

Ulf Sandmark: Saudis have lost their gamble in Yemen but can't find honorable way to leave

TEHRAN (FNA) — Geopolitical analyst Ulf Sandmark says Saudi Arabia is stuck in the war in Yemen without finding an honorable way to end it and instead continues to gamble by redoubling its input like gambling addicts.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with FNA, Ulf Sandmark said that the Saudis, who very much relied on their mercenaries and air power, underestimated the barefoot Yemeni fighters and are now stuck without an honorable way to end the war they started.

According to the analyst, the British, who are financially benefiting from the arms sales to Saudi Arabia, are geopolitically looking for destabilization of the South West Asia region with the aim to block the emerging Chinese New Silk Road (NSR) policy, which is a threat to the British geopolitical policy of Divide and Rule.

Ulf Sandmark is a Swedish economist and human rights activist as well as a longtime collaborator of American political figure Lyndon H. LaRouche. Sandmark is a board member of the Schiller Institute in Sweden and the Stockholm correspondent for the Executive Intelligence Review (EIR). He has delivered speeches at various international conferences, including a two-day conference held in London last year with his stated aim to "support the Yemeni people against the Anglo-American-Saudi imperial war."

FNA has conducted an interview with Ulf Sandmark about the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen and possible motives behind the war imposed on the country by Saudi Arabia and its western allies namely the US and the UK.

Below you will find the full text of the interview.

■ What do you think about the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen caused by the Saudi war and the blockade on the country? What are the Saudis' objectives in their war on Yemen?

A: This worst ongoing humanitarian crisis in the world is constantly misreported. Mostly, it is just the plus 10,000 civilian deaths mentioned caused by direct war action. It is not including that a child dies every ten minutes from starvation, dehydration and disease. Even the figure 247,000 deaths mentioned in Sana'a August 28th, 2017, by Minister of Human Rights Alia Faysal Abdul Latif, is



probably much too small, if all the deaths caused by the war from hunger, disease and lack of medical care are included.

■ It seems that the Saudis expected an easy-to-win combat when they first stepped into the war. What do you see as the reasons for Riyadh's continued failure in Yemen?

A: The Saudis underestimated the barefoot Yemeni fighters. The Saudis lack the citizen soldiers of a republic fighting for their cause. With just mercenaries and air power they cannot win the war. They did not succeed to use former president Saleh to split the Sana'a government. Now they are stuck without an honorable way to end the war, and instead gamble by redoubling their input, very much like addicted gamblers.

■ Why do the US and the UK continue to supply Saudi Arabia with arms despite international criticism with regard to civilian casualties?

A: The endless standoff in the Yemen war suits perfectly the British objective to move the destabilizations to the Gulf region, when pushed out of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Turkey. Geopolitically the [Persian] Gulf is the most important area

from where the British attempt to control China, Japan, India and Indonesia, who depend on the energy sources there. This is the stated policy of the modern form of British empire as described in April 2013 by Royal United Services Institute's Briefing paper: "A Return to East of Suez?" As the US moves out of the [Persian] Gulf to concentrate on the Asian pivot against China, the British filled the vacuum.

Taking a leading Western role in the [Persian] Gulf benefitted the British arms sales, the briefing states, but does not mention the closer control of the Sovereign Wealth Funds to shore up the Western financial centers and the most dirty imperial operations. There is no mentioning of the huge secret slush fund created out of the Yamama weapons deals with the Saudis, and used for secret joint deployments of terrorists and insurrections around the globe.

The urgent motivation for destabilizations of the South West Asia region has been to block the emerging Chinese New Silk Road (NSR) policy, which is a threat to the British geopolitical policy of Divide and Rule. NSR could transform the whole region (and the

world) by integrating it economically and peacefully with Asia, Africa and Europe, as has been shown by the cooperation between Russia, Iran and China in the Syrian war.

■ Why have the international organizations, particularly the UN, remained passive in the face of the ongoing Saudi atrocities?

A: They are actually raising their voices a lot about the humanitarian suffering, but the war decisions remains with governments, not NGOs.

■ The Saudi-led coalition has recently increased its airstrikes on Yemen. These airstrikes have mostly killed Yemeni civilians, including thousands of women and children. What do you see as the reason for the airstrikes targeting civilians?

