



International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Grossi speaks after the IAEA Board of Governors meeting, Vienna, 16 November 2022

## Project Esther: Trump's blueprint to crush Palestine advocacy

By Sahar Dadjoo

TEHRAN- A subtle yet pervasive campaign that jeopardizes the foundation of free speech and democratic dissent has emerged in the shadow of America's political theater. Project Esther is more than just a policy initiative. It was designed by the Heritage Foundation and is now a part of the Trump administration's second term.

Under the guise of combating antisemitism, it is a planned attack on the pro-Palestine movement that aims to criminalize advocacy and silence critics.

The far-right's larger Project 2025 agenda, which aims to reshape American governance under a nationalist, authoritarian vision, served as the foundation for Project Esther, which was unveiled in the tense political environment of late 2024 rather than in response to an increase in antisemitic violence.

## Ortagus's successor, another ugly face of Washington

By Sondoss Al Asaad

BEIRUT — Israel's Channel 14 reported on Sunday that Morgan Ortagus, Deputy Special Presidential Envoy for West Asia, would soon leave her post. The news channel said this move "is not good news as Ortagus was a strong supporter of Israel and worked decisively on the issue of disarming Hezbollah."

Since U.S. President Donald Trump assumed the presidency, Ortagus has visited Lebanon several times as part of Washington's pressure on Lebanon amid an atmosphere of threats and hints of aggressive steps against Lebanon.

During the recent Qatar Economic Forum, Ortagus stated, "Lebanon still has a lot to do to disarm Hezbollah," claiming that Lebanese officials "have accomplished more in the past six months than they probably have in the past fifteen years."

Reportedly, President Joseph Aoun was invited, a month ago, to hold a live Zoom interview with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy;

## Massacre at Gaza starvation camp

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN – The Israeli occupation regime kills and injures scores of starving civilians at a "failed" U.S. aid distribution center.

The Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) carried out a major attack on Palestinians as they approached a designated aid distribution site operated by an American company in the Mawasi area of Rafah, southern Gaza Strip.

Medics say at least 31 starving Palestinian civilians were killed, and more than 200 others were injured as a result of Israeli gunfire.

The victims had gathered at what was supposed to be a humanitarian aid point, yet were targeted despite their desperate need for food after being deliberately starved by the Israeli regime.

In response, the Gaza government media office condemned such aid zones as "collective death traps, not humanitarian relief points."

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## Seyed Ali Madanizadeh proposed as new economy minister

TEHRAN- Spokesman for Majlis (the Iranian Parliament)'s presiding board announced the government's introduction of the proposed economy minister to this board on Sunday.

Abbas Goudarzi said that Seyed Ali Madanizadeh was introduced to the parliament as the government's proposed candidate for the position of minister of economy, and the letter of acceptance will be placed on the agenda of the Majlis open session next week.

According to the internal regulations of the parliament, the letter of introduction of the minister of economy will be announced in the first session, which is next Sunday, and the specialized committee will have one week to present its report for reading in the parliament. ► Page 4



## Iran parliament speaker begins strategic Latin America tour with official visit to Venezuela

TEHRAN – Speaker of Iran's parliament Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf arrived in Caracas on Sunday, leading a high-level parliamentary delegation.

This visit initiates a strategic multi-nation tour across Latin America, with subsequent stops planned in Cuba and Brazil.

Upon landing at Caracas airport, Qalibaf received an official welcome from Venezuelan Foreign Minister Yvan Gil Pinto, Transport Minister Ramón Velázquez, heads of the Iran-Venezuela Joint Commission, members of Venezuela's National Assembly, and Iranian Ambassador Hojjatollah Soltani. ► Page 2

## Araghchi to pursue diplomatic coordination on Gaza in visits to Egypt, Lebanon

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi left Tehran Sunday evening to begin a two-day diplomatic mission to Egypt and Lebanon, where he is expected to hold high-level meetings, according to Foreign Ministry Spokesman Esmail Baghaei.

Speaking to reporters in Tehran, Baghaei said the meetings will focus on a broad spectrum of bilateral issues, as well as key developments in the region and beyond.

According to Baghaei, the trip reflects Iran's growing emphasis on strengthening ties and coordinating more closely with regional partners at a time of heightened tensions and strategic realignments.

"The foreign minister's visit is part of Iran's ongoing efforts to deepen regional dialogue," Baghaei said, adding that the agenda includes bilateral relations, regional consultations, and coordination on pressing international developments, with particular attention to the situation in occupied Palestine.

The spokesman noted that Iran seeks to engage in "serious and constructive" discussions with Cairo and Beirut on how to confront the escalating crisis in Gaza, the broader implications of Israeli aggression, and the pursuit of regional stability through diplomacy. ► Page 2

## 21 Iranian officers deployed to peace missions in Africa: top commander

TEHRAN – In a ceremony held on Sunday, Brigadier General Kioumars Heidari, Commander of the Iranian Army Ground Forces, announced the deployment of 21 Iranian military officers to international peacekeeping missions in four African nations—Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Mali.

General Heidari revealed that these officers were dispatched as part of Iran's dedicated peacekeeping unit, which has been trained and equipped in line with the latest UN protocols.

"We have established peacekeeping units furnished with the latest standards in training, equipment, and operational procedures," he said, highlighting the military's commitment to professionalism in multilateral operations.

In addition to the current deployments, the commander announced that 40 elite officers from the Army Ground Force have successfully completed advanced peacekeeping courses in Switzerland, Italy, Turkey, and India. These programs, designed to meet UN standards, are part of a broader strategy to prepare Iranian forces for expanded participation in international missions. ► Page 2

## Family Physician Program to kick off in mid-June

TEHRAN – The health ministry is planning to start the Family Physician Program in cities and villages with a population of less than 20,000 individuals on June 22, the first day of summer.

The program will gradually target other parts of the country as well, ISNA quoted Health Minister Mohammad-Reza Zafarqandi as saying.

In April, Zafarqandi said the Family Physician Program will kick off in the current Iranian year that started on March 21.

"It is a large-scale program based on social behavior change. Designing new patient pathways, reforming the referral pattern, and improving the healthcare network system requires careful coordination between the

Health Ministry, governors, and other relevant institutions at the provincial level," IRIB quoted Zafarqandi as saying.

So, it is absolutely essential to develop a national headquarters headed by the President to oversee the overall management of the program, he added. ► Page 7