



# Obama declares 'war on war'

Urges all countries, religions to reject extremist ideologies

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

You'll remember the "war on terror" and the "war on drugs", well now President Barack Obama has declared a "war on war" during a speech at the UN General Assembly.

The phrase sums up the predicament of a world embroiled in numerous complex and inextricable wars.

Obama urged all countries and religions to reject extremist ideologies on Wednesday, lest the world end up in a "cycle of conflict".

Quoting influential Muslim cleric Sheikh Abdullah bin Bayyah, he suggested that a "war on war" was needed to ensure a peaceful future:

"The ideology of Isil or al Qaeda or Boko Haram will wilt and die if it is consistently exposed, confronted, and refuted in the light of day. Look at the new Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies - Sheikh bin Bayyah described its purpose: 'We must declare war on war, so the outcome will be peace upon peace.' Look at the young British Muslims, who responded to terrorist propaganda by starting the 'notinmyname' campaign, declaring - 'Isis is hiding behind a false Islam.' Look at the Christian and Muslim leaders who came together in the Central African Republic to reject violence - listen to the Imam who said, 'Politics try to divide the religious in our country, but religion shouldn't be a cause of hate, war, or strife.'"

Taking aim at the so called Islamic State, Obama condemned the group as a "network of death", saying that "the only language understood by killers like this is the language of force."

His annual visit to the UN comes shortly after the US began bombing Syria in a bid to disrupt the Islamic State.

Earlier in the month, Obama became the fourth president in a row to go on TV and announce airstrikes in Iraq.



A Syrian government soldiers gesture on a tank as it drives past damaged buildings in Adra northeast of the capital Damascus, yesterday. Syrian government troops recaptured the key rebel-held town of Adra, in and area of the town used to house workers, after securing the highway and the industrial zone, a security source and monitoring group said.

PHOTO: AFP

# France strikes ISIS in Iraq

Holds crisis meeting after brutal hostage killing in Algeria

AFP, Paris

France carried out a fresh round of air strikes in Iraq yesterday as it renewed its determination to fight ISIS jihadists after the beheading of hostage Herve Gourdel.

Meanwhile, Paris yesterday said it had widened its vigilance alert for nationals abroad from 31 to 40 countries including Asian nations.

President Francois Hollande pledged "determination, composure and vigilance" in the face of jihadi threats at a cabinet meeting and announced that flags nationwide would be flown at half-mast for three days from Friday to mourn the loss of the 55-year-old mountaineer.

"Faced with this threat, we need national unity," he told the meeting, according to government spokesman Stephane Le Foll, who also announced France had carried out air strikes in restive Iraq yesterday morning -

- the second in the space of a week.

France opposed the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq but was one of the first to sign up for an active role in the campaign against the IS group that has rampaged through large areas of Iraq and Syria.

Paris has six Rafale fighter jets and just under 1,000 soldiers based in the United Arab Emirates, and yesterday carried out its first air strike on IS targets in Iraq, destroying a logistics depot.

As the cabinet meeting ended, Hollande went straight into crisis defence talks during which, Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has said, "everything would be looked at again," including "what we want to do in Iraq and what will happen in Syria."

France has vowed to conduct aerial operations against Iraq in support of local forces fighting IS but has stressed it will not deploy ground troops, nor will it expand operations to Syria, as the United States has done.

US, Saudi and Emirati warplanes bombed oil installations in eastern Syria overnight in a bid to cut off a significant source of funding for the IS group.

However, Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian seemed to open the door to possible action in neighbouring Syria, telling French radio yesterday it was "a question that had to be asked."

Gourdel's public execution at the hands of ISIS-linked Algerian group Jund al-Khilifa, or "Soldiers of the Caliphate," sparked global outrage and an outpouring of grief and anger in France.

Gourdel was kidnapped on Sunday while hiking in a national park in eastern Algeria that was once a magnet for tourists but later became a sanctuary for Islamists.

His abduction came shortly after the ISIS group urged militants to "kill a disbelieving American or European -- especially the spiteful and filthy French."

