

Hamas Says to Form ‘National Consensus Government’ in Gaza

GAZA (Dispatches) – A senior leader of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas says the group seeks the formation of a national consensus government in the Gaza Strip. Osama Hamdan, Hamas’s representative in Lebanon and a member of the group’s politburo, made the remarks in a statement on Tuesday, as a new round of indirect talks on a ceasefire in Gaza have resumed in Qatar’s capital, Doha. “We want a national consensus government to be the gateway to managing Palestinian affairs in this transitional phase until the Palestinian people decide to choose their leadership,” Hamdan said. He said, “The experience of negotiating with Israel has proven that the only solution to achieve the rights of our people is to engage with the enemy and force it to retreat.” The senior Hamas official further noted that the Zionist regime prevents the Palestinian people in



People wave Palestinian, Hamas and Fatah flags during a march in support of the people in the Gaza Strip, in the West Bank city of Nablus on October 26, 2023.

Gaza from everything and persists in killing and destruction, stressing that the message of the resistance is that it will continue on the same path and nothing will weaken its resolve. “Our clear position in the negotiations is a ceasefire, the withdrawal

of the occupation, the exchange of prisoners and the reconstruction of Gaza without Israeli conditions,” he said. Hamdan’s remarks come as indirect talks aimed at establishing a ceasefire in Gaza between Israel and Hamas have resumed in Qatar.

Qatar’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Majed al-Ansari confirmed in a statement on Tuesday that the technical meetings “are still happening between both sides,” referring to meetings with lower-level officials on the details of an agreement. He went on to say that there were “a lot of issues that are being discussed” in the ongoing meetings, but declined to go into details “to protect the integrity of the negotiations.” According to Ansari, there are “no principal meetings” taking place at the moment. Mediators Qatar, Egypt and the United States have been engaged in months of back-and-forth talks between representatives from the Tel Aviv regime and Hamas that have failed to end nearly 15 months of the Israeli war. A key obstacle to a deal has been Israel’s reluctance to agree to a lasting ceasefire.

Yemeni Security Forces Dismantle Saudi, British Espionage Network

SANA’A (Dispatches) – Yemeni security forces dismantled an extensive espionage network accused of working for Britain and Saudi Arabia, amid operations against the Zionist regime’s assets in the occupied territories in retaliation for the regime’s campaign of genocide in Gaza. The Yemeni Security and Intelligence Service announced in a statement on Monday that the country’s law enforcement forces apprehended members of a spy network affiliated with Britain’s notorious Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), also known as MI6, who were working in coordination with the Saudi General Intelligence Presidency (GIP),

Press TV reported. The statement added that the spies were tasked with collecting sensitive information on Yemen’s strategic facilities, including missile launch pads, drone operations, and the movements of high-profile military and political figures. They had been trained in the Saudi capital Riyadh, supplied with sophisticated surveillance tools, and dispatched on missions to monitor sensitive locations and gather critical data. The Yemeni Security and Intelligence Service underlined its full commitment to countering foreign acts of espionage, urging the Yemeni people to report suspicious

activities. It also warned of severe penalties for those found to be collaborating with hostile foreign intelligence agencies. In June, Yemen’s security forces busted an espionage network accused of working for the United States and Israel. Yemen’s Security and Intelligence Service announced on June 10 that they had exposed a large espionage network active within various government departments for the past eight years. “The exposed network collected important information in various fields and carried out direct espionage technical operations on behalf of

the enemy’s intelligence services to obtain confidential, sovereign information,” Major General Abdul Hakim Hashem al-Khaiwani, head of Yemen’s Security and Intelligence Service, stated during a televised address. Security authorities reported that the U.S.-Israeli-led network had recruited officials within the Yemeni government to influence decision-makers and infiltrate state agencies. The spies also conducted operations aimed at spreading diseases to compromise Yemen’s health system and promoted “moral corruption” to undermine the country’s education system.

PRCS: Israel Killed 1,056 Medical Personnel, Arrested 350 Others Since Last Oct.

