

## 'U.S. Submitted to Release of Iran Funds Without Vienna Talks'

TEHRAN -- Iran succeeded in freeing its blocked funds without the revival of the JCPOA nuclear accord, Tehran's chief negotiator Ali Bagheri-Kani told the national television.

The United States was insisting all along during talks that Iran's funds would be released only after a deal was reached on the revival of the nuclear deal, Bagheri-Kani said during a television interview Thursday evening.

However, "Iran's diplomacy shaped conditions in such a way that the Americans were forced to retreat from their position and free Iran's funds outside the framework of an agreement."

Earlier this month, Iran and the United States announced that \$6 billion frozen in South Korea due to U.S. sanctions will be released through Qatari mediation.

Bagheri-Kani also confirmed that talks over the release of prisoners were taking place alongside the negotiations in 2021-2022, but the process ended when the Ukraine war began in February 2022 and the delegations left Vienna after almost a year of periodic meetings.

He added that Iran contin-

ued pursuing the issue of the blocked funds through intermediaries and the U.S. was resisting. In September 2022, however, "Americans accepted to take steps for releasing the money outside the framework of the nuclear talks, after our persistent follow-ups."

Bagheri-Kani said in his interview that riots in Iran briefly "distracted" the Biden administration, "but they quickly returned to the talks at the end of autumn."

He also said Iran now has full control over its assets in other countries and can transfer them between foreign banks of its own choosing.

He said Iran has already taken control of a significant amount of its funds in Iraq.

"The (issue of) funds in Iraq were also raised in the understanding reached with the Americans and the process for their release has also started," he said.

"We have no more blocked funds ... we receive the interest of the funds (held abroad) and use them for exchanges with countries and even transfer them to other areas for (financing) our purchases."

## Ex-Diplomat: G7 Seeks to Undercut BRICS

TEHRAN -- A former Iranian diplomat says the group of industrial countries of the world known as the Group of Seven (G7) will seek to undercut BRICS, a bloc comprising the world's emerging economies.

"Although some of its member states have economic relations with the West, BRICS is seeking a structure to wean itself off the U.S. dollar, and that is why the bloc is regarded as a rival to major member states of the G7," said Abdoreza Faraji, Iran's ex-ambassador to Norway and Hungary, in an interview with IRNA.

"Naturally, the West and G7 will not stand idly by against BRICS and will try to undermine it," he explained.

He said BRICS' member states, in total, make up around 47% of the population, nearly a fourth of the gross national

product (GNP) and approximately a third of the land of the world.

"Ditching the greenback and establishing a balance in the world's financial and economic situation are among the objectives of the formation of BRICS," he explained.

He touched upon Iran's BRICS membership bid, adding, "Putting our economic house and international relations in order is a prerequisite for gaining maximum benefit from BRICS membership."

He expressed hope that Iran's membership in the bloc will lay the groundwork for the lifting of sanctions against Tehran.

BRICS is made up of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. A BRICS summit kicked off in the South African city of Johannesburg on Tuesday.

# Army Launches Massive Electronic Warfare Drill



Iran's military commanders attend a briefing session of the Shield of Velayat's Guardians 1402 drill on Friday.

TEHRAN -- A massive joint electronic warfare drill of various army units started on Friday as domestically designed and manufactured equipment has boosted the country's prowess in electronic warfare.

Codenamed Separ-e Hafezan-e Velayat 1402 (Shield of Velayat's Guardians 1402), the drill aims to assess the performance and effectiveness of various fixed, mobile, ground-based and airborne electronic warfare systems.

Units of the army's ground force, air force, navy and air defense are participating in the war game that is held in the central areas of the country.

According to a statement by the army, various tactics and operations have been successfully carried out during the drill, including identifying radio and data link communi-

cations, execution of group attack operations by micro aerial vehicles (MAVs) against defined targets, electronic operations to protect radars, and ground-based electronic operations to disrupt and deceive enemy radar systems.

Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the deputy chief of Iran's army for coordination, said on Thursday that the drill features different types of indigenous electronic warfare systems, such as radars, drones, cyber and aerospace systems, manned and unmanned fighter jets, micro aerial vehicles, and fixed, mobile, land- and air-based systems.

He said electronic warfare is a vital aspect of modern and future wars and that the Iranian army has focused on developing and training its human and technological resources in this field over the past

years.

He said that the Iranian army has achieved significant progress and achievements in designing and manufacturing its own electronic warfare equipment, using its specialized knowledge, technical know-how and internal capabilities.

