

Local

UNSC condemns attacks on oil tankers, urge maximum restraint: Kuwait's envoy

Kuwait concerned over growing number of refugees: UN Representative

NEW YORK: The UN Security Council members late on Monday condemned the recent attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf region, which, according to them, represent a serious threat to maritime navigation and energy supply. It also is contravening international rules on freedom of navigation and maritime transport, as well as a threat to international peace and security. This came in a press statement by Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi following a closed-door meeting on the situation in the Middle East, which was briefed by UN Undersecretary General for Political Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo.

Otaibi's remarks came in his capacity as Council President for June. The members "urged concerned parties and all countries in the region to exercise maximum restraint and take measures and actions to reduce escalation and end tension," said Otaibi. The members also urged parties concerned to exercise maximum restraint in the Gulf region, Otaibi noted. "They urge that differences must be addressed peacefully and through dialogue," he said, noting that council members "will continue to be seized on the matter."

After a two-hour meeting, the council agreed on a statement that did not single out Iran but made clear that all sides should back away from a much-feared military confrontation. That joint stance from world powers came just hours after Trump

slapped new sanctions on Iran, targeting supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and eight Iranian commanders.

As the council met behind closed doors at Washington's request, Iran's UN ambassador told reporters that conditions were not ripe for dialogue with the United States. "You cannot start a dialogue with somebody who is threatening you, who is intimidating you," said Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi, who said the "atmosphere of such a dialogue is not ready yet."

Tensions have soared after Iran last

that Iran was behind recent attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman, using divers who placed mines on the ship's haul. Tehran has denied responsibility for those attacks. The Security Council is set today to discuss the Iran nuclear deal that the United States has exited and that the Europeans are struggling to salvage.

Refugees' numbers

In the meantime, Kuwait expressed concern over the growing numbers of refugees and internally displaced people, calling for preventing conflicts to resolve the situation. Otaibi made those remarks during the UN Security Council's Arria Formula session on meeting the needs of refugees and displaced people, held late Monday. The international community celebrated the World Refugee Day last Thursday as the numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons jumped to about 70.8 million, according to a report by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said Otaibi.

On this matter, the ambassador welcomed the announcement of the African Union on making 2019 the 'Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.' He expressed full support to Union in resolving this vital issue, as the continent celebrates the 50th anniversary of the 1969 Convention on protecting refugees in Africa.



Security Council urges dialogue

week shot down a US surveillance drone that Tehran insists had ventured into its airspace — a claim rejected by Washington. Trump triggered international alarm when he said on Friday that he had called off US military strikes against Iran at the last minute because he decided there would be too much collateral damage.

During the meeting, the United States presented evidence which it says shows

ity of the human rights does not mean that "we accept the dictation of principles and approaches that contradict with our values and culture and tenets of our religion, Islam."

Kuwait welcomes the commissioner's report concerning status of the human rights across the globe, he said, stressing that Kuwait will continue to support the commission for improving human rights throughout the world, particularly concerning "our brothers in Syria, Palestine and Yemen, as well as concerning the Muslim Rohingya in Myanmar." The commissioner has indicated in her report at some achievements with respect of boosting human rights, efforts that have been exerted to safeguard these rights, particularly in shadow of huge challenges this year in the face of global security and peace.

Bulk of the challenges

Ghunaim expressed regret that a bulk of the challenges in this respect have been witnessed "in our region," amid continuing strife, relocation and killing of brotherly peoples, particularly the most vulnerable. He renewed strong condemnation of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, flagrant violations by the occupation forces against the unarmed Palestinian people, in defiance of international laws and resolutions of the human rights council. He called on the international community to shoulder its responsibilities to ensure respect for international humanitarian principles and laws, expressed regret that these breaches have been taking place amid noticeable diminishing of interest on part of the international community toward the peace process in the Middle East.

With respect of the conditions in Kuwait, he noted that the authorities provide guarantees for human rights for the Kuwaiti people, based on the necessity to bolster democracy and human rights. Respecting human rights has become a main criterion, nowadays, to measure political development and define international relations, he said noting that human rights have turned into a mark of Kuwait's internal and external policies.

The 1962 Kuwaiti Constitution has recognized these rights, in line with the Islamic sharia (law) and international covenants namely the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Kuwait Constitution is largely in harmony with the world human rights declaration. Article 29 stipulates that people are equal in terms of humanitarian dignity, before the law and regarding rights and duties. He has affirmed Kuwait's diligent work for safeguarding the human rights in a manner that respects the society culture and traditions, hoping that the international community would shoulder the relevant responsibilities by lending support to the higher commission so it may fulfill its asks efficiently. —KUNA



NEW YORK: Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi speaks to reporters following a closed-door meeting on the situation in the Middle East on Monday. — KUNA

Three key solution

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti senior diplomat presented three key solution to face the growing number of refugees, including preventing the breakout of conflicts at early stages, boosting international and regional cooperation and improving the humanitarian conditions for refugees. The growing numbers of refugees and displaced people come with high political and financial costs, said Otaibi, adding that it also affects

regional stability.

Moreover, Otaibi noted UNHCR's efforts to help refugees adapt to their new environment, while also aiding host countries in meeting the needs of refugees. The Arria Formula is an informal arrangement that allows the council greater flexibility to be briefed about international peace and security issues. It has been used frequently and assumed growing importance since it was first implemented in March 1992. — Agencies

Kuwait urges more effort against forces behind terrorism

GENEVA: Kuwait affirmed yesterday its keenness on cooperating with friendly and allied states to face the spreading terrorism, urging the international community to double efforts in facing 'forces of darkness' behind the mushrooming peril. The Kuwaiti stand was expressed by the permanent representative to the United Nations Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghunaim, during the 41st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). It was manifested during interactive dialogue with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachete, while examining her regular report about human rights worldwide. Kuwait has presented to the world 'an honorable image' about Islam that rejects extremism and calls for tolerance with other religions. Moreover, it has reacted to baseless charges targeting Muslim states, accusing them of hosting and concealing terrorism, he said.

Denouncing terrorism

Ambassador Ghunaim affirmed Kuwait's denunciation of terrorism and all forms of violent extremism for posing a threat to security and stability of the globe, noting necessity of facing this menace, regardless of motives and justifications and victims' identity, "for terrorism has no religion or identity." The world's continuous suffering from terrorism is painful, and what doubles the pain is the fact that the Arab and Muslim peoples are mostly targeted, thus there is a need to double efforts and enhance international coordination to face the powers of darkness behind it, in shadow of respect for basic human rights, Ghunaim added. The envoy explained Kuwait's deep belief that human rights are comprehensive, support for constructive dialogue among various states for boosting and safeguarding the human rights, based on respect of communities' right for choosing values, principles and approach for their peoples for sake of safeguarding and enhancing human rights.

Kuwait favors such an approach despite polarization, often witnessed within the Security Council quarters, slowing down its performance: therefore everyone should respect other communities' right to choose values and principles and the approach that suit them for protecting and boosting human rights. The Kuwaiti ambassador explained that some parties' bids to dictate their values and cultures at pretext of the human rights is unacceptable, thus accepting the universal-

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