GAZA (Dispatches) – The Zionist regime has systematically and deliberately targeted Palestinian medical teams, killing more than 1,056 and arresting 350 others since October 7, 2023, the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) has said. In a statement, Bashar Murad, director of health programs at PRCS, said the Zionist regime has committed serious violations against health workers in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank,

including paramedics, primary care crews as well as ambulances and hospitals. According to the statement, the Israeli occupation army has deliberately targeted and destroyed four branches of the PRCS in Gaza, causing significant damage to them, including the Jabalia branch in the northern Gaza Strip, which was completely destroyed. Murad added that al-Amal Complex, the largest PRCS centre in Gaza

City, was also targeted, resulting in the deaths of 47 Palestinians, including medical and paramedic staff, as well as displaced persons who sought refuge there. Murad explained that about 80 per cent of the PRCS’s capabilities have been systematically and deliberately destroyed in the Gaza Strip, even though the Red Crescent, along with the Red Cross, are international organizations protected under international

law in war and conflict zones. He pointed out that 32 Red Crescent personnel have been killed due to the Israeli war machine, most of whom were directly and deliberately targeted while performing their duties in the Gaza Strip. The occupying regime has killed more than 45,855 Palestinians in Gaza since October 2023 and injured 109,140 more, according to the Ministry of Health.

Widespread Criticism as Hundreds of Afghans Arrested in Islamabad

KABUL (AFP) – Afghans living in the Pakistani capital have been detained by authorities, including some who are registered with the UN’s refugee agency. It warned in a statement late on Monday that uncertainty around the visa process for Afghans in Pakistan has caused “troubling cases of arbitrary detention and deportation.” Islamabad has cracked down on undocumented Afghans as political tensions with Kabul have increased, forcing more than 780,000 Afghans back across the border since the end of 2023 — including some who have lived in Pakistan for decades. “The Embassy of Afghanistan expresses its deep concern over the recent detention of approximately 800 Afghan nationals in Islamabad,” it said on social media platform X. “This has caused the tragic separation of families, including women and children, many of whom remain stranded in Pakistan.”

The statement said the number included 137 Afghans with pending visa extension requests or who are temporarily registered with the UNHCR, the UN’s refugee agency. The embassy was “alarmed by reports of unwarranted arrests, home searches, and extortion targeting Afghan nationals,” it said. Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry has not responded to requests for comment. More than 600,000 Afghans have fled to Pakistan since the Afghan Taliban regained control of Kabul in August 2021, including tens of thousands on the advice of Western nations with the promise of relocation. Many are forced by embassies to wait for months in guest houses in Islamabad while their cases are processed and have reported a rise in harassment by police in recent weeks. The Pakistan government said its deportation campaign is a bid to improve security

after a rise in militancy in the border regions. But Afghans say they are being targeted because of a political falling-out between Islamabad and Kabul. “The Afghans in Pakistan awaiting immigration are going through so much pain,” Umer Ijaz Gilani, a lawyer who represents Afghans, told AFP. Millions of Afghans have fled into Pakistan to escape successive conflicts over decades, becoming deeply ingrained in Pakistani society. According to the UNHCR, Pakistan currently hosts some 1.5 million Afghan refugees and asylum-seekers, alongside more than 1.5 million Afghans of different legal statuses. Pakistan has given a series of short-term extensions to Afghans with registered refugee status, currently due to expire in June 2025.

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Several branches of the IRGC, including the navy and the paramilitary Basij forces, will also take part in the exercises, he added. Last week, U.S. news website Axios reported that White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan had presented President Joe Biden with options for a potential U.S. strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities before January 20, when Donald Trump takes office. Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei lambasted the reports, saying threats against the country’s nuclear facilities are “a gross violation of international law”. Tensions soared after the United States, during Trump’s first term in office, withdrew from a landmark nuclear deal that offered Tehran sanctions relief in return for curbs on its nuclear program. Members of Trump’s incoming administration have vowed to resume the former president’s “maximum pressure” campaign against Iran. On Monday, Gen. Naeini announced that about 30 land, air and maritime drills have commenced across six western and southern provinces and will continue until mid-March. “The number of drills has almost doubled this year compared to last year, in response to the evolving threat landscape,” Naeini was quoted as saying on the sidelines of a press briefing in Tehran. “These exercises are significantly larger in scope and sophistication, featuring new weaponry and expanded participation of brigades engaged in realistic operations.” The largest maritime exercise is set to take place in the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic chokepoint through which one-third of the world’s oil supply is shipped. “The enemy is displaying false enthusiasm while misinterpreting the situation, trying to portray the Islamic Republic as weakened,” Naeini told reporters. “Iran has been preparing for complex, large-scale conflicts and remains confident in its deterrent capabilities.” Additionally, 100,000 members of the Basij forces are expected to march in Tehran this Friday. “We have considered all possible scenarios and are conducting realistic and proportionate exercises,” Naeini said. “The Islamic Republic will not initiate any war in the region but will respond decisively to any threats.”

