



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

GÜNLÜK ORTADOĐU BÜLTENİ

Domestic Policy in the Middle East Countries

Bölge Ülkelerinde İç Siyaset

The Restructuring Procces of Iraq

Irak'ın Yeniden Yapılanma Süreci

Energy Security

Enerji Güvenliđi

Economy News

Ekonomi Haberleri

Peace Process

Barıő Süreci

Ethnic and Secterian Groups

Etnik ve Mezhepsel Gruplar

Non State Actors

Devlet-dıő Aktörler

Relations with the West

Batı'yla İliőkiler



MIDDLE EAST DAILY BULLETIN

05 OCTOBER 2012

NO: 1469

1. IRAQ.....	2
• Iran Renews Strong Opposition to Military Options against Syria	2
• Russia to sign \$5-billion defense contract with Iraq	3
• Spread of terrorism serves Israel interests: Talabani	5
• Iraq sentences US citizens to life in prison	6
2. IRAN	7
• Iran Urges Syria, Turkey to Show Restraint over Border Clashes.....	7
• Rahimi, Erdogan meet in Ankara	8
• Iran-Turkey trade transactions value to hit \$30bln.....	9
3. SYRIA.....	10
• UN condemns Syrian shelling of Turkey	10
• Turkey authorises future Syria raids	11
• Turkey not interested in war with Syria: Erdogan.....	16
• Foreign Ministry: We Are Looking Forward to Security Council Clear Condemnation of Aleppo Terrorist Bombings	18
4. ISRAEL-PALESTINE	21
• Al-Zahar: Further Cooperation between Hamas, Islamic Jihad to Strengthen Resistance	21
• Thousands join Islamic Jihad rally in Gaza.....	22
• Netanyahu's mind made up on calling early election'	23
5. AFRICA and EGYPT	25
• Libya's national assembly rejects government line-up	25
6. JORDAN and LEBANON.....	25
• Jordan monarch dissolves parliament, calls for new polls	25
• Beirut opposes military intervention in Syria, Lebanese president says.....	28
7. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA.....	28
• Yemen to construct first railway line to link it to Saudi Arabia, Oman	28
• Jailed Bahraini activist: Struggle for democracy must sustain	30
8. AFGHANISTAN - PAKISTAN	32
• Film looks to rekindle Afghan cinema	32
• Two NATO supply trucks torched in southwest Pakistan.....	32
• 8 rockets hit US Bagram air base in Afghanistan.....	33

1. IRAQ

• Iran Renews Strong Opposition to Military Options against Syria

TEHRAN (FNA)- The Iranian Foreign Ministry underlined Tehran's strong opposition to military intervention in Syria, and urged Damascus and Ankara to exercise self-restraint after the recent clashes in their border areas.



Iran's Foreign Ministry expressed regret over the incident, and sympathized with the bereaved families of the victims. It also invited the two sides' officials to show self-restraint and find out the root causes of such events.

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehman-Parast said such clashes merely serve the interests of ill-wishers and enemies of peace, stability and tranquility of the region.

Such events lead to disruption of friendship and brotherhood between

nations and neighbors at the regional and international levels, he said.

Iran will continue its humanitarian efforts to help resolve Syria crisis and believes that the issue will be resolved through dialogue and political means as well as through self-restraint, he said.

Turkish artillery hit targets near Syria's Tel Abyad border town for a second day on Thursday, killing several Syrian soldiers according to activists and security sources.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said several Syrians were killed in the Turkish bombardment of a military post near the Syrian town of Tel Abyad, a few miles across the frontier from Akcakale.

On Wednesday, a mortar hit the border town of Akcakale in Southern Turkey.

It was not clear who fired the mortar into Turkey, but security sources said it had come from near Tel Abyad and that Turkey was increasing the number of troops along its border.

Syria said it was investigating the source of the mortar bomb and urged restraint.

Information Minister Omran Zoabi conveyed his condolences to the Turkish people, saying his country respected the sovereignty of neighboring countries.

Since the beginning of unrests in Syria in March 2011, Turkey has tried hard to intensify the crisis in Syria by training terrorists and sending weapons to the Arab country. Such behavior resulted in further problems for the government of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in its relations with its neighbors.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9107110506>

- **Russia to sign \$5-billion defense contract with Iraq**

Russia may join the ranks of major importers of weapons to Iraq. During the visit of Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki's, a contract for \$5 billion may be signed for the sale of MiG fighter jets, products of Russian Helicopters, anti-aircraft missile systems, armored vehicles and other weapons to the Middle Eastern country.

In Soviet times, Baghdad was one of the main buyers of the products of MIC USSR. After the war in the early 1990s, military and technical cooperation between Russia

and Iraq was at a very low level. After the second US-Iraq war, Russia began supplying weapons to Iraq in larger volumes. Between 2008 and 2011 the new government in Baghdad purchased Russian weapons worth \$246 million dollars. The bulk of the purchase was helicopters. In this same period, the actual deliveries of weapons and military equipment of U.S. production totaled \$6.56 billion dollars, according to the director of the Center for Analysis of World Arms Trade (TSAMTO) Igor Korotchenko.

According to the Iraqi News Agency Shafaq, during the visit of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in Moscow scheduled for October 10, new contracts for the supply of arms and military equipment may be signed.

If the deal goes through, Iraq will be among five largest importers of Russian arms. According to the newspaper, contracts will be signed for the supply of the products of the pro RAC "MiG", "Helicopters of Russia, and "Tula "Instrument Design Bureau" in the amount of \$4.3 billion dollars. It is assumed that Iraq would sell 30 Mi-28N

combat vehicles and 42 anti-aircraft missile and gun complex "Shell-S1." Additionally, there may be new contracts for the supply of MiG-29M/M2, radars, armored vehicles and other weapons.

Until now, the main supplier of arms to Iraq was its main occupant - the USA. Baghdad has purchased from the U.S. military-industrial complex M1 tanks, F-16 fighter jets and other weapons for nearly \$15 billion. The Americans supplying outdated weapons to Iraq at traditionally high prices - 36 old F-16 for over \$5 billion dollars. In addition, Baghdad purchases equipment from the governments of other countries occupying Iraq. Ukraine supplies over \$1.5 billion worth of weapons.

