

Israeli aggression on agenda of Zarif's talks in Moscow



Moscow, September 2 (RHC)-- Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is in the Russian capital of Moscow for high-level talks on a wide range of issues, including the recent Israeli assaults on regional countries.

"In addition to bilateral talks on bilateral cooperation, we will hold talks [with Russians] on regional issues" such as the Israeli regime's recent assaults against regional states, Zarif told reporters upon arrival in Moscow on Sunday.

He made the comments amid escalation of tension along the occupied territories' borders with Lebanon, after the Hezbollah resistance movement attacked Israel's military vehicles earlier in the day, leaving a number of Israeli forces dead or injured.

The Israeli artillery units also struck the southern part of Lebanon shortly after an Israeli drone violated the Lebanese airspace, and dropped incendiary material that sparked a fire in a forest at the border.

In his Sunday comments, Zarif highlighted other subjects to be discussed during his Monday talks with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. "We are on the verge of the Astana talks in Turkey, and there is a need for coordination. We also need coordination on the Yemen issue."

He said the "serious developments in Afghanistan" will also be on the agenda of his Monday talks. "Iran's special envoys for Afghanistan, Yemen, and Syria in the delegation visiting Russia, and will hold talks with their counterparts," Zarif added.

The top diplomat said he will also brief the Russian "friends" on the latest developments regarding the Iran nuclear deal, particularly the recent talks held in France. "We have common stances on the JCPOA with Russia and China and many other global developments," he said.

The talks on the 2015 nuclear deal will come as Iran has given other parties to the deal, especially Europe, until Thursday to fulfill their commitments under the accord; otherwise Iran will take the third step of reducing its obligations.

Tehran rowed back on its nuclear commitments twice in compliance with articles 26 and 36 of the JCPOA. Iran says its reciprocal measures will be reversible as soon as Europe finds practical ways to shield the Iranian economy from unilateral U.S. sanctions which were imposed last year when President Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal.

The Europeans have already missed a 60 day-deadline set by Tehran, prompting Iran to go for the second phase of cutting its commitments on July 7, which marked the start of a second such deadline for them.

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.

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