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Iranian parliament designates U.S. military as 'terrorist'

TEHRAN — The Iranian parliament on Tuesday passed a triple-urgency resolution which designated the U.S. military, the Pentagon and affiliated organizations, as "terrorists".

All 233 present members of the parliament voted in favor of the motion, according to ISNA. **→ 3**

Expulsion of U.S. from West Asia doomed fate of Washington, Zarif says

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that the ultimate expulsion of the U.S. from West Asia is the doomed fate of Washington's unbridled exploitation of the tools of war, sanctions, and assassination.

"The path chosen by the U.S. for itself and the region is characterized by insecurity, war and bloodshed. But, Iran, as the unified voice arising from the heart of every child of this ancient **→ 2**

The day Soleimani martyred declared International Day of Resistance

TEHRAN — Iran has declared January 3, the day Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani was assassinated in a United States airstrike in Baghdad, as the International Day of Resistance.

According to the Pentagon, General Soleimani was assassinated on Donald Trump's order.

The U.S. airstrike also martyred Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy commander of the anti-terrorist Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF). **→ 2**

ARTICLE
Sondoss Al Asaad
Political analyst from Beirut

Letter on behalf of Resistance Youths

Dear Iranian youths and the entire Iranian nation, allow me, on behalf of my fellow sisters and brothers in the Resistance-axis, to extend our deepest sympathies and condolences to you at the irreparable loss of our dearly beloved Martyr Lieutenant General Qasim Soleimani and his great companions. We have all been utterly shocked and dismayed at Trump's heinous crime and the excruciating pain that ensues. May the almighty God ease our pain and grant us peace and patience.

Let me seize this opportunity to write to our unrivaled Martyr Soleimani and thank him for the furthestmost impact he has had on us. On our honour, we vow to perpetuate your exemplary mission and to serve our oppressed peoples at all times. We vow that your honourable martyrdom would be the starting point to revenge, humiliate and expel the Zionist and American criminal psychopaths from our entire West Asia region and to foil all their malicious schemes.

We are forever grateful. We are forever in your debt. You made the ultimate sacrifice, willing to give your life for the Ummah you had long loved and believed in. You lived humble and committed, fought fearlessly against terrorism, led dozens of honourable battles and martyred for us. Leader, thank you for setting our priorities straight, first and foremost, to be at the service of this holy path, your path and the path of our holy martyrs, who sacrificed their consecrated lives that we now enjoy freedom and dignity.

Tribute to the charismatic legend who has terrified Washington over the past four decades, to the inspiring revolutionary leader who awakened the consciousness of the oppressed peoples, who had long been subject to the arrogant colonialist culture of fear, cowardice, submission, and surrender. Tribute to the extraordinary Leader, who emerged from the homes of the vulnerable, and who long wished to be called a 'Warrior' defending the hopeless. Tribute to the devoted leader who endeavoured martyrdom with an Aalawi heart, Abbasi altruism and Hussaini perseverance, so he lifted upward as an immortal martyr. **→ 7**

Intl. museums, archeologist condemn Trump's threat to hit Iranian cultural sites

TEHRAN — The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the American Alliance of Museums, and a renowned Polish archeologist have condemned U.S. President Donald Trump's recent statements on threatening to target Iranian cultural sites.

According to Artnet News, Tristram Hunt, the former politician who is now the director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, tweeted his dismay. Trump's threats "must be condemned," he wrote, "just as the bulldozing of Palmyra & significant heritage sites by ISIS was abhorrent." Hunt adds: "This is a worrying step towards the normalization of cultural destruction as a war aim." The V&A is planning a major exhibition of Persian art and design in the fall.

The renowned Polish archeologist Barbara Kaim, who specializes in the archaeology of Iran and Central Asia, compared Trump's threats to that of a "barbarian."

"I completely do not understand how modern man can let himself even just to think about destroying cultural goods," Kaim says. "How is this different from some known ISIS activities?" she asks, referring to the cultural vandalism of Islamic extremists.

Thomas Campbell, the former director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art who is now at the helm of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, has been unusually outspoken.

Campbell posted a powerful response on Instagram alongside a map of Iran's most important heritage sites. He explained that normally museum directors "remain behind the scenes... But when the President of the United States inverts every value system our country previously stood for, and calls for destructive attacks against cultural sites in one of the oldest civilizations of the world, you have to speak out vehemently and urgently." The American Alliance of Museums also on

Monday condemned the targeting of cultural sites for destruction.

