

Iranian foreign minister affirms U.S. travel restrictions on diplomats are inhumane



New York, July 18 (RHC)-- Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says US travel restrictions imposed on Iranian diplomats and their families living in New York are "basically inhuman."

"It is certainly not a friendly action. It puts the members of the mission and their families under basically inhuman conditions. But for me it's fine because I don't have any work anywhere other than the three buildings," Zarif told reporters at the United Nations on Wednesday.

The United States has restricted their travel to between the United Nations, the Iranian UN mission, the Iranian UN ambassador's residence and John F. Kennedy airport. UN voices concerns about curbs imposed on Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif by the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump.

"The secretariat is aware of the restrictive travel measures imposed by the host country on personnel of the permanent mission of Iran to the UN. The secretariat is in close contact with the permanent missions of the United States and Iran to the UN regarding this matter and has conveyed its concerns to the host country," UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq told reporters.

Tehran says the restrictions imposed on Zarif, traveling between the United Nations and the Iranian UN mission or the Iranian UN ambassador's residence, would not affect his work schedule. "Putting restrictions on his (Zarif's) presence in some streets in New York will certainly not affect his work schedule," said Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abbas Moussavi.

Late last month, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump had threatened to blacklist Zarif. Washington claims it restricted Zarif's travel "in a manner that is fully consistent" with its obligations under a 1947 agreement with the United Nations.

However, the United States is required to allow access to the United Nations for foreign diplomats under the 1947 UN "headquarters agreement." The restrictions come amid heightened tensions between Washington and Tehran, which started when the US unilaterally withdrew from a multilateral Iran nuclear deal clinched between the Islamic Republic and world powers in 2015, and reimposed sanctions on Iran.

Meanwhile, Zarif addressed the high-level political forum on sustainable development at the UN, during which he said the US has subjected Iranian civilians to the most brutal form of economic terrorism to achieve its political goals.

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