A: In failing to defeat the Yemeni military forces, the Saudis have intensified the policy to force the Yemenis to capitulate by starving the civilian population. The intent of starvation is proven by the Saudi answer, to the international outcry demanding ending of the siege on the harbor Hodeida, by renewed attacks right there.

■ Why is the regime continuing its attacks on the country despite its failures and cash-strapped economy? What do you think about the future of the war?

A: The Saudis and the [Persian] Gulf states are not on their own in this. They are haunted by the British imperial needs to keep the tension. Eventually their war on Yemen, or other destabilizations of even themselves, could be used to bring the US president into a self destruction by attacking Iran. President Trump would not politically survive an attack against Iran, like he could after the cruise missiles attack against the Syrian air force base. He is not elected to follow the advices from the US neoconservative war hawks, but to end the geopolitical wars in Asia. In this way the constant cooking (reshuffling) of the region suits the higher British purpose of regime change in the US, when that is not achieved by the Mueller investigation or all the other British scandal mongering against the US president. However, this instability cannot go on for long. It will go either way. If the US is brought further into peaceful cooperation with the BRICS nation to build the New Silk Road, then the war in Yemen could stop very soon. Otherwise...

Syria Peace Talks: World must give Sochi a chance

TEHRAN (FNA) — United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has sent his special envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, to the Syrian peace conference in Russia.

Guterres is confident that the congress in Sochi will be an important contribution to revive the UN-sponsored peace talks in Geneva. The UN decision to send its envoy to the Syrian National Dialogue Congress in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi comes despite the Syrian opposition's calls for the boycott of the event. Some 1,600 people have been invited to the talks aimed at resolving the years-long crisis in the Arab country.

Last December, Iran, Russia, and Turkey agreed to hold the congress in Sochi on January 29-30. While the Syrian government at the time immediately announced that it would attend the event, some Syrian "opposition" groups rejected the Russian initiative, which is also aimed at agreeing on a post-war constitution in the Arab country. Damascus correctly says a so-called peace proposal by some countries, including the US and Saudi Arabia, is "not even worth the ink." The real peace process between Syria's warring parties in the Kazakh capital Astana has resulted in significant achievements instead, leading to ceasefires and establishment of de-escalation zones across the conflict-ridden country.

The Astana talks have been brokered by Iran, Russia and Turkey, and unlike what Western powers and some Arab states would like to suggest, Sochi is not an attempt to create a separate peace process that would undermine the United Nations' efforts while laying the groundwork for a solution more suitable to the Syrian government and its allies Russia and Iran. This is the one and the only solution to the years-long crisis in the Arab country. And the reasons are plenty:

- The talks seek no breakup of Syria; it will improve the security situation in the region.
- The goal is not to pave the way for an open-ended US occupation of a part of Syria.
- No opposition group has been banned from attending the event — except for terrorists.
- Iran and Russia have no illicit interests in the Arab country; they are Syria's allies.
- The agreement on ceasefires and de-escalation zones has worked as a test for commitment.
- The Sochi peace conference is aimed at agreeing on a post-war constitution.

- Having regained the upper hand on the battlefield after nearly seven years of conflict, the Syrian government has offered amnesty to the opposition fighters. It is the foreign-backed opposition that are obstructing the whole process, wanting to see US occupying troops in Syria permanently.

At any rate, Syria and its allies are determined to speed up the current political process. And the absence of some opposition elements will not hinder that meaningful progress. What's more, all member states of the UN Security Council are attending the Tuesday conference. This includes regional states like Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, along with Iran and Turkey, the two guarantors of the Astana process (seven rounds of peace talks have been held in Astana to date).

Beware last Apartheid Regime in the world

TEHRAN (FNA) — The Trump White House should hold its head in shame. Instead of reversing President Donald Trump's universally-condemned decision to declare Al-Quds as Israel's new capital, it sent this week Vice President Mike Pence to the Israeli Knesset to give a speech loudly praising "the miracle of Israel," and presenting America's support for Israel as a question of siding with good over evil.

