

New Book: Trump Offered West Bank to Jordan's King Abdullah in 2018



U.S. President Donald Trump gives a press conference with King Abdullah II of Jordan in the Rose Garden at the White House on April 5, 2017.

WASHINGTON (Middle East Eye) – Former U.S. President Donald Trump offered Jordan's King Abdullah II control over the occupied West Bank in 2018, a new book due to be published next week has revealed.

According to a report in the Washington Post, the book details how on receiving the offer the king told a friend: "I thought I was having a heart attack. I couldn't breathe. I was bent doubled-over."

Jordan ruled the West Bank from 1948 to 1967, when it was captured and illegally occupied by Zionist troops. Around 60 percent of the Jordanian population is of Palestinian descent.

Trump in the White House 2017-2021.

The book says Trump's offer was made in January 2018 and is among several new details about his presidency revealed by Baker, chief White House correspondent for the New York Times, and Glasser, staff writer for the New Yorker.

Since the start of the occupation, the Zionist regime has been building settlements in the West Bank that are considered illegal under international law. The settlements are said to be one of the main impediments to 'peace' in the region.

Despite signing a treaty with Tel Aviv, Amman has not recognized the Zionist regime's 1967 occupation of east Al-Quds and other parts of the West Bank.

Trump's offer came as Washington had no authority to give away this Palestinian land. The former U.S. president had been condemned by Palestinians for his pro-Zionist stance. Among his controversial measures with regard to Palestine was relocating the U.S. embassy to Al-Quds, not considering settlements inconsistent with international law, and pushing for a plan which had not included Palestinian rights.

A Miracle... (Continued From Page One)

In Beirut, Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said the attendance of millions of Muslim pilgrims from across the world at the annual Arba'een rituals is a "miracle".

"Throughout history, there is no gathering like the gathering of lovers of Imam Hussein (AS) in the holy city of Karbala, and this today is like a miracle. Twenty million pilgrims means 20 million hearts beating for the love of Imam Hussein (AS)."

Nasrallah also expressed his gratitude to Iraq's entire political parties and factions, and appreciated the Iraqi people for their generosity and hospitality.

Elsewhere in his speech, the Hezbollah head pointed to the 1982 massacre of thousands of Palestinian civilians at Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in the southern flank of the Lebanese capital city of Beirut.

"This massacre was not only against the Palestinians, but led to the martyrdom of 1,900 Lebanese and 3,500 Palestinian people," Nasrallah said. "The killing in Sabra and Shatila is the biggest and most heinous massacre in the history of Arab-Israeli wars, and the perpetrators escaped punishment."

The massacre took place when Christian Phalangist militias armed by the Zionist regime stormed into the Palestinian refugee camps in southern Beirut and brutally killed civilians, including many women and children.

Nasrallah issued a fresh warning over the offshore Karish gas field, urging the occupying regime of Israel to refrain from extracting its resources.

"The red line to us is that there should not be extraction from Karish," he said.

He said Hezbollah was "giving a real chance" to the U.S.-brokered negotiations, which are aimed at demarcating a maritime border to allow for offshore drilling in disputed areas.

"We are following up on the negotiations and all our eyes are on Karish and our missiles are locked on Karish," Nasrallah said. "As long as extraction has not started, there is a chance for solutions."

"We will not allow that oil and gas be extracted from the disputed Karish field before Lebanon obtains its rightful demands," he added.

Hezbollah has repeatedly threatened further attacks if the gas extraction goes ahead, after launching four unarmed drones toward Karish in July.

SCO... (Continued From Page One)

The leaders of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan met at the summit to order their forces to withdraw after deadly clashes along their disputed border raised fears of all-out conflict.

Putin and Xi both also met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who told the assembled leaders that efforts were being made "to finalize the conflict in Ukraine through diplomacy as soon as possible".

Putin told Erdogan, who has been a key broker in limited deals between Russia and Ukraine, that Moscow was keen to build closer ties with Turkey and was ready to "significantly increase" all exports to the country.

Venezuela... (Continued From Page One)

The South American country received the second tanker on June 11, 2022.

The second tanker was of Aframax type with a deadweight between 80,000 and 120,000 metric tons (mt) which can carry 113,000 mt or 750,000 barrels of oil. The 250-meter-long vessel is equipped with a 21,000 horsepower engine and three diesel generators that are capable of producing 900 kilowatts of electricity.

