

*Syria renews call for withdrawal
of U.S. troops, halt to plunder of
oil reserves*

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?U.S. troops are illegally in Syria to loot the country's oil??

Damascus, December 15 (RHC)-- Syria has renewed its call for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the energy-rich northeastern part of the country, saying the occupation troops and their allied Takfiri militants are involved in the systematic looting of oil, wheat crops and other commodities.

Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in a statement on Wednesday said the latest figures show that the estimated value of losses suffered as a result of strikes carried out by US forces and their allied terrorists on Syrian territory stands at 25.9 billion USD.

"The ongoing looting of crude oil, natural gas and mineral resources has incurred a loss worth \$19.8 billion, while 3.3 billion was lost as a result of acts of vandalism against essential facilities," the ministry noted. It added that aerial aggression by the U.S.-led military coalition formed on the pretext of fighting the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group has caused damage valued at \$2.9 billion to the Arab country's oil and gas installations.

The Syrian ministry put the value of indirect losses from the continued presence of American occupation forces in the country at over 86 billion USD, noting that the figure represents lost proceeds as a result of lower production of crude oil, natural gas, oil derivatives and minerals. It further called on the United Nations to initiate measures aimed at putting an end to violations of international law by US-led allied forces and giving Damascus reparations for years of aggression.

The ministry asked the world body to help end the illegal presence of American soldiers in Syria, help the Damascus government exercise sovereignty over oil and gas fields occupied by US military troops, and activate mechanisms aimed at the immediate and unconditional removal of anti-Syria sanctions in order to improve the humanitarian situation in the country and provide appropriate conditions for the voluntary and safe return of refugees to their homeland.

The U.S. military has for years stationed its forces and equipment in northeastern Syria, with the Pentagon claiming that the deployment is aimed at preventing the oilfields in the restive area from falling into the hands of Daesh terrorists.

Damascus, however, maintains the deployment is designed to plunder the country's rich natural resources. Former U.S. President Donald Trump admitted on several occasions that American forces were in the Arab country for its oil wealth.

Syria says Washington's occupation has cost Syria over \$107 billion in oil and gas sector losses. Damascus also complains that the US' thefts of Syrian oil, natural gas and other resources have led to energy shortages and have further deteriorated the economy and people's livelihoods.

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