

Egyptian, Rwandan presidents hold talks in Cairo

Author:

Sun, 2022-03-27 14:37

CAIRO: Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi has held talks with his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame in Cairo.

At a joint press conference, El-Sisi said the talks "dealt with the progress made in various aspects of bilateral relations," adding that "there are still many opportunities to develop and advance these relations."

He said: "We agreed to continue the political consultation and coordination that already exists between us, in order to advance bilateral cooperation and coordinate the two countries' positions on regional issues of common interest.

"We also agreed on the need to raise the rates of trade exchange, which has grown significantly over the past two years despite the pandemic."

El-Sisi and Kagame witnessed the signing of cooperation agreements and memoranda of understanding between the two countries after their talks.

El-Sisi said they also discussed issues of security and development in Africa, including the spread of terrorism.

He noted Egypt's establishment of the Sahel and Sahara Counter-terrorism Centre, and praised Rwanda's efforts in UN peacekeeping operations in Africa.

El-Sisi reiterated the need for a binding legal agreement on filling and operating Ethiopia's Renaissance Dam within an appropriate timeframe, and in a way that enhances regional security and stability based on international law and UN Security Council resolutions.

He stressed "the importance of joint cooperation between all Nile Basin countries out of concern for common interests, not harming any of the basin countries, and Egypt's rejection of any unilateral measures."



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Egypt's President El-Sisi receives phone call from Ukrainian counterpart
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[Turkey says world cannot 'burn bridges' with Moscow](#)

Author:

Reuters

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Sun, 2022-03-27 10:23

DOHA: Turkey and other nations must still talk to Russia to help end the war in Ukraine, Turkey's presidential spokesman said on Sunday, adding that Kyiv needed more support to defend itself.

NATO member Turkey has good relations with both Russia and Ukraine and has sought to mediate in the month-long conflict.

"If everybody burns bridges with Russia then who is going to talk to them at the end of the day," Ibrahim Kalin told the Doha international forum.

“Ukrainians need to be supported by every means possible so they can defend themselves ... but the Russian case must be heard, one way or the other,” so that its grievances could be understood if not justified, Kalin added. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has urged the West to give his country tanks, planes and missiles to fend off Russian forces. The West has responded to Russia’s invasion by slapping sweeping economic sanctions on Moscow. Ankara says Russia’s invasion is unacceptable but opposes the Western sanctions on principle and has not joined them.

Turkey’s economy, already strained by a December currency crisis, relies heavily on Russian energy, trade and tourism, and since the war began on Feb. 24 thousands of Russians have arrived in Turkey, seeing it as a safe haven from the sanctions.

Ahmet Burak Daglioglu, head of Turkey’s investment office, told the forum separately that some Russian companies were relocating operations to Turkey. Asked on a panel about Turkey doing business with any people which could be of benefit to President Vladimir Putin, he said: “We are not targeting, we are not chasing, we are not pursuing any investment or capital that has a question mark on it.”

Two superyachts linked to Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich have docked in Turkish resorts.

Western governments have targeted Abramovich and several other Russian oligarchs with sanctions as they seek to isolate Putin and his allies over Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine.



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World focused on Turkey as Ankara mediates in talks between warring Ukraine, RussiaTurkey in tough spot over Russia-Ukraine crisis

[At least 6 dead, more missing in Oman rockslides](#)

Author:

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Sun, 2022-03-27 09:12

MUSCAT: At least six workers were killed and others missing after rockslides engulfed a quarry in northern Oman on Sunday, emergency authorities said. Further slides in the wake of the deadly collapse were hampering rescue efforts at the quarry in Ibri, Al-Dhahirah governorate, the Gulf state's Civil Defense and Ambulance Authority said.

Footage posted by the CDAA showed a towering cliff face crumbling onto the quarry below, creating a huge cloud of dust as workers shouted below.

"The rockslides are still going on and hampering the search for missing people," it tweeted.

"So far, six dead people have been recovered and four others have been treated in moderate to critical condition," it said, without giving the victims' nationalities.

Ibri, in the Hajjar mountain chain about 200 kilometers (125 miles) from the capital Muscat, is a center for quarries, mainly marble, which often employ immigrants from South Asia.



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Saudi Dar Alrkan, Oman's Omran partner in \$1.6bn deal to bolster tourism

[US envoy not confident Iran nuclear deal is imminent](#)

Author:

Reuters

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1648363923011896500

Sun, 2022-03-27 06:42

DOHA: US Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley said on Sunday he was not confident that a nuclear deal between world powers and Iran was imminent, dampening expectations after 11 months of talks in Vienna that have stalled.

