

# Iran nixes US, UK accusations over Ukraine war

Iran's ambassador to the UN categorically rejected as baseless accusations made by the US and UK against Tehran over the Ukraine war and regional destabilization.

"I categorically reject the identical accusations made by the representatives of these two countries against Iran concerning the conflict in Ukraine," Amir Saeid Iravani wrote in a letter to rotating President of the UN Security Council Barbara Woodward.

He said that Iran's position on Ukraine is "clear, consistent, and remains unchanged," Press TV reported.

Iravani said the US,



● AFP

through its unconditional political, military, and financial support for Israel, bears direct responsibility for the destabilization of the region and the atrocities committed against civilians in Gaza, the West Bank, and Lebanon.

"It is an irrefutable fact that the civilian deaths, devastation, and destruction of infrastructure in Gaza and Lebanon are enabled by US-made weapons and its unwavering support, while its repeated vetoes of cease-fire resolutions in the Security Council shield Israel from accountability," Iravani said. The US, he said, has paralyzed the Security Council, and granted Israel a

license to continue its aggression and carnage under the pretext of self-defense with full impunity as evidenced by the recent US veto of the cease-fire resolution on Gaza.

"Similarly, we reject the baseless allegations made by the UK's Foreign Minister [David Lammy] in the meeting, accusing Iran of regional destabilization. These unfounded claims are an obvious attempt to obscure the UK's own historical and ongoing role in creating instability and turmoil in the region.

"The UK's colonial imposition during the Mandate for Palestine coupled with its calculated political engineering to deprive the

Palestinian people of their rights, laid the foundation for the injustices and brutalities we witness today," Iravani said.

He said the UK played a pivotal role in the establishment of the usurping Israeli regime and is directly complicit in the displacement, suffering, and oppression of the Palestinian people.

"The United States and the United Kingdom cannot absolve themselves of responsibility while enabling Israel's crimes. Their unconditional support of Israel perpetuates conflict and undermines the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security."

## Navy chief: Iran seeking 'more successful presence' in seas

National Desk

Iran's Navy chief Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said the Navy has prioritized updating and modernizing its vessels for "more successful presence" in the seas.

Given the challenges facing the countries in the world at seas such as smuggling, piracy and maritime terrorism, protecting and safeguarding the country's interests requires having powerful navy at the regional and

international levels, Irani said while addressing a press conference held on the occasion of Iran Navy Day on Saturday.

Referring to the Navy's measures in this regard, Irani said the Iranian Navy is currently manufacturing a number of new submarines that will be soon brought to service.

Hailing the Navy's missile power, the commander said his forces have missiles with a range of over 1,000 kilometers, adding that the Iranian Navy

has also enhanced its electronic warfare capabilities.

Admiral Irani added that the Navy has begun to build destroyers more powerful than the Mowj-class ones, saying that two such military ships are being manufactured.

All ships of this class have a displacement of 1,500 tons and are the largest class of domestic warships, after drone carriers. Due to their function, they are classified as destroyers.

Irani also said strengthening floating military bases in the oceans is on the agenda.

Iran's Navy has in recent years achieved self-sufficiency in manufacturing surface and sub-surface vessels. It has also increased its presence in international waters to protect naval routes and provide security for merchant vessels and tankers.

Last year, the Iranian Navy's 86th flotilla of warships successfully completed a round-the-world voyage after sailing 63,000 kilometers of sea routes over a period of eight months.

Iran's Navy chief Rear Admiral Shahram Irani addresses a press conference held on the occasion of Iran Navy Day on November 23, 2024. ● IRNA



## Italian court rules Jerusalem al-Quds cannot be Israel's 'capital'

An Italian court has ruled on the status of the occupied Palestinian city of Jerusalem al-Quds, underlining that the holy city cannot be acknowledged as the "capital" of the Israeli regime.

The significant ruling by the Rome court is based on international legal principles and represents worldwide attempts to negotiate the Israeli-Palestinian dispute by taking an impartial position on the controversial matter of the city's ownership.

Jerusalem al-Quds is a highly contested city globally due to its profound historical, cultural, and religious importance to Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

Ever since Israel proclaimed Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital in 1980 with the "Jerusalem Law," there has been widespread international opposition

to this unilateral decision. Many countries keep their embassies in Tel Aviv in order to remain neutral in the conflict, as Palestinians also demand East Jerusalem as the capital of their own state in the future.

The United Nations, with resolutions like UN Security Council Resolution 478, has clearly stated that Israel's declaration is invalid, advising member countries against setting up diplomatic offices there.

The decision from the Italian court was a response to a legal case questioning the official acknowledgment of Jerusalem al-Quds as the "capital" of Israel. The court stated that acknowledging the city as Israel's capital would go against international law and go against Italy's promises to support peace and neutrality in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The court emphasized the significance of diplomacy and dialogue over unilateral declarations by not acknowledging Jerusalem al-Quds as the capital of Israel.

The court's decision implies disapproval of actions taken by countries like the United States, who acknowl-

edged Jerusalem al-Quds as Israel's capital in 2017 during the Donald Trump administration and later moved its embassy there.

More than 700,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East al-Quds.

The international community views the settlements as illegal under international law and the Geneva Conventions due to their construction on the occupied territories.

The choice made by Italy could strengthen the EU's united position and confirm its importance as a crucial intermediary in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Francesca Albanese, the UN special rapporteur on the rights situation in Palestine, also reacted to the Italian court's ruling and praised the "important" decision.

"Today it doesn't rain, it pours. Important decision in the Italian justice system re the status of [al-Quds]: stop calling it the capital of Israel, it is not. And the judge's motivation is really touching," Albanese wrote in a post on her X social media account.



## Israel pounds central Beirut, kills over 15



Firefighters battle the flames after a building was hit in an Israeli airstrike in the Hadath neighborhood of Beirut's southern suburbs on November 23, 2024. ● AFP

Lebanon said an Israeli air strike in the heart of Beirut that brought down an eight-storey residential building and jolted residents across the city killed at least 15 people on Saturday.

The attack in the capital was followed by others in the city's southern suburbs after calls by the Israeli military to evacuate the area, AFP reported.

"The strike was so strong it felt like the building was about to fall on our heads," said Samir, 60, who lives in a building facing the one that was destroyed.

The Israeli strike, which hit the working-class Basta neighborhood, killed at least 15 people and wounded 63, Lebanon's Health Ministry said, adding it had also left behind "a large amount of body parts that are being identified."

"The final death toll will be determined after DNA tests are carried out," the ministry said in a statement.

The state-run National News Agency (NNA) said Israeli jets had launched six missiles at the structure, causing "wide-

spread destruction in buildings" nearby. The predawn attack in Basta was not preceded by an evacuation warning from Israel's military.

A Lebanese security source told AFP on condition of anonymity that the strike had "targeted a leading Hezbollah figure", though it was unclear if they were killed. The official did not name the figure.

Another strike hit the neighborhood of Hadath in Beirut's southern suburbs.

Israel stepped up its campaign against the resistance group in late September, targeting its strongholds in the east and south as well as south Beirut, and later sending in ground troops after nearly a year of limited cross-border exchanges of fire.

Lebanon's Health Ministry says at least 3,645 people have been killed since October 2023, when Hezbollah began trading fire with Israel in solidarity with its Palestinian ally Hamas. Most of the deaths have been since September this year.

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