Maduro said in June that the fourth tanker will also join the Venezuelan state-owned oil and natural gas company (PDVSA) in 2024, marking the conclusion of a 2006-signed contract on four oil tankers between the two states.

President... (Continued From Page 2)

the implementation of the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran corridor and balance customs and transportation tariffs among the three countries.

Facilities have been created for the travel of Iranian business people to Kazakhstan, Tokayev stated, adding efforts should be made to increase the existing logistics and transportation capacities.

The Kazakh leader also invited Raisi to visit this country and attend the upcoming Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building (CICA) meeting.

Raisi said Iran is determined to implement agreements made by the two countries during the Kazakh president's visit to Tehran.

The Iranian president also held talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discussed the formation of a committee to pursue implementation of joint projects.

In separate talks with his counterpart Sadyr Japarov, President Raisi voiced Iran's readiness to share its technical and scientific experiences with Kyrgyzstan.

He also stressed the need for efforts to increase economic relations between Tehran and Bishkek. Iran and Kyrgyzstan can promote regional cooperation in partnership with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, he Raisi added.

For his part, Japarov said the expansion of relations with Iran is one of the top priorities of his country.

Guarantees... (Continued From Page 2)

Also as a goodwill gesture, Iran voluntarily chose to have extensive cooperation with the IAEA, beyond the safeguards agreement.

Back in June, Tehran decided to stop the voluntary cooperation, while stressing that its commitments under the agreement would continue.

Raisi also said the West has to ask the Zionist regime to stop its nuclear weapon program instead of picking on Iran over its peaceful nuclear activities.

"Before asking us to stop our nuclear activities, the West has to make this demand on the Zionist regime that owns weapons of mass murder," he stated.

Raisi, meanwhile, touched on ongoing talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia that seek to mend the differences between the two sides.

Riyadh ruptured its diplomatic ties with Tehran in early 2016 following demonstrations which were held in front of the Saudi embassy in Tehran and its consulate in the northeastern holy city of Mashhad by angry protesters censuring the Al Saud family for its earlier killing of the top Saudi Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

"Talks with Saudi Arabia continues. We have held five rounds of talks and will continue to hold more," the president said.

Addressing Iraq's drawn-out failure to form a government, Raisi said, "We would be delighted to witness a strong government in Iraq."

The Arab country has been without a government since parliamentary elections in October. Lawmakers faithful to influential Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr exceeded their fellow aspirants in the polls by winning as many as 73 seats.

Raisi said European countries had approached the Islamic Republic concerning the Iraqi crisis, saying, "We told them that this issue concerns the Iraqis."

The Iranian president also said, "The region's problems would be solvable if foreign forces stopped their interference," adding, "The Iraqis should not allow the Americans' presence."

The Iranian president finally addressed the issue of an April-present ceasefire in Yemen.

The truce has been almost holding, despite sporadic violations by a Saudi Arabia-led coalition, which began waging a war on the Arab world's poorest nation in March 2015.

President Raisi said in order for the truce to enter a permanent state, the coalition had to lift a siege that it has been employing against Yemen since the onset of the invasion.

Envoy... (Continued From Page 2)

the joint statement issued by Germany, France and the United Kingdom on the revival of the JCPOA, stressing that Tehran did its best in the negotiation process and acted "constructively" to reach an agreement.

Kanaani said that the IAEA's frequent reports have confirmed the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program, urging the agency to act "professionally" and without any pressure exerted by a third party – making an apparent reference to Israel.

Iran... (Continued From Page 2)

Earlier this month, Albania, which has for years hosted anti-Iran terrorists in collusion with the U.S., severed diplomatic ties with Tehran, accusing it of orchestrating a July "cyber attack" against Tirana.

Kanaani said the United States, the occupying regime of Israel, and the terrorist MKO group that has been hosted by Albania since 2016 are the "third parties" that have coerced Tirana into taking the decision.

U.S. Boosts Assistance to Jordan With 'Longest, Largest' Aid Package

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – The U.S. is boosting aid to its longtime ally Jordan as the resource-poor kingdom copes with a flagging economy at home and the lingering effects of conflicts amongst its neighbors.

The two countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Friday that will see the U.S. provide \$10.15bn in aid to Jordan over the next seven years.

The deal was first announced by President Joe Biden in July following his meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah II on the sidelines of a summit in Jeddah.

