

# More sanctions likely on Iranian regime, says US national security adviser

Author:

Sat, 2018-11-10 22:29

PARIS: US National Security Adviser John Bolton said that more sanctions were possible on Iran just days after a new round of measures touted as the most punishing ever on Tehran entered into force.

Bolton said two rounds of unilateral US sanctions introduced by President Donald Trump in August and most recently on Monday had had a "quite significant" effect on the Iranian economy and the country's actions abroad.

"I think that you're going to see even more sanctions coming into play over time and much tighter enforcement of the sanctions," Bolton said in Paris.

Asked what would be the target of the sanctions, he replied: "There are other things we can do in the terrorism and counterterrorism area."

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasts that the sanctions will cause Iran's economy to contract 1.5 percent this year and 3.6 percent next year – pain that Trump has boasted about.

"We've seen indications that it has affected their belligerent activity in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. Not enough yet, but it's beginning to have that effect," Bolton said.

"We've seen a continuation and exacerbation of political discontent inside Iran. That opposition continues to manifest itself. Economically the Iranian currency is going through the floor, inflation has quadrupled and the country is clearly in recession."

He said "the objective is still to drive Iran's exports of oil to zero" despite waivers given to the biggest buyers of Iranian oil, including China, India and South Korea.

"It's with some satisfaction that I noticed today the price of oil is down. We have worked with the Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other producers to make sure production is up so that historic buyers of Iranian oil are not disadvantaged," he added.

Bolton spoke as Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that US sanctions have had no effect on Iran's economy because Washington had already practically reimposed them earlier.

"The sanctions have had no impact on our economy because America had already used all the weapons at its disposal and there was nothing new to use against us," Rouhani said in remarks carried live on state television on Saturday.

“They just issued a long list of banks, their branches ... and airlines and their planes. And this shows that they are merely trying to affect the Iranian nation psychologically,” Rouhani said.

The US said it would temporarily allow eight importers to keep buying Iranian oil when it reimposed sanctions last Monday aimed at forcing Tehran to curb its nuclear, missile and regional activities.

“It has now become clear that America cannot cut Iran’s oil exports to zero,” Rouhani added, speaking after a weekly meeting with the heads of the parliament and the judiciary.



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[John Bolton](#)

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[International Monetary Fund \(IMF\)](#)

US grants Iraq 45-day waiver over Iran sanctions to import gas, electricity:  
US EmbassyRouhani: New US sanctions have no effect on Iran economy

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# Palestinian dies of wounds from West Bank clashes

Author:

AFP

ID:

1541870657421664200

Sat, 2018-11-10 16:47

RAMALLAH: A Palestinian man shot in clashes with Israeli forces in October has died of his wounds, the health ministry in the occupied West Bank said on Saturday.

Mohammed Shreyteh, 28, had been shot in the head during the clashes that took place on October 26 in the West Bank.

At the time, witnesses said the violence erupted when Israeli settlers came to visit a site near the West Bank village of Al-Mazraa Al-Gharbiya, and that Palestinians pelted them with stones.

Israeli forces then intervened and fired tear gas and ammunition at the Palestinians, according to the witnesses.

The Israeli army accused Palestinians of instigating a "riot" during which they allegedly "set off fireworks and hurled rocks" at troops and border police.

The military responded with "riot dispersal means and fired in accordance with standard operation procedures," it said.

During those clashes another Palestinian, Othman Ladawda, 33, was killed, the health ministry in the West Bank said at the time.

He was hit with live ammunition, with the bullet piercing organs in his lower abdomen, the ministry said.



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Wintry weather and diplomacy cool down Gaza border protests  
Gaza border protest more subdued

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## [Lebanon's Hezbollah insists on government demand, warns Israel](#)

Author:

Reuters

ID:

1541868330941428400

Sat, 2018-11-10 16:33

BEIRUT: The leader of the Lebanese Shiite group Hezbollah insisted that one of its Sunni allies be given a portfolio in a new Lebanese cabinet, and

indicated it would be ready to go back to square one in negotiating a government if necessary.

