

British MPs urge consequences for illegal Israeli evictions

Author:

Mon, 2021-02-08 22:06

LONDON: A cross-party coalition of over 80 British MPs has urged the UK's foreign secretary to impose consequences on Israel if hundreds of planned evictions of Palestinian families go ahead.

About 200 families in East Jerusalem are in immediate danger of being dispossessed of their homes following a legal battle waged against them by settler associations.

"This would amount to the forcible / mass eviction and dispossession of hundreds of Palestinian families," read the letter sent to Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab.

"As you are well aware, the forcible transfer of an occupied population is a grave violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention," it added.

"Israeli settlers as well as government and municipality officials speak openly about wishing to control the demographics of the city. Any actions by the occupying power to alter Jerusalem's character, status or demographic composition are illegal under international law."

The MPs urged the British government to "put a stop to the forcible transfer of families from their homes in occupied East Jerusalem."

They also suggested potential consequences that the government should impose if the evictions go ahead, including "reducing diplomatic engagement and banning trade in settlement products in full conformity with international law." The letter added: "Settlements are illegal so such a step is not a sanction."

Chris Doyle, director of the Council for Arab-British Understanding, told Arab News that he welcomed the letter.

It "highlights a significant degree of parliamentary concern over Israeli practices in the occupied territories," he said.

"It's clearly an outrage that Israel continues to engage in forcible dispossession whilst at the same time building and expanding on illegal settlements and the dispossession of Palestinian land. It's all part of a larger process that goes unaddressed."

On Friday, the Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC) ruled that it has jurisdiction over war crimes committed in the occupied Palestinian territories.

This ruling, Doyle said, "highlights the grave consequences that could, down

the line, hit those senior Israeli officials and ministers who authorize such crimes.”

He added: “Israel has for a long time been able to act with the knowledge that it had the full backing of the US, and that therefore there wouldn’t be any accountability – but who knows, further down the line this may change.”

While the ICC ruling may influence future Israeli policy, Doyle said Raab could do a lot more right now to uphold international law.

“The Palestinians are tired of just hearing the same old copy-paste press releases. There really should be some stronger action, which could include a ban on trade with illegal settlements,” he added.

“This would ram home to Israeli leaders that there are consequences for illegal actions – that’s the whole fundamental basis for international law.”



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British MPs demand UK sanctions over Israel’s West Bank annexation plan
British MPs urge UK government to recognize Palestine

Sudan's PM Hamdok announces new cabinet

Mon, 2021-02-08 20:33

KHARTOUM: Sudan's Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok announced a new cabinet on Monday, appointing Darfur rebel leader Jibril Ibrahim as finance minister. Among the other new appointments were Mariam Sadiq Al-Mahdi, a leader of the popular Umma Party, who was named as foreign minister.



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EU 'concerned' by Houthi attacks on

Saudi Arabia's territory

Mon, 2021-02-08 19:27

LONDON: The EU said Monday it was "concerned" about repeated Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia's territory.

It also said it had concerns about recent attacks by the Houthis in the Marib and Al-Jawf governorates of Yemen, adding military action there "seriously undermined" efforts to bring an end to the conflict in the country.

"Renewed military action and offensives in Ma'arib governorate at this particular time seriously undermine ongoing efforts by UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths, as well as the overall efforts of the international community to bring the war in Yemen to an end," [a statement said](#).

"The EU actively supports these efforts and reiterates the urgency of reaching an inclusive political settlement for the whole of Yemen, as was also underlined by Ambassadors of the EU and its Member States on the occasion of their visit to Aden on 6 and 7 February," the statement added.

The EU also said it welcomed the decision taken by the new administration of President Joe Biden to review US policy on Yemen, and that it shared Washington's belief that there was no military solution to the war.

On Sunday, [Griffiths visited Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif](#) in Tehran to discuss his peace plan for Yemen, known as the Joint Declaration.

Representatives of Yemen's internationally-recognized government asked Griffiths to demand Iran stopped aiding the Houthis financially and militarily following several deadly strikes against civilian and military targets in Yemen and Saudi Arabia.



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UN Yemen envoy in Iran as Houthi attacks escalate
UN worried Yemen's Houthis may renege on tanker examination

[GCC calls Egypt main pillar for security of Arab region](#)

Author:

Sun, 2021-02-07 21:02

CAIRO: The GCC considers Egypt a main pillar for national security in the Arab region, the council's secretary said Sunday.