# Britain readies for Iraq action

Arrests 9 Islamists in London for 'encouraging terrorism'

AFP, London

British Prime Minister David Cameron was preparing for a key vote on joining air strikes in Iraq yesterday as police arrested nine people, including a notorious radical preacher, accused of links to Islamist extremism.

Cameron was meeting ministers after returning from the UN General Assembly in New York, where he announced that parliament would vote today on British planes joining US-led strikes against the ISIS group in Iraq.

With the prime minister set to argue that the jihadists pose a direct threat to Britain, nine people were arrested in London early yesterday on suspicion of encouraging terrorism and belonging to and supporting a banned organisation.

They are accused of being members of the extremist Islamist group Al-Muhajiroun, co-founded by one of the detained men, Anjem Choudary, Britain's Press Association reported.

The arrests "are part of an ongoing investigation into Islamist-related terrorism and are not in response to any immediate public safety risk," Scotland Yard said.

Police are also searching 19 properties following the arrests, all but one in London.

Al-Muhajiroun aims to overthrow the British government and replace it with an Islamic state before establishing a global Islamic caliphate, according to the London-based International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence.

While securing British support may not be crucial to the US-led offensive, Cameron told the UN Security Council he wanted it to "play its part" after US President Barack Obama urged the global community to unite against a "network of death".

Cameron has taken a cautious approach to military action against Iraq, haunted by a damaging House of Commons defeat over military action against President Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria last year.

Although he has ruled out sending in ground forces, many lawmakers are also likely to be cautious about air strikes on Iraq as Britain's involvement in the 2003 US-led invasion of the country remains deeply unpopular.

A total of 179 British personnel died in Iraq between 2003 and 2009.



Anjem Choudary

# Hamas, Fatah agree on Gaza unity govt

AFP, Cairo

Rival Palestinian factions Hamas and Fatah reached a "comprehensive" agreement yesterday for the return of their unity government in Gaza after two days of talks in Cairo, negotiators from both sides said.

The Palestinian rivals had set up a unity government of independents in June but it never took hold, with Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas accusing Hamas of running a "parallel" administration as de facto ruler in the Gaza Strip.

Hamas in turn accused Abbas's Palestinian Authority, headquartered in Ramallah, of not paying its 45,000 employees in Gaza.

"Fatah and Hamas have reached a comprehensive agreement for the unity government to return to the Gaza Strip," Jibril Rajoub of Fatah told AFP.



PHOTO: AFP

Palestinian children sit on the rubble of their house which was destroyed during the fifty days of conflict between Israel and Hamas, in the Shejaiya neighborhood of Gaza City, yesterday. A new UN-brokered deal has set the stage for private companies to help rebuild Gaza after a seven-week conflict that left 100,000 people with nowhere to live.

# Strategic blunders behind ME crises

Rohani slams West at UN

AFP, United Nations

Iranian President Hassan Rohani wavered between criticism and engagement in a speech to the UN yesterday, slamming Western blunders in the Middle East but signalling commitment to securing a deal on nuclear power.

"The strategic blunders of the West in the Middle East, Central Asia and the Caucasus have turned these parts of the world into a haven for terrorists and extremists," he told the UN General Assembly in New York.

"Improper interference in the developments in Syria are clear examples of this erroneous strategic approach in the Middle East."

The United States has the support of five Arab countries in its air campaign to defeat what President Barack Obama on Wednesday called a "network of death" -- the Islamic State group.

Rohani called for "moderate politicians" in the Middle East to take the lead in countering "violence and terrorism" and said it was a "myth" that Iran seeks to control Arab countries in the region.

"The right solution to this quandary comes from within the region... with international support and not from outside," he said, warning otherwise there would be "repercussions for the whole world."

Rohani is determined to lift damaging Western sanctions that have hit his economy hard and prevented oil companies from doing business in the oil-rich country.

US Secretary of State John Kerry is to hold three-way talks with his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif and EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton later yesterday as they push for a nuclear deal by a November 24 deadline.

"We are determined to continue negotiations with our interlocutors in earnest and good faith, based on mutual respect and confidence," Rohani said.