In a televised speech on Saturday, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah also warned Israel that his Iranian-backed group would respond to any attack on Lebanon and urged his country to withstand diplomatic pressure over its rocket arsenal. Hezbollah's demand for one of its Sunni allies be given a portfolio in the new Lebanese government is at the heart of a row that has obstructed a final agreement six months since a parliamentary election.

The formation of a new government is necessary before any moves can be made toward fiscal reforms which the International Monetary Fund said in June are needed immediately to improve debt sustainability.

Hezbollah says one of its Sunni allies must be represented in the government to reflect their election gains.

But Prime Minister-designate Saad Al-Hariri, who is Lebanon's main Sunni politician and enjoys Western backing, has ruled out allocating any of his cabinet seats to them.

Lebanon's political system requires government positions to be allotted along sectarian lines.

Nasrallah said rejecting a Sunni ally from its "March 8" camp amounted to exclusion of a section of Lebanese.

"We were sincere when we spoke of a national unity government. There is no national logic, or moral logic, or legal logic ... for anyone in Lebanon to come out and say 'it is forbidden for the March 8 Sunnis to be represented in the Lebanese government,'" Nasrallah said.

"If it is forbidden, come let's talk again from the start," he said, adding: "We don't want conflict, or tension, or escalation."

President Michel Aoun vowed earlier on Saturday to find a solution to the problem. Though a political ally of Hezbollah, Aoun has sided with Hariri in the row.

Hezbollah, groups and individuals that support its possession of weapons won more than 70 of the 128 seats in the May 6 parliamentary election.

Hezbollah is proscribed as a terrorist group by the United States. The group last fought a major conflict with Israel in 2006, since when it has grown militarily stronger as a major participant in the Syrian war.

Nasrallah said Israel had recently tried to increase pressure over the group's rocket arsenal and to create "a state of intimidation and threat that if this matter is not dealt with, it (Israel) will deal with it." Israel had used "the Americans and even some European states" in this effort, he said.

"I say to Lebanon that it must bear this level of diplomatic pressure,"

Nasrallah said. "Any attack on Lebanon, any air strikes on Lebanon or bombardment – we will certainly respond," he said.



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'Hezbollah needs to be eliminated,' UAE tycoon Al-Habtoor tells Arab-US policymakers conference  
US sanctions on Hezbollah embarrass Lebanon

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## [Turkey orders 103 soldiers arrested in Gulen probe](#)

Author:

Fri, 2018-11-09 22:36

ISTANBUL: Turkish prosecutors ordered the detention of 103 soldiers with suspected links to the US-based cleric accused of orchestrating a failed coup in mid-2016, state-owned Anadolu news agency said on Friday.

Police have carried out regular sweeps against alleged supporters of the preacher Fethullah Gulen since the coup attempt of July 2016, in which 250

people were killed. Gulen denies involvement.

In the latest operation, in Istanbul and 31 other provinces, police have so far detained 74 people, Anadolu said.

The 103 suspects, all on active service, include colonels and lieutenant colonels, it said, adding that an investigation had shown they had communicated over fixed-line and pay telephones.

Authorities said members of the alleged Gulen network communicated via payphones.

Turkey's Western allies have criticized the crackdown, which mostly took place under a state of emergency declared shortly after the coup attempt and remained in effect until July 2018.

Erdogan's critics accuse him of using the failed putsch as a pretext to quash dissent.

Turkey says the measures are necessary to combat threats to national security.



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Turkey orders 61 soldiers detained for suspected Gulen links – mediaTurkey detains 150 soldiers over alleged Gulen links

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## Turkey announces new Syria border crossing

Author:

Menekse Tokyay

ID:

1541791630794543100

Fri, 2018-11-09 22:28

ANKARA: Ankara officially announced on Friday the opening of a new border crossing between Turkey and the northwestern Syrian city of Afrin.

