

# *Iran says Israel playing victim to divert attention from its continuous crimes*

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Zahra Ershadi, Iran's deputy permanent representative to the UN

United Nations, August 7 (RHC)-- An Iranian envoy to the United Nations says the Israeli regime is "playing victim" to divert attention from its continuing crimes in Palestine, warning the occupying regime against any acts of "adventurism and miscalculations."

Zahra Ershadi, Iran's deputy permanent representative to the UN, made the remarks in a statement on Friday after a closed-door meeting of the UN Security Council on a recent incident for an Israeli-operated oil tanker in the Sea of Oman.

Tensions simmer in the region in the wake of a suspected drone attack last week on the Israeli-managed tanker -- Mercer Street -- off the Omani coast, where two crew members were killed. With no evidence, the United States, Israel, and Britain blamed Iran for the incident. Tehran categorically rejects the accusation.

The Iranian envoy's comments came in reaction to a highly provocative statement by Israel's minister of military affairs Benny Gantz, who said on Thursday that the regime was prepared to strike Iran, issuing a blatant threat against the Islamic Republic.

"Immediately following this event, Israeli officials accused Iran of the incident. This is what they usually do. It is a standard practice of the Israeli regime. Its aim is to divert attention of the world public opinion from the regime's crimes and inhumane practices in the region. To that end, they accuse others of wrongdoing. In almost all incidents in the Middle East, Israel accuses Iran. They do it immediately and provide no evidence. Playing victim, lying and deception are part of their toolbox," said Ershadi in her statement.

She also said that the occupying regime's hue and cry on the Mercer Street incident was aimed, in particular, at concealing its terrorist acts against commercial navigation.

The Iranian envoy then referred to reports by the Syrian government and mainstream media outlets that Israel attacked at least 10 oil tankers en route to Syria during the past two years, killing at least two crew members of the targeted vessels.

"These are only a few examples of adventurism and destabilizing activities of the Israeli regime at regional seas. Such unlawful and terrorist acts seriously threaten maritime security, disrupt freedom of navigation and endanger energy security," Ershadi added.

She also stressed that such attacks by the occupying entity are gross violations of international law and the UN Charter and "shall not go unpunished", stressing that the UNSC must prevent Israel's "unbridled adventurism" in the region, and must prove that it is not "trapped" by the regime's "deceptions and fabrications."

"We categorically reject the unfounded accusation of Israel on the Mercer Street vessel incident as we have written in our recent letter to the council's president," the Iranian envoy stressed, adding that the Tel Aviv regime "cannot whitewash its destabilizing practices and vicious policies by blaming and accusing others."

Referring to Gantz's military threat against Iran, Ershadi said that Israel continues to brazenly threaten to use force against regional countries. "Iran warns against any such adventurism and miscalculations. Yet, Iran will not hesitate to defend itself and secure its national interests," she stressed.



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