maintains its airstrikes and blockade.

The reprisal has been targeting hugely sensitive and strategic spots across the kingdom, including targets resting in the heart of the capital

Riyadh, oil production facilities belonging to Saudi oil giant Aramco, and Saudi military installations.

Saudi Arabia and its regional allies, chiefly the United Arab Emirates (UAE), launched a war against Yemen in March 2015 to restore the government of fugitive former president Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, who resigned in 2014 and then fled to Riyadh.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the war has killed almost a quarter of a million Yemenis, caused outbreaks of diseases, turned Yemen into the world's worst humanitarian crisis and brought the poor Arab country to the verge of famine.

The United Nations warned on Thursday of the "imminent collapse of the health situation in Yemen," stressing that the situation in the impoverished country is "intolerable." "20.1 million people in Yemen are in need of medical assistance," OCHA said on Twitter.

It added that 51 percent of the country's health facilities were fully functioning, noting that "67 out of 333 districts do not have doctors."

Overall, the plight of children remains grim, with a child under the age of five dying every 10 minutes of preventable causes, OCHA pointed out.

## Syria Urges UNSC to Act Against Zionist Attacks

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Syria says a missile attack by the Zionist regime near the capital Damascus has wounded four soldiers, and has asked the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to take an immediate and decisive measure against the regime's aggression.

Syria's news agency SANA, quoting an unidentified military official, said Syrian air defenses were able to shoot down most of the missiles before they hit their targets on Thursday.

Damascus residents reported hearing at least one explosion.

The missiles were fired from the direction of neighboring Lebanon and the occupied Golan Heights, state television

said.

The occupying regime has launched hundreds of attacks against Syria over the years but rarely acknowledges or discusses such operations.

Syria renewed its call for UNSC to take a "firm and immediate" action against acts of aggression by the Zionist regime, urging the world body to hold to account regime authorities over their support for terrorism, crimes against the Syrian and Palestinian nations as well as their backing of terrorist outfits.

The Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, in a statement on Thursday, said the missile attack near Damas-

cus at the dawn was a flagrant violation of the UN Charter, principles of the international law, and relevant Security Council resolutions, which all demand respect for Syria's sovereignty.

"The Israeli act of aggression comes at the time when the world is celebrating Easter, which carries the message of love and peace. Israel, however, has proven through its incessant attacks on the Syrian soil that it does not believe in peace but rather in the law of the jungle," the statement read.

The Syrian ministry added that Zionist regime officials tend to pride themselves on such acts of aggression in order to cover up

their moral and political crises, highlighting that the authorities' persistence on the attacks comes under the aegis of Washington's unlimited and continuous support.

The statement went on to say that Israeli officials support terrorist groups wreaking havoc across Syria, and prevent Syrian government forces and their allies from crushing Daesh, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham and other militant outfits.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Zionist regime and its Western and regional allies are aiding terrorist groups wreaking havoc in the country.

## UAE Accused of Selling Palestinian Lands to Settlers

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has taken part in selling properties in East al-Quds to Zionist settlers, the Palestinian website Al-Qastal reported.

"The UAE is involved in selling three properties to settlers in Batn al-Hawa neighborhood in the Silwan area in East Jerusalem (al-Quds)," Al-Qastal quoted informed Palestinian sources. The sources said that "documents proving the involvement of the UAE and Palestinian figures in selling real estate in Silwan will be revealed later".

At dawn on Thursday, groups of settlers reportedly managed to seize three buildings and a plot of land in Batn al-Hawa neighborhood, under the protection of the regime's police, after the site was handed to settler associations.

Meanwhile, families from the town of Silwan, just outside of occupied East al-Quds, held a meeting on Thursday in which they stressed the necessity of boycotting "real estate looters" cooperating with settler associations. The boycott

includes refraining from attending their events, and from inviting them to national or family events, and imposing a complete and comprehensive boycott against them and their families.

### More Illegal Settler Units

In another development, Zionist regime authorities gave the green light for the construction of hundreds of illegal settler units in the occupied East al-Quds in the first such measure since U.S. President Joe Biden assumed office in late January.

The proposed 540 housing units are to be built in the Palestinian neighborhoods of Beit Safafa and Sharafat, and create territorial continuity between the two major settlements of Har Homa and Givat Hamatos south of East al-Quds, Israeli English-language newspaper Haaretz reported.

The Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority condemned the decision by the regime, with

presidential spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh saying in a statement that the move is "condemned and rejected."

"It violates all United Nations resolutions that condemn settlements, especially Resolution 2334 which affirmed that all forms of settlements on Palestinian lands are illegal," Abu Rudeineh said.

President Biden had claimed his administration would restore the U.S. policy of opposing settlement expansion in the occupied Palestinian territories.

His predecessor Donald Trump recognized al-Quds as the so-called capital of the Zionist regime in December 2017 and announced in November 2019 that his administration no longer considered settlement construction in the occupied West Bank a violation of international law.

More than 600,000 Zionists live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East al-Quds.

## Occupying Regime Says Not to Cooperate With ICC Probe

AL-QUDS (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime say it will tell the International Criminal Court (ICC) it does not recognize the authority of the tribunal, which is planning to investigate the regime's war crimes in the occupied Palestinian territories.

ICC prosecutors said letters had been sent on March 9 to all parties within the Zionist regime concerned, giving them a month to inform the court if they were conducting investigations of the crimes and want an ICC inquiry deferred while that is ongoing.

In a speech, prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu deemed the ICC inquiry an "absurdity".

Netanyahu said in a statement that the regime will respond to a notification letter from the ICC, telling it that Tel Aviv does not recognize the tribunal's authority.

Last month, ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda announced in a statement the launch of a war crimes investigation into the Palestinian territories, which have been under the regime's occupation since

1967.

She said her inquiry will be conducted "independently, impartially and objectively, without fear or favor."

The Palestinian Authority (PA) welcomed the prosecutor's announcement.

It is "a long-awaited step that serves Palestine's tireless pursuit of justice and accountability, which are indispensable pillars of the peace the Palestinian people seek and deserve", the PA foreign ministry said in a statement.

Hamas resistance movement also praised the ICC's move.

"We welcome the ICC decision to investigate Israeli occupation war crimes against our people. It is a step forward on the path of achieving justice for the victims of our people," Hazem Qassem, a Hamas spokesman said.

"Our resistance is legitimate and it comes to defend our people. All international laws approve legitimate resistance," Qassem noted.