"Our nation has a long history of safeguarding cultural resources, particularly in nations experiencing political turmoil and armed conflict. Strikes against cultural sites anywhere in the world are a threat to our global heritage and contradicts treaties signed by the United States to protect humankind's cultural heritage in the 1954 Hague Convention for the protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2347, and 1972 UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. We expect the United States Government to comply with international law and urge the US Government to reaffirm its commitment to its longstanding practice of not targeting cultural sites during peace or wartime." The AAM announced in an official statement. **→ 10**

Germany slashing troop numbers in Iraq

Germany says it is reducing its military presence in Iraq, in the latest fallout from the United States' assassination of Iranian commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani.

The German government told parliament in a letter on Monday that about 30 soldiers stationed in Baghdad and Taji would be moved to Jordan and Kuwait.

Germany has about 415 soldiers in the U.S.-led coalition purportedly fighting the Takfiri terrorist group of Daesh. About 120 of them are stationed in Iraq.

A German Defense Ministry spokesman told AFP that the withdrawal would "begin shortly."

According to the German government, the partial withdrawal was ordered by the U.S.-led joint command for fighting Daesh.

The move comes after Iraqi lawmakers unanimously approved a bill demanding the withdrawal of all U.S.-led foreign military forces following the U.S. airstrike that killed Lt. Gen. Soleimani. Iraq has condemned the strike as a violation of its sovereignty.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said late Monday that the basis for the German military presence in Iraq was "that we have an invitation from the Iraqi government and parliament."

"If that is no longer the case... then the legal

basis for us to be there is missing. We have to clarify this with those responsible in Baghdad as soon as possible," Maas said.

A U.S. drone carried out an airstrike at Baghdad's international airport early on Friday, assassinating Lt. Gen. Soleimani, who was the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), as well as eight other people.

Iran has pledged a "harsh revenge" against America for the assassination. **(Source: AFP)**



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Tehran Dialogue Forum focuses on Persian Gulf security

The Tehran Dialogue Forum brought together high ranking diplomats, ambassadors and foreign dignitaries on Tuesday. The forum primarily focused on security in the Persian Gulf region. The chief guests of the conference were Omani Foreign Minister Yousuf bin Alawi and former Afghan president Hamid Karzai. The Omani chief diplomat offered condolences for the martyrdom of top Iranian General Qassem Soleimani, who was assassinated in a terrorist act by the U.S. in Baghdad on Friday.

Presence of trans-regional forces root cause of insecurity: Iran

TEHRAN — The Iranian deputy foreign minister said on Tuesday that trans-regional powers are in the Persian Gulf region under the pretext of preserving peace and stability but they are in fact after their own strategic objectives.

"Several security plans have thus far been offered for security in the Persian Gulf but we have not reached a suitable result so far. We do not have any specific security structure in the Persian Gulf region," Abbas Araghchi said, addressing the Tehran Dialogue Forum.

The forum, with a focus on security in the Persian Gulf, opened in the Iranian capital on Tuesday morning with the participation of a number of foreign officials, ambassadors, and experts.

Pointing to the barriers facing materialization of a suitable security plan in the region, he said, "The first reason is presence of trans-regional players which have been deployed in the region under the pretext of maintaining peace and stability in the Persian Gulf region but are actually after their own strategic objectives."

"The Persian Gulf Cooperation Council is not a comprehensive organization because Iran is not among its member states. If we lack a comprehensive structure in a region we will not enjoy specific security arrangements," the senior diplomat said.

He added, "The Persian Gulf's security is not separable. Security should be for all or for none. This is a comprehensive security."

Addressing the UN General Assembly late in September, President Hassan Rouhani unveiled Iran's new initiative for the establishment of peace and security in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

"The goal of the Coalition for Hope is to promote peace, stability, progress and welfare for all the residents of the Strait of Hormuz region, and to enhance mutual understanding and peaceful and friendly relations amongst them," Rouhani told the delegates at the UN.

"This initiative includes various venues for cooperation, such as the collective supply of energy security, freedom of navigation and free transfer of oil and other resources to and from the Strait of Hormuz and beyond," he added.

"The Coalition for Hope is based on important principles such as compliance with the goals and principles of the United Nations, mutual respect, equal footing, dialog and understanding, respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, inviolability of international borders, the peaceful settlement of all disputes, and more importantly, the two fundamental principles of non-aggression and non-interference in the domestic affairs of each other. The presence of the United Nations is necessary for the creation of an international umbrella in support of the Coalition for Hope," Rouhani underlined.