

Iran: US obstacle in way of resolving int'l issues

Iran's interim foreign minister said the United States' unilateral approach to international issues has proven to be a failure, stressing that Washington is not part of the solution, but an obstacle in the path of peace.

Speaking to reporters in New York on Friday, Ali Bagheri Kani criticized the US's withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and its export of weapons to Israel amid the regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip, Press TV reported.

"The Americans' claims that unilateralism can bring about peace, stability and security to the world have failed," he said.

"Practically, the American's approaches to the Iran nuclear negotiations, as well as the Palestine issue and the Zionist's aggression against Gaza, demonstrated that they cannot be part of the solution, but they are themselves the main obstacle."

The top diplomat also noted that the US is not qualified to be a "neutral mediator" as it disrupted the JCPOA's implementation and is even "encouraging" Israel to commit more crimes in Gaza

by providing the regime with lethal arms.

Bagheri Kani made the remarks after he attended two United Nations Security Council meetings focusing on the developments in Palestine and multilateralism.

Call for end to Israel's genocide

He said that in the meetings, he had underlined the need for an immediate end to the Gaza genocide and highlighted the consequences if the regime committed a "strategic mistake" by invading Lebanon.

"The Zionists are killing and injuring 20 oppressed Palestinians almost every hour. Thus, the world should not remain silent and passive in the face of these continued crimes that are being normalized," he added.

The interim foreign minister further hailed resistance as an effective element in the region, saying it plays a major role in creating regional stability and prevents the Israelis from escalating their offensive and massacre in the region.

Israel unleashed its brutal Gaza onslaught on October 7, 2023, after the Hamas resistance



group carried out its historic operation against the occupying entity in retaliation for the regime's intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people. The Tel Aviv regime has so far

killed at least 38,848 Palestinians, mostly women, and children, in Gaza, and injured 89,456 others in the besieged Gaza Strip. The Iranian official also held

separate meeting with President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Mirjana Spoljaric Egger on Thursday, during which he praised the ICRC's efforts regarding

Palestine and Gaza, describing the humanitarian conditions of oppressed Palestinians as very worrying.

'Wrong approaches'

"Unfortunately, politically-motivated and wrong approaches together with double standards have so far frustrated attempts aimed at ending the Gaza crisis," he said.

Egger, for her part, expressed deep concern over the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza and appreciated Iran's contributions to the Geneva-based humanitarian organization.

Meanwhile, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator Joyce Masoya lauded Iran's "constructive" role in humanitarian issues and stressed the need for enhancement of cooperation between the two sides.

Masoya made the remark during a meeting with Bagheri Kani in New York on Thursday.

She called for greater efforts in order to stop the Gaza war, and end the current alarming situation in the war-ravaged territory.

UN court: Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory 'illegal'

International Desk

Israel's decades-long occupation of the Palestinian territories is illegal and needs to end "as rapidly as possible", the UN's top court said Friday.

The UN's General Assembly asked the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in late 2022 to give an "advisory opinion" on the "legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem [AI-Quds]".

"The court has found that Israel's continued presence in the Palestinian Territories is illegal," ICJ presiding judge Nawaf Salam said Friday, adding: "Israel must end the occupation as rapidly as possible."

Evacuation of settlers

The ICJ added that Israel was "under an obligation to cease immediately all new settlement activities and to evacuate all settlers" from occupied land.

Israel's policies and practices including the building of new settlements and Israel's continued maintenance of a wall between the territories "amount to annexation of large parts" of the occupied territory, it said.

'Great day for Palestine'

Palestinian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Varsen Aghabekian Shahnai hailed "a great day for Palestine" while Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu



AFP

slammed the ICJ ruling as 'decision of lies'.

"This is a great day for Palestine, historically and legally," Aghabekian told AFP, speaking on behalf of the Palestinian Foreign Ministry.

"This is the highest judicial body in the world and it has presented a very detailed analysis of what is going on through Israel's prolonged occupation and colonization of the Palestinian territory in violation of international law." The ICJ held a week-long session in February to hear submissions from countries following the request - supported by most countries within the assembly. Most speakers during the hearings called on Israel to end its 57-year occupation. They warned a prolonged occupation posed an "extreme danger" to stability in the Middle East and beyond.

Knesset resolution on Palestinian state

On Wednesday, Israel's parliament, Knesset, voted 68-9 to pass a resolution that rejects the

establishment of a Palestinian state.

Mustafa Barghouti, the secretary-general of the Palestinian National Initiative, condemned the move, saying "This resolution represents a rejection of peace with Palestinians and an official declaration of the death of [the] Oslo agreement."

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said the resolution "once again showed the world the racist nature of the Zionists' usurping regime".

The Palestinian resistance movements of Hamas and Islamic Jihad also called on the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to withdraw its recognition of Israel.

"The leaderships viewed that, in light of the Knesset's declared position rejecting the Palestinian people's right to establish their independent state, the national collective is required today to take a unified stance to confront these attempts to erase the Palestinian cause," they said in a joint statement.

Trump expands lead on Biden after shooting: Polls

Democrats call for Biden to step aside as nominee



Donald Trump



Joe Biden

International Desk

Former US president Donald Trump has expanded his lead over President Joe Biden in recent polling after last week-end's assassination attempt. A survey released Thursday by CBS News found that among likely voters, 52 percent said their choice for president is Trump, while 47 percent said the same about Biden. Trump's numbers increased, up from 50 percent in a July 3 survey, while Biden dropped 1 percent.

Biden fared better in battleground states but still trailed Trump. Fifty-one percent of likely voters in battleground states say they choose Trump compared to Biden's 48 percent.

Most respondents said the way Trump handled the assassination attempt at his Butler, Pa., rally last Saturday had no

change on their vote, but 26 percent said they are more likely to consider voting for Trump after the shooting and 7 percent said they are less likely to consider him.

Biden's poor debate performance last month sparked fear among Democrats about his ability to beat Trump in the election and serve another four years if reelected. Calls for him to step aside and let someone else, namely Vice President Harris, run have persisted in the weeks after the debate.

The survey found that Trump would also lead if Harris were the nominee, 51 percent to 48 percent. A Morning Consult survey released Thursday also found Trump widened his lead after the shooting.

Democrats at the highest levels are making a critical push for Biden to reevaluate his election bid, with former presi-

dent Barack Obama expressing private concerns to allies and former speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi privately telling Biden the party could lose the ability to seize control of the House if he doesn't step aside.

Pelosi has told Biden she believes he cannot win the Nov. 5 election and backed California lawmaker Adam Schiff's call for him to step aside, a top White House source with direct knowledge of the matter said.

So far, 21 House Democrats and two Senate Democrats have directly called on the president to exit the race. Several people close to Biden also said Thursday that they believe he has begun to accept the idea that he may not be able to win in November and may have to drop out of the race, bowing to the growing demands of many anxious members of his party.

Caspian states begin rescue drill hosted by Iran

Iran is hosting a rescue drill with the participation of all five Caspian Sea littoral states. The drill began on Friday and will last until Sunday, according to Mehr News Agency.

The exercise, named "CASAREX 24", is hosted by the Northern Fleet of Iran's Navy. The motto of the rescue drill is "Together for a safe and secure Caspian Sea".