

Unconventional Weapons Rejected

As a victim of unconventional weapons, Iran will never accept the use of such weapons against humanity, Iran's envoy to Japan said.



Abbas Araqchi

"Just like the Japanese nation, the people of Iran has experienced the horror of these weapons, which gave rise to a religious decree against the production and use of nuclear weapons in Iran," the Iranian ambassador in Tokyo, Abbas Araqchi, told a gathering of Japanese women married to Iranian nationals in Tokyo, PressTV reported.

With more than 100,000 Iranians who fell victim to the use of chemical weapons during the 1980-88 Iraq-imposed war, the Islamic Republic has been severely affected by the consequences of the weapons of mass destruction.

"During the Iran-Iraq war, the West supplied Saddam Hussein with large quantities of chemical weapons, which were used against Iranian soldiers. Two decades after the end of the war, victims of Iraq's atrocities are dying all over the country from the enduring effects of such weapons," Araqchi added.

In a 12,000-page weapons declaration delivered to the United Nations in 2002, Iraq identified 31 major foreign suppliers in its chemical weapons program, which included 2 US companies, 14 companies from Germany, 3 companies each from the Netherlands and Switzerland and 2 each from France and Austria.

Blast Near Iran Embassy In Baghdad

A roadside bomb exploded on Sunday near the Iranian embassy in the West Baghdad neighborhood of Salihyah, wounding four people and damaging a minibus, police said.

"A roadside bomb exploded next to a minibus, damaging it and wounding 4 people," said an Iraqi policeman, whose name was not given.



AP Television pictures showed a minibus riddled with shrapnel holes near the Iranian Embassy and blood on the ground.

The blast occurred a few meters away from the fortified Green Zone--which houses the US and British embassies and the Iraqi leadership--and on the first day of a ceasefire between Shiite militants and US-backed Iraqi forces.

Elsewhere in Baghdad, authorities in Sadr City reported no violence on Sunday as gunmen withdrew from the streets and shops reopened after two months of intense clashes.

Also on Sunday, the US military announced that one US soldier was killed when the vehicle he was traveling in rolled over near Al-Asad, home to the second largest US airbase in Iraq.

Sunday's announcement raises the number of the US military losses in Iraq to at least 4,075 since the Iraq war started in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

Incentives Violating Nation's Rights Unwelcome



Mohammad Ali Hosseini

> Compiled by Davood Baqeri

Iran says it will not consider any package or incentives that violate the rights of its nation.

Talking to reporters during his weekly briefing in Tehran, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini added that no new package has been presented by the Europeans to Iran.

Earlier, senior officials from the United States, Russia, China, Britain, Germany and France agreed at a meeting in London to offer a new package to coax Iran to suspend uranium enrichment.

Iran ruled out halting its disputed nuclear work on Monday, saying it would not consider any incentives offered by world powers that violated the Islamic Republic's rights to atomic technology.

He criticized the western governments for the incorrect approach they adopted toward Iranian nuclear program over the past years and said the Iranian nuclear program steers clear of the western accusations.

Iran got a clean health bill from the International Atomic Energy Agency on February 22.

Asked about an upcoming visit to Tehran of a delegation from the UN nuclear agency, Hosseini said an IAEA team is scheduled to arrive in Tehran soon.

"The head of the delegation has not been determined yet," he added.

> Lebanon Crisis

The spokesman noted that Iran believes the best solution to Lebanon's political crisis is national unity.

"The current situation in Lebanon can be dealt with in an acceptable way by holding negotiations and reaching an agreement among all domestic groups," he said.

Hosseini noted that Tehran has repeatedly stressed that the Lebanese people are the ones who should decide how to resolve the political crisis in their country.

"The way out of the Lebanese tension is completely domestic and should be eased by the Lebanese themselves. No one else can decide for the people of Lebanon," he said.

"Iran would welcome any effort leading to a proper way out of the current deadlock in Lebanon."

Hosseini voiced Tehran's readiness to help in this connection.

He said that Iran has repeatedly warned that Israel and its ally, the United States, stir up tension in Lebanon using all within their reach to ignore different Lebanese parties.

The spokesman added that the US and Israel are using their media to sow discord by saying that the current tension in Lebanon has resulted from conflicts between the followers of various religions in that country.

Hosseini criticized certain European countries for their indifference toward the ongoing situation in Lebanon and in the Middle East.

