

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) – The Secretary-General of the Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq movement, Qais al-Khazali, on Saturday accused Western “embassies and intelligence agencies” of waging a “soft war” against the Iraqis via injecting billions of dollars to promote “gender, women empowerment, and sexual freedom” agenda. Speaking at a commemorative event for a fallen leader of al-Hashd al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilization Forces-PMF), al-Khazali said, “various forms of distortion and psychological, media, and intellectual warfare have been practiced against the Iraqis through different means of so-called soft war, propagated on social media platforms run by electronic armies backed by several embassies, intelligence agencies, and others who have spent billions of dollars to distort the beliefs, morals, customs, and traditions of those people.”

When someone is sure of the returns, then he shows generosity.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Hammas: Palestinians Not to Allow Abortion of Escalating Intifada

GAZA STRIP (Dispatches) – Hamas resistance movement's chief Ismail Haniyeh says that Palestinians and their resistance will not allow the abortion of escalating intifada.

He asserted in a statement: “All desperate efforts being exerted to suppress the ongoing Palestinian Intifada in the occupied West Bank, to undermine the Palestinian resistance and to override the Palestinian pains and ambition for freedom and independence will go in vain.”

The Hamas chief hailed the Palestinians who responded to the calls of the Lions' Den fighters to take to the streets across the occupied territories.

On Friday at midnight, thousands of Palestinians took to the streets in the Palestinian cities and villages in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, chanted in support of the Lions' Den and hailed the martyrs murdered by the Zionist troops in the city of Nablus.

“With all pride, we stand before these floods of supporters across the occupied territories and refugee camps declaring that resistance is the only option for the liberation of the land of Palestinians from the Zionist occupation,” Haniyeh said.



Hammas resistance movement's chief says Palestinians and their resistance will not allow the abortion of escalating intifada.

He added: “The battle to liberate the land of fathers and grandfathers from the Israeli occupation has reached a decisive stage.”

The top Hamas leader stressed that the Palestinians, who live in and around Palestine, are the people to take fateful decisions regarding the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian future.

Egypt has been holding “intensive talks” with Palestinian factions in recent days to prevent an escalation after the Zionist regime killed

11 Palestinians on Wednesday in the occupied West Bank, according to a report by Al-Araby Al-Jadeed newspaper.

“The Egyptian mediator tried to persuade the Palestinian factions, especially from Gaza, not to escalate in response to the raid on Nablus,” the report said, citing informed sources.

“The leaders of the resistance informed the Egyptians that the ‘unity of regions’ principle cannot be waived and the operation of launching rockets will continue and may

develop into other qualitative operations,” the newspaper added.

Palestinian resistance factions early on Thursday launched retaliatory missiles towards the Zionist settlements adjacent to the Gaza Strip.

The sources said Egypt has renewed its request to the U.S. to put pressure on the Zionist regime to stop the escalation of violence from its side. Cairo also repeated its appeal to the Islamic Jihad movement not to escalate. The Egyptians are deeply concerned about the possibility of an armed confrontation this year.

U.S. Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib has condemned the “violent attack” carried out by the Zionist regime on the occupied West Bank city of Nablus.

Tlaib wrote on Twitter: “Today the extremist right-wing regime of Israel violently attacked the city of Nablus, leaving 82 Palestinians shot & bringing the 2023 death toll to 61, including 13 children.”

“Until the U.S. stops funding this apartheid regime, it will enable more death & destruction,” Tlaib stressed, referring to the extremist right-wing cabinet that includes fanatical ministers convicted of violent and racist remarks.

Oman Pledges Not to Normalize Relations With Zionist Regime



Moroccans wave the Palestinian flag as they gather to protest the normalization of ties with the Zionist regime, outside the parliament building in the capital Rabat on December 24, 2022.

MUSCAT (Dispatches) – The Sultanate of Oman has committed to the Palestinian Authority (PA) that it will not normalize relations with the Zionist regime, Sama News has reported.

Israeli Channel 12, Sama News reported, disclosed that this pledge came following the occupying regime's declaration that Oman had permitted the Zionist regime's airlines to fly eastwards over its skies.

Channel 12 reported that the PA agreed not to condemn Oman's approval of the regime's airlines to fly over its skies in return for this pledge.

On Thursday, Zionist foreign minister Eli Cohen announced Oman's approval for airlines to fly through its airspace.

