

Zionists Declare Al-Khalil 'Closed Military Zone' to Prevent Rights Organizations Tour

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime's army has declared the city of Al-Khalil a "closed military zone" to prevent a tour organized by human rights organizations with the participation of hundreds of activists in the city. This came a week after the regime troops in the city attacked Israeli activists who showed solidarity with the city's residents against settler attacks.

Around 300 activists came to Al-Khalil to participate in a tour organized by 30 human rights organizations in the wake of the recent attacks on activists in Al-Khalil.

The occupation army claimed it sealed off the city to "prevent friction". The military has limited the movement of those participating in the tour to a bus stop near the Ibrahim Mosque.

The tour was organized by the Israeli organizations Breaking the Silence, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Peace Now, B'Tselem and other organizations. The military order took effect at 7



Hundreds of Israeli and foreign left-wing activists gather in solidarity with its Palestinian residents in the Al-Khalil city, in the southern West Bank on December 02, 2022

am before the activists arrived for the tour.

Meanwhile, the Zionist regime is reportedly mulling over denying entry to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 amid a spike in the regime's aggression against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank.

According to the Israeli media outlet Israel National News, the regime is considering a ban on Francesca Albanese, an international lawyer and researcher who has worked extensively on the Palestinian issue, for making anti-Israeli remarks.

The newspaper claimed that Albanese took part in a conference

last week in the Gaza Strip, which was also attended by Hamas and Islamic Jihad officials, and told the participants that "you have the right to resist this occupation."

Organized by the Council on International Relations-Palestine, the conference was titled "16 Years of Siege on Gaza: Impacts and Prospects" which aimed to shed light on the repercussions of the siege on the besieged enclave, the Palestinian Chronicle reported.

Albanese is not the first UN representative to be denied access to the occupied territories by the occupying regime authorities. Her predecessors Michael Lynk and Richard Falk, among others, were repeatedly prevented from visiting due to their critical stance on the regime's atrocities.

In a report on October 18, Albanese strongly condemned the Zionist regime's "apartheid practices" in the occupied Palestinian territories, saying its actions against Palestinians amount to "persecution."

China Censures 'Illegal' U.S. Troops, Smuggling of Oil, Grain in Syria

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – China has denounced as "illegal" the U.S. stationing of troops in Syria and the smuggling of oil and grain from the war-torn Arab country.

Media reports say the U.S. occupation forces have sent 54 oil-laden tankers from northeastern Iraq to their bases in northern Iraq.

Some Syrians reportedly said "what the U.S. troops did leaves them struggling to survive winter," according to Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesperson Zhao Lijian.

"The U.S. stationing of troops in Syria is illegal. The U.S. smuggling of oil and grain from Syria is illegal. The U.S. missile attack against Syria is also illegal,"

Zhao told reporters.

He cited official data from the Syrian government that between 2011 and the first half of 2022, the U.S. smuggling activities have cost Syria more than 100 billion dollars of losses.

Zhao said the United States keeps violating international laws and rules, and yet claims to be a champion of what it calls "the rules-based international order."

He added that when Washington talks about "rules," it is often just trying to find a pretext for serving its own interest and perpetuating its hegemony.

The spokesperson quoted the former French ambassador to the United States, Gerard Araud, among others, as saying, "the Americans basically want to do

whatever they want, including when it is against international law, as they define it, they do it."

"We believe the international community is not blind to this and will treat it with vigilance," Zhao said.

U.S. military trucks and tankers frequently carry tons of grain and crude oil from the northeastern Syrian province of Hasakah to the semi-autonomous Kurdistan region in northern Iraq as part of Washington's systematic smuggling of basic commodities out of Syria.

The U.S. military has for long stationed its forces and equipment in northeastern Syria, with the Pentagon claiming that the deployment is aimed at preventing the oilfields in the area from

falling into the hands of Daesh terrorists.

Damascus, however, maintains the deployment is meant to plunder the country's natural resources. Former U.S. President Donald Trump admitted on several occasions that American forces were in the Arab country for its oil wealth.

On September 21, China called on the United States to stop plundering Syria's national resources and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab country. China's Foreign Ministry also said the U.S. government has a duty to investigate robberies committed by intervening military forces, as well as to compensate for the damages caused.

UN Slams Attack on Pakistani Embassy in Afghanistan

UNITED NATIONS (Xinhua/AFP) – UN Security Council has condemned "in the strongest terms" a "terrorist attack" on the Pakistani embassy in Afghanistan, while stressing the principle of the inviolability of diplomatic premises.