> Zionist Crimes

Hosseini also called on the international community, Muslim countries in particular, to confront the crimes of the Zionist regime.

"It is time the world started paying attention to the real demands of the Palestinian people. It is necessary for the international community and Islamic states to put on their agenda confrontation with the criminal acts of the Zionist regime and support for the Palestinians with the aim of restoring their rights and establishing justice," he said.

The spokesman declared that the Islamic Republic regards the racist, aggressive and illegal nature of the Zionist regime the root cause of all crises in the region.

"The Zionist regime celebrates the 60th anniversary of its illegal establishment under circumstances wherein the rightful inhabitants of the historical land of Palestine are being subjected to great suffering and pain," he said, adding that the regime has a black record of committing brutal acts in Palestine.

> Iraq Talks

Hosseini also said Tehran might consider resumption of talks with the United States on Iraq.

"If conditions were right, Iran would resume talks with the US on security in Iraq," he said.

The spokesman had said last week that Iran would not talk with the US as long as US forces targeted Iraqi civilians in their fight against militias linked to Shiite cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr.

Iran and the US have already held three rounds of talks in Baghdad, which led to an as yet unimplemented plan to form a trilateral security committee consisting of Iran, the US and Iraq to help bring stability to Iraq.

Kyrgyzstan Wants Enhanced Ties

The Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry has held a seminar in Bishkek on Saturday to study Iran-Kyrgyzstan ties jointly with the UNESCO Friends Society and the Iranian Embassy.

Twenty-five articles on economic, political, cultural and scientific cooperation between Iran and Kyrgyzstan were presented in several working committees, PressTV reported.

In a message to the seminar, Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Ednan Karabaev said that since the establishment of diplomatic ties between Kyrgyzstan and Iran in 1992, the two countries have significantly improved their cooperation in political, economic, cultural and educational fields.

"Mutual respect is a prerequisite for multilateral cooperation within the framework of international organizations and financial institutions," he added.

Karabaev said it goes without saying that the determination of Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as well as the strong historical bonds between the two countries will pave the way for further improvement of Tehran-Bishkek relations.

Iran's Ambassador in Bishkek Mohammad Reza Sabouri noted at the seminar that after the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the Islamic Republic of Iran was one of the first countries to recognize Kyrgyzstan's independence.

Persian Press Watch

American Trap

KAYHAN: Most Iraqi lawmakers are opposed to any pact with the United States. As a result, Americans unilaterally prepared a draft agreement called Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which was tentatively signed by Baghdad in March. While the western media call it "an economic, political and security pact", all its 10 paragraphs are related to military and security cooperation between Baghdad and Washington. Americans are actually imposing this pact on the Iraqis. The two sides are scheduled to finalize the pact by the end of summer. Upon its finalization, the deal will turn Iraq into a colony and a permanent military base of the United States, in which case the country will become the second Israel, albeit with an Islamic cover. There is no doubt that the Iraqi people and religious scholars as well as revolutionary groups will not tolerate this colonial pact.

Media Clout

IRAN: The so-called "cultural NATO" is the most recent conspiracy against the Islamic Republic. About two years ago, the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei warned political and cultural officials against a western cultural assault. However, it seems less attention has been paid to the issue and no serious action has been taken to foil this cultural conspiracy. The reality is that the cultural arena of the country has never been able to persuade policy- and decision-makers realize that the domestic media can be used as a weapon to confront the cultural assault. The media is the most effective means of fortifying the people culturally and also withstanding the assault of enemies. For the same reason, officials should affirm the media clout and help the media activists play their role in a more efficient manner.

Strong Force

JOMHOURI-YE ESLAMI: Risky measures taken by the western-backed Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora have taken the Muslim country on the verge of a civil war. In an unprecedented decision, Siniora sacked the security chief of Lebanon's airport on the allegations of having ties with Hezbollah and called for dismantling the telecom network of the resistance movement, igniting the first flames of a civil unrest. Siniora's decision was aimed at weakening Hezbollah and paving the way for the Zionist regime to overpower the resistance movement. In fact, in the Winograd report on the 33-Day War waged by Israelis against Lebanon, the telecom network of Hezbollah was said to play a key role in defeating the Israeli Army. However, Siniora and his allies should beware that Hezbollah is a strong force that cannot be defeated easily.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi

