

Report Reveals Role of Terrorists in 2013 Killing of Syria Activists



Newly recruited militants take part in their last training on December 8, 2014 before being sent to the frontline along with terrorists from the so-called Jaish al-Islam near Damascus.

DAMASCUS (Press TV) – A foreign-backed terror group in Syria, and not the Syrian government, was behind the killing of the female rights activist Razan Zaitouneh and her companions in 2013, a report has revealed.

Zaitouneh, a Syrian human rights lawyer and civil society activist, along with her husband, Wael Hammad, and two of their friends and colleagues, were mysteriously abducted in the office of Violations Documentation Center, which she had founded to document atrocities

by terrorists and armed groups, in Douma, a militant-held town on the outskirts of the capital Damascus.

There has been no sign of life and no proof of death for the ill-fated activists since their disappearance.

Zaitouneh's fate has been one of the longest-running mysteries of the conflict in Syria. She was 36 at the time of the abduction.

At the time of Zaitouneh's disappearance, Douma, which is located in the Eastern Ghouta enclave, was hotly con-

tested by the Daesh terrorist group, the Al-Qaeda-affiliated Nusra Front, so-called Jaish al-Islam, among other militant outfits.

Jaish al-Islam, which is influenced by Wahhabism, is one of several Takfiri terrorist groups operating in Syria.

Germany's international news channel Deutsche Welle (DW) recently issued a report which proved beyond doubt that Zaitouneh and fellows were kidnapped and killed by the terrorist group. Indications had already suggested this scenario

to be the case.

The investigative report by DW is based on evidence gathered from six countries and interviews with dozens of witnesses with intimate knowledge of the case. It tracked down the nefarious terror group.

In 2011, Zaitouneh was co-recipient of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

In the summer of 2013, Zaitouneh was busy trying to gather evidence and write reports about violations committed by militant groups. However, despite being repeatedly denied access to militants' facilities, including those operated by Jaish al-Islam, she continued her research.

When she refused to back down, members of the terrorist group took things a step further. They launched a social media campaign to discredit her, including making her out to be an immoral woman and likening her to a spy working for Damascus, according to several sources who were in Douma at the time, the report said.

DW obtained a voice recording of a man who was ordered by a Jaish al-Islam associate to threaten Zaitouneh. He can be heard describing his interaction with the victim.

According to audio testimony obtained by DW, Zaitouneh was seen at Tawbeh prison by another female inmate within months of the abduction.

All efforts to release Zaitouneh and her companions failed.

Only weeks before a Russian airstrike would kill him in December 2015, so-called Jaish al-Islam founder and military leader, Zahran Alloush, promised friends and families of the victims to settle the question regarding their fate.

Stand...

(Continued From Page One)

The harmonious gathering of individuals around the Ka'bah is not attainable, but the harmonious gathering of hearts around the illuminating verses of the Holy Qur'an and holding fast to the rope which God stretches out [Qur'an, 3:103] is a perpetual duty.

We who are the followers of Islam – and who enjoy a large population, vast lands, countless natural resources and nations that are aware and awake – must build the future with our assets and resources. Over the last 150 years, Muslim nations have not had any role in deciding the fate of their countries and their governments. Apart from a few exceptions, they have all been led and governed by transgressing Western governments while being subject to their greed, interference and malevolence. Scientific backwardness and political dependence in many countries is the product of that passivity and incompetence.

Today, our nations, our youth, our scientists, our religious scholars, our civic intellectuals, our politicians, our political parties and our people must make up for that dishonorable, embarrassing past. They must stand firm and resist the aggression, interference and wickedness of Western powers.

All that the Islamic Republic of Iran is saying that has caused the world of Arrogance to become despondent and infuriated is actually an invitation to this kind of resistance. This is a resistance in the face of the interference and evil of America and other transgressing countries so as to take the fate of the world of Islam in one's own hands by relying on Islamic teachings.

Naturally, America and its cohorts are sensitive about the word "resistance" and have decided to show all kinds of hostility to the "Islamic Resistance Front." Some regional governments' cooperation with them is a bitter reality that strengthens those malicious acts as well.

The straight path shown to us by the Hajj rituals, by "Saiy," "Tawaf," "Arafah," "Jamarat" and the jubilation and unity in Hajj, is to rely on God, to pay attention to the never-fading power of God, to have national self-confidence, to believe in struggle and endeavor for religion, to show firm determination when moving forward and to have abundant hope for victory.

