

EU agrees sanctions against Turkey for drilling off Cyprus

Author:

AFP

ID:

1563220510075539900

Mon, 2019-07-15 18:55

BRUSSELS: European Union officials on Monday agreed political and financial sanctions against Turkey after Ankara went ahead with drilling operations off Cyprus despite repeated warnings, European diplomats said.

"The conclusions on Turkey have been adopted and they will be made public in the coming hours," the EU's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told reporters after a meeting with members states' foreign ministers.

The most serious measure is understood to be a cut of 145.8 million euros (\$164 million) in the European funds allocated to Turkey for 2020.

The European Investment Bank has been asked to revisit the conditions set out for providing financial support to Ankara, according to several European sources.

The EU is also expected to downgrade its dialogue with Turkey, without cutting it off completely.

And one senior European diplomat added: "It has not be ruled out that targeted sanctions be adopted at some time or other."

The EU last month warned Turkey it could face sanctions if it did not cease what the bloc called "illegal" drilling in Cyprus's exclusive economic zone. Last week, diplomats began discussing what measures to impose.

It was the discovery of huge gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean that sparked the dispute between EU member Cyprus and Turkey.

Ankara sent two ships to carry out drilling off the Cypriot coast despite the warnings from the EU.

Cyprus has been divided between the Republic of Cyprus and a northern third under Turkish military control since 1974 when Turkey invaded in response to a coup by a Greek military junta.

The tensions over gas drilling are also likely