

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime has attacked Syria 25 times since the beginning of the year, Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported. Eighteen of the attacks were aerial and seven were ground-to-ground, with 60 targets hit throughout Syria and 61 people killed, the report said. Damascus was bombed 12 times, Quneitra six times, Homs three times, Aleppo three times, and Tartous twice. The occupying regime has intensified its air strikes on Syria this year, according to the state-run Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA). The occupation regime does not comment officially on such reports.

He who is deserted by friends and relatives will often find help and sympathy from strangers.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

European Diplomats: Settlers Have Made Palestinian Lives Intolerable

WEST BANK (Dispatches) – European officials have slammed rising Zionist settler attacks on Palestinian properties and villages and called on Tel Aviv “to do more to hold to account and prevent those who have made the lives of Palestinians ... intolerable.”

Representatives from the United Kingdom, European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Finland, Belgium, Sweden, Canada and Norway on Thursday visited the Palestinian community of Burqa which has witnessed increasing settler violence and the demolition of EU-funded schools.

They learned how the community has endured harassment and intimidation from settlers. “They also observed the aftermath of Ras at-Tin’s displacement due to settler attacks and how these attacks intensified after the establishment of an illegal outpost near the community,” their statement said.

“The delegation was extremely alarmed by the growth of settler violence, which alongside demolitions has displaced over 400 Palestinians this year and resulted in several casualties across the West Bank.”



A Palestinian man reacts near a burned car after a confrontation with a group of settlers in Burqa near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, August 9, 2023.

Additionally, diplomats strongly condemned the recent demolition of Ein Samiya school, which was funded by donors as humanitarian relief, emphasizing the Zionist regime’s breach of international humanitarian law. They called on Israel, as the occupying power, to halt all confiscations and demolitions and to give unimpeded access to humanitarian organizations in the occupied West Bank.

More than 750,000 settlers illegally live in the occupied West Bank and East Al-Quds, according

to the UN.

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has denounced the regime’s plan to speed up the construction of illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank, calling on Palestinians to resist by all means.

Hamas spokesman Jihad Taha said in a statement on Thursday that the plan was part of the systematic land confiscation policy adopted by the Zionist regime led by prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

According to a plan dubbed “a million for Samaria” that was put forward on Wednesday, occupation authorities eye to have one million settlers in the West Bank region of Samaria by 2050.

Taha said the only way to confront the regime’s plans was through resistance, and that such schemes were bound to fail.

The developments come as far-right Zionist minister Itamar Ben-Gvir said his and his family’s rights to safe movement in the occupied West Bank are more important than those of Arabs, downplaying the deadly string of murders in Arab communities.

“My right, and my wife’s and my children’s right, to get around on the roads in Judea and Samaria is more important than the right to movement for Arabs,” he said during an interview with Israel’s Channel 12 news, referring to the West Bank by its biblical name.

“Sorry Mohammad,” he provocatively told the Arab journalist and interviewer of Channel 12 Mohammad Magadli, “but that’s the reality. That’s the truth. My right to life comes before their right to movement.”

U.S. Says Not to Abandon West Asia, Resistance Vows to Crush Invaders



People gather to attend a ceremony to commemorate the martyrdom anniversary of top Iranian anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and his companions, who were killed in a U.S. drone strike near Baghdad airport on January 3, 2020, in Baghdad, Iraq.

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) – The U.S. will not “walk away” from the Middle East, a top general said Thursday, emphasizing the region’s critical role in the country’s national security priorities.

During an interview with Jordan’s Al-Mamlaka TV, Mark Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the region is “very important and very significant to the United States for a lot of reasons.”

“Obviously, the region is a primary source of oil and energy resources for other parts of the world,” he said.

“I can’t imagine that the United States would ever walk away from the Middle East. I think we’ll remain committed for many, many years and decades to come,” he said.

An Iraqi Resistance group has warned the United States that it would “crush” Washington’s destructive projects in the region.

Kata’ib Hezbollah, which belongs to Iraq’s Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) umbrella counterterrorism forces, who are better known as Hashd al-Sha’abi, issued the warning in a statement.

The U.S. withdrew its troops from Iraq between 2007 and 2011 but redeployed them in 2014 along with other partners to allegedly counter the threat of the Daesh terrorist group.

Iraq managed to end the territorial rule of the terror outfit in the country thanks to the sacrifices of the national army as well as the PMU.

The statement by Kata’ib Hezbollah said American military convoys’ recent movements across some Iraqi cities served as a “clear testament to the enemy’s intransigence and its intention to retain its invasive combat forces in the [Arab] country.”

The remaining American forces, though, are “not stronger” in number and the size of their equipment than those that the U.S. used to keep in the country before 2011, the group said. The Resistance has also developed and increased its capabilities compared to that time, it added.

“They (the Americans) should know this that their muscle-flexing is futile, and if the resistance chooses to fight, it will crush their sinister projects in the region so that Iraq will be their last stronghold in the multi-polar world.”

The statement came a day after Asaib Ahl al-Haq, another Iraqi Resistance group, said the eventual withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Iraq was inevitable since the country was capable of defending itself.

The movement also said the main goal of the American military presence in Iraq was to ensure the security of the Zionist regime.

Report: Unprecedented Number of Israelis Seeking Immigration

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) – European embassies in Tel Aviv have recorded an unprecedented increase in the number of Israelis applying for a passport or an immigration visa in recent months.

Israel’s Ynetnews website reported that the diplomatic missions of France, the Netherlands, Romania, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Italy, and the Baltic states have all witnessed a significant surge in requests for foreign passports.

“Some link it to the judicial overhaul legislation, while others believe the reason to be the high cost of living,” a European envoy said.

