

TEHRAN -- The newly-appointed secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said Monday a recent security pact signed between Iran and Iraq is the result of months of negotiations and joint efforts as well as a roadmap for establishing stable security at the borders between the two countries.

"We expect the Iraqi government to guarantee the security of the common borders with Iran as soon as possible as it is stipulated in the security pact by ending the presence of anti-Iranian elements in Iraq," Ali Akbar Ahmadian told his Iraqi counterpart Qassim al-Araji here.

PARIS (AFP) -- French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday warned that global plastics pollution was a "time bomb", as diplomats began five days of talks in Paris to make progress on a treaty to end plastic waste.

Representatives of 175 nations with divergent ambitions met at the UNESCO headquarters with the aim of making progress towards reaching, by next year, a historic agreement covering the entire plastics life cycle.

Viewpoint

Iran, Oman Set the Precedent of Peace & Progress in the Region

Terror Group Linked to Zionist Regime Dismantled



Hassan Taftian Finishes First in French Tournament



Palestinian Officer Martyred by Zionist Troops in Jenin



General: Israeli Army Has Great Fear of Nasrallah

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) -- A former Israeli general said the Zionist army is afraid of the future actions of Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, explaining that Israel has not built capabilities to deal with a regional war against it.

General Yitzhak Brick, former army Ombudsman, touched on the statements of General Aharon Haliva, head of the Israeli Military Intelligence Division (Aman), during the Herzliya security conference that Nasrallah is very close to "committing a mistake that will lead the deteriorating situation in the region to a major war."

Brick, cited by Hebrew language Maariv newspaper, said Nasrallah's response that if the occupying regime of Israel threatened his party, the war would move into Israel, indicate

that he is alluding to a "problem inside Israel."

The former general said the statements of Israeli chief of staff, General Herzi Halevi, at the same conference, indicate that "things are happening" that prove that the Israeli army "has a great fear of Nasrallah's future actions."

Brick called on the Israeli army command to put more than 100,000 soldiers on reserve, "ready for any future war waged against Israel."

Last Thursday, Nasrallah warned the Zionist regime against making an "uncalculated mistake," adding that "today's time is different from the past."

"If Israel thinks the major war will be with the Palestinians only or the Lebanese only, then it is mistaken" he added.

Ayatollah Khamenei Tells Sultan Haitham: Increasing Iran-Oman Cooperation Important



Ayatollah Khamenei holds talks with Oman's Sultan Haitham in Tehran on Monday, with President Raisi and other officials of the two countries also in attendance.

TEHRAN -- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Monday that Iran and Oman will benefit from closer bilateral cooperation, lauding the Raisi administration's policy of improving ties with regional nations.

"We believe that the expansion of bilateral relations in all fields benefits both sides," the Leader said in a meeting with Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said

here.

"Increasing Iran-Oman cooperation is important because the two countries share the very important Strait of Hormuz waterway."

Referring to negotiations between Iranians and Omanis, Ayatollah Khamenei noted said the talks should be followed up seriously until they yield tangible results.

The Leader also urged all the regional countries to take into ac-

count the policy pursued by the Zionist regime and its supporters to sow discord and erode peace in the region.

Ayatollah Khamenei touched on Sultan Haitham's comments on Egypt's willingness to resume relations with the Islamic Republic, saying, "We welcome this position and have no problem in this regard."

Concerning the Omani Sultan's satisfaction with the resumption

of Iran-Saudi Arabia ties, the Leader said, "These issues are the outcome of the administration's good policy to develop and strengthen relations with neighbors and regional states."

Ayatollah Khamenei expressed hope that the Islamic ummah will regain its grandeur through the expansion of ties between governments, as the convergence of Muslim countries' capacities and facilities would benefit all Muslim nations and governments.

Sultan Haitham, for his part, emphasized that Muscat's policy is to expand relations with its neighbors, especially the Islamic Republic.

The two sides exchanged views on various fields of cooperation during the talks in Tehran, he said, hoping that with the continuation of the negotiations, bilateral relations will expand further and yield practical results.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, the Omani Sultan traveled to Iran on Sunday upon an invitation by Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi.

In a joint statement released on Monday, President Raisi and Sultan Haitham said they discussed ways to reinforce bilateral ties on the basis of brotherhood and common interests, especially in the areas of trade, energy, investment, and culture.

(Continued on Page 7)

Erdogan Faces Polarized Turkey After Election Win

ISTANBUL (AFP) -- Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday confronted the tough task of uniting his deeply divided country after winning a historic run-off election to extend his two-decade rule to 2028.

Turkey's longest-serving leader brushed aside a powerful opposition coalition, an economic crisis and anger following a devastating February earthquake to beat secular challenger Kemal Kilicdaroglu in Sunday's vote.

But the four-point victory margin was Erdogan's narrowest of any past election, highlighting the sharp polarization the conservative will contend with in his final term.

Erdogan, 69, called on Turks to "come together in unity and solidarity", whereas Kilicdaroglu vowed to "continue the struggle" against the president and his AKP party, which has dominated Turkish politics since 2002.