The truth of the realities in the Islamic region bolsters this hope and builds up this determination. From another perspective, the bitter events in the world of Islam, scientific backwardness, political dependence, and economic and social problems direct us

toward a great duty and an untiring endeavor.

Usurped Palestine is calling for our help. Innocent, bloodied Yemen torments every heart. The plight of Afghanistan concerns everyone. The bitter events in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and some other countries – where the interfering, malevolent hand of the U.S. and its cohorts is completely visible – is stimulating the zeal and determination of all the young people.

On the other hand, the emergence of the Resistance Forces throughout this sensitive region, the awakening of nations, and the motivation of the young, enthusiastic generation, is making hearts overflow with hope. Palestine is wielding the sword of Quds in all its territories. Quds, Gaza, the West Bank, the 1948 Lands and the Palestinian camps all rose up and bravely defeated the aggressor over the course of just 12 days.

Yemen, which has been besieged and alone, has endured seven years of war, crimes, and the murder of innocent people by the evil, stone-hearted enemy. It has not surrendered despite a lack of food, medicines and other basic needs. On the contrary, Yemen has perplexed the enemy with its power and ingenuity.

In Iraq, the Resistance Forces are pushing back the occupying U.S. and its puppet Daesh. With their loud cries, they are eloquently expressing their firm decision to confront every act of interference and malice on the part of the U.S. and its cohorts.

The American propaganda effort to distort the will, demands and actions of the brave youth and forces of the Resistance in Syria, Lebanon and other countries and to ascribe them to Iran or any other reference point, is an insult to those valiant, vigilant youth. And this stems from America's deep ignorance about regional nations.

This ignorance led America to be humiliated in Afghanistan. After that raucous invasion 20 years ago and after having used weapons and bombs against defenseless people and civilians, it became stuck in a quagmire and eventually withdrew its forces from that country. Of course, the vigilant Afghan nation should remain watchful concerning America's tools for gathering intelligence and its soft-war weapons, and it must vigilantly fight them.

Regional nations have shown that they are awake and vigilant and that their path is different from the path of those governments that are even prepared to go as far as to give in to U.S. demands over a vital matter – the Palestinian cause – in order to keep it satisfied. These are governments that overtly and covertly create ties of friendship with the usurping Zionist regime. In other words,

they deny the right of the Palestinian nation to their historic land. This is an act of stealing Palestinian assets. They did not find it sufficient to ransack the natural resources of their own countries, and they are now ransacking the resources of the Palestinian nation.

Brothers and sisters,

Our region and the swift, diverse events taking place in it are an exhibition showing us lessons and examples. On the one hand, we can learn the lesson of gaining power using resistance against the transgressing aggressors. On the other hand, we can learn the lesson of humiliation that results from submitting to them and showing weakness.

The true, divine promise is assistance for the fighters in the way of God, "If you aid the cause of Allah, He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly." [Holy Qur'an, 47:7]

The primary result of this struggle in the way of God will be to prevent America and other international aggressors from interfering in the affairs of Islamic countries, God willing.

I ask God, the Exalted, to assist the Muslim nations, I send greetings to the Imam of the Age (may our souls be sacrificed for his sake), and I ask God to elevate the status of the great Imam Khomeini and our illustrious martyrs.

Greetings to God's righteous servants.

Seyyed Ali Khamenei

July 17, 2021

Tir 26, 1400

Dhu al-Hijjah 6, 1442

PM ...

(Continued From Page One)

A member of the politburo of the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq resistance group, which is part of the PMU, stressed the need to fight off the "terrorist U.S. forces" in Iraq, saying there is no safe haven for the occupying American forces in the Arab country.

"Resistance groups intend to engage in a direct conflict with the U.S. military," Saad al-Saadi said, al-Ebaa news agency reported on Sunday.

Al-Saadi stressed that the security, political, and economic problems in Iraq are caused by the U.S.

He also called on Kadhim to be sensitive about Iraq's sovereignty, noting that the Iraqi prime minister is facing a great challenge and he must prove his patriotism.

In remarks earlier this month, al-Saadi said Iraqi resistance groups had no choice but to confront the US militarily, noting

that they stood ready to respond to any U.S. attack against the PMU forces.

He also said the resistance groups gave diplomacy ample opportunity, but the U.S. government took the opportunity to procrastinate, urging the Iraqi government to "demand the expulsion of Americans from Iraq."

