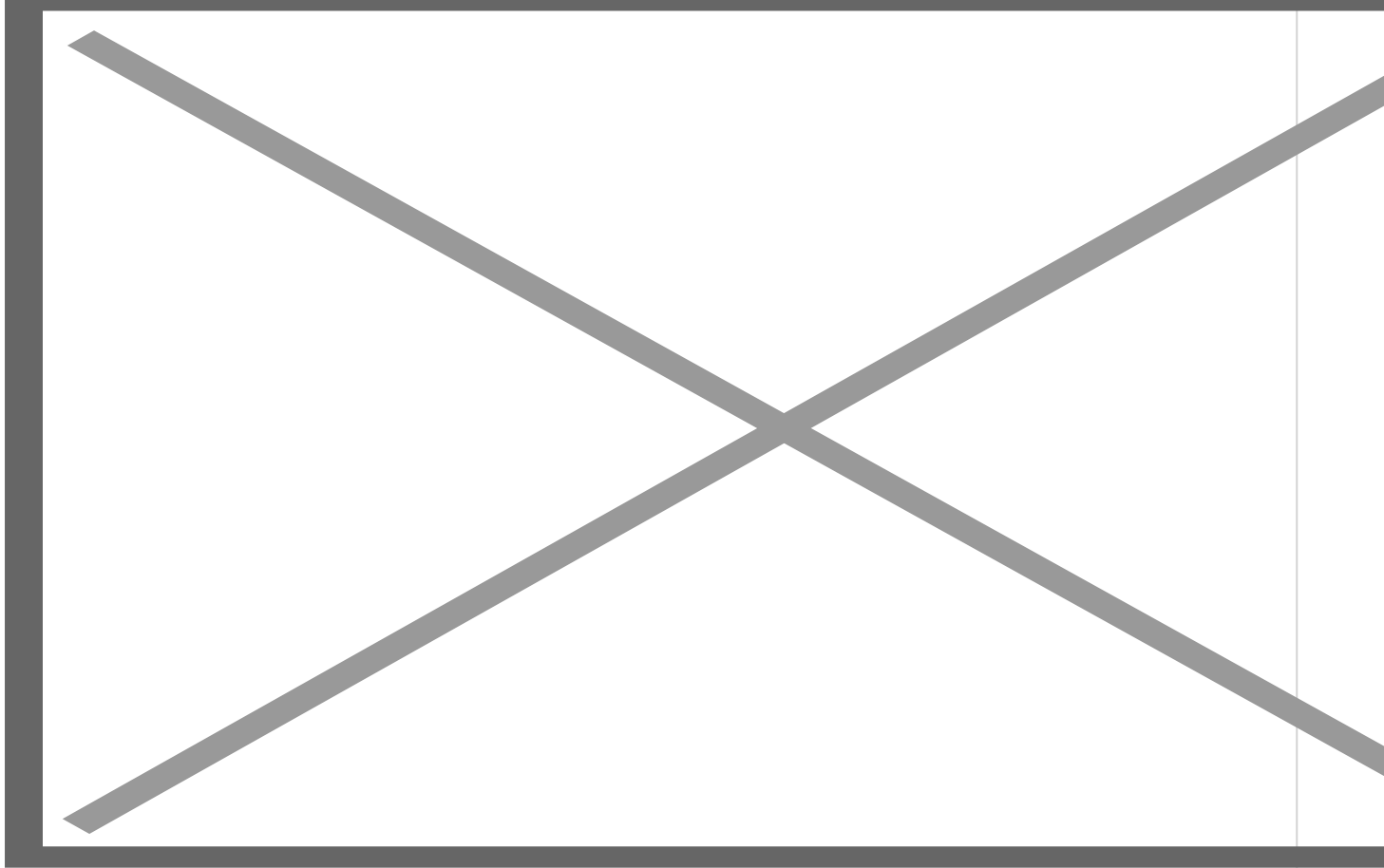


China urges U.S. to stop bandit behavior of looting Syrian resources

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A U.S. military armored vehicle is seen outside an oil well in Syria's Hasakah governorate on Nov. 6, 2019. (Photo by AFP)

Beijing, July 21 (RHC)-- China has urged the United States to immediately stop plundering Syria's national resources after reports said American forces had recently transferred stolen Syrian oil to northern Iraq.

China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said Wednesday that the US exhibited "bandit behavior" after he was asked to comment on Washington transferring "stolen oil" to Iraq from occupied Syrian oilfields. Syria regularly reports U.S. forces smuggling oil and wheat out of the war-torn nation.

Wang said 90 percent of the Syrian population is currently living below the poverty line and two thirds relies on humanitarian assistance. More than half of the population suffers from food insecurity, he added.

"The U.S. military still occupies the main grain- and oil-producing areas in Syria, looting and plundering Syrian national resources, worsening the local humanitarian crisis," Wang said.

Last week, official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) reported that US forces had transported tanker trucks loaded with stolen oil and vehicles carrying military equipment from the al-Jazeera region of Hasakah province to the Iraqi territory.

Local sources in the past have reported U.S. troops moving Daesh elements around across the border between Syria and Iraq. Wang said Syrians have described the presence of the United States as a form of terrorism.

The United States, he said, has always boasted about its so-called highest standards of human rights and the rule of law, but its actions in Syria prove that it actually fails in every aspect.

"The United States should respect Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity, respond to the calls of the Syrian people, immediately lift unilateral sanctions against Syria, immediately stop plundering Syria's national resources, and make up for the harm caused to the Syrian people with concrete actions," Wang said.

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