Last year, Russia has retained the second place in the world in terms of arms exports, selling weapons abroad for 11.3 billion dollars. Most likely, this year the country will also remain in second place with a total export at \$13.293 billion, or 19 percent of the world supply. The main volume of shipments accounted for a very small number of countries that have the potential to negatively affect the front-runner position of Russia in the global arms trade.

In the next four years, in terms of the signed contracts, the leaders of Russian weapons import will be India, Venezuela, and Vietnam. "First place in the period from 2012 to 2015 in Russia's arms exports will again be taken by India with \$14.3 billion dollars. In second place instead of Algeria will be Venezuela with \$3.2 billion. Vietnam will be in third place," said Igor Korotchenko to the media based on the improved analytical predictions by TSAMTO. In the fourth place in terms of procurement of military goods from Russia is China with \$2.8 billion followed by Syria with \$1.6 billion.

The share of the top three importers of Russian weapons in the overall balance of supply abroad will be 62.43 percent, the share of the top five - 74.9 percent. The total volume of the Russian arms exports in this period is projected at \$32.5 billion dollars. The emergence among the major buyers of Russian military equipment of Baghdad is unlikely, said the director of the Center for Analysis of World Arms Trade.

"Personally, I have serious doubts that Iraq will buy billions dollars' worth of our

weapons. They will not be allowed to do it. Iraq's foreign policy is tightly controlled by the U.S., and no matter what they say, that Iraq broke away from America and left to float freely - it is not the case. Of course, there are some contradictions between the administrations in Washington and Baghdad. However, Iraq is tightly attached to the American war machine. In previous years, they purchased solely from the U.S. for the amount of over \$6 billion. We sold for under \$300 million dollars. The numbers speak for themselves. So I do not expect very large contracts. Even if Iraq wants to buy a large quantity of Russian weapons, America will be opposed to it," said Igor Korotchenko to "Pravda.Ru."

During the visit of Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki to Russia other issues in addition to the military contracts will be discussed. During the visit, the parties may sign a number of documents on the Russian-Iraqi inter-industry and investment ties. Relevant programs are being refined by the chambers of commerce of Iraq and Russia. Baghdad expects Russia's direct investment in Iraq at over \$10 billion.

Vitaly Salnik

http://english.pravda.ru/russia/economics/05-10-2012/122363-russia_iraq-0/

- **Spread of terrorism serves Israel interests: Talabani**

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani has warned that spread of terrorism in the region would serve the interests of the Israeli regime.



In a meeting with Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi on Thursday, Talabani praised his country's consolidated and deep-rooted relations with the Islamic Republic.

Vahidi, for his part, said the Iraqi president played an effective role in the expansion of defense cooperation between Tehran and Baghdad.

Heading a high-ranking defense delegation, Vahidi arrived in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, on Wednesday on an

official visit at the invitation of his Iraqi counterpart Sadoun al-Dulaimi.

Upon arrival at the Baghdad International Airport, Vahidi told reporters that his visit was aimed at exploring ways to expand defense ties between Iran and Iraq, exchange views on major international and regional developments and pursue the implementation of defense agreements between the two countries.

The Iranian minister held talks with senior Iraqi officials including Sadoun al-Dulaimi, National Security advisor Faleh al-Fayad and Parliament Speaker Osama al-Nujaifi.

This is the first visit by an Iranian defense minister to Iraq since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/10/05/265026/terrorism-serves-israel-iraq-president/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter+

- **Iraq sentences US citizens to life in prison**

An Iraqi court has sentenced a US citizen to life in prison over links to the al-Qaeda network and involvement in funding "terrorist operations."



According to a statement released by the interior ministry on Thursday, the Central Criminal Court in Baghdad's western neighborhood of Karkh handed the ruling to 53-year-old Omar Rashad Khalil, also known as Abu Mohammed, on Wednesday, AFP reported.

The sentence said Khalil was wanted for "his direct membership in the terrorist al-Qaeda organization" and his "active participation" in funding "terrorist operations" inside Iraq.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq is a shadowy group that was reportedly led by Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Zarqawi was reportedly killed in June 2006.

According to US government and military officials, the group was then led by Ayyub al-Masri, who was killed along with Abu Omar al-Baghdadi -- another leader of the group -- in a joint Iraqi-US operation in Salahuddin province in April 2010.

Al-Qaeda in Iraq has been blamed for some of the deadliest terrorist attacks in the country since the US-led invasion in March 2003.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/10/05/265040/iraq-sentences-us-citizen-to-life-in-jail/>

2. IRAN

- **Iran Urges Syria, Turkey to Show Restraint over Border Clashes**

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Arab and African Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian called on the Turkish and Syrian governments to exercise self-restraint and remain calm after recent border skirmishes between the two neighboring countries.



"The Islamic Republic of Iran calls on both sides (Turkey and Syria) to exercise self-restraint, launch a close study over the case and pay heed to the (hidden) goals of

the enemies," Amir Abdollahian told FNA on Thursday.

He reiterated that both sides should pay attention to the presence of extremist and irresponsible armed groups in the region and also the enemies' tactics and plots.

"Protecting the territorial integrities of Syria and Turkey, as well as resorting to self-restraint are the prerequisites to help bring back calm to Syria," Amir Abdollahian added.

He pointed out that regional security depends on border control by Syria's neighboring countries, "which has been stressed in the negotiations held in Cairo and New York".

Turkish artillery hit targets near Syria's Tel Abyad border town for a second day on Thursday, killing several Syrian soldiers according to activists and security sources.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said several Syrian soldiers were killed in the Turkish bombardment of a military post near the Syrian town of Tel Abyad, a few miles across the frontier from Akcakale.

On Wednesday, a mortar hit the border town of Akcakale in Southern Turkey.

It was not clear who fired the mortar into Turkey, but security sources said it had come from near Tel Abyad and that Turkey was increasing the number of troops along its border.

Syria said it was investigating the source of the mortar bomb and urged restraint. Information Minister Omran Zoabi conveyed his condolences to the Turkish people, saying his country respected the sovereignty of neighboring countries.