Some 3,500 foreign troops, including 2,500 Americans, are still in Iraq, with the alleged aim of preventing the re-emergence of Daesh in the country.

Observers, however, say Washington's targeting of resistance forces is aimed at reviving Daesh and, in turn, prolonging its illegal occupation of Iraq under the pretext of fighting the terrorist group.

Elsewhere in his Sunday interview, Kadhim said he will visit Tehran after the inauguration of new president Ebrahim Raisi, who will be sworn in early next month.

"We hope that we will not be an arena for the U.S.-Iranian conflict," he said, emphasizing that Baghdad is in contact with Tehran because "we need stability."

Kadhim said negotiations between Iran and the U.S. will impact the region. He also said talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia, hosted by Baghdad, will continue.

Nujaba Details UAE's Subversive Acts in Iraq

Iraq's al-Nujaba Movement said Monday the United Arab Emirates has made \$13 billion from its destabilizing role in Iraq, criticizing the Iraqi government for preferring trade with a "small, non-producing country."

Nasr al-Shammari, a spokesman for the resistance movement, hit out at the Baghdad government over the country's large trade deficit with the UAE.

The spokesman said the deficit is due to the fact that Iraq exported mostly oil products worth \$1.27 billion in 2019, while it received UAE re-exports of mainly communication and satellite equipment worth \$13.7 billion in the year.

"In other words, the trade balance is equivalent to \$12.43 billion in favor of the UAE," he said.

"This is while, Iraq's imports from Qatar were worth about \$30 million, from Saudi Arabia worth about \$700 million and from the United States worth \$1.2 billion," Shammari said.

Citing official figures, Shammari put Iraq's exports to China at \$22 billion against \$9 billion of imports from the Asian country.

The country's imports from Turkey stand

at about \$10 billion, and from Iran at \$8 billion, nearly \$1 billion of which is for the purchase of gas for power plants.

These figures, Shammari said, are "understandable and justifiable", given that the trade involves large countries such as the U.S., China, Iran and Turkey, but not with the UAE which he described "a port with a number of commercial offices" producing nothing.

He also questioned Baghdad's refusal to trade directly with productive countries such as China, and instead importing low quality and energy-intensive equipment from the UAE amid a power crisis in the country.

Shammari said any multimillion-dollar trade with a country requires respect for its sovereignty and non-interference in its internal affairs, but the UAE has played a destructive role in Iraq, citing its subversive acts against the development of al-Faw port on the mouth of the Persian Gulf. "The UAE is the main loser from the inauguration of this project, as it would lose billions of dollars annually when it opens. Therefore, it has no problem with spending one billion dollars to set fire to Iraq and stop the al-Faw Grand Port project."

Iraq agreed a \$2.625 billion deal with South Korea's Daewoo Engineering & Construction in December 2020 to build the first phase at its planned Faw commodities port in the south of the country.

Earlier this year, an Iraqi lawmaker revealed the destructive role that the United Arab Emirates plays in Iraq, saying the UAE's national security advisor was in charge of implementing the Emirati agenda that aims to destabilize the country.

"The UAE received the Iraqi file at the request of the U.S. and the Zionist entity after Daesh occupied a number of provinces," Kazem al-Sayadi, noting that Abu Dhabi has "death squads" in most countries across the world.

He said UAE National Security Advisor Tahnoun bin Zayed Al Nahyan buys positions in ministries and assigns them to corrupt figures to implement the country's "destructive" agenda in southern and central Iraq and to target the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), better known as Hashd al-Sha'abi.

The PMU is a government-sponsored umbrella organization composed of around 40 factions of volunteer counter-terrorism forces, including mostly Shia Muslim groups, besides Sunni Muslims, Christians and Kurds. The force played a major role in the liberation of the entire Iraqi land from the control of the terrorists in December 2017.

According to al-Sayadi, an Emirati security team had arrived in Iraq to manage the Iraqi intelligence service and make Iraq a subordinate to the UAE which itself is "basically a subordinate of the Zionist entity".

Wildfires...

(Continued From Page One)

of that horrific fire that killed 85 people watched warily as the blaze burned.

A growing wildfire south of Lake Tahoe jumped a highway, prompting more evacuation orders, the closure of the Pacific Crest Trail and the cancellation of an extreme bike ride through the Sierra Nevada.