“There are more and more Israeli families requesting passports, queues have been growing to numbers we haven’t seen before. We feel like this has become a phenomenon.”

The Spanish embassy confirmed that over the past three years, there has been a rise in applications for passports, as well as relocation and digital nomad visas that allow Israelis to live and work in the European country.

“There’s an increase in the number of passport requests, but we aren’t aware of the motivation behind this,” the French embassy in Tel Aviv said.

Recently, Lebanon’s Hezbollah

Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said that the Zionist regime’s weak internal front is facing an “ideological retreat,” which is driving settlers to pack their bags and leave the occupied Palestinian lands.

A survey by Israel’s Channel 13 found last month that 28 percent of Israelis are considering leaving the occupied territories.

Over half of the survey’s respondents — 54 percent — said they feared the controversial scheme was harming the regime’s security, and 56 percent were worried about civil war.

The poll reflected the impact of policies adopted by the extremist

cabinet of Zionist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, among them the so-called judicial overhaul plan that has sparked mass protests.

Last week, the regime’s immigration encouragement organization Nefesh B’Nefesh reported a significant drop in immigration to the occupied territories from North America, particularly among young people.

“Israeli attractions are dimmed due to internal disputes, and there is a slowdown in migration,” it said. “There is talk of instability in Israel, more people are telling us that they are not interested in migrating.”

Turkey’s FM Meets Iraq’s Shia Heavyweights to Deepen Cooperation

BAGHDAD (Middle East Eye/Reuters) – Turkey’s foreign minister concluded a three-day trip to Iraq in which he met with actors from across the political spectrum, with water security, development projects, and fighting “terror” high on the agenda.

The visit, the first to Iraq by Hakan Fidan since he became foreign minister in June, included meetings with usual counterparts like Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid, Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani, and Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein.

However, others were perhaps more noteworthy, like his first-time meetings with senior Shia heavyweights, including leaders of U.S.-sanctioned groups.

Fidan held talks with Falih al-Fayyadh, head of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) umbrella organization; Nouri al-Maliki, former prime minister; Hadi al-Amiri, head of the Fatah alliance; and Qais al-Khazali, leader of the Asaib Ahl al-Haq political party and paramilitary group.

He also held discussions with Khamis al-

Khanjar, the leader of the Azem Alliance.

“There hasn’t been a visit like this intense and comprehensive in the past 18 years,” Bilgay Duman, a coordinator for Iraqi studies at the Ankara-based think-tank, Orsam, told Middle East Eye.

“Fidan is taken very seriously in Iraq due to his past engagements as the intelligence chief. He knows all the actors.”

A Turkish source familiar with the visit told MEE that Ankara wants to talk to “pretty much everyone that matters within Iraq to help reach stability in the country.”

“We want a united Iraq that doesn’t witness the loss of generations, resources, and opportunities. And we will be a positive force to help them do it,” the source said.

At a joint news conference with his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein, Fidan publicly asked Baghdad to brand the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) as a terror group.

The PKK, a Kurdish separatist group, has been in conflict with the Turkish state since the 1980s, involving violence that has killed tens of

thousands of people. Turkey, the U.S., and the EU have designated the PKK as a terror group due to the deadly attacks it has carried out on civilians.

The group has operated from northern Iraq for decades and recently increased its presence in Sinjar and Sulaymaniyah, located in the country’s autonomous Kurdistan region.

Last year, Ankara closed its airspace to flights in and out of Sulaymaniyah, citing alleged growing activity of the PKK in the city.

Iraqi officials have long complained that Turkish air strikes against PKK members violate the country’s sovereignty.

In a latest development, Turkish drone strikes on Thursday killed seven members of the PKK including two medical personnel, in Iraq’s northern province of Erbil, the counter-terrorism service said, as Turkey’s foreign minister visited the region.

Three PKK fighters were killed in Sidakan district when a Turkish drone struck their vehicle, the counter-terrorism service said in a statement earlier on Thursday.

Report: Saudi Arabia Considering Chinese Bid to Build Nuclear Plant

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Saudi Arabia is considering a Chinese bid to build a nuclear power plant in the kingdom amid frustration over the United States’ stipulations for supporting Riyadh’s quest for nuclear power, the Wall Street Journal has reported.

China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC), a state-owned firm, has proposed the construction of a nuclear plant near the border with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, the newspaper reported, citing unnamed Saudi officials.

Saudi officials hope the Chinese bid will push U.S. President Joe Biden’s administration to loosen its conditions for aiding the kingdom’s nascent nuclear industry, including commitments not to enrich uranium or mine their own uranium deposits, the newspaper said.

China is unlikely to require Riyadh to adhere to such requirements, which are intended to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the newspaper said.

CNNC and the foreign ministries of China and Saudi Arabia did not immediately respond to requests for comment made by the Reuters news agency.

Saudi Arabia and China have deepened their ties in recent years, raising

concern in Washington.

Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the kingdom in December and the two countries in June announced investment deals worth \$10bn during the two-day Arab-China business summit in Riyadh.

Xi, whose country is the world’s biggest energy consumer, has pledged to pursue a “pattern of multi-faceted energy cooperation” with Persian Gulf countries.

China has in recent years sought to export its nuclear energy industry overseas.

In 2019, a senior Chinese official said Beijing could build as many as 30 overseas nuclear reactors through its “Belt and Road” infrastructure drive over the following decade.

Beijing has also ramped up its diplomatic presence in the region, including brokering a deal earlier this year that normalized relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran after years of severed ties.

Saudi Arabia, one of the world’s biggest oil producers, has for years explored the development of a domestic nuclear energy industry to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels.

The kingdom generates almost all of its power needs from oil and natural gas, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.