Since the beginning of unrests in Syria in March 2011, Turkey has tried hard to intensify the crisis in Syria by training terrorists and sending weapons to the Arab country. Such behavior resulted in further problems for the government of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in its relations with its neighbors.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9107110482>

- **Rahimi, Erdogan meet in Ankara**

Ankara, IRNA – Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi who is visiting Turkey at the head of high-ranking delegation met with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday.



The meeting took place at Prime Minister's Palace and the delegations from both sides started their negotiations.

Rahimi is visiting Turkey at invitation of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and he is accompanied by ministers of oil, industry, mine and commerce, roads and transportation and justice.

Rahimi and Erdogan will attend a joint press conference after their talks.

Iranian first vice president will meet with Turkish President Abdullah Gul on Friday in the second day of his visit to Turkey.

<http://old.irna.ir/News/Politic/Rahimi,-Erdogan-meet-in-Ankara/80355591>

- **Iran-Turkey trade transactions value to hit \$30bln**

Ankara, IRNA – Iran’s First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi said that after removal of some obstacles impeding Iran-Turkey trade ties, the value of trade transactions between the two countries will exceed \$30 billion.



Rahimi, who is visiting Turkey at the invitation of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, expressed his satisfaction with the volume of trade transactions between Tehran and Ankara.

“In my meeting with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan I will discuss removal of some obstacles and

bureaucratic barriers obstructing trade and commercial ties between both countries,” he added.

Pointing to the satisfactory ties between Iran and Turkey in different fields, Rahimi said that Iran and Turkey have differences of opinion in some political spheres, but they have consensus in the economic sector and Tehran-Ankara trade ties is improving at an expedited manner.

He went on to say that the prerequisite for expansion of ties in all area is preparing a suitable framework which has been discussed during his meeting with Erdogan.

“We (Iran and Turkey) will try to increase the volume of trade ties up to above \$30 billion,” Rahimi added.

He referred to the visit of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Tehran in March and his talks with Iranian officials in different areas such as political, security, economic, trade and cultural.

“During Erdogan’s visit to Iran the two sides expressed hope that the value of trade transactions between Tehran and

Ankara would reach \$30 billion within a five year period. However, in view of the pace of trade transactions between the two countries, that objective will be materialized sooner than that deadline," Iran's first vice president added.

[http://old.irna.ir/News/Economic/Iran-Turkey-trade-transactions-value-to-hit-\\$30bln/80355627](http://old.irna.ir/News/Economic/Iran-Turkey-trade-transactions-value-to-hit-$30bln/80355627)

3. SYRIA

- **UN condemns Syrian shelling of Turkey**

Security council overcomes divisions to condemn attack which killed five people in border town.



The UN Security Council has unanimously approved a statement condemning "in the strongest terms" Syria's shelling of a Turkish town that killed five people.

Council members managed to bridge differences between the strong statement demanded by the United States and its

Western supporters and backed by their NATO ally Turkey, and a weaker text pushed by Russia, Syria's most important ally, after negotiations that began late on Wednesday and continued through Thursday.

In the press statement, which needed approval from all 15 council members, the UN's most powerful body said the incident "highlighted the grave impact the crisis in Syria has on the security of its neighbors and on regional peace and stability."

It also extended condolences to the families of the victims and to the government and people of Turkey.

The council demanded an immediate end to such violations of international law and called on the Syrian government "to fully respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours." Russia's agreement that the Syrian shelling violated international law was a key concession by Moscow.

'Terrorists and insurgents'

The original Western-backed draft, proposed by Azerbaijan, condemned the

shelling "in the strongest terms" and called it a violation of international law. Proposed Russian amendments never mentioned any breaches of international law, so the inclusion in the final text was a concession by Moscow.

Earlier on Thursday, Syria's UN envoy said his government was not seeking any escalation of violence with Turkey and wanted to maintain good neighbourly relations.

Ambassador Bashar Ja'afari said the government did not apologise for the shelling from Syria because it was waiting for the outcome of an investigation on the source of the firing.

He read reporters a letter he delivered to the Security Council that sent Syria's "deepest condolences" to the families of the victims "and to the friendly and brotherly people of Turkey."

It urged Turkey and its other neighbours to "act wisely, rationally and responsibly" and to prevent cross-border infiltration of "terrorists and insurgents" and the smuggling of arms.

During Thursday's negotiations on the text when the outcome was still in doubt, US Ambassador Susan Rice told reporters "we think it's very important that the council speak clearly and swiftly to condemn this shelling."

"This sort of cross-border military activity is very destabilising and must be stopped," she said.

The border violence has added a dangerous new dimension to Syria's civil war, dragging Syria's neighbours deeper into a conflict that activists say has already killed 30,000 people since an uprising against President Bashar Assad's regime began in March 2011.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/10/201210544635377414.html>

- **Turkey authorises future Syria raids**

Parliament votes to approve cross-border military action after deaths of five civilians in shelling.

Turkey's parliament has authorised cross-border military action against Syria, if deemed necessary by the government.

The mandate, valid for one year, was passed by 320 votes in the 550-seat Turkish parliament, the Anatolia news agency reported on Thursday.

Besir Atalay, Turkey's deputy prime minister, said authorising the use of force in Syria was not a declaration of war but was intended as a deterrent.

The vote came as Turkey resumed shelling Syrian government military positions on Thursday morning in retaliation for a mortar attack which landed over its border in southeastern Turkey killing five of its citizens - a woman and four children from the same family.

"The Syrian side has admitted what it did and apologised," Atalay said.

Turkish state media said that the attacks by artillery units based in the border town of Akcakale were continuing.

The diplomatic developments came as violence continued in Syria itself. Opposition activists reported several large explosions in a Damascus suburb.

A London-based rights monitor reported 63 deaths across the country on Thursday.

Syrian troops injured

Two Syrian troops were injured as a result of overnight Turkish shelling at a base near the Syrian border town of Tal al-Abyad, Bashar al-Jaafari, Syrian ambassador to the UN, said.

Speaking at the UN on Thursday, Jaafari said though their men had been injured in the retaliatory attacks, the forces of Bashar al-Assad, Syrian president, "practised self-restraint" and did not respond.

Jaafari said Syria was "seriously investigating" the source of the artillery fire, but said that in such instances, "states and governments should act wisely, rationally and responsibly".

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey's prime minister, addressing the shelling in Akcakale for the first time, said though this is not the first instance of Turkey's territorial integrity being challenged by Syrian artillery, Turkey has shown "restraint and patience".