Pakistani ambassador to Afghanistan has survived unscathed a gun attack by unknown armed men at the entrance of the embassy in Afghan capital Kabul, and a security guard of the embassy was injured, Afghan local media reported earlier Friday.

In a press statement, the 15-nation Security Council called on all relevant parties to respect and ensure the safety and security of diplomatic and consular premises and personnel of UN member states.

The council members stressed the fundamental principle of the inviolability of diplomatic

and consular premises, and the obligations on receiving states, under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, "to take all appropriate steps to protect diplomatic and consular premises," the statement said.

They also "underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organizers, financiers, and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice," added the statement.

Also on Friday, three unidentified militants detonated a car bomb and tried to storm the headquarters of an Afghan party headed by veteran politician Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, officials said.

Ghairat Baheer, an official with the Hizb-e-Islami party, said two attackers were killed as

they tried to enter the Kabul building — which also houses a mosque — and a third escaped.

"The car detonated outside, so there was little damage," he said.

Officials said Hekmatyar — a politician who served as prime minister in the 1990s — was inside at the time, but was unhurt.

Hekmatyar is regarded as a political survivor in Afghanistan, having fought against the Soviet occupation, the Taliban's first stint in power, and the Western-backed government that ruled until August last year.

The attack came two days after at least 16 people were killed, mostly children, and dozens of others injured in a powerful explosion at a religious school in northern Afghanistan's city of Aybak, the capital of Samangan province.

Anti... (Continued From Page One)

the Sikh community in the neighboring state of New Hampshire. On Monday, another mobile billboard truck was spotted in the town of Norwich, Connecticut, in which the images on the truck accused Pakistan of fueling a Sikh rebellion in the Indian state of Punjab.

According to a Fox61 report, one of the rotating images showed a man in a turban carrying what appeared to be a semi-automatic weapon along with an oversized ammunition belt. According to the report, both the Department of Justice and the FBI have opened an investigation into the matter.

"I think these kinds of things could lead to serious violence," Gurpreet Singh, a resident of Norwich, told Fox61.

That incident comes three months after a bulldozer, bearing the images of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Yogi Adityanath, the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, rolled through the streets of Edison and Woodridge during the India Day parade in August.

Like the truck, the bulldozer stopped outside Muslim-owned businesses and left the Muslim community in the vicinity feeling intimidated and concerned for their safety.

Bulldozers are synonymous with the destruction of activists and political dissidents' homes, particularly Muslim-owned homes in India.

Adityanath's reputation for the tactic has earned him the moniker of Bulldozer Baba ("Daddy Bulldozer").

"It appears the imagery on the truck was trying to link Muslims with the attacks in Mumbai and we had nothing to do with it," Minhaj Khan, an activist with the Indian American Muslim Council (IAMC), told MEE.

"Instead of trying to build bridges on independence day, they brought a bulldozer and they tried to intimidate us, and now they brought this truck during a national day of mourning at a place of worship... It was appalling."

In Edison, organizers were forced to apologize for the bulldozer following an outcry and national coverage but those closely following the events in the state say that Hindutva, or Hindu nationalism, is deeply embedded in states such as New Jersey, Texas and California.

Earlier this week, Cair-NJ and members of the Muslim Center of Middlesex County held a joint press conference in Piscataway to demand a response to the incident.

"While everyone - even bigots - has the right to free speech, no-one has the right to target religious minorities, especially at their houses of worship, with acts of perceived intimidation and harassment," Cair-NJ Executive Director Selaedin Maksut said in a statement.

The Piscataway police department told MEE the matter was now with the Attorney General's office.

Iran... (Continued From Page 2)

a subsidiary firm of the IRGC Cooperative Foundation and Javan News Agency. Also on the list of expanded sanctions are the Paravar Pars Aerospace Engineering Services and Research Company, and the Design and Manufacturing of Aircraft Engines Company (DAMA).

The final individual on the new list is Muhammad Javad Azari Jahromi, who was Iran's minister of information and communication.

Iraqi... (Continued From Page 2)

are under the constant watch of Iranian armed forces, he said, adding, "Unfortunately, there are some movements in Iraqi borders that lead to instability."

Iran has already asked the Iraqi Kurdistan to dismantle terrorist groups but "no cooperation has yet been offered on the issue," added the commander.

