

Japan urges Iran's restraint over Haniyeh assassination



Abbas Araghchi



Kamikawa Yoko

International Desk

Japan called on Iran to exercise restraint after the Islamic Republic vowed to punish Israel for the assassination of Hamas leader in Tehran last month.

Japan's Foreign Minister Kamikawa Yoko in a phone conversation with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi on Wednesday expressed serious concern over the current deteriorating situation in West Asia, saying that escalation

of the situation would not be in the interest of the region or the international community as a whole.

She called on Iran to show restraint, saying that every effort should be made to avoid further tensions.

Kamikawa also called on Iran to urge resistance groups in the region to exercise restraint.

Both sides affirmed the importance of peace and stability in West Asia region and confirmed to continue to

maintain communication between Japan and Iran based on their traditional, friendly relationship.

Tensions remain high in the region following Israel's assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran on July 31. Iran has blamed Israel for the assassination and has vowed to punish the regime for the killing of Haniyeh who had traveled to Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Iranian president.

On Monday, Araghchi said that Iran's response to Israel would be "definite, calculated and accurate."

Unlike the Israeli regime, Iran does not seek to increase tensions in the region although it is not afraid of it, Araghchi added.

Revenge for Haniyeh's blood 'certain'

Meanwhile, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri said on Monday

that the assassination of the Hamas leader cannot be forgotten and revenge for Haniyeh's blood by the Axis of Resistance and Iran is "certain." General Baqeri underlined that the Islamic Republic and the Axis of Resistance will separately act in this regard.

Also on Wednesday, the Iranian foreign minister held talks with Khalil al-Hayya, the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas's deputy Political Bureau chief.

During the phone call, Araghchi hailed Palestinians' eleven-month-long steadfastness in the face of the Israeli regime's genocidal war and atrocities, expressing confidence that "final victory" belongs to the Palestinian people.

"The current Iranian administration will continue to robustly pursue its predecessors' policy of support for the oppressed Palestinian nation," Araghchi added, stressing that the Islamic Republic would stand with the Palestinians "until the end." He also underlined that Tehran would lend its support to whatever agreement leading to a ceasefire and cessation of the underway war on the Gaza Strip that meets the approval of the Palestinian people and resistance.

Iran looking for ways to get sanctions lifted: *Pezeshkian*



National Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said his government is looking for ways to get illegal sanctions removed that have been imposed against the Islamic Republic.

Pezeshkian made the remarks on Tuesday while speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a ceremony held at the Foreign Ministry premises to honor and introduce the new foreign minister.

"The actions of enemies against our country are cruel. We adhered to our commitments and they must stick to their commitments," Pezeshkian said. He said that strengthening and developing relations with neighbors is one of the government's priorities.

"Connections and development of relations [with neighbors] make sanctions ineffective," the president added.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi also made brief remarks.

"The most important priorities of his ministry are opening the way and removing obstacles in the economic field, the honor and pride of Iran and Iranians in all fields, as well as securing national interests and helping the country's national security," he said.

Earlier in the day, the new president and other members of his cabinet met with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, where he said that maintaining national unity and keeping people happy with the government policies is the best way to defeat the oppressive US and EU sanctions.

On Friday, Araghchi said the government was given a mission by the Leader to neutralize illegal sanctions and their possible impacts on the Iranian nation.

"Our foreign policy will be active and not passive. We'll try to be present on international forums. If a new order is being formed, we should not be passive. We must play a role for our interests, for the region and the Islamic world," said the foreign minister, a former nuclear negotiator.

The new Iranian foreign minister added, "Our priority is our neighbors. Our second priority is to expand the field of diplomacy to Africa and East Asia. The third priority is the countries that stood by Iran in difficult situations."

Ayatollah Khamenei on Tuesday gave the go-ahead for "engagement" with the US in his first meeting with the administration of Pezeshkian.

"There is no barrier to engage with the enemy," Ayatollah Khamenei said. "But you should not pin hopes on the enemy and trust it," the Leader added. Iran has long been at loggerheads with the US over a series of issues including Tehran's nuclear program. But tensions began to mount after the US in 2018 walked out of an international deal between Iran and world powers that eased sanctions in return for curbs on Iran's nuclear work. Then-US president Donald Trump reimposed and reinforced sanctions on the Islamic Republic under its so-called "maximum pressure" campaign. Talks to revive the tattered nuclear deal, known as the JCPOIA, during the tenure of US President Joe Biden failed.

Israel launches major deadly raid in occupied West Bank

Israel launched a large-scale military raid in the occupied West Bank overnight and into Wednesday, with its forces killing 10 Palestinians and sealing off the city of Jenin.

Israel has carried out near-daily raids in the West Bank since Hamas' Oct. 7 attack out of Gaza triggered the ongoing war there. Israel claims it is trying to prevent attacks on its citizens, while Palestinians in the West Bank fear it intends to broaden the war and forcibly displace more of them, according to AP.

Lt. Col. Nadav Shoshani, an Israeli military spokesman, said "large forces" had entered Jenin as well as Tulkarem and the Al-Faraa refugee camp dating back to the 1948 Middle East war, all in the northern

West Bank.

He said Israeli forces killed nine Palestinians, including three in an airstrike in Tulkarem and four in an airstrike in Al-Faraa. He said another five people were arrested, and that the raids were the first stage of an even larger operation.

Hamas announced that 10 of its fighters had been killed in the West Bank on Wednesday. Palestinian resistance groups said they were exchanging fire with Israeli troops.

The governor of Jenin, Kamal Abu al-Rub, said on Palestinian radio that Israeli forces had surrounded the city, blocking exit and entry points and access to hospitals, and ripping up infrastructure in the camp. Israeli Foreign Minister Israel

Katz drew comparisons with Gaza and called for similar measures in the West Bank.

Hamas called on Palestinians in the West Bank to rise up, calling the raids part of a larger plan to expand the war in Gaza and blaming the escalation on US support for Israel. The group called on security forces loyal to the Palestinian Authority, which cooperate with Israel, to "join the sacred battle of our people."

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, condemned the raids as a "serious escalation". Abbas later announced he was cutting short a visit to Saudi Arabia and returning to the West Bank, where his government is based.



At least 652 Palestinians in the West Bank have been killed by Israeli fire since the war in Gaza began over 10 months ago, according to the Palestinian ministry. Most have died during raids, which often trigger gunbattles with resistance fighters.



Israeli soldiers operate during a raid in the Nur Shams camp for Palestinian refugees near the city of Tulkarem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on August 28, 2024.

● JAAFAR ASHTIYEH/AFP



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Fatemeh Mohajerani named Iranian gov't spokesperson

National Desk

Iran's new President Masoud Pezeshkian appointed Fatemeh Mohajerani as the government's spokesperson during a cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

Mohajerani replaces Ali Bahadori Jahromi who served as the government's spokesperson under the late president Ebrahim Raisi. Born in 1970 in central city of Arak, Mohajerani has served as the head of Shariati Technical and Professional College in the Raisi administration.

She has a Doctor of Business Administration degree from Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh Campus in



Fatemeh Mohajerani

Edinburgh, Scotland. Mohajerani is the first female spokesperson of the government since the Islamic Revolution in 1979.