However, Erdogan, speaking in the Turkish capital, said: "Turkey has no intention of starting a war" in the region.

"All we want in this region is peace and security. We have no intention of starting war. We are aware of the outcome, consequences, of war in Iraq and Afghanistan ... we see the same in Syria".

The parliament had already been due to vote on Thursday on extending a five-year-old authorisation for foreign military operations, an agreement originally intended to allow strikes on Kurdish bases in northern Iraq.

But the memorandum signed by Erdogan and sent to parliament overnight said that despite repeated warnings and diplomatic initiatives, the Syrian military had launched aggressive action against Turkish territory, presenting "additional risks".

"This situation has reached a level of creating a serious threat and risks to our national security. At this point the need has emerged to take the necessary measures to act promptly and swiftly

against additional risks and threats," it said.

'The last straw'

Al Jazeera's Anita McNaught, reporting from Akcakale, said the addition of the Syrian resolution was a "knee-jerk response" to Wednesday's shelling.

In the most serious cross-border escalation of the 18-month uprising in Syria, Turkey hit back after what it called "the last straw" when a mortar hit a residential neighbourhood of the southern border town of Akcakale on Wednesday.

Al Jazeera's Jacky Rowland reports on the NATO reaction

Security sources said the mortar had come from near Tal al-Abyad and that Turkey was increasing the number of troops along its border.

"Our armed forces in the border region responded immediately to this abominable attack in line with their rules of engagement; targets were struck through artillery fire against places in Syria

identified by radar," Erdogan's office said in a statement late on Wednesday.

"Turkey will never leave unanswered such kinds of provocation by the Syrian regime against our national security."

Syria said it was investigating the source of the mortar bomb and urged restraint. Omran Zoabi, information minister, conveyed his condolences to the Turkish people, saying his country respected the sovereignty of neighbouring countries.

Following the attack, Bulent Arinc, the deputy prime minister, said Turkey was "not blinded by rage".

"There is definitely a response to it [the attack] in international law ... We are not blinded by rage, but we will protect our rights to the end in the face of such an attack on our soil that killed our people."

'Certain responsibilities'

Al Jazeera's Andrew Simmons , reporting from Antakya on the Turkish-Syrian border, said Arinc's mention of "certain responsibilities" contained within NATO treaty articles, could mean that Turkey

responded without consulting international bodies first.

NATO said it stood by member-nation Turkey and urged Syria to put an end to "flagrant violations of international law".

Al Jazeera's McNaught said that one has to ask the question of whether Syria "would want to draw Turkey into the conflict, and would Turkey want this to be the start of a larger and widening escalation of the battle regionally".

The US-led Western military alliance held an urgent late night meeting in Brussels to discuss the matter.

That meeting was only the second time in NATO's 63-year history that members had convened under Article 4 of its charter which provides for consultations when a member state feels its territorial integrity, political independence or security is under threat.

Turkey also asked the UN Security Council to take the "necessary action" to stop Syrian "aggression".

In a letter to the president of the 15-nation Security Council, Ertugrul Apakan, Turkey's UN ambassador, called the firing of the mortar bomb "a breach of international peace and security".

Security Council members managed to bridge differences between the strong statement demanded by the United States and its Western supporters and backed by their NATO ally Turkey, and a weaker text pushed by Russia, Syria's most important ally, after negotiations that began late Wednesday and continued through Thursday.

In the press statement, which needed approval from all 15 council members, the UN's most powerful body said the incident "highlighted the grave impact the crisis in Syria has on the security of its neighbours and on regional peace and stability".

It also extended condolences to the families of the victims and to the government and people of Turkey.

The council demanded an immediate end to such violations of international law and called on the Syrian government "to fully

respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours".

Russia's agreement that the Syrian shelling violated international law was a key concession by Moscow.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/10/2012103181110169706.html>

Killing of captured Iranians to begin in 48 hours, Syrian brigade warns

A brigade of the Free Syrian Army has given the Syrian regime 48 hours to release opposition detainees and stop the shelling of civilians before it begins executing a number of Iranian hostages accused of helping the President Bashar al-Assad's forces, Al Arabiya TV reported on Friday.

In a video aired by Al Arabiya, members of the Bar'a brigade in the East Ghouta, on the outskirts of Damascus, said, "If the Syrian regime, backed by the Iranian regime, does not release detainees and stop the shelling on unarmed civilians and indiscriminate killing of innocent of people within 48 hours from the release of this statement, an Iranian prisoner will be killed for each martyr who is killed."

In a previous video aired by Al Arabiya, and which can be viewed at: <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/08/05/230496.html>, the Al Bara'a brigade claimed that it kidnaped 48 members of the elite Iranian Revolutionary Guards and denied Iran's claims that they were pilgrims.

The brigade "captured 48 of the Shabiha (militiamen) of Iran who were on a reconnaissance mission in Damascus," said a man dressed as an officer of the Free Syrian Army, in the video aired by Al Arabiya.

"During the investigation, we found that some of them were officers of the Revolutionary Guards," he said, showing ID documents taken from one of the men, who appeared in the background with a large Syrian independence flag held by two armed men behind them.

Abdel Nasser Shmeir, interviewed later by Al Arabiya and presented as the commander of Baraa Brigade, gave similar details.

"They are 48, in addition to an Afghani interpreter," he said, claiming that the

captives were members of a 150-strong group sent by Iran for "reconnaissance on the ground."

Iran has appealed to Turkey and Qatar, both with close relations with the Syrian opposition, for help in securing the release of the hostages it claims were pilgrims visiting the Sayyida Zeinab shrine, a Shiite pilgrimage site in the southeastern suburbs of Damascus.

Shmeir said his men "have not yet entered into any contacts" about the hostages.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/05/241955.html?PHPSESSID=lqpicnknj3559080k00okn8qv5>

- **Turkey not interested in war with Syria: Erdogan**

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said on Thursday that Turkey would never want to start a war and parliament had authorized foreign deployment of troops as a deterrent after a deadly Syrian shelling of southeast Turkey.



“We could never be interested in something like starting a war,” Erdogan told reporters at a news conference.

