

Selected articles (January 08, 2020)

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1a)

International journalist statement in defence of Julian Assange

The European Federation of Journalists calls on journalists and people in journalism-related roles to sign the international journalist statement in defence of Julian Assange.

January 2, 2020

<https://europeanjournalists.org/blog/2020/01/02/international-journalist-statement-in-defence-of-julian-assange/>

<https://speak-up-for-assange.org/journalists-speak-up-for-julian-assange/>

1b)

WikiLeaks: UN official accuses UK and US of torture over treatment of Assange and Manning

January 1, 2020

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/wikileaks-julian-assange-chelsea-manning-torture-un-detention-whistleblower-nils-melzer-a9266076.html>

„[...] Nils Melzer, the UN Special Rapporteur on torture, said Ms Manning, who is being held in a jail in Virginia after refusing to testify about Mr Assange, was being subjected to an “open-ended, progressively severe measure of coercion fulfilling all the constitutive elements of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment”.

He added: “The practice of coercive detention appears to be incompatible with the international human rights obligations of the United States.” [...]“

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2a)

Iran writes to UN: We’re not after war but reserve right to self-defense against US threats

January 8, 2020

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2020/01/08/615633/Iran-letter-United-Nations-self-defense-United-States-Trump-threats-Soleimani>

„[...] I must also stress that the aforementioned statements and actions are only the tip of a submerged iceberg of hostile policies and unlawful practices, as well as the threats and plots of the United States against Iran over the past 40 years.

While the Islamic Republic of Iran does not seek war, it seriously warns against any further military adventurism against it. Iran is determined to continue to strongly protect its people, to vigorously defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and to fully secure its national interests.

Accordingly, in conformity with international law and in exercising its inherent right to self-defense, Iran will take all necessary and proportionate measures against any threat or use of force.

This is in accordance with its inherent right under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, and Iran will not hesitate to exercise it when required.

The irresponsible policies and unlawful practices of the United States continue to not only endanger the very foundations of international law and order but also pose a real threat to international peace and security.

The international community should not condone or tolerate this situation and must demand that the United States put an end to its continued unlawful and destabilizing measures in such a volatile region as the Middle East, particularly by withdrawing all its forces from the region.

Likewise, the United Nations Security Council must condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the unlawful threats and unfettered policies of the United States as well as hold it accountable for all of its wrongful acts and unlawful practices while compelling it to abide by the principles and rules of international law.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council."

2b)

The USA is now at war, de-facto and de-jure, with BOTH Iraq and Iran

By The Saker

January 5, 2020

<https://thesaker.is/the-usa-is-now-at-war-de-facto-and-de-jure-with-both-iraq-and-iran/>

1. Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdl Mahdi has now officially revealed that the US had asked him to mediate between the US and Iran and that General Qassem Soleimani to come and talk to him and give him the answer to his mediation efforts. Thus, Soleimani was on an OFFICIAL DIPLOMATIC MISSION as part of a diplomatic initiative INITIATED BY THE USA.

2. The Iraqi Parliament has now voted on a resolution requiring the government to press Washington and its allies to withdraw their troops from Iraq.

3. Iraq's caretaker PM Adil Abdul Mahdi said the American side notified the Iraqi military about the planned airstrike minutes before it was carried out. He stressed that his government denied Washington permission to continue with the operation.

4. The Iraqi Parliament has also demanded that the Iraqi government must "work to end the presence of any foreign troops on Iraqi soil and prohibit them from using its land, airspace or water for any reason"

5. The Iraqi Foreign Ministry said that Baghdad had turned to the UN Security Council with complaints about US violations of its sovereignty.

[...]

9. *The US has announced the deployment of 3'000 soldiers from the 82nd Airborne to Kuwait.*

10. *Finally, the Idiot-in-Chief tweeted the following message, probably to try to reassure his freaked out supporters: "The United States just spent Two Trillion Dollars on Military Equipment. We are the biggest and by far the BEST in the World! If Iran attacks an American Base, or any American, we will be sending some of that brand new beautiful equipment their way...and without hesitation!". Apparently, he still thinks that criminally overspending for 2nd rate military hardware is going to yield victory... [...]"*

2c)

No, Iran didn't exit the nuclear deal. And no, its nuclear announcement is not revenge for Soleimani.

By John Krzyzaniak

January 6, 2020

<https://thebulletin.org/2020/01/no-iran-didnt-exit-the-nuclear-deal-and-no-its-nuclear-announcement-is-not-revenge-for-soleimani/>

„On January 5, Iran made a major announcement regarding its nuclear program, stating that it will no longer observe limits on the number of centrifuges that it uses to enrich uranium. While the announcement is significant, it was not altogether unexpected. And it most certainly does not constitute the “harsh revenge” that Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, promised following the killing of Qasem Soleimani last week. [...]"

