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Palestinians Mark Land Day

On March 30, Palestinians in Israel as well as in the occupied West Bank organized activities to mark Land Day.

The purpose of Land Day is to protest Israel's ongoing expropriation of Palestinian land. The first land day was organized in 1976 and attacked by Israeli troops who killed six Palestinians.

This year, demonstrations and other activities were organized in Galilee and other areas inside Israel as well as in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Tulkarem and across the West Bank.

This year's activities focused on opposing the Apartheid Wall which Israel is building in order to carry out the de facto annexation of 45% of the area of the West Bank.

For Your Information: Israel's Apartheid Wall

Israel is building a 450-mile wall which will wind across the West Bank.

The Wall is 8 meters high and includes armed watchtowers as well as a 30-100 meter buffer zone with electric fences, trenches and wire mesh.

98% of all Israeli settlers will be included inside the Wall and these settlements will be de facto annexed to Israel.

Through the Wall, Israel will expropriate 45% of the land of the West Bank. Palestinian villages and cities will be separated from each other into isolated cantons, thus undermining the possibility of creating any economically viable Palestinian state. 275,000 thousand Palestinians in 122 villages and towns will live in closed areas, surrounded by the Wall. Many other towns will be separated from their adjacent farm land and water sources.

Israeli Troops Storm Al-Aqsa Mosque

On April 2, more than 70 Palestinians were injured when the Israeli army stormed into the Al-Aqsa mosque shortly after noon prayers.

The Israelis used tear gas, sound grenades, rubber bullets and stun bombs.

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U. S. Mideast Strategy Doomed to Failure

This commentary is reprinted from the Korean Central News Agency, 4/2/2004.

The United States has become all the more undisguised in its efforts for dominating the whole of the Middle East. The U.S. Mideast strategy, a main link in the whole chain of its strategy for world supremacy, is aimed to monopolize the Rich oil resources in the region and, furthermore, have a military foothold for containing surrounding powers.

Since the United States unilaterally launched a war of aggression against Iraq on March 20 last year allegedly to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, ignoring the protest of the United Nations and the international community, and occupied the country, it has persistently sought a strategic goal of putting the Middle East under its domination.

The U.S. Mideast strategy, by and large, is prompted by two purposes - - one is to place the region under its political and military control and the other to make the whole of the region pro-America by injecting "democracy" based on the American-style view of value into the Mideast countries.

For the first purpose, the United States had Kuwait named a non-NATO ally exceptionally on January 15. It implied that if other nations in this region continue pursuing pro-U.S. policies, they could also enjoy the U.S. political and military "protection".

To this end, the United States has invited Israel, Egypt, Jordan and other nations in the Middle East to the NATO Summit to be held in Turkey in June and is now lobbying other NATO nations to establish relationship of "partnership" with them.

While going ahead with the plan to turn Iraq into a down-the-line pro-U.S. state, the United States is openly pressurizing Syria, Iran and other

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Terrorist in the U.S. Delegation to Geneva

Below we reprint a letter dated March 27, 2004 from the Cuban ambassador at the UN to Secretary General Kofi Annan, reporting that an official U.S. delegate to the Human Rights Commission participated in acts of terrorism.

Your Excellency:

I have the honor of directing myself to Your Excellency to denounce before the United Nations the presence of a well-known terrorist of Cuban origin, Luis Zuñiga Rey, on the official U.S. delegation to the 60th session of the Human Rights Commission (HRC) presently convened in Geneva. The attitude adopted by the U.S. government is paradoxical when the images of the terrorist attacks perpetrated in Madrid last March 11, costing the lives of more than 200 people, are still fresh.

For those who combating terrorism in an honorable way, it is a real affront and a complete lack of respect to have -- under the disguise of a diplomat and delegation member to such a forum -- an individual with a long and well-known criminal history, as confirmed in a report by Mr. Enrique Bernales Ballesteros, UN Special Rapporteur on mercenary activities, which was presented precisely before the HRC in 1999.

In that report, the UN Special Rapporteur points to Luis Zuñiga Rey, of Cuban origin and based in Miami, as a member of the underground security of the so-called Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF), a paramilitary structure.

According to Bernales Ballesteros' 1999 report, Zuñiga Rey recruited Guatemalan citizen Percy Francisco Alvarado Godoy to study points in Cuba that were vulnerable and susceptible to terrorist attacks, such as hotels, thermoelectric plants and oil refineries, among others.

It was possible to frustrate the actions promoted by Zuñiga Rey due to the fact that Alvarado Godoy was a Cuban State Security agent.

The current occupant of a seat within the U.S. delegation left Cuba illegally in 1973, by entering the Guantánamo naval base and, on his arrival in Miami, enrolled in a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operation that consisted of a plan to infiltrate Cuban territory in order to commit sabotage and assassinate the country's main leaders.

That plan was neutralized by the Cuban authorities in August 1974. Zuñiga Rey was arrested with explosives and weapons. After standing trial by the due legal authorities, he was sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment, of which he completed only 14, being released in 1988. Upon his return to the United States he linked up with the CANF and was directly or indirectly involved in planting explosive devices in Havana hotels and Cuban hospitals.

The decision by the U.S. government to include Luis Zuñiga Rey as a member of its official delegation to the Human Rights Commission currently convened in Geneva is not only disrespectful to the United Nations; at the same time, the presence of an individual with such a record places the security of this venue at risk, as well as that of all of the delegates now participating in the labors of the 60th session of the Human Rights Commission.

Of what value is the report presented in 1999 by Mr. Enrique Bernales Ballesteros, the UN Special Rapporteur on mercenary activities to the Human Rights Commission?

Is it possible that five years after its presentation to this forum

the report has become a dead letter and an object of mockery on the part of a member state that proclaims to be a standard-bearer in the international struggle against international terrorism?

Is it possible to remain silent in face of an individual with such a criminal and terrorist history in a body whose fundamental objective to date has been for the full application of human rights?

Cuba hopes that the HRC's current president will adopt the appropriate measures for dealing with an unsuitable delegate and act accordingly. If the presence of Zuñiga Rey is accepted as a normal event, terrorism is being blessed instead of combated, and an erroneous message of complicity and impunity is being sent to the convicted perpetrators of terrorist acts.

Cuba's delegation is willing to offer more detailed information on this notorious terrorist and his prior activities. . . .

Orlando Requeijo Gual, Ambassador, Permanent Representative

U.S. Mideast Strategy (from page 1)

anti-U.S., independent nations to reform their political system and open their society, groundlessly charging them with providing weapons and training centers to "terrorist organizations".

The facts indicate that the United States, with Iraq as a foothold, intends to "readjust" surrounding nations one after another and totally dominate the Middle East, thus using this region, which takes 65 percent of the world's oil resources, as a base for executing its strategy for world supremacy.

It is also prompted by this goal that the United States is pushing ahead with an ambitious plan to station its forces in the Middle East indefinitely and establish its military installations in the region.

What is noteworthy in the U.S. moves to dominate the Middle East is the "plan for democracy in the Middle East" made public by Bush in early February. The key point of the plan is to reform the political system of the Mideast nations and introduce American-style democracy there.

The United States has sent high-ranking officials to Mideast and European nations to drum up support for its plan.

But the United States has been baffled in its Mideast strategy.

Iran and Syria has officially stated that they would resolutely cope with U.S. sanctions, while the anti-U.S. resistance has been escalated in Iraq.

As soon as it was made public, the "plan for democracy in the Middle East" was rejected by all the nations belonging to the League of Arab States.

Protest against the arrogant plan came out in the emergency conference of foreign ministers of the League of Arab States held in Cairo on March 1 and the general meeting of the Arab Parliamentary Union in Damascus on February 2. The plan has been castigated by Arab media, too.

The U.S. anachronistic Mideast strategy, categorically rejected by the Arab people, is destined to go busted.

Israeli Troops Storm Al-Aqsa Mosque (from page 1)

The Al-Aqsa mosque is the third holiest shrine of Islam and the Israeli occupationist forces have repeatedly carried out provocations against the mosque. Israel is digging extensive excavations underneath of the mosque which have already weakened its foundations.