Far from it, America has sided with evil over good and the desperate attempt by Pence to focus heavily on defending President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem Al-Quds as Israel's capital, citing biblical stories about the city, and suggesting that King David's declaration of it as the capital millennia ago still applies, won't change the irrefutable fact that this is still an apartheid regime condemned and isolated the world over.

Not surprising, Pence used his speech to also appease Tel Aviv by attacking the Iran nuclear deal, terming the pact as a "disaster," and accusing Iran of being a brutal dictatorship that seeks to dominate the entire Arab world. He vowed the US would "no longer certify" the deal, leading to applause from the Israeli MPs.

Lest the pro-Israel US vice president forgets, the country he criticized is the same country that helped Iraq and Syria defeat the terrorist group of ISIL, Al-Qaeda and their affiliates in the Levant. This is also the only country in the Middle East that almost every year holds democratic elections to choose its leaders and government officials.

The same is not true about Israel, which denies the Palestinians the right to vote, freedom, self-determination and democracy. This is also the same regime that keeps hearing criticisms and condemnations at the United Nations, including internationally-endorsed resolutions that decry Israel as the world's last Apartheid regime that must be dismantled.

Just like the rest of the international humanitarian community, Iran considers the Israeli regime as a permanent menace for the national security of all countries. Iran supports the Palestinians because they are an oppressed nation plagued by the US-funded Tel Aviv regime which has expelled them from their motherland. Palestinians are living in poverty in camps in Lebanon, Syria and other countries. They have lost their homes, assets and jobs, and for that reason and



no other, defending them is a humane and moral duty.

If that's not enough, consider this: A United Nations hearing on its human rights record in Geneva on Tuesday once again accused the Israeli regime of ongoing abuses and anti-democratic policies as it was called out as the world's last functioning "Apartheid state".

A delegate from South Africa - a nation with a unique vantage from which to judge, said: "Israel is the only state in the world that can be called an apartheid state." The South African delegate said to UN members during the Human Rights Council (HRC) hearing at the Palais du Nations in Geneva that: "We remain deeply concerned at the denial of the right of self-determination to the Palestinian people, in the absence of which no other human right can be exercised or enjoyed."

This is not a one-off criticism of Israel and its Apartheid policies in occupied Palestine. The delegate who made the remarks was echoing the recommendations of several member states as well, that called, above all, for an end of the 50-year-long occupation of Palestine.

Nor is that all: While Israel continues to accuse the HRC of bias and denies responsibility for the crimes that correspond to the illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories, the independent review by Human Rights Watch found that the Zionist regime continues a pattern of systemic human rights violations - many of which have recurred consistently over the past 50 years of the occupation and some that have intensified significantly in recent years.

According to HRW's review, those

violations include: unlawful killings and war crimes without accountability; illegal settlements and institutional discrimination; forced displacement; prolonged closure of Gaza and unjustified movement restrictions in the West Bank; and abusive detention.

Vice President Pence should hold his head in shame. Because it is against this condemnable background under international law that he went to the Israeli Knesset to praise the "miracle of Israel". Deep inside his heart he knows that this "miracle" has only brought US-funded death and destruction to the Palestinians, including colonialism, war crimes, illegal settlements, systematic discrimination, forced displacement, blockade and open-ended war and occupation.

Iran's opposition to Zionism and to the colonizing regime and policies of Israel is therefore a legitimate political position. It only becomes illegitimate if it is motivated or accompanied by illegitimate motives or arguments, for example such as stem from generalized hatred or prejudice against Jews. But such illegitimate motives or arguments need to be proven before accusing any opponent of Zionism. Iran has long underlined the wide differences between Judaism and Zionism, stressing that the two stand on the opposite. Those who doubt may go ask the Jewish community about the living conditions in Iran.

Pence's speech at the Israeli Knesset cannot simply be taken for granted. In the absence of proof, his baseless accusation that Iran's anti-Zionist discourse and opposition to the Israeli regime are per se a threat to regional peace and stability is a despicable calumny.



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(With Tourism Approach and International Interactions)



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- Tourists safety and rights in the Persian Gulf
- Tourism sustainable development of the Persian Gulf and its coasts
- Persian Gulf region capacity of tourism, ecotourism and health
- Persian Gulf coasts tourism development using national youth and elites interests and abilities

Conference Venue: Bushehr Province

Conference Schedule

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