The aim of this direct gate, which has been operational since Thursday, will be to increase, fasten and facilitate the supply of humanitarian and reconstruction aid to the region. It will also boost economic transactions in Afrin.

In proximity to Hamam village in the west of Jinderes, the border gate is called “Olive Branch” with reference to Turkey’s cross-border counterterrorism operation in Afrin which was conducted between January-March this year to clear the region from Syrian Kurdish YPG militia and Daesh terrorists.

Currently there are ten land and three rail custom gates between Turkey and Syria, while only seven of them are operational.

So far, Turkey’s humanitarian assistance to the region has consisted of delivery food, fruits and vegetables, drinking water, mattresses, blankets, hygiene kits, clothes, and packages of diapers to about 300,000 civilians in Afrin.

Turkey has ensured to distribution of food and personal care items to Afrin through dozens of aid distribution centers it established in the region.

Ömer Özkizilcik, analyst and editor at Suriye Gündemi (Syrian Agenda) news website, said the new Olive Branch border crossing to the Afrin region has primarily logistic and administrative reason behind its construction.

“Until now, supplies to Afrin from Turkey were usually sent via Azaz. With the new border crossing, Turkey aims to increase its ability to supply Afrin with humanitarian aids and also to accelerate Turkish reconstruction efforts into the region,” he told Arab News.

“While local councils in Euphrates Shield areas are supported by the south-



eastern Gaziantep governorate of Turkey, local councils in Afrin are supported by the southern Hatay governorate. With the new opened border crossing, the Hatay governorate will firstly have a direct link to Afrin," Ozkizilcik added.

The new border crossing will also enable the local residents of Afrin to boost their economic transactions by sending their locally produced items directly into Turkey, and will boost the regional economy, experts underline.

Wealth, combined with the relative calm in the region, is expected to increase the appeal of Afrin and to encourage needy refugees for returning home.

According to Ozkizilcik, another perspective behind the border crossing is the possibility for Syrian refugees inside Turkey to cross directly into their hometowns in the Afrin region under the supervision of Turkish authorities.

"All in all, Turkey is further improving its influence in northern Syria," he added.

Sinan Hatahet, an expert on Syria at Al Sharq Forum in Istanbul, thinks that this is rather an administrative decision rather than political.

"Previously the aid was passing through Kilis border gate, and now the humanitarian aid and trade flows will be directly transferred from Hatay to Afrin. It could incur faster, quicker and more lucrative trade flows," he told Arab News.

Bedir Mulla Rashid, a Syrian analyst from Omran Center for Strategic Studies in Istanbul, said the border gate would also help meeting the logistical needs for the troops and officers deployed in the region.

"Since it is near to Jindires it will be a chance for more exchange of goods inside Syria between areas of Olive Branch operation and Idlib province. And Afrin city local council is performing better after electing Said Sulaiman," Rashid told Arab News.

According to Rashid, since the announcement came from the Turkish Trade Minister, it means that more efforts will be done to increase trade in the area in general especially in terms of agricultural products and textile.

"Afrin is a rich area in terms of olive and grain. The relative safety of Afrin region during the civil war also encouraged many cloth manufacturers in Aleppo to move their products to Afrin. And now they can either do their trade with Turkish market or export through it to other regional markets," he added.

However, Rashid does not think the opening of this border gate will trigger a significant returnee wave from Turkey back to Afrin for now.

"Till now many of groups linked to Free Syrian Army (FSA) are based in the cities and villages of Afrin, and some of them are doing some violations like

imposing high taxes on goods and movement of people,” he said.

But, Rashid added, if the security situation is improved and FSA groups are pulled out of Afrin, it will for sure make some changes in the returnee trend of Syrian refugees back home,”



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Erdogan criticizes Russia, says Turkey to decide future of Afrin  
Turkey to continue measures in Syria's Afrin until threats eliminated: Defense minister