The failure of efforts to restore the pact, which would curb Tehran's nuclear program in exchange for lifting tough sanctions, could carry the risk of a regional war, or lead to more harsh Western sanctions and further rises in world oil prices, analysts say.

"I can't be confident it is imminent.. a few months ago we thought we were pretty close as well," Malley said at the Doha Forum international conference.

"In any negotiations, when there's issues that remain open for so long, it tells you something about how hard it is to bridge the gap."

His assessment of the negotiations in Vienna to revive a 2015 nuclear accord came after Kamal Kharrazi, a senior adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said a deal could come soon.

"Yes, it's imminent. It depends on the political will of the United States," Kharrazi told the conference.

Then-US President Donald Trump abandoned the nuclear pact in 2018, prompting Tehran to start violating nuclear limits set under the deal about a year later, and months of on-and-off talks to revive it paused earlier this month after Russia presented a new obstacle.

Russia later said it had received written guarantees that it would be able to carry out its work as a party to the deal, suggesting Moscow could allow it to be resuscitated.

Kharrazi said in order for the deal to be revived it was vital for Washington to remove the foreign terrorist organization (FTO) designation against Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), an elite unit which reports to Khamenei.

The IRGC, created by the Islamic Republic's late founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini during the 1979 revolution, is more than just a military force.

It is also an industrial empire with enormous political clout. It was listed by Washington as a specially designated global terrorist (SDGT) and sanctioned under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) in 2017.

The IRGC's foreign operations arm, the Quds Force, was labelled an SDGT in 2007. The Trump administration put the IRGC organization on the FTO list in April of 2019.

The Quds Force helps Iran spread its influence in the Middle East through proxies.

"IRGC is a national army and a national army being listed as a terrorist group certainly is not acceptable," said Kharrazi.

Asked about any potential redesignation, Malley said: "Regardless of what happens to the IRGC issue that you raise, our view of the IRGC is many other

sanctions on the IRGC will remain. This is not a deal that intends to resolve that issue.”

Tehran has also been pushing for guarantees that any future US president would not withdraw from the deal, which would curb Tehran’s nuclear program in exchange for lifting tough sanctions which have hammered Iran’s economy.

The extent to which sanctions would be rolled back is another sensitive subject.

The United States’ allies in the Gulf and Israel view the nuclear talks with misgivings and see Tehran as a security threat.

Israel and the United States will cooperate in preventing a nuclear-armed Iran despite differences over any nuclear deal, Israel’s foreign minister said on Sunday.

“We have disagreements about a nuclear agreement and its consequences, but open and honest dialogue is part of the strength of our friendship,” Yair Lapid said in Jerusalem during a joint press conference with visiting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.





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EU's Borrell says nuclear agreement with Iran very close
Ukraine, Iran deal, post-pandemic woes focus of Middle East summits

[Yemen calls on international community to stop Houthis from threatening shipping](#)

Sat, 2022-03-26 20:58

LONDON: Yemeni Information Minister Moammar Al-Eryani said on Saturday recent repeated attempts by the Houthi militia to target oil tankers and threaten the security and safety of international shipping lines in the Red Sea and Bab Al-Mandeb was a serious escalation.

He added that it falls in line with the Iran-backed group's efforts to damage oil infrastructure and global energy supplies at Tehran's behest, arming and planning.

The Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen said on Wednesday that it had thwarted an attempt by the Houthi militia to carry out an attack in the southern Red Sea and Bab Al-Mandeb on giant oil tankers and destroyed two explosive-laden Houthi boats.

“Houthi militia threaten international navigation, taking advantage of the Stockholm Agreement and control over Hodiedah, under the eyes of the UN Mission to Support Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA), which made no progress and has become a cover for the militia to violate the agreement and commit terrorist activities,” Al-Eryani said in a series of tweets.

He also said that the coalition was making “exceptional efforts on behalf of the world in securing oil tankers and shipping lanes,” including neutralizing six remotely controlled booby-trapped boats and a number of drones that were being prepared in Hodeidah and Saleef ports in the past 72 hours.

He called on the international community, including the UN and US envoys, to stop Houthi activities that threaten energy sources and supplies and the security and safety of international shipping lanes, work to include them on international terrorism lists, and prosecute their leaders as war criminals and hold them accountable.



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World condemns Houthis as US says Iran ‘clearly enabled’ Jeddah oil attack
Coalition launches air-strikes, destroys explosive-laden boats in Yemen’s Hodeidah, Saleef