Iran has made remarkable strides in creating a diverse range of domestic equipment thanks to the expertise and engineering skills of its experts. As a result, the armed forces are now self-sufficient in this area.

Iran's officials have made it clear that they shall not waver in their efforts to enhance their defense capabilities, including their missile power, noting that these measures are solely intended for defense and that the country's defense capabilities will never be up for negotiation.

## Envoy: Iran Backs Syrian Demand for Exit of Foreign Forces

UNITED NATIONS (Dispatches) -- Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations Amir Saeid Iravani says Tehran backs the Syrian government's demand for the complete withdrawal of "all illegal foreign military forces" from the war-torn country.

Addressing a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in Syria, Iravani argued that the illegal presence of foreign military forces has created favorable conditions for terrorist activities within Syria.

"The unhindered movement of terrorist groups, including Daesh, into Syrian territory, where foreign forces are illegally present, poses a serious threat to both regional and global peace and security," he said.

"We support the legitimate demands of the Syrian Government for the complete withdrawal of all illegal foreign military forces from Syrian territory."

The U.S. deployed forces and military equipment in 2014 under the pretext of fighting the Daesh terrorist group.

American forces have sus-

tained their illegal presence on Syrian soil, although Damascus and its allies defeated Daesh in late 2019. Damascus maintains the deployment is meant to plunder the country's natural resources.

The Iranian envoy also said the occupation of certain areas in the Arab country by illegal foreign forces as well as the aggressions by the Israeli regime and terrorist groups inflicted sustained suffering upon the Syrian people.

"The Security Council must take a strong stance, condemning such egregious violations and compelling the Israeli regime to cease its aggressions and put an end to the occupation of the Syrian Golan," he added.

The Golan Heights have been under Israeli occupation since 1967, when the regime launched a large-scale war against the regional Arab states, including Syria.

Tel Aviv has been using the territory as a launchpad for its acts of military aggression against the Arab nation ever since. Such attacks have inten-

sified in recent months despite the Syrian government's warnings.

The regime has been also using the occupied territory to provide safe passage and medical treatment for the anti-Syria Takfiri terrorists, who would flee there from the Syrian military's counter-terrorism operations.

On Monday, the occupying regime of Israel launched airstrikes against the vicinity of the Syrian capital of Damascus, wounding a Syrian soldier and causing material damage in the area.

"We strongly condemn the repeated aggressions and violations of Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Israeli regime," Iravani said.

"These reprehensible acts, like the recent terrorist attacks on Damascus and its surrounding areas on August 21st, deliberately targeting civilian infrastructure, constitute a flagrant breach of international humanitarian law and the UN Charter. They also pose a grave threat to regional peace and stability."

The Holy Qur'an

Fight them, and Allah will punish them by your hands, cover them with shame, help you (to victory) over them, heal the breasts of Believers, and still the indignation of their hearts. For Allah will turn (in mercy) to whom He will; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

The Holy Qur'an (9:15)

### PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	12:06
Evening (Maghreb)	18:57
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:32
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	04:04

## President Raisi Outlines Iran's Plans for Africa Ties

JOHANNESBURG (Dispatches) -- President Ebrahim Raisi says Iran seeks to have relations with African countries based on mutual respect and benefit, despite Western states that only want to plunder Africa's natural resources and wealth.

"Unlike Western countries, which are only looking to loot the resources and wealth of African countries, Iran is looking for a relationship based on respect and mutual benefits," he told his Senegalese counterpart Macky Sall on the sidelines of the BRICS summit here.

He also voiced Iran's readiness to share its knowledge, expertise, achievements and capabilities in technology, engineering, science and industry with Senegal.

For his part, Sall lauded BRICS's invitation of Iran to join the grouping, stating that the country's presence in the bloc will help balance the international system and form a multipolar world.

"Western countries, as the main violators of human rights, seek to put pressure on independent countries under the guise of defending human rights," the Senegalese president said.

The countries that have for centuries practiced slavery on a large scale and have dark colonial records, and even nowadays continue such policies in other forms have no right to claim to be advocates of human rights, Sall highlighted.

Conveying his eagerness for greater involvement of Iranian companies and entrepreneurs in Senegal, he said the West African nation seeks to leverage Iran's expertise and foster expanded collaboration in the fields of energy and science.

Separately, President Raisi announced Iran's readiness to cooperate with Tanzania in the fields of technology, engineering, construction of dams and power plants, agriculture and industry.

During a meeting with his Tanzanian counterpart Samia Suluhu Hassan, the Iranian president welcomed the expansion of bilateral ties between Tehran and Dodoma, and stressed the need for activation of the joint economic cooperation between the two countries as well as plans to

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