"God granted our wishes. Erdogan is a great leader, he has brought Turkey a long way," Burak Durmus, 24, said in Istanbul's conservative stronghold of Uskudar.

Bugra Iyimaya, a 28-year-old academic, said the opposition would "resist and fight until the end" after Erdogan won Turkey's first runoff.

"Our elders taught us to struggle... we will not lose or give up on this country with one election," he told AFP.

Relieving Turks of the country's worst economic crisis since the 1990s is an urgent priority.

Inflation is running at more than 40 percent, partly exacerbated by Erdogan's unorthodox policy of

cutting interest rates to try to cool spiraling prices.

Analysts say Erdogan's lavish campaign spending pledges and unwavering attachment to lower interest rates will further strain banks' currency reserves and the lira, which edged down against the dollar on Monday.

Hopes for "an abandonment of the crazy, unconventional economic model and a return to the favor of international investors are finally dashed", said Bartosz Sawicki, market analyst at Conotxia fintech.

"The current set-up is just not sustainable," added Timothy Ash of BlueBay Asset Management, pointing to the tens of billions of dollars the central bank has blown to prop up the lira.

If Erdogan refuses to perform a U-turn on interest rates and abandon the lira, "it could get ugly", he warned.

A colossal reconstruction effort in Turkey's southeast is still at an early stage after February's earthquake that killed more than 50,000 people and destroyed infrastructure and livelihoods.

Official figures estimated the damage at more than \$100 billion.

NATO partners are anxiously waiting for Ankara to approve Sweden's stalled bid to join the U.S.-led military alliance.

Erdogan has blocked the application, accusing Stockholm of sheltering Turkish opposition figures with alleged links to outlawed Kurdish militants.

"Another five years of Erdogan means more of the geopolitical balancing act between Russia and

(Continued on Page 7)

Study: New York City is Sinking

NEW YORK (AP) — If rising oceans aren't worry enough, add this to the risks New York City faces: The metropolis is slowly sinking under the weight of its skyscrapers, homes, asphalt and humanity itself.

New research estimates the city's landmass is sinking at an average rate of 1 to 2 millimeters per year, something referred to as "subsidence."

That natural process happens everywhere as ground is compressed, but the study published this month in the journal Earth's Future sought to estimate how the massive weight of the city itself is hurrying things along.

More than 1 million buildings are spread across the city's five boroughs. The research team calculated that all those structures add up to about 1.7 trillion tons (1.5 trillion metric tons) of concrete, metal and glass — about the mass of 4,700 Empire State buildings — pressing down on the Earth.

The rate of compression varies throughout the city. Midtown Manhattan's skyscrapers are largely built on rock, which

compresses very little, while some parts of Brooklyn, Queens and downtown Manhattan are on looser soil and sinking faster, the study revealed.

While the process is slow, lead researcher Tom Parsons of the U.S. Geological Survey said parts of the city will eventually be under water.

"It's inevitable. The ground is going down, and the water's coming up. At some point, those two levels will meet," said Parsons, whose job is to forecast hazardous events from earthquakes and tsunamis to incremental shifts of the ground below us.

But no need to invest in life preservers just yet, Parsons assured.

The study merely notes buildings themselves are contributing, albeit incrementally, to the shifting landscape, he said. Parsons and his team of researchers reached their conclusions using satellite imaging, data modeling and a lot of mathematical assumptions.

It will take hundreds of years — precisely when is unclear — before New York becomes Amer-

ica's version of Venice, which is famously sinking into the Adriatic Sea.

But parts of the city are more at risk.

"There's a lot of weight there, a lot of people there," Parsons said, referring specifically to Manhattan. "The average elevation in the southern part of the island is only 1 or 2 meters (3.2 or 6.5 feet) above sea level — it is very close to the waterline, and so it is a deep concern."

Because the ocean is rising at a similar rate as the land is sinking, the Earth's changing climate could accelerate the timeline for parts of the city to disappear under water.

"It doesn't mean that we should stop building buildings. It doesn't mean that the buildings are themselves the sole cause of this. There are a lot of factors," Parsons said. "The purpose was to point this out in advance before it becomes a bigger problem."

Already, New York City is at risk of flooding because of massive storms that can cause the ocean to swell inland or inundate

neighborhoods with torrential rain.

The resulting flooding could have destructive and deadly consequences, as demonstrated by Superstorm Sandy a decade ago and the still-potent remnants of Hurricane Ida two years ago.

"From a scientific perspective, this is an important study," said Andrew Kruczkiewicz, a senior researcher at Columbia University's Climate School, who was not involved in the research.

Its findings could help inform policy makers as they draft ongoing plans to combat, or at least forestall, the rising tides.

"We can't sit around and wait for a critical threshold of sea level rise to occur," he said, "because waiting could mean we would be missing out on taking anticipatory action and preparedness measures."

New Yorkers such as Tracy Miles can be incredulous at first.

"I think it's a made-up story," Miles said. He thought again while looking at sailboats bobbing in the water edging downtown

(Continued on Page 7)