

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نښاد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

By Bill Van Auken
14.10.2019

US sends 3,000 more troops to defend Saudi monarchy

The Pentagon confirmed Friday that 3,000 more US troops are being deployed to Saudi Arabia to defend the blood-soaked monarchy led by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and prepare for war against Iran.

The deployment includes two fighter squadrons, one Air Expeditionary Wing (AEW), two more Patriot missile batteries, and one Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD).

According to a Pentagon statement Friday, the US secretary of defense phoned Crown Prince bin Salman (who also holds the post of Saudi minister of defense) to inform him of the coming reinforcements, which he said were meant “to assure and enhance the defense of Saudi Arabia.”

The Pentagon also acknowledged that the latest escalation brings the number of additional troops sent into the Persian Gulf region since May to 14,000. They have been accompanied by an armada of US warships and a B-52-led bomber task force. The Pentagon has also announced that an aircraft carrier-led battle group will remain in the Persian Gulf.



US soldiers deployed in the Middle East (U.S. Army by 1st Lt. Jesse Glenn)

While initiated as a supposed response to unspecified threats from Iran, the US buildup in the Persian Gulf region has constituted from its outset a military provocation and preparation for a war of aggression. This military buildup has accompanied Washington's so-called "maximum pressure" campaign of sweeping economic sanctions that are tantamount to a state of war. The aim, as the Trump administration has stated publicly, is to drive Iranian oil exports down to zero. By depriving Iran of its principal source of export income, Washington hopes to starve the Iranian people into submission and pave the way to regime change, bringing to power a US puppet government in Tehran.

The latest military buildup was announced in the immediate aftermath of an attack on an Iranian tanker in the Red Sea, about 60 miles from the Saudi port of Jeddah. The National Iranian Tanker Co. reported that its oil tanker Sabiti was struck twice by explosives early Friday morning, leaving two holes in the vessel and causing a brief oil spill into the Red Sea.

While Iranian state news media blamed the damage on missile attacks, a spokesman for the company told the *Wall Street Journal* that the firm was not sure of the cause.

Some security analysts have suggested that the fairly minor damage to the vessel could have been caused by limpet mines. Such mines were apparently used last June when two tankers—one Japanese and one Norwegian-owned—were hit by explosions in the Sea of Oman. At the time, Washington blamed the attacks on Iran, without providing any evidence. Tehran denied the charge, saying that it sent teams to rescue crew member of the damaged tankers.

The Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA) quoted an unnamed Iranian government official as stating that the Iranian tanker had been the victim of a “terrorist attack.”

“Examination of the details and perpetrators of this dangerous action continues and will be announced after reaching the result,” Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said.

The National Iranian Tanker Co. issued a statement saying there was no evidence that Saudi Arabia was behind the attack.

The incident raised the specter of an escalating tanker war that could disrupt shipping through the strategic Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 percent of the world’s oil supply flows. News of the attack sent crude oil prices spiking by 2 percent.

In addition to the June attacks on the tankers in the Gulf of Oman, in July, British commandos, acting on a request from Washington, stormed an Iranian super tanker, the Grace 1, in waters off the British overseas territory of Gibraltar. In apparent retaliation, Iranian Revolutionary Guards seized the British-flagged Stena Impero for what Tehran charged were violations of international maritime regulations as it passed through the Strait of Hormuz. Both tankers were subsequently released.

Earlier this week, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo issued a statement charging that the Iranian super tanker, renamed the Adrian Darya 1, had offloaded its oil in Syria in violation of European Union sanctions and a pledge made by Tehran to the UK at the time of the vessel’s release. He demanded provocatively that “EU members should condemn this action, uphold the rule of law, and hold Iran accountable.”

The Trump administration, which in May of last year unilaterally and illegally abrogated the 2015 nuclear agreement between Tehran and the major powers, has been pressuring the European signatories to the deal—Germany, France and the UK—to follow suit.

12 October 2019