

U.S. secretary of state says all options remain on the table against Iran



U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo speaks alongside Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi (L) in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. (Photo: AFP)

Tel Aviv, November 21 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has repeated Washington's threats against Iran, saying all options remain on the table against the Islamic republic. Pompeo made the remarks in an interview with the Israeli newspaper Jerusalem Post when he was asked whether "all options still on the table" against Iran.

Pompeo said this has been the policy of the United States for the past four years and there's no reason it would change. "My judgement is, and history will reflect, that we've been pretty successful," he said.

"I remember when we first began the maximum pressure campaign. We'd withdrawn from the JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action], and the world said this will never work, American sanctions alone won't work," he said. "Well, they have significantly reduced Iran's capacity to foment harm around the world. It's not complete," he added.

"[U.S. President Donald Trump] has done several things. One, he denied them money. That also sent a strong message to the Middle East that facilitated the Abraham Accords [through] this central understanding, this isolation of Iran in ways that are deeply different than before, whether it's the [United Arab] Emirates or Bahrain or Sudan or whoever signs the Abraham Accords next," he continued.

On Wednesday, Iran warned the US of a crushing response if it takes any hostile move against the country. A military advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei warned that an act of military aggression by the U.S. against Iran that could lead to an even limited conflict is likely to set off a full-scale war that would afflict other parts of the region too.

The remarks were made by Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan, defense minister during President Hassan Rouhani's previous tenure and former commander of the Air Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC). "A limited, tactical conflict can turn into a full-fledged war," Dehqan warned.

This followed a New York Times report that Trump had asked his top aides, including Pompeo, about the possibility of striking Iran's nuclear facilities. The report said the aides dissuaded Trump by warning him that any such a move could escalate into a broader conflict in the last weeks of his presidency.

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