“This is a historic decision that will shorten the flying time to Asia, lower costs for Israelis and helps Israeli airlines to be more competitive,” Cohen communicated.

At the same time, Oman announced that the regime's airlines would be able to pass through its airspace, noting that this came after months of talks between the occupying regime's so-called ministry of foreign affairs and Omani authorities.

In July 2021, Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Al-Busaidi told London-based newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat: “Oman believes in the principle of achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of the two-state solution.”

The remarks came a week after Iraq's deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs renewed his country's rejection of normalization of relations with the Zionist regime.

Fuad Hussein denied reports about normalization of ties with the Zionist regime during a press conference upon his return from Washington.

Hussein also denied that this issue was proposed for discussion during his meet-

ings with senior American officials while he was in the U.S. capital.

“We have not heard from the political blocs about the issue of the normalization,” he said. “All these reports are fake. Everyone knows the political situation in Iraq. It has been clear that such an issue has never been proposed.”

Earlier, Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also said the situation between the Zionist regime and the Palestinians was not getting better.

In an interview at the Munich Security Conference, he said the priorities were for the Palestinians to have a homeland and for there to be a so-called two-state solution.

“The first Arab-Israeli peace deal was in 1979, more than 40 years ago and what has come of that? The Abraham Accords were done two years ago and what has come of that? The situation for the Palestinians is still as dire as it was ever before,” he told Reuters.

“I don't see how the Abraham Accords are bringing closer a two-state solution,” he added, referring to a raft of agreements between the Zionist regime and Arab states in recent years.

Back in 2020, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed United States-brokered agreements with Zionist regime to normalize their ties with the regime. Some other regional states, namely Sudan and Morocco, followed suit soon afterward.

Spearheaded by the UAE, the move has sparked widespread condemnations from the Palestinians as well as nations and human rights advocates across the globe, especially within the Muslim world.

Other regional countries have also been fraternizing with the occupying regime, including Saudi Arabia, which received a visit by the regime's former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu in November 2020.

Oxford Students Report Racial Profiling at Event Hosting Zionist Envoy

LONDON (Middle East Eye) – Pro-Palestine students said they faced racial profiling and intimidation while protesting Oxford Union's hosting of the Zionist regime's ambassador to Britain on Thursday.

Ambassador Tzipi Hotovely, who previously served as a settlement minister under prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, spoke at the Oxford Union during a members-only event discussing the so-called Abraham Accords.

The event also hosted the UAE's ambassador to the UK, Mansoor Abulhoul; and Bahrain's deputy ambassador to the UK, Hussain Mohammed Alam.

More than 150 Oxford students protested the union's invitation of Hotovely, citing the regime's hu-

man rights violation against Palestinians.

Security was high at the event, with at least six security guards manning the entrance and four others stationed inside the debating society's hall.

Students reported being racially profiled and heavily scrutinized by police and security guards, both upon entry to the event and when standing outside demonstrating.

One student, who wished to remain anonymous, told Middle East Eye that “security [guards] were profiling people, there was a girl wearing a hijab, they checked her more than they checked others' bags. They saw a flag in her bag and told her to leave it with them”.

The Oxford Student newspaper

said three of its journalists covering the event were removed from the area by police after being questioned and threatened with arrest.

The protest outside the hall was organized by Oxford University's Arab, Palestinian and Syrian societies. Demonstrators condemned the Oxford Union for inviting Hotovely, who one protester accused of supporting violence against Palestinians.

“Hotovely joins the ambassadors to UAE and Bahrain to discuss the Abraham Accords, a conversation that legitimizes the Israeli occupation and escalating violence on Palestinians, just as 2022 marked the deadliest year for Palestinians in the occupied West Bank,” one of the protest organizers, who did not wish to give a name, told MEE.

“This is the second time in a year that the union has brought Hotovely to campus, despite the extremity of her support for the violence on Palestinians.”

The protest organizer added that Oxford Union advertised the event two days earlier in a deliberate effort to suppress opposition to Hotovely's invitation.

Inside the union building, the “free Palestine” chants of protesters outside could be heard through the thin windows throughout the discussion.

As Hotovely began to speak, a student sitting in the back row raised a Palestinian flag, almost at half-mast, as if raising it only for the panelists to see. Security quickly pounced on him and took the flag outside.

Magnitude 5.5 Earthquake Strikes Turkey Again

ANKARA (Dispatches) – A magnitude 5.5 earthquake struck central Turkey on Saturday, the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre said.