GCC Secretary General Nayef Al-Hajraf met President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi and hailed his role in protecting Arab national security and defending all causes

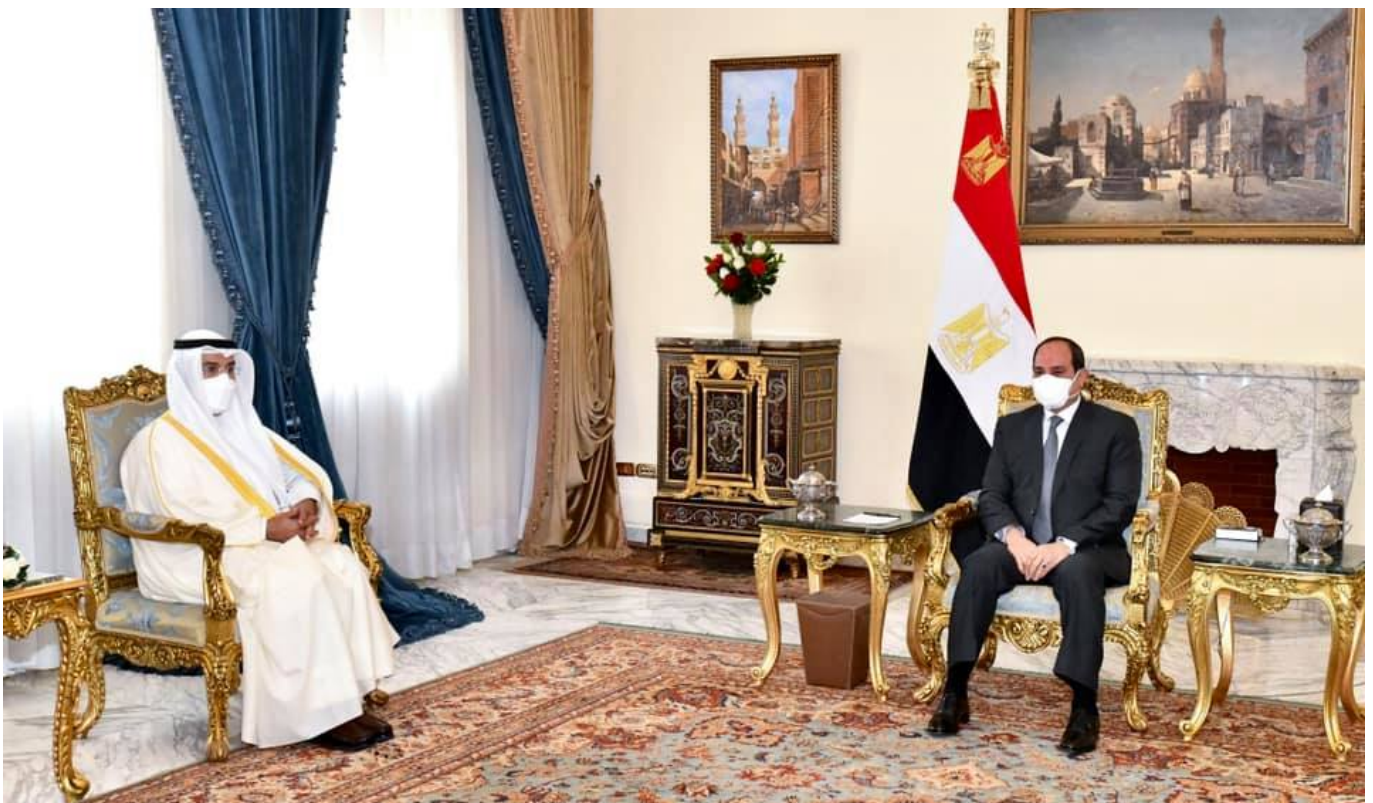
of the Arab nation, according to Presidential Spokesman Bassam Rady.

Al-Hajraf said the stability of Gulf states are connected to the security of Egypt, and the opposite is true, he added in statements quoted by the state-run news agency MENA.

Al-Hajraf also met Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry at the ministry's headquarters in Cairo.

The secretary general described ties with Egypt as "historic with firm roots," as he mentioned the GCC support for the Egyptian government in battling terrorism.

Al-Hajraf has recently visited Iraq and Jordan where he discussed cooperation priorities in both countries with their prime ministers.



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Head of Libyan parliament arrives in Cairo following invitation from Egyptian president

Biden tells Iran 'we will not lift sanctions'

Sun, 2021-02-07 18:23

LONDON: Joe Biden has said Iran must cut its uranium enrichment before any return to talks over the regime's nuclear program. The US president said he would not ease any of the tough sanctions imposed by Donald Trump after he withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal, while Iran is not sticking to its commitments. Iran has repeatedly breached the deal in recent months even amid suggestions that Biden would attempt to revive the agreement between Iran and world powers. The deal reduced sanctions on Iran in return for curbing its nuclear development, which many fear is intended to build an atomic weapon. Biden was asked in a CBS interview to be aired on Sunday whether he would halt sanctions in a bid to bring Iran back to negotiations. "No," the new president said, in a clear one-word response. He then nodded when asked if Iran would have to stop enriching uranium first.

With Iran resuming its enrichment of uranium, we asked Pres. Biden if the U.S. will lift sanctions first in order to get Iran back to the negotiating table on a nuclear deal.

"No," Pres. Biden says, affirming that Iran will have to stop its enrichment program first pic.twitter.com/OPszf15Q1o

– Norah O'Donnell (@NorahODonnell) [February 7, 2021](#)

Iran said last month that it was now enriching uranium to a purity of 20 percent – far above the 3.67percent level set by the deal.

Biden's administration has said it has to work urgently to stop Iran developing a nuclear weapon.



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