Syrians... (Continued From Page One)

control over the country, turn a patchwork of former rebel factions into a new army, and push for the removal of Western sanctions. The country’s new de facto leader, Muhammad al-Julani, head of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, has also publicly said Syria is not seeking a military conflict with Israel and will not pose a threat to the West. In the meantime, residents of Quneitra have largely been left to fend for themselves. In the village of Rafid, inside the buffer zone, locals said the Israeli military had demolished two civilian houses and a grove of trees as well as a former Syrian army outpost. Mayor Omar Mahmoud Ismail said when the Israeli forces entered the village, an Israeli officer greeted him and told him, “I am your friend.” “I told him, ‘You are not my friend, and if you were, you wouldn’t enter like this,’” Ismail said. In Dawaya, a village outside the buffer zone, 18-year-old Abdelrahman Khaled al-Aqqa was lying on a mattress in his family home Sunday, still recovering after being shot in both legs. Al-Aqqa said he joined about 100 people from the area on Dec. 25 in protest against the Israeli incursion, chanting “Syria is free, Israel get out!” “We didn’t have any weapons, we were just there in the clothes we were wearing,” he said. “But when we got close to them, they started shooting at us.” Six protesters were wounded, according to residents and media reports. Another man was injured on Dec. 20 in a similar incident in the village of Maariyah. The Zionist military said at the time that it had fired because the man was quickly approaching and ignored calls to stop. Regarding the Dec. 25 incident, the Israeli military said its forces had fired “warning shots solely aimed at the air” after the crowd did not heed a call to stand back. In the village of Swisah, Adel Subhi al-Ali, a local Sunni religious official, sat with his 21-year-old son, Moutasem, who was recovering after being shot in the stomach in the Dec. 25 protest. He was driven first to a local hospital that did not have the capacity to treat him, and then to Damascus where he underwent surgery. When he saw the Israeli tanks moving in, “We felt that an occupation is occupying our land. So we had to defend it, even though we didn’t have weapons, ... It is impossible for them to settle here,” al-Ali said. Since the day of the protest, the Israeli army has not returned to the area, he said. Al-Ali called for the international community to “pressure Israel to return to what was agreed upon with the former regime,” referring to the 1974 ceasefire agreement, and to return the Golan Heights to Syria. But he acknowledged that Syria has little leverage.

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the lofty intentions of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution in transforming the Islamic Republic of Iran into a leading and superior country in the region in the fields of economy, science, and technology,” Pezeshkian stated. He also referred to cooperation between the government and universities to address issues in order to neutralize hostilities against Iran. “We are confident that with reliance on the enormous capacities available in the country and the interaction and cooperation between academic centers and the government, all the enemies’ plots to impose sanctions, sow discord, and demoralize our people will be thwarted.”

Iran’s... (Continued From Page 2)

feature of every developed country, in a resilient economy this happens more carefully and on a larger scale. The simplicity of products makes the economy fragile and vulnerable where they are easily substituted by competitors during the time of sanctions. The share of knowledge-based and complex goods should be exponentially increased with right policies and necessary incentives. Over the past few years, Iran has emerged as an arguably regional powerhouse in knowledge-based production ecosystem where a sprawling expanse of science and technology parks has helped it break the fangs of oppressive sanctions. The number of knowledge-based enterprises has grown in recent years – from only 50 firms and startups in 2023 to more than 6,000 at present, according to the vice presidency office for science and technology. Based on the National Innovation Fund statistics, tech firms and knowledge-based companies raked in more than \$5 billion in revenues in 2021. Some 40 knowledge-based companies are listed in the stock market as well. By identifying the country’s relative and absolute advantage, Iran needs to take bold steps on economic complexity. One way is to study the evolution of successful countries and use their experiences in various fields.