The Tamarack Fire, which was sparked by lightning on July 4, had charred about 28.5 square miles (74 square kilometers) of dry brush and timber as of Sunday night. The blaze was threatening Markleeville, a small town close to the California-Nevada state line. It has destroyed at least two structures, authorities said.

A notice posted Saturday on the 103-mile (165-kilometer) Death Ride's website said several communities in the area had been evacuated and ordered all bike riders to clear the area. The fire left thousands of bikers and spectators stranded in the small town and racing to get out.

Kelli Pennington and her family were camping near the town Friday so her husband could participate in his ninth ride when they were told to leave. They had been watching smoke develop over the course of the day, but were caught off guard by the fire's quick spread.

"It happened so fast," Pennington said. "We left our tents, hammock and some foods, but we got most of our things, shoved our two kids in the car and left."

About 800 fire personnel were assigned to battle the flames by Sunday night, "focusing on preserving life and property with point protection of structures and putting in containment lines where possible," the U.S. Forest Service said.

A fire in the mountains of northeast Oregon grew to more than 18 square miles (48 square kilometers) by Sunday. The Elbow Creek Fire that started Thursday has prompted evacuations in several small, remote communities around the Grande Ronde River about 30 miles (50 kilometers) southeast of Walla Walla, Washington. It was 10% contained.

Natural features of the area act like a funnel for wind, feeding the flames and making them unpredictable, officials said.

Overall, about 70 active large fires and complexes of multiple blazes have burned nearly 1,659 square miles (4,297 square kilometers) in the U.S., the National Interagency Fire Center said. The U.S. Forest Service said at least 16 major fires were burning in the Pacific Northwest alone.

Iran...

(Continued From Page 2)

Palestinian worshipers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque, saying the regime has left no choice for Palestinians but to put up resistance against such aggression.

"The aggression occurring on the eve of Eid al-Adha is strongly condemned, and Iran expresses its disgust at the approach," he said.

Khatibzadeh said Iran will continue to make every effort to prevent such acts of violence and aggression, noting that the united voice of the Islamic world can be helpful.

On the recent opening of the Emirati embassy in Tel Aviv, Khatibzadeh said the occupying regime of Israel assumes that it can gain some legitimacy for itself through such acts while it is indeed at the nadir of its legitimacy.

He said Israel, as a regime that has been the source of violence and terror in the region for decades, cannot gain any legitimacy through such acts.

"The United Arab Emirates should know that they are responsible for the unrest and for what would happen in this region due to the presence of the regime occupying Al-Quds," the spokesman added.

On Sunday morning, over 1,500 settlers accompanied by Knesset members, and backed by Israeli forces, broke into the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and injured dozens of Palestinian worshipers.

According to the official Palestinian news agency Wafa, dozens of Israeli police officers raided the site and cleared the way for hundreds of settlers, who broke into the courtyards once it had been almost completely emptied of Muslim worshipers.

In recent years, there has been a sharp spike in acts of aggression committed by Israeli settlers against the Palestinians throughout the occupied territories.

Settlers, protected by Zionist forces, regularly break into the Al-Aqsa Mosque and attack Palestinian worshipers.

Response...

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rejected as "inaccurate" the media portrayals of the sabotage operation, which he blamed on the Tel Aviv regime, saying the incident caused only minor material damage and no fatalities.

Such attempts at disrupting Iran's peaceful nuclear activities have failed thanks to the vigilance of Iran's security and defense organizations.

The Nournews report further indicated that space and satellite technologies, in addition to generating power in various scientific fields, have in recent years played an important role in the intelligence, security and military confrontations among countries.

It said space exploitation is carried out with various purposes such as scientific exploration, the use of infinite space resources, telecommunications, remote sensing, distance education, location and navigation, espionage, defense and military.

"Since this field is considered as one of the pillars of power generation in various economic, industrial, political and military dimensions and security in the world today, the issue of 'space security' as its integral appendix has been disputed by the great powers. Among them is the ongoing dispute between the United States and Russia in this regard," it added.

In this regard, some regimes use military satellites and other satellites with other applications for military and terrorist purposes, in which case, of course, the target countries will not be subject to space security protocols.

According to the report, the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) has adopted protocols obliging its member states to respect the rights of other countries in the field of space and to commit to the peaceful use of this space.

"Basically, if the international institutions and organizations that are responsible for regulating the misused of space satellites are not able to defend the rights of other countries and citizens of the international community, in such cases, it is natural that these countries will not sit idle and will also make a direct confrontation, in which case, the world peace and security will be endangered."