

Iran calls for emergency OIC meeting on Israeli aggression in Rafah

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Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian held phone talks with OIC Secretary-General

Hissein Brahim Taha on Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024.

Tehran, February 16 (RHC)-- Iran has called for an emergency meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) amid the dire humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, especially Rafah which faces an imminent Israeli invasion.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian made the plea on Thursday during phone talks with OIC Secretary-General Hissein Brahim Taha, demanding that Muslim countries "take decisive measures against the recent aggression of the Zionist regime".

Israel is preparing a ground invasion of Gaza's southern city Rafah where more than a million Palestinians have fled since the start of the war on Gaza, with a top UN official warning that it could lead to a "slaughter."

Amir-Abdollahian expressed deep regret over the situation and condemned the recent Israeli aggression against Rafah, "which has so far led to the martyrdom of a large number of innocent Palestinian women and children." He said "further activity and mobility of the international community, especially the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, is important and urgently needed in order to stop these attacks".

The minister also touched on the dire humanitarian situation in northern Gaza and the severe shortage of basic necessities of life for the residents. He stressed the need for appropriate and urgent measures to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, especially food, medicine and pharmaceuticals.

The OIC secretary expressed concern over the situation and condemned continued Israeli attacks on Gaza. He also welcomed Iran's proposal to hold an emergency meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers and promised to follow up the issue in consultation with the member countries.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been driven into Rafah, seeking shelter in a sprawling makeshift encampment near the Egyptian border.

Australia, Canada and New Zealand were the latest to warn Israel not to launch a ground onslaught against Rafah, issuing a joint statement saying it would be "devastating" for the 1.5 million Palestinians trapped there. "There is simply nowhere else for civilians to go," they said.

Nevertheless, Israel launched more deadly strikes on southern Gaza on Thursday, after extremist prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted he would push ahead with a "powerful" invasion of the overcrowded city of Rafah.

According to Politico, the U.S. has given Israel the green light to kill civilians in Rafah despite public comments from US officials calling for the regime to come up with a plan to protect civilians in the city.

U.S. officials told the Washington-based online political journalism network that the Biden administration was not planning any consequences for Israel if it went ahead with the Rafah invasion. "No reprimand plans are in the works, meaning Israeli forces could enter the city and harm civilians without facing American consequences," the report read.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby made clear at a press conference on Monday that the US wasn't thinking about cutting off Israel from military aid if it went ahead with the assault.

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