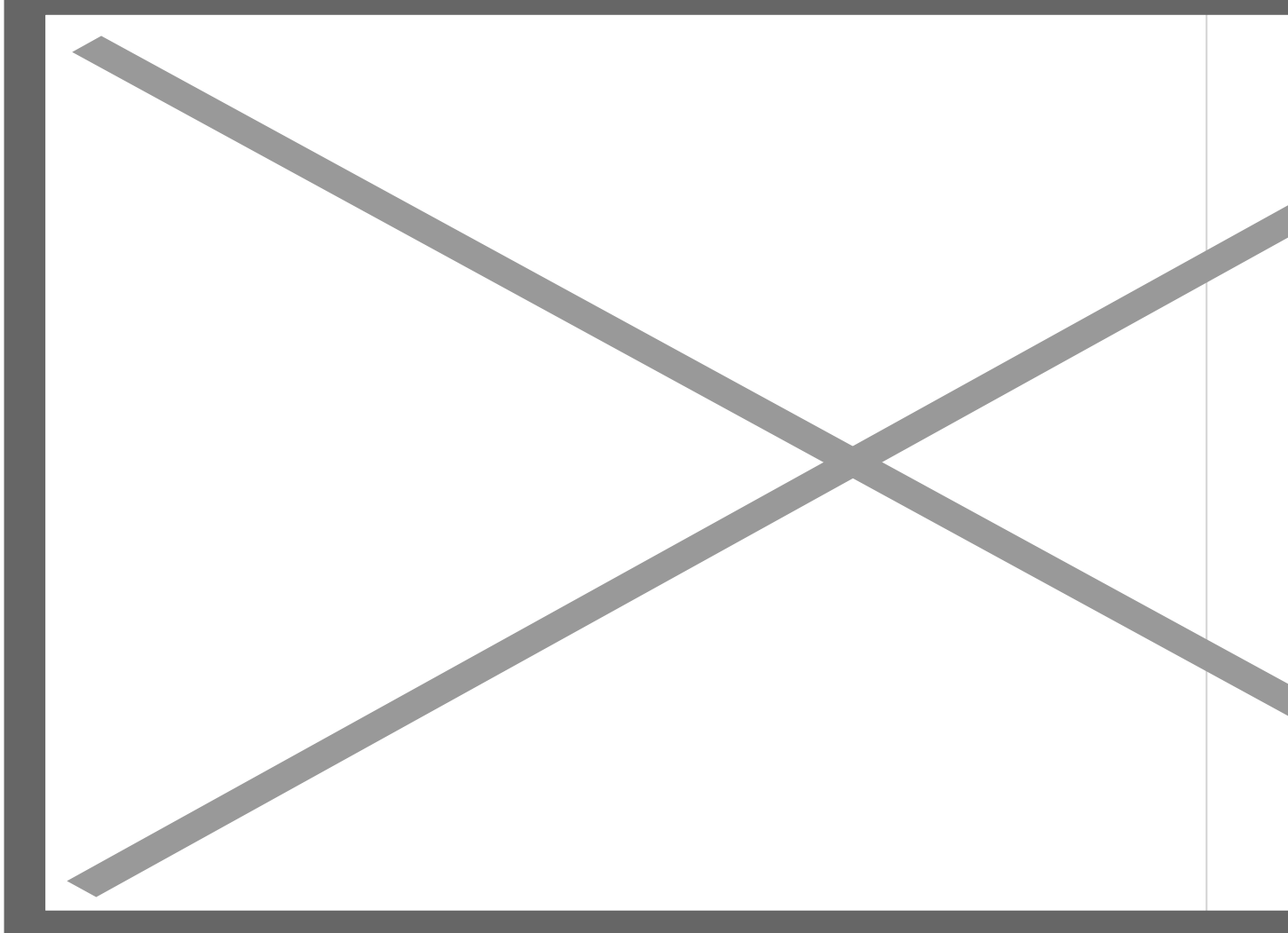


Assassination of Iranian physicist another attempt to disrupt development

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Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht-Ravanchi

United Nations, November 28 (RHC)-- Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht-Ravanchi says there are "serious indications of Israeli responsibility" in the assassination of Iranian physicist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh.

In a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the UN Security Council (UNSC) on Friday evening, Iran's ambassador to the world body said that the Islamic Republic reserves the right to defend itself.

"The cowardly assassination of Martyr Fakhrizadeh -- with serious indications of Israeli responsibility in it -- is another desperate attempt to wreak havoc on our region as well as to disrupt Iran's scientific and technological development," Takht-Ravanchi said in the letter.

The letter came hours after Fakhrizadeh, the head of the Defense Ministry's Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research (SPND), was assassinated by terrorists in his vehicle in a small city east of the capital Tehran in an attack that also involved a car bombing.

"Warning against any adventuristic measures by the United States and Israel against my country, particularly during the remaining period of the current administration of the United States in office, the Islamic Republic of Iran reserves its rights to take all necessary measures to defend its people and secure its interests," the letter further read.

The letter went on to refer to the assassination of several prominent Iranian scientists in terrorist attacks over the past decade, saying that there was strong evidence that some foreign parties were behind those assassinations. "Over the current decade, several top Iranian scientists have been targeted and assassinated in terrorist attacks and our firm evidence clearly indicates that certain foreign quarters have been behind such assassinations," it said.

Takht-Ravanchi also hailed Fakhrizadeh's significant role in combating the COVID-19 disease in Iran. "One of the latest services of Martyr Fakhrizadeh was his outstanding role in the development of the first indigenous COVID-19 test kit, which is a great contribution to our national efforts in curbing the COVID-19 pandemic at a time when Iran is under inhumane sanctions of the United States, strictly preventing our access to humanitarian goods including medicines and medical equipment," he said.

In conclusion, Iran's envoy urged Guterres and the UNSC to strongly condemn the terrorist act and take necessary measures against its perpetrators.

Earlier on Friday, Takht-Ravanchi tweeted that the assassination was aimed at wreaking havoc on the region.

Separately on Friday, Iran's Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raeisi said the "big crime" was carried out by "traitorous elements linked to foreigners and international Zionism with the sinister goal of hindering the country's scientific progress."

Raeisi further praised the scientist's role in speeding up Iran's advancements in various scientific fields, including the nuclear industry, saying Fakhrizadeh's martyrdom will not block the country's path forward.

He called on the country's security and intelligence institutions in addition to relevant judicial bodies to do their utmost to arrest and serve justice to the criminals and mercenaries involved in the crime as soon as possible.



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