“The Turkish Republic is a state capable of defending its citizens and borders. Nobody should try and test our determination on this subject,” he added, according to Reuters.

Meanwhile, Syria’s ambassador to the United Nations said Thursday Damascus “is not seeking any escalation with any of its neighbors, including Turkey,” after a deadly cross-border shelling incident.

“The Syrian government has a key interest in maintaining good neighborly relations with Turkey,” Ambassador Bashar Jaafari told reporters.

“In case of border incidents between any two neighboring countries, governments should act wisely, rationally and reasonably,” he added.

He called on the Turkish government to cooperate with Syria on controls to “prevent armed groups from infiltrating through this border” to stage attacks in Syria.

The ambassador said a Turkish counter-strike Thursday morning against Syrian positions on the other side of the border wounded two Syrian military officials.

He confirmed that Damascus had presented its “deepest condolences” to Ankara for the shelling Wednesday that killed five Turkish civilians, but he added “it was not an apology.” He said that authorities were “seriously investigating the source” of these strikes.

But asked for an explanation for the Syrian shelling, he said an investigation into the incident had not been completed.

The ambassador announced that he had submitted to the Security Council president for October, Guatemala U.N. ambassador Gert Rosenthal, a letter explaining Syria’s position, as well as another asking the council to condemn the attacks on Aleppo.

The U.S. State Department, Meanwhile, said it considered Turkey’s response to Syrian mortar fire this week to be appropriate, proportionate and designed to deter any future violations of its sovereignty by Syria.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Victoria Nuland appeared to be trying to help cool tensions.

“Our understanding is that the Turks have responded. The Turkish Parliament has also given the government the capacity to respond again if there are future such violations of Turkish sovereignty,” Nuland told reporters at her daily briefing.

“From our perspective, the response that Turkey made was appropriate, it also was designed to strengthen the deterrent effect so that these kinds of things don’t happen again, and it was proportional,” she said.

U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon urged Turkey and Syria to exercise “maximum restraint”, his spokesman said.

“The secretary general calls on all concerned to abandon the use of violence, exercise maximum restraint and exert all efforts to move toward a political solution,” spokesman Martin Nesirky said.

Ban reiterated his concern that violence from Syria’s long-running internal conflict could spill over into neighboring countries, Nesirky said.

Nesirky said the special U.N.-Arab League envoy on Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, had been in contact with Turkish and Syrian officials to encourage an easing of tensions.

The incident marked the first time Turkish civilians have been killed by Syrian fire since the uprising against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad’s regime began in March 2011.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/04/241864.html?PHPSESSID=lqpicnknj3559080k00okn8qv5>

- **Foreign Ministry: We Are Looking Forward to Security Council Clear Condemnation of Aleppo Terrorist Bombings**

DAMASCUS, (SANA) - Foreign and Expatriates Ministry addressed two

identical letters to the Security Council president and the Secretary-General of the United Nations about the terrorist bombings that rocked Aleppo city on Wednesday.

The Ministry said in the letters that on Wednesday, October 3rd, the city of Aleppo witnessed a series of fatal suicide terrorist bombings as citizens were heading to their work and students to their schools and universities , and the terrorist Qaeda- affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra group claimed responsibility for the terrorist act.

The Ministry added that the first bombing hit at 07:50 a.m. at Saadalla al-Jabiri Square, where two suicide bombers blew up two booby-trapped vans loaded with big amounts of explosives exceeding 1,000 kg.

The Ministry said that the second bombing hit around 08:17 a.m. in front of the Governorate HQ, where a suicide bomber detonated a booby trapped Cham car loaded with more than 500 kg of explosives and at the same time two mortar shells fell near the Municipal Palace building.

The Ministry said that the third bombing occurred at 10: 35 a.m., when the engineering unit were attempting to dismantle an 1000-kg explosive device put in a Cham car when the terrorists detonated it remotely near al-Amir Hotel, Aleppo Chamber of Commerce and the Central Bank.

The Ministry pointed out that the initial toll of the terrorist acts reached 34 martyrs and 221 injured people, in addition to the bodies of three terrorists among the dead, adding that the terrorist bombings caused great damage to public and private properties, official buildings, hotels and residential buildings in the targeted areas and the surroundings , in addition to the destruction of 250 public and private cars.

The Ministry underlined that this coward terrorist act perpetrated by al-Qaeda-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra group, which is becoming remarkably active in the Syria, is an episode of a series of terrorist attacks that the Syrian provinces have witnessed at the hands of the terrorist and criminal gangs and mercenaries who are fleeing into Syria and being aided with money,

weapons, training and shelter by counties in the region and abroad which provide them and their crimes with a political and media cover that guarantees them impunity.

The ministry said that such barbaric terrorist acts against both military and civilians set a clear example of acts of terrorism which the international community agreed on condemning, and its member states agreed on taking certain measures against the executors and those who support them.

The letters added that as Syria expects the international community represented by the Security Council to take a clear stance condemning these terrorist acts and holding their executors and those behind them accountable, a number of the permanent member countries at the council hindered adopting any firm stance in previous cases.

"It is paradoxical that the countries which are known as supporters of terrorists in Syria, especially Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, through harboring and training them or providing financial, military and logistic support to their gangs take pride in

doing so in flagrant violation of their legal obligations in regard to the international conventions of which these countries are part, or the resolutions adopted by the Security Council under the 7th Chapter on combating international terrorism," the ministry said.

"Worse still is the fact that some permanent member countries which waged wars in the world under the pretext of combating terrorism are providing political and logistic cover for terrorism in Syria and the countries which support it publically, materially or through preventing the Security Council from condemning the terrorist acts in Syria and holding those behind them accountable and bringing them to justice," it added.

The Ministry concluded that the Syrian Arab Republic, looking forward to a Security Council clear condemnation of the terrorist acts which hit Aleppo city on Wednesday and condemn those who support it, considering this a test of the credibility of the international community and its determination to combat international terrorism regardless of its justifications, time, place or whoever supports it.

It added that continuing the policy of double standards which characterized the behavior of the US, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and their allies in addressing issues relevant to region and reach to the extent of political hypocrisy in dealing with acts of international terrorism in the world will be another evidence that some regional and international sides have gone so far as part of the organized terrorism which targets Syria and people in present and in the future.

