

Iran: Ignoring hands of US, Israel in West Asia developments great mistake

Baqaei says Tehran not shifting regional policies on daily basis

International Desk

Iran rejected the Turkish foreign minister's remarks about regional countries' domination, including Tehran, on other states, saying that ignoring "the overt and covert hands of the US and Israel in regional developments is a great mistake." Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei in a post on X quoted Turkey's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan as saying, "The region must be freed from the culture of one country dominating others; neither Arabs, nor Turks, nor Kurds, nor Iranians should seek to dominate, harass, or threaten one another." Baqaei responded to Fidan's remarks with a question, "But what about Israel?" He accused the Israeli regime of escalating aggression in Syria following the fall of Da-

mascus on December 8, 2024, when Turkish-backed forces seized control of the capital. Baqaei stated that within days of Damascus' fall, the Israeli regime launched a massive attack on Syria's military and defense infrastructure, including its scientific and research centers, destroying more than 90 percent of them. He further noted that the Israeli regime has reoccupied the entire Golan Heights and seized "large" and strategic parts of Syrian territory, promoting its "expansionist agenda." Baqaei also warned that, "The Israeli regime now controls Syria's most important water sources and repeatedly violates the country's territorial integrity and national sovereignty." He emphasized that Tehran "has not pursued any regional ambitions in the past five de-

acades." Instead, he stated that Iran's primary concern remains supporting the Palestinian people and their cause in fight against the Israeli occupation. "The issue of Palestine is more alive than ever, and Israel is more hated than ever," he asserted, adding that plans for the forced displacement in Gaza and the annexation of the occupied West Bank would not be possible without "stabs in the back." In his X post, Baqaei warned against ignoring "the overt and covert hands of the US and Israel in regional developments," asserting that their influence has fueled instability. Baqaei said Tehran is committed to its "principled positions," emphasizing that the country does not shift its policies on a daily basis. "We are steadfast in our principled positions and do not shift



Esmail Baqaei
IRNA

from one policy to another every day. The Islamic Republic of

Iran has always supported the resistance while honestly con-

fronting illegal behavior and terrorism," Baqaei said.

Iranian MP: Refusing nuclear talks with West not on agenda

International Desk

An Iranian lawmaker said refusing to negotiate with the West on Iran's nuclear program has not been on the country's agenda, stressing that the Islamic Republic's ongoing talks with European countries show that "door is open for talks." Abbas Golroo, a member of Parliament's National Security Committee, said no proposal has been received that needs to be considered by Iran. The Iranian lawmaker said as the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution and the president have repeatedly said, nobody is opposed to negotiations in Iran. Citing talks with the West during the presidency of former Iranian

president Hassan Rouhani, which led to the conclusion of the 2015 nuclear agreement, Golroo said that it shows that Iran is not opposed to talks. But the United States, one of the signatories to the deal, was not committed to the agreement and withdrew from the deal, which left the future of the agreement in limbo. He underlined that it is not right to say that the Islamic Republic is against negotiations. The parliamentarian said Iran is currently holding negotiations with three European powers, France, Britain and Germany, and the issue indicates the door is open for talks. There have been speculations on new negotiations between Tehran and Washington on Iran's peaceful



Abbas Golroo

nuclear program in recent months, especially after Donald Trump's return to power in the United States in January. However, Trump's language of threats and imposition of sanctions against Iran have had Iranian officials skeptical of negotiations with the US. Iranian officials say that negotiations under pressure is not meaningful.

Iran, UAE hold 1st meeting of Joint Committee of Political Consultations

International Desk

Iran and the United Arab Emirates held their first meeting of a Joint Committee of Political Consultations between the two countries, during which Iran expressed its readiness to strengthen cooperation with the UAE based on mutual interests. Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi, who led the Iranian delegation in Abu Dhabi, reiterated Tehran's foreign policy priority of fostering stronger relations with neighboring countries and highlighted the meeting's role as a platform for advancing bilateral coordination. He also stressed the need to accelerate the implementation of agreements reached between the two countries and explore new areas of cooperation to further solidify ties. Iranian diplomat also referred to the regional developments and called for unity among Islamic nations in countering Israeli aggression in Palestine and Tel Aviv's destabilizing influence in

the region. He pointed to the upcoming Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) foreign ministers' meeting as an opportunity for member states to take a unified stance against Israeli-American plans for genocide and the forced displacement of Palestinians in Gaza. The Friday meeting was co-chaired by Takht-Ravanchi and Lana Nusseibeh, UAE's assistant minister for political affairs. For her part, Nusseibeh reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to expanding comprehensive relations with Iran, expressing optimism that continued political consultations would enhance bilateral coordination and facilitate the effective implementation of agreements. She also reiterated the UAE's firm rejection of any plans for the forced displacement of Gaza's population. Both sides welcomed the progress made in joint economic, consular, and security cooperation, including the Joint Economic Commission, Consular Committees, and Coast Guard Cooper-



ation Meetings. They expressed readiness to accelerate the finalization of agreements and memorandums of understanding (MoUs) currently under discussion. After China, the UAE has the largest amount of trade relations with Iran. The trade value of the two countries has reached 27 billion dollars. Iran imported \$20.8 billion of goods from the UAE in its last fiscal year ending in March 2024, making the latter Iran's top source of imports according to the country's Customs body. In the same period, the UAE was Iran's top third export destination, with \$6.6 billion worth of goods exported.

Tehran says PKK leader's disarmament call leads to 'renouncing violence'

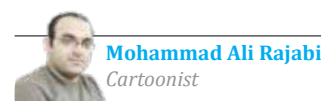


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International Desk

Iran on Friday welcomed a call by jailed founder of Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group Abdullah Ocalan to lay down arms, calling it a step toward "renouncing violence." In a major shift, Ocalan on Thursday said that "all groups must lay down their arms and the PKK must dissolve itself." The outlawed militant group, which has led a four decades-long insurgency against the Turkish state, declared an immediate cease-fire on Saturday, a news agency close to it said, heeding Ocalan's disarmament call. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said in a statement on Friday that Tehran views the move as "an important step toward renouncing violence." He added that Iran "welcomes any pro-

cess that leads to stopping terrorism and strengthening security in neighboring Turkey," expressing hope that it "will also have positive effects in the region." The PKK is blacklisted as a "terrorist" organization by Turkey, the United States, the European Union and many other Western countries. Earlier this month, Iranian Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib discussed "the fight against terror organizations, especially the PKK and Daesh," during a meeting with visiting Turkish spy chief Ibrahim Kalin. Iran has long accused various Kurdish militant groups of inciting unrest and carrying out operations within its borders. In March 2023, Iran signed a security agreement with Iraq aimed at disarming Kurdish militants and removing them from border areas.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