"The U.S. has gone above and beyond for Jordan," the country's foreign minister, Ayman Safadi, said at an event hosted by the Wilson Center in Washington following the signing.

"It's an extremely important MOU. It speaks to the strong friendship the two countries have. This is the longest and the largest MOU that we signed." The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, as it is officially known, is one of the U.S.'s most stalwart allies in the region.

The U.S. is Jordan's largest donor, and the level of aid the kingdom receives exceeds the amount Washington provides to Egypt, another U.S. ally in the region with a population 10 times the size of Jordan.

Jordan's government has always supported Palestinian statehood and any change in that policy would have been momentous and destabilizing.

The previously unreported offer comes after the Washington Post obtained a copy of Peter Baker and Susan Glasser's *The Divider*: U.S. aid to Jordan has been climbing for nearly a decade. In 2014 it totaled about \$660m per year. With the new MOU it is on track to reach \$1.45bn in 2023.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration said that it will give the majority of a \$300m tranche of annual military aid conditioned on human rights improvements to Egypt, saying Cairo had made "clear and consistent progress in releasing political prisoners and providing detainees with due process of law".

Rights groups and some U.S. lawmakers have urged the administration to withhold the full \$300m from Egypt where at least 60,000 political prisoners cur-

rently languish in prisons, many of them held in pre-trial detention.

Congress had made \$300m of the more than \$1bn Egypt receives in U.S. military aid contingent on President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi improving the country's human rights record.

As in 2021, the U.S. will withhold \$130m of military aid but allow the other \$170m.

U.S. State Department officials told Reuters that \$75m will be released after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken determined that Cairo, by releasing around 500 jailed individuals, had made some progress on political detentions and due process.

Syria: 5 Syrians Killed in Zionist Aggression

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – Five soldiers were killed by a fresh missile attack by the Zionist regime on the international airport of the capital Damascus and military sites south of the capital after midnight Friday, the Syrian military said.

The Syrian air defenses, it said, were triggered by the attacks, shooting down a number of the missiles.

The so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based war monitor, said the attacks targeted the countryside of Damascus.

Syria's official SANA news agency quoted a military source as saying that the strikes, which were carried out at approximately 00:45 am local time (2145 GMT) on Saturday, came "from the northeastern direction of Lake Tiberias, targeting Damascus airport and some points south of Damascus."

The military source was quoted as saying by SANA that, "The aggression led to the death of five soldiers and some material damage."

Earlier in the month, the Zionist regime's jets launched a number of mis-

siles from across the Mediterranean at the Aleppo International Airport in northwestern Syria, damaging the runway and rendering the facility out of service.

Syrian air defenses intercepted some of the incoming missiles, with reports providing no details on the number of possible casualties.

Syria has been in the grip of foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Zionist regime and its Western and regional allies aid terrorist groups that continue to wreak havoc in the country.

The occupying regime frequently targets military positions inside Syria, especially those of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah which has played a key role in helping the Syrian army in its fight against foreign-backed terrorists.

The Zionist regime rarely comments on its attacks on Syrian territories, which many see as a knee-jerk reaction to the Syrian government's success in confronting and decimating terrorism.

Lebanon Starts Plan to Return 15,000 Syrian Refugees Monthly

BEIRUT (Xinhua) – Lebanon on Saturday started implementing its plan to return 15,000 Syrian refugees monthly to their homeland, Elnashra news website reported.

Syrian refugees wishing to return home will be transported by the buses sent by the Syrian government, according to Elnashra.

The process will take place in cooperation with the Lebanese General Security Directorate and the Lebanese Red Cross, which will escort them to the Masna'a crossing between Lebanon and Syria un-

der the supervision of the UN Refugee Agency.

The first convoy plans to depart in 10 days, according to Elnashra.

"If no obstacles rise, the Lebanese General Security Directorate can organize the return of 200,000 Syrians within approximately a year," it added.

On July 4, Lebanese Minister of the Displaced Issam Charafeddine announced that the Lebanese government would secure the return of 15,000 displaced Syr-

ians monthly to their homeland.

Lebanese authorities said Lebanon would implement its plan regardless of the international position on this matter as the presence of a significant number of refugees weighs heavily on the country's economy which is already mired in an unprecedented crisis.

Lebanon hosts the world's largest number of refugees per capita, with a government estimate of the Syrian refugees in the country at 1.5 million.