Pointing to the IRGC's powerful intelligence surveillance over the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, he said the military force was well capable of targeting a leader of the terrorist group but refrained from doing so because he was being accompanied by his family.

The IRGC also managed to target a terrorist leader who was injured and transferred to a hospital in Erbil, the provincial capital of Iraq's Kurdistan Region, he said.

"We can reach terrorist groups wherever they are," he said, noting that the IRGC could target houses that host terrorists.

Borrell... (Continued From Page 2)

In a phone conversation with Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres, Amir-Abdollahian said the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine is rooted in the wrong policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), namely its expansion toward the east.

The top diplomat reiterated Iran's opposition to the dispatch of weapons to the parties involved in the war which he said would only increase human losses and financial costs for both sides.

He said Tehran would continue its efforts to stop the war and promote lasting peace in Europe. Both Iran and Russia have repeatedly denied claims that Tehran has provided Moscow with drones to be used in the war in Ukraine.

The anti-Iran claims first emerged in July, with U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan alleging that Washington had received "information" indicating that the Islamic Republic was preparing to provide Russia with "up to several hundred drones, including weapons-capable UAVs on an expedited timeline" for use in the war.

Amir-Abdollahian also said the United States and some Western states have resorted to misinformation and abused international mechanisms to provoke chaos and acts of terror in Iran in recent months.

He said diplomacy and dialogue are the best ways to solve problems, emphasizing, however, that in the face of other options, the Islamic Republic's hands are not tied, apparently referring to the West's sanctions against Tehran over the recent unrest and Iran's tit-for-tat punitive measures.

The UN chief, for his part, hailed Iran's constructive role in regional issues and expressed hope that Tehran's efforts would lead to the end of the war in Ukraine and the establishment of a ceasefire there.

Guterres said dialogue and diplomacy are suitable ways to solve regional and international issues and stressed the importance of continued efforts by Iran to help find a political solution to the Yemeni crisis.

The Iranian foreign minister and the UN chief also exchanged views about the latest developments in the talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and Iran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Senior... (Continued From Page 2)

remains our preference," he said, despite the fact that the Islamic Republic has repeatedly rejected U.S. allegations that it is seeking to build a nuclear bomb.

"Now, there are other tools that we are already using: pressure, international pressure, of a kind that Iran has not experienced for many many years," he added.

"Remember under the Trump administration much of the world, including our three European allies in the negotiations, spent at least as much time blaming the US, as they were blaming Iran for its nuclear advances."

The official claimed that in August the two sides had almost reached an agreement on the JCPOA deal, but Tehran wanted the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to stop its inspections, and so, they disagreed. Tehran, however, disputed this, saying it had complied with the deal even beyond its obligations, since the 2015 signing of the JCPOA, and the IAEA had witnessed Tehran's commitment to the terms of the deal at least 15 times. Iran turned off several of IAEA's cameras which were functioning outside the Safeguards Agreement since early June after the IAEA Board of Governors passed a resolution that accused the country of not cooperating with the UN body.

Report: Sweden Extradites PKK Member to Turkey

ISTANBUL (AP) – Sweden has extradited a convicted member of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) to Turkey as Ankara presses Stockholm for further steps in return for its membership in NATO, state media reported on Saturday.

Mahmut Tat, who was sentenced to six years and 10 months in jail for PKK membership in Turkey, fled to Sweden in 2015 but his asylum request was rejected.

Tat arrived in Istanbul on Friday night having been detained by Swedish police, the Anadolu news agency reported.

He was taken by Turkish police soon after arriving at Istanbul airport and referred to court on Saturday, the private NTV broadcaster reported.

Turkey has accused Finland and Sweden in particular of providing a safe haven for outlawed Kurdish groups it deems "terrorists," and held back on ratifying their NATO bids despite an agreement in Madrid in June.

Finland and Sweden dropped decades of military non-alignment and sought to join NATO in May, after the conflict in Ukraine.

The decision requires a consensus within the

U.S.-led military alliance, but only Turkey and Hungary are yet to ratify their membership.

Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu held trilateral talks with his Swedish and Finnish counterparts on the margins of a NATO meeting in Bucharest this week.

"The statements (coming out of Sweden) are good, the determination is good but we need to see concrete steps," Cavusoglu said.

Ankara has said it expects Stockholm to take action on issues including the extradition of criminals and freezing of terror assets.