A deal would be a "historic opportunity" for the West that would send a message of "peace and security," he added.

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany are seeking to scale back Tehran's nuclear activities by November 24. Thorny talks have taken place on the sidelines of the General Assembly.



PURRING GAFFE

# Cameron to apologise to UK Queen

AFP, London

British Prime Minister David Cameron will apologise to Queen Elizabeth II in person after describing how she "purred" down the telephone when he told her Scotland had rejected independence, media reported yesterday.

Cameron was caught on camera Tuesday making the remarks to former New York mayor Michael Bloomberg in the United States.

"The definition of relief is being the prime minister of the United Kingdom and ringing the Queen and saying: 'It's alright, it's OK.' That was something," Cameron said. "She purred down the line."

Cameron said he was "very embarrassed" and "extremely sorry" about what had happened. It is thought he will say sorry to the 88-year-old monarch at the next of their regular weekly meetings.

# EBOLA CRISIS

# S Leone extends quarantine drive

AFP, Freetown

Sierra Leone yesterday began a quarantine of more than one million people in the largest lockdown in west Africa's deadly Ebola outbreak, as world leaders met to discuss the crisis at the United Nations.

The northern districts of Port Loko and Bombali were to be closed off along with the southern district of Moyamba -- effectively sealing in around 1.2 million people.

With the eastern districts of Kenema and Kailahun already under quarantine, more than a third of the population of six million, in five of the nation's 14 districts, now finds itself unable to move freely.

"The isolation of districts and chiefdoms will definitely pose great difficulty but the lives of everyone and the survival of our country takes precedence over these difficulties," President Ernest Bai Koroma told the nation in a televised address late Wednesday.

"These are trying moments for everyone in the country."

The deadliest Ebola epidemic on record has infected more than 6,200 people in west Africa and killed nearly half of them, according to the World Health Organization's latest figures.

The virus can kill its victims within days, causing rampant fever, severe muscle pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and -- in many cases -- unstoppable internal and external bleeding.

# US govt to pay \$500 million in compensation to Indian tribe

AFP, Washington

The US government will pay more than \$500 million to the Native American Navajo tribe in the US southwest, ending decades-old disputes over use of their land, officials said Wednesday.

Under the agreement -- to be formally signed Friday in Window Rock, Arizona -- the Navajo will receive \$554 million, the Navajo Nation and US Department of Justice told AFP.

In return, the tribe will waive lawsuits over US management of Navajo resources and funds.

The sum is the largest ever paid by the United States to a single tribe, according to The Washington Post.

"This historic agreement resolves a long-standing dispute between the United States and the Navajo Nation, including some claims that have been sources of tension for generations," Attorney General Eric Holder

said in a statement sent to AFP.

Half of all Navajo land is rented out for agricultural and forestry purposes, oil and gas production, and mineral extraction, among other uses.

The Navajo reservation, straddling the western states of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, is the largest in the United States, covering around 70,000 square miles (181,299 square kilometers).

The Navajos are the largest indigenous tribe in the United States with more than 300,000 members.

The US government has already reached similar agreements with other tribes. Including the Navajo payment, a total of \$2.61 billion has been paid to 80 tribes since 2010.

In 2012, the United States agreed to give more than a billion dollars to 41 tribes settling a dispute over use of their land and goods.



In Loving Memory

Inna Lillahi wa inna ilaihi rajiun

Mrs. Jahanara Begum of Shinepukur Zamindar Bari, Dohar, Dhaka, w/o Late A B M Omar, passed away (Inna...Rajun) at 7 AM on September 23, 2014 at her Tejgaon residence in Dhaka. She was 96 and suffering from minor old age complications and was laid to rest in the Banani Graveyard.

She is survived by her only son Dr Kazi A H M Akram (Miroo) and a host of grandchildren and well wishers. Her kulkhwani will be held on Friday (26 September, 2014) at her Tejgaon Residence (115/A Airport Road, Dhaka-1215) after Asr prayers.

For information & queries, please contact 01732634542.