The quake was at a depth of 10 km (6.21 miles), EMSC said.

Saturday's earthquake had a depth of 7km (4.34 miles) and hit the Bor district at 1:27pm (10:27 GMT), the Turkish disaster management agency AFAD said. No casualties have been reported so far.

Vice President Fuat Oktay said response teams are on the ground to assess any damage.

“There is no negative situation at the moment. May God protect our country and our nation from all kinds of disasters,” he said on Twitter.

The aftermath of the 7.8-magnitude quake on Feb. 6, which led to over 50,000 deaths in southern Turkey and northern Syria, has seen Turks question the structural integrity of many of the 173,000 buildings that collapsed or were seriously damaged.

Experts have said many toppled structures were built with inferior materials and methods and often did not comply with government standards. Opposition parties have accused President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's administration of failing to enforce building regulations.

Investigations have been launched against more than 600 people in relation to buildings that collapsed in Turkey's catastrophic earthquake earlier this month, a government official said Saturday.

Justice Minister Bekir Bozdag said 184 of the 612 suspects had been jailed pending trial. Those in custody include construction contractors and building owners or managers, he said in televised comments from a coordination center in Diyarbakir in southeast Turkey.

“The detection of evidence in the buildings continues as a basis for criminal investigation,” Bozdag added.

Turkey launched its homes rebuilding drive for its 1.5 million citizens that are left homeless in the aftermath of the devastating tremors that jolted both Turkey and Syria earlier this month, leaving behind a death toll of more than 50,000.

President Tayyip Erdogan has pledged to rebuild homes within a year, as more than 160,000 buildings containing 520,000 apartments collapsed or were severely damaged by the shocks.

Meanwhile, a pan-Arab international campaign has announced plans for launching a popular convoy to confront the long-running blockade imposed by the United States and the European Union on Syria, which is currently suffering the aftermath of a dev-

astating earthquake that has so far claimed thousands of lives and left as many destitute across the Arab country.

The Arab and International Campaign to Break Siege on Syria made the announcement after a meeting headed by its general coordinator Magdi al-Masrawi, former secretary-general of the Arab National Congress, official SANA news agency reported.

“The conferees studied a proposal to launch an Arab popular convoy from the west of the Arab world to its east under the title “The Arab Unity Convoy to Break the Embargo Imposed on Syria” similar to the “Convoy of Arab Unity, Maryam” to break the siege on Iraq, which started at the beginning of the current century from London towards Morocco, then towards Iraq,” the campaign said.

According to the statement, it was agreed that members of the committee, along with members of the General Arab Conference, personalities and parties in solidarity with Syria, would conduct contacts in order to make the initiative a success.

The disastrous earthquake hit Turkey and neighboring Syria earlier this month, killing more than 50,000 in both countries, according to the latest figures which are updated daily.

Yemenis Stage Rallies in Support of Palestinians, Condemn Saudi Siege

SANA'A (Dispatches) – Yemenis have flooded the streets of the capital city of Sana'a, calling for the removal of a siege on the country by the Saudi-led coalition and expressing support for the Palestinian nation.

The demonstrations marked the anniversary of the 2018 assassination of Saleh al-Sammad, the former head of Yemen's Ansarullah Supreme Political Council. Similar events took place elsewhere, including the northern city of Sa'ada.

The crowds commemorated Al-Sammad and vowed to continue efforts to liberate all the Yemeni lands from invaders and occupiers.

Demonstrators warned the Saudi-led coalition and the United States against continuing the war on Yemen. They demanded the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Yemen.

The demonstrators also expressed solidarity with the Palestinian peo-

ple and their just cause to liberate the Palestinian land.

The participants vowed that Palestine will remain the top issue of the Yemeni people and the Arab and Islamic nations.

The rallies had been called by the leader of the Ansarullah resistance movement Abdul-Malik al-Houthi.

Saudi Arabia, in collaboration with its Arab allies and with arms and logistics support from the United States and other Western states, launched the war on Yemen in March 2015.

The objective was to crush Ansarullah, which has been running state affairs in the absence of a functional government in Yemen, and reinstall the Riyadh-friendly regime of Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi.

The coalition has failed to achieve any of its objectives. Hundreds of thousands of Yemenis have been killed. The world's worst humanitarian crisis has unfolded in Yemen.