2d)

Iran ‘not interested’ in having nukes, will stick to JCPOA once given benefits in return – UN envoy

January 7, 2020

<https://www.rt.com/news/477615-iran-nuclear-weapons-ambassador/>

„[...] Prohibited by the supreme leader’s decree, nuclear weapons are inconsistent with Iran’s defensive doctrine, the country’s UN envoy said after Tehran announced the suspension of limits under the 2015 deal. [...] There is “no place for nuclear weapons in Iran’s defensive doctrine,” he told PBS Newshour, adding that the country is also abiding by the Non-Proliferation Treaty – a 1968 pact that aims for nuclear disarmament and sets standards for arms control.[...]“

2e)

Iran announces decision to take fifth step to scale back JCPOA commitments

January 5, 2020

<https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2020/01/05/615457/Iran-step-JCPOA-commitment-enrichment>

„[...] The Iranian government announced in the statement on Sunday that from now on, the country will observe no operational limitations on its nuclear industry, including with regard to the capacity and level of uranium enrichment, the amount of enriched materials as well as research and development. [...],

„[...] In response to the US unilateral move, Tehran has so far rowed back on its nuclear commitments four times in compliance with Articles 26 and 36 of the JCPOA, but stressed that its retaliatory measures will be reversible as soon as Europe finds practical ways to shield the mutual trade from the US sanctions.

As a first step, Iran increased its enriched uranium stockpile to beyond the 300 kilograms set by the JCPOA.

In the second step, Tehran began enriching uranium to purity rates beyond the JCPOA limit of 3.76 percent.

In the third phase, after the Europeans failed to meet a 60-day deadline to meet Iran's demands and fulfill their commitments under the deal, Iran started up advanced centrifuges to boost the country's stockpile of enriched uranium and activated 20 IR-4 and 20 IR-6 centrifuges for research and development purposes.

In November, Iran began injecting gas into centrifuges at the Fordow plant as part of its fourth step away from the JCPOA under the supervision of the IAEA. [...],

2f)

Iraqi Parliament Expels Foreign Militaries From Iraq

Moon of Alabama

January 5, 2020

<https://www.moonofalabama.org/2020/01/iraqi-parliament-expels-foreign-militaries-from-iraq.html>

„[...] Before the vote Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi told the parliament that he was scheduled to meet with Soleimani a day after his arrival to receive a letter from Iran to Iraq in response to a de-escalation offer Saudi Arabia had made. The U.S. assassinated Soleimani before the letter could be delivered by him. Abdul-Mahdi also said that Trump had asked him to mediate between the U.S. and Iran. Did he do that to trap Soleimani? It is no wonder then that Abdul-Mahdi is fuming. [...]"

2g)

Erbil Owes Existence to Gen. Soleimani, KRG Ex-President Tells Why

By IFP Editorial Staff

January 7, 2020

<https://ifpnews.com/erbil-owes-existence-to-gen-soleimani-kr-ex-president-tells-why>

„The review of an interview with former president of the Kurdistan Region five years after being published in a Turkish daily sheds light on how Iran's General Qassem Soleimani literally saved Erbil after the Kurdish calls for help from the US, UK, France, Turkey and Saudis went unheeded when bloodthirsty ISIS forces were on the city's doorstep.[...]“

2h)

Trump's Cartoon Imperialism And War Crimes

By Daniel Larison

January 5, 2020

<https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/trumps-cartoon-imperialism-and-war-crimes/>

„[...]The fact that attacking cultural heritage sites is a war crime is probably one of the things that appeals to Trump. He sees war only in the crudest terms of plunder and atrocity. He has both advocated for committing atrocities and pardoned men who have committed atrocities. It doesn't concern him that threatening the cultural heritage of one of the world's oldest civilizations is disgraceful barbarism. It would never occur to him that the U.S. should aspire to live up to a higher standard. He doesn't think that the U.S. should be bound by the restrictions that his own administration endorsed in a 2017 Security Council resolution, because he takes for granted that when the U.S. does something it can't be a war crime. [...]“

2i)

UN Security Council adopts historic resolution for the protection of heritage (resolution 2347)

March 24, 2017

<https://en.unesco.org/news/security-council-adopts-historic-resolution-protection-heritage>

see also resolution 2347 for the protection of heritage: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2347\(2017\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2347(2017))

„[...]“The deliberate destruction of heritage is a war crime, it has become a tactic of war to tear societies over the long term, in a strategy of cultural cleansing. This is why defending cultural heritage is more than a cultural issue, it is a security imperative, inseparable from that of defending human lives,” Director-General Bokova told the Security Council, as she spoke in support of the resolution, with Executive Director of UNODC Yuri Fedotov and Commander Fabrizio Parrulli of the Carabinieri Italiani. [...]“

2j)

Calling Soleimani Assassination an 'Act of War' Without Authorization, Omar and Lee Announce War Powers Resolution to Stop Trump

"Trump's reckless military actions, without Congressional approval or authorization, have caused this crisis," said Rep. Barbara Lee. "We have been down this dangerous path before in Iraq, and we cannot afford another ill-advised, destructive, and costly war in the Middle East."