<http://sana.sy/eng/21/2012/10/04/445248.htm>

4. ISRAEL-PALESTINE

- **Al-Zahar: Further Cooperation between Hamas, Islamic Jihad to Strengthen Resistance**

TEHRAN (FNA)- Mahmoud al-Zahar, a senior official of the Palestinian Hamas Movement, stressed that bolstered cooperation between Hamas and Islamic Jihad Movements is a necessity for strengthening the resistance front.



"Cooperation between the Islamic Jihad and Hamas is an Islamic necessity for strengthening the resistance," al-Zahar said.

He also felicitated the Islamic Jihad Movement on the anniversary of its establishment, and said due to the fact that the Movement's political thoughts are developing and moving ahead, it will enjoy high influence in future.

Al-Zahar had also earlier this year said that merging Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the main Palestinian Islamic resistance movements, is a political and religious must.

"Religion, politics and political developments in our surrounding necessitate closeness of Islamic movements," Al Zahar stated in January.

He said that integration of the two Palestinian movements in a single

organizational structure can resolve many problems, including those related to elections since both groups can now take part in the elections in a single framework.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9107110476>

- **Thousands join Islamic Jihad rally in Gaza**

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Tens of thousands of Islamic Jihad supporters gathered in al-Kateba square in Gaza City on Thursday to celebrate the 31st anniversary of the movement's founding.



The event also marked the 17th anniversary of the assassination of Islamic Jihad's founder Fathi al-Shiqaqi.

Islamic Jihad secretary-general Ramadan Shallah addressed the crowds and called for a new national strategy.

"The Palestinian project of establishing a state on the 1967 borders through

negotiations has obviously failed," Shallah said.

Nineteen years of failed negotiations have created a crisis which cannot be resolved by insisting on more negotiations, or through non-violent resistance, he added.

Shallah said Islamic Jihad supported all methods of resistance, and would not rule out armed struggle from the Palestinian agenda.

He said regional revolutions were "a double-edged sword": they gave hope to Palestinians, but Arab countries were too embroiled in domestic concerns to help the Palestinian cause.

"We are not calling on anyone to get into a war with Israel but at least we can make a political war to protect Jerusalem and the Al-Aqsa Mosque."

Shallah said the Gaza Strip was no better off under Egypt's post-revolutionary government than it had been when Hosni Mubarak held the Egyptian presidency.

Regarding Syria, he urged a political rather than a military solution, and said the country's unity must be guaranteed.

<http://www.maannews.net/eng/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=526207>

- **Netanyahu's mind made up on calling early election'**

By LAHAV HARKOV, GIL HOFFMAN

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has already made a final decision to seek a February 12 election rather than try to pass the 2013 state budget, politicians who spoke to Netanyahu said on Thursday.



Netanyahu has said that he will make a final decision when the Knesset returns from its extended summer recess on October 15. But the politicians who spoke to him said he left no doubt that his mind was already made up.

Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin told Netanyahu and coalition chairman Ze'ev

Elkin to initiate elections immediately in the first few hours of the Knesset's winter session. He warned that if the Knesset was not immediately dissolved, parties would try to pass expensive populist legislation and the economy could be harmed. Rivlin said initiating immediate elections was also important in order to pass the budget as soon as possible following the vote.

"There is no doubt that a political ruling has been made, and all of the parties are ready for an election," Rivlin said during a Succot celebration in Migron in Samaria.

Rivlin pointed out that there is an international economic crisis that threatens to reach Israel, saying that, without a budget for 2013, there could be serious socioeconomic ramifications and harm to the weaker sectors of the population.

If the Knesset is dissolved on October 15, the earliest possible time to hold an election would be January 15, 2013.

However, echoing statements by Netanyahu's office, Rivlin said he thought that the vote would be held in the second or third week of February.

Netanyahu was scheduled to meet late on Thursday with Habayit Hayehudi chairman and Science and Technology Minister Daniel Herschkowitz, and on Friday with Yisrael Beytenu leader, Foreign Minister Avigdor Liberman.

In radio interviews on Thursday, Liberman endorsed initiating early elections.

“I prefer elections to election economics,” he said. “We are ready for elections at any moment. We support self-restraint, but we can’t have only one party with responsibility. We can no longer waste time. It’s time for decisions.”

Liberman called for an end to the “public bickering” between Netanyahu and Defense Minister Ehud Barak, which he said did no good for the government. Netanyahu and Barak have not spoken since Netanyahu made statements condemning the defense minister for meeting American officials behind his back. No meeting was set for Friday either.

Israel Radio reported that Barak, who also heads the Independence Party, met with

former Kadima chairwoman Tzipi Livni in New York two weeks ago, angering Netanyahu. According to the report, the Likud Party sees the meeting as an attempt by Barak to coordinate politically with Livni, and to potentially cooperate with her in the future. But Barak’s office said Livni initiated the meeting and that it was insignificant.

Amid reports that Livni intends to form a new party later this month, she has remained mum.

She wrote on Facebook Thursday for the first time since the election atmosphere began on Tuesday.

But rather than address the potential race in Israel, she focused her remarks on Wednesday night’s presidential debate in the US. She complained that while the presidential candidates were debating, their wives were competing with a cookie bake-off.

<http://www.jpost.com/DiplomacyAndPolitics/Article.aspx?id=286702>

5. AFRICA and EGYPT

- **Libya's national assembly rejects government line-up**

Libya's national assembly rejected on Thursday the government line-up put forward by new Prime Minister Mustafa Abu Shagur after protesters stormed its headquarters, a representative told AFP.



Speaking on Libyan television, Abu Shagur said he intended to change some of the nominations and told the congress he wanted to announce the new list at the weekend.

"I will deliver a new list on Sunday," he said, according to Reuters.

"We voted to reject the government proposed by Abu Shagur and to grant him until Sunday to present a new line-up," said Abdelali al-Dersi, who represents the eastern town of al-Bayda in the assembly.

"The government didn't represent all the sectors or regions of Libyan society. It was

thrown together arbitrarily and on the basis of friendships," he added.

General National Congress representatives began discussing the lineup late Thursday after more than 100 demonstrators had barged into their headquarters complaining that the western town of Zawiyah was not represented on the list.

Critics also charged it lacked competent and well-known personalities.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/04/241880.html?PHPSESSID=lqpicnknj3559080k00okn8qv5>

6. JORDAN and LEBANON

- **Jordan monarch dissolves parliament, calls for new polls**

Jordan's King Abdullah II dissolved parliament and called early elections on Thursday, the royal palace announced on the eve of a major opposition rally to demand reforms.



“The king has decided to dissolve the chamber of deputies from this Thursday and to call early elections,” a statement said. It gave no date, but the monarch has said he wants polls to be held by the end of 2012.

The opposition Muslim Brotherhood said earlier that it was going ahead with its planned rally in central Amman on Friday by an estimated 50,000 supporters.

Numerous demonstrations have taken place in Jordan since January 2011 to call for political and economic reforms and demand an end to corruption. In response, King Abdullah said early elections would be held.

But the Brotherhood says it would boycott the polls as they did in 2010 to protest against the lack of solid reforms, while calling for a parliamentary system where the prime minister is elected, rather than named by the king.

A demonstration in support of the king was called off over fears of unrest as it would have coincided with the Islamist rally, organizers said.

“We have postponed indefinitely our demonstration scheduled at the same time as the Muslim Brotherhood's to avoid any problems,” said Jihad al-Sheik, head of an Internet-based youth group that organized the event.

The cancellation came “after a request to that effect from the director of general security, Hussein al-Majali, MPs and tribal leaders” to prevent unrest.

Around 200,000 people had been expected to turn up at the demonstration in Amman to show their support for the king’s efforts to bring in reforms.

Numerous demonstrations have taken place in Jordan since January 2011 to call for political and economic reforms and demand an end to corruption. In response, King Abdullah said early elections would be held.

But the Brotherhood says it would boycott the polls as it did in 2010 to protest against the lack of solid reforms, while calling for a parliamentary system where the prime minister is elected, rather than named by the king.

In an exclusive interview with AFP last month, the king said a decision by the Islamists to boycott the vote was “a tremendous miscalculation.”

“As constitutional monarch, my mandate is to be the umbrella for all political groupings and all segments of our society, and as part of that responsibility, I am telling the Muslim Brotherhood that they are making a tremendous miscalculation,” he said.

“The countdown to the elections has already started. Registration is under way. We have already crossed the one-million person mark. Parliament will be dissolved. The elections date will be announced. And we will have a new parliament by the new year.”

The Islamists and other opposition parties have said they were considering a boycott over a new electoral law under which voters cast two ballots: one for individual candidates in their governorates and one for parties or coalitions nationwide.

King Abdullah has ordered parliament to increase seats reserved for party

candidates, urging the Islamists to take part in the polls.

MPs raised the number from 17 to 27, but failed to satisfy opposition groups.

“This elections law is not perfect. We all understand that. But there is no better consensus on an alternative. What is critical is that we keep going forward, and -- mark my words -- we will have a new parliament by the new year,” the king said.

“So I am telling the Muslim Brotherhood, you have a choice. To stay in the street or to help build the new democratic Jordan.”

According to the constitution, elections take place every four years, but Jordan held early polls in 2010 after the king dissolved parliament.

The Islamists boycotted those elections in protest at constituency boundaries, saying they over-represented loyalist rural areas at the expense of urban areas seen as Islamist strongholds.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/04/241850.html?PHPSESSID=lqpicnknj3559080k00kn8qv5>

- **Beirut opposes military intervention in Syria, Lebanese president says**

Lebanese President Michel Suleiman has expressed strong opposition to military intervention in Syria and called for a swift political solution to the Syrian crisis.

Speaking after a meeting with his Argentine counterpart Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner in Buenos Aires on Thursday, Suleiman said it was important to allow Arab nations to achieve their goals, including reform, freedom and democracy, without violence or foreign military intrusion, Lebanon's Daily Star newspaper reported.

The Lebanese president added that it was also necessary to quickly resolve the Syrian conflict on the basis of dialogue and within the framework of the international community's efforts and the mission of UN-Arab League Special Representative for Syria Lakhdar Brahimi.

Syria has been experiencing unrest since March 2011 and many people, including large numbers of security forces, have been killed in the turmoil.

Damascus says outlaws, saboteurs, and armed terrorists are the driving factor behind the unrest and deadly violence, but the opposition accuses the security forces of being behind the killings.

The Syrian government says that the chaos is being orchestrated from outside the country, and there are reports that a very large number of insurgents in the country are foreign nationals.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/10/05/265065/lebanon-opposes-intervention-in-syria/>

7. ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF OF BASRA

- **Yemen to construct first railway line to link it to Saudi Arabia, Oman**

The Yemeni government unraveled plans to construct the country's first railway line, expected to cost over a \$1 billion amid security concerns.



The project, seen as a major leap for the Yemeni transportation sector, will cost \$1.29 billion, according to Saleh Abdullah al-Wali, head of the General Association for Land Transportation.

“The new railway will link Yemen to both Saudi Arabia and Oman. It will start from the Hajjah governorate in the northwest through the coastal strip,” he said in a press statement.

Wali explained that the 2,155 kilometer-long line was made possible through a number of studies.

“One study was conducted by a British company and another by the United Nations. There was also a study submitted by the Gulf Cooperation Council and which made sure the project will be implemented according to Gulf standards.”

In addition to offering more than 25,000 job opportunities, Wali pointed out, the project, expected to take more than six years, is of strategic importance since it will provide ten folds the capacity of means of transportation currently used

and will offer a safer and faster alternative.

The Yemeni government has been engaged in a series of talks with railway companies in the UK, Germany, Russia, India, and the United States about the implementation of the project.

The Russian ambassador in Sana’a has stated earlier that the national Russian railway company (RZhD) is ready to implement the project and will take part in the international bid.

In December 2006, the Yemeni Ministry of Transportation and the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCOWA) signed an agreement to prepare a feasibility study for the construction of a railway line in Yemen.

The study, which was completed in 2009, suggested implementing the project on three phases: the first is comprised of the 578-long Maaden line and the 729-kilometer long Aden-Harad line, the second the 386-long Aden-Belahf line, and the third the 766-long Belahf-Shahan line.

While the several economic and strategic advantages of the project were repeatedly enumerated by Yemeni officials, observes were able to see the other side. For them, this project will be subjected to a lot of dangers as long as militant groups and armed tribes are out of the government's control.

"We all know that the state cannot control a lot of areas in Yemen, especially remote ones," sociologist Mujib Abdul Wahab told Al Arabiya.

Abdul Wahab cited several examples of vandalism perpetrated by armed groups especially since the protests erupted in 2011.

"They destroyed oil and gas pipelines and cut electric cables whether because of political rivalry or to put pressure on the government to respond their demands, usually related to releasing detained members of one tribe or another."

The last of these incidents, Abdul Wahab explained, was when members of the al-Shabwan tribe cut electricity from the station located in the governorate of

Maarib and which provides for several neighboring governorates.

"In the light of such a deplorable security situation and the influence exercised by armed groups, you can't propose the construction of a railway line knowing that it will always be subjected to several attacks on regular basis."

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/10/04/241857.html?PHPSESSID=lqpicnnkj3559080k00okn8qv5>

- **Jailed Bahraini activist: Struggle for democracy must sustain**

Bahrain Center for Human Rights President, Nabeel Rajab made the remarks during the funeral procession held for his mother in Manama on Thursday, Reuters reported.



"I want and wish for all of you to go to the capital Manama, and everywhere else to fight for democracy, respect, and other rights. We will prove to them (the government) that even if they imprison us,

kill us or our families, we will return and we will win this battle against their cruel policies, God willing," he said.

"Our struggle as Bahrainis will continue for democracy, social justice, and equality," he added.

Rajab, who has been serving a three-year sentence since August for participation in "unauthorized" anti-regime demonstrations, was briefly released to attend the funeral.

On September 27, a Bahraini appeals court once again refused to release him on bail and set October 16 for a third appeals hearing.

In July, he was also sentenced to three months in prison for allegedly "insulting" the people of Muharraq Island on Twitter in June.

Human rights groups, including Amnesty International, have called for Rajab's immediate release, arguing that the activist has been jailed only for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

Popular revolution started in Bahrain in mid-February 2011 when demonstrators, inspired by the popular revolutions of Tunisia and Egypt, started holding massive anti-regime rallies.

The Bahraini government promptly launched a brutal crackdown on the peaceful protests and called in Saudi-led Arab forces from neighboring Persian Gulf states.

Dozens of people have been killed in the crackdown and the security forces have arrested hundreds, including doctors and nurses accused of treating injured revolutionaries.

A report, published by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry in November 2011, found that the Al Khalifa regime had used excessive force in the campaign of suppression and accused Manama of torturing political activists, politicians, and protesters.

The protesters say they will continue holding anti-regime demonstrations until their demand for the establishment of a democratically-elected government is met.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/10/04/264996/bahrain-activist-urges-more-protest/>

8. AFGHANISTAN - PAKISTAN

• Film looks to rekindle Afghan cinema

Buzkashi Boys, screened to critical acclaim abroad, aims to inspire new generation of filmmakers.

A new short film shot and produced in Afghanistan hopes to revive the nation's cinema after it was stunted by a Taliban-era ban and a three-decade-long conflict.

Buzkashi Boys, a story of two Afghan boys coming-of-age in the Central Asian nation, was shot entirely on location in the Afghan capital.

The film has already been screened to critical acclaim in Italy, China, Canada and the US.

Featuring icons of Afghan culture like the national sport of buzkashi and prominent visual placement of the now destroyed Darul Aman palace, the film, being screened in Kabul for the first time, hopes to inspire a new generation of young

Afghan filmmakers who will once again make original features in the nation.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/asia/2012/10/2012104191950375439.html>

• Two NATO supply trucks torched in southwest Pakistan

Two trucks carrying supplies for the US-led NATO forces in Afghanistan have been set on fire in Pakistan's southwestern province of Balochistan, Press TV reports.



The containers were forcefully stopped on Friday at Mastung district near Quetta and set ablaze, an official from Baluchistan government said.

The two vehicles were carrying NATO supplies from the Pakistani port city of Karachi to neighboring Afghanistan, the official added.

There have been no immediate reports of casualties.

No group has claimed responsibility for the assault, but Pakistani police have blamed it on Pakistan's pro-Taliban militants, who have previously conducted similar assaults on the NATO trucks heading to Afghanistan.

On September 7, two oil tankers bound for US-led NATO soldiers in Afghanistan were also torched in Dasht area in the Mastung district.

Pakistan was the main supply route for US-led forces occupying Afghanistan from October 2001 to November 2011, when Islamabad shut down the key supply routes after Washington launched airstrikes on two Pakistani military checkpoints, killing 24 Pakistani soldiers.

However, the routes were reopened on July 3 after US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton apologized to Pakistan in a statement over the killing of the soldiers.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/10/05/265061/nato-supply-trucks-torched-in-pakistan/>

- **8 rockets hit US Bagram air base in Afghanistan**

Eight rockets have been fired into the US-run Bagram air base near the Afghan capital of Kabul, Press TV reports.



The rockets targeted the major US base in the Parwan province on Friday, local officials said.

No casualties have been reported.

Meanwhile, spokesman for Taliban militants Zabihullah Mujahid said the group claims responsibility for the attack.

On September 10, a similar rocket attack hit the US base, killing four Afghan intelligence personnel and injuring two US-led foreign soldiers.

Violence in Afghanistan has been on the rise in recent months despite the presence of thousands of US-led foreign forces in the war-weary country.

The United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in 2001 as part of Washington's so-called war on terror.

The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but years into the invasion, insecurity remains across the country.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2012/10/05/265060/8-rockets-hit-us-air-base-in-afghanistan/>

This media summary is prepared by **ORSAM Middle East Research Assistant Sercan DOĞAN. It covers news and commentaries as reported by the national media sources publishing in the Middle Eastern countries. The views expressed are not those of ORSAM and their inclusion does not imply factual accuracy.*

Bu bülten **ORSAM Ortadoğu Uzman Yardımcısı Sercan DOĞAN tarafından hazırlanmaktadır. Bülten Ortadoğu ülkelerinin yerel haber kaynaklarından derlenmektedir. Belirtilen görüşler bölge ülkelerinin haber kaynaklarına ve ismi geçen yazarlara ait olup ORSAM'ın görüşünü yansıtmamaktadır.*