
International Intelligence

Turkey, Iran Ministers Meet in Tehran for Talks

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu was in Tehran on Jan. 4-5, where discussions with his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Salehi focused on reopening nuclear talks, as well as the situation in Iraq and Syria. It appears from the talks that Turkey is extremely concerned that Iraq may be descending into sectarian civil war.

Davutoglu was said to be carrying a message from the European Union's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, on a proposal to restart the talks with the P5+1 (the UN Security Council Permanent Five plus Germany). At their joint press conference, Salehi said that Iran wants the nuclear talks to resume, and proposed that they take place in Turkey. Davutoglu told the press he hoped that the negotiations would resume and "gain good results." In Ankara the next day, Davutoglu held a press conference with visiting Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba, where he reconfirmed that Iran was ready to resume these talks.

While the Turkish and Iranian Foreign Ministers' talks were taking place, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad initiated a telephone discussion with Russian President Dmitri Medvedev; a statement on Medvedev's website says that he expressed satisfaction with Ahmadinejad's "positive evaluation" of Russia's "step-by-step" proposal to dispel concerns about Iran's nuclear program.

EU Backs Crippling Sanctions Against Iran

European Union governments have agreed "in principle" to join the Obama Administration-imposed tough sanctions against Iran, according to European sources. The legislation, which calls for sanctions against financial institutions that deal with Iran's central bank, its main clearinghouse for oil exports, is meant to

force Iran to abandon its nuclear program, which Iran says is strictly non-military.

Western countries have imposed various sanctions on Iran for years, with little impact. But the latest measures are qualitatively different, directly targeting Iran's oil industry, which accounts for 60% of its economy. It is evident that the EU leaders twisted arms in financially desperate Greece, which gets a third of its oil from Iran and is a beneficiary of Tehran's lenient financing, and Spain and Italy, which are also big buyers, to agree to the sanctions.

Meanwhile, China, Iran's biggest trading partner, has cut its orders of Iranian oil by more than half this month due to differences over pricing, while, at the same time, voicing strong opposition to U.S. sanctions. Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei repeated China's position that it prefers dialogue with Iran to sanctions.

A Turkish energy official said that Ankara, which buys about 30% of its oil from Iran, was seeking a waiver from Washington for its biggest refiner, Tupras.

Obama's Genocide in Haiti: Cholera Claims More Lives

An alarming cholera outbreak in the municipality of Pestel, on Haiti's southern peninsula, once again demonstrates the criminal negligence displayed by the President Obama, who was explicitly offered the opportunity to prevent genocide after the 2010 earthquake, and instead imposed it as policy.

The mayor of Pestel reported 200 people ill with cholera, 17 of whom died Jan. 6, in an area bereft of medical supplies, medical personnel, or a cholera treatment center. Although an American doctor working for a medical NGO connected to the Haiti Advisory Epidemic System (HEAS) responded immediately to rush in the necessary supplies and personnel, there is now an 8.5% fatality rate, far exceeding any statistics provided by the Pan American Health Organization.

This occurs amidst official talk of declining infection rates, and the with-

drawal of many medical NGOs due to lack of funding.

Anger and frustration are reflected in the comment by a Florida-based medical professional who characterized the number of Pestel's fatalities as "an unacceptable CFR [Cholera Fatality Rate] after more than one year of the beginning of this epidemic.... We cannot continue being witnesses to negligent interventions carried out by the UN and its health branch."

The source said that Haiti will be hit by a "fourth, fifth, and sixth" wave of cholera in the coming months, for which it is woefully unprepared.

Dump the Queen! Jamaica Opts To Become a Republic

In a move that is likely to provoke the fury of the British monarchy, Jamaica's new Prime Minister, Portia Simpson-Miller of the People's National Party, announced during her Jan. 5 swearing-in that her government intends to do away with the monarchy, dump the Queen of England as head of state, and become a republic, *Caribbean360* daily reported Jan. 6.

Simpson-Miller also underscored that Jamaica needs to complete the circle of independence by having its own indigenous President. Under the current Constitution, the Queen is represented by a governor-general who appoints the prime minister.

In August 2011, Jamaica will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its independence from Britain. Like so many other Caribbean nations, which the Empire still treats as its colonial possessions, Jamaica is reeling from the global financial breakdown and decades of imperial economic policy. The bulk of its revenue comes from a rapidly shrinking tourist industry.

A further reflection of a rebellious attitude is seen in the fact that several Caribbean states, acting through the Rio Group, voted in a meeting last year to back Argentina's claim to sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands *against Britain*, a fact that Argentine President Cristina Fernández happily pointed out in a recent speech.