By Jon Queally

January 6, 2020

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/01/06/calling-soleimani-assassination-act-war-without-authorization-omar-and-lee-announce>

„In a move underscoring that the U.S. Congress has the sole constitutional power to declare war, Democratic Reps. Barbara Lee and Ilhan Omar announced a War Powers Resolution in the House on Sunday as a companion version to that introduced by Sen. Tim Kaine in the Senate on Friday. "Let's not mince words: the assassination of Qasem Soleimani was an act of war undertaken without Congressional authorization, in violation of the Constitution of the United States of America," said Congresswoman Omar of Minnesota in a statement. "Following the assassination, thousands of additional troops were sent to the Middle East in one of the largest rapid deployments seen in decades. This follows years of saber-rattling and threats of war against Iran by President Trump and his accomplices. We in Congress must exercise our Constitutional duty—and do everything in our power to stop another disastrous war." [...]"

2k)

Will Russia become the brother in arms with Iran?

By Punsara Amarasinghe

Foreign Policy News

January 6, 2020

<https://foreignpolicynews.org/2020/01/06/will-russia-become-the-brother-in-arms-with-iran/>

„[...] Furthermore, the rapport built by Moscow in the Middle East with Iranian rivals such as Saudi Arabia, UAE and even Israel can become adversaries again leading to an unmitigated disaster of Putin's grand strategy of keeping ties with American allies in the middle east. These circumstances will create twilight scenario to assess any possible moves by Moscow. [...] All in all, Russia's next move would not definitely be a blatant military assistance to Teheran as a brother in arms. But, Russia is likely to play a key role through its diplomatic means to impede any crisis that would be detrimental to its ally Iran.“

2l)

Axis Of Resistance Sas How It Will Avenge Qassem Soleimani

Moon of Alabama

January 6, 2020

<https://www.moonofalabama.org/2020/01/the-axis-of-resistance-announces-the-project-that-will-avenge-qassem-soleimani.html#more>

„[...]Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah, a dear friend of Soleimani, announced yesterday that the Resistance Axis will take its own, separate revenge. [...]“ „[...] Just punishment therefore means American military presence in the region, U.S. military bases, U.S. military ships, every American officer and soldier in our countries and regions. The U.S. military is the one who killed Soleimani and Muhandis, and they will pay the price. This is the equation. I want to be very clear, we do not mean American citizens or nationals. There are many Americans in our region. We don't mean to attack them, and it is wrong to harm them. Attacking US civilians anywhere serves Trump's interests. The American military institution put itself in the midst of battle by carrying out the assassination. [...]“

2m)

Invoke U.N.'s Uniting for Peace Resolution before Trump Embroils Us in War with Iran

By Dimitri Lascaris

January 7, 2020

<https://dissidentvoice.org/2020/01/invoke-u-n-s-uniting-for-peace-resolution-before-trump-embroils-us-in-war-with-iran/>

„[...] Iran has called upon the U.N. Security Council to denounce the Trump administration's "criminal act" and "state terrorism" (both accurate descriptions of Trump's drone attack on the sovereign territory of Iraq), but Security Council intervention is doomed to failure: the U.S. government would undoubtedly exercise its veto power to block any Security Council action against the United States.

There may be, however, another option.

That option is United Nations General Assembly Resolution 377, known as the "Uniting for Peace" resolution. Adopted in 1950, Resolution 377 provides that, in cases where the Security Council, due to a lack of unanimity amongst its five permanent members, fails to act as required to maintain international peace and security, the General Assembly shall consider the matter immediately and may issue any recommendations it deems necessary in order to restore international peace and security.

Any such recommendations would not be binding upon United Nations members or the Security Council, but a strong, widely-supported denunciation of America's latest act of criminal aggression against Iran, coupled with carefully crafted recommendations for defusing the crisis with collective measures, might just be enough to preserve Iran's credibility as a regional power without obliging Iran to retaliate. [...]"

2n)

Iran Parliament Passes Motion Designating US Army, Pentagon as Terrorist

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iran's lawmakers unanimously voted for a motion to designate the US Army and the Pentagon as terrorist organizations in response to a recent move by Washington to assassinate Iran's revered commander, Lt. General Qassem Soleimani.

January 7, 2020

<https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2020/01/07/2176598/iran-parliament-passes-motion-designating-us-army-pentagon-as-terrorist>

2o)

"To Initiate a War of Aggression Is Not Only an International Crime: It Is the Supreme International Crime"

By David W. Mathisen

January 06, 2020

<https://www.globalresearch.ca/initiate-war-aggression-not-only-international-crime-supreme-international-crime/5699721>

„[...] We have every reason to be suspicious about those allegations and to suspect that things are not necessarily as we are being told, because the entire pretext for invading Iraq in the first place, seventeen years ago in early 2003, was based on complete lies and fabrications.

The most dastardly of these lies, used to support the war of aggression against Iraq, was the lie that Iraq had something to do with the attacks of September 11, 2001.

There is now so much evidence which shows that the official story of what took place on that awful day is a complete pack of lies that nobody who examines that evidence can possibly fail to conclude that we have been lied to about September 11th for going on nineteen years — and those lies have been used to “justify” (falsely justify, of course, which is no justification at all) wars of aggression which have resulted in the deaths of many hundreds of thousands (probably now numbering in the millions) of innocent civilians, including children, and in the complete devastation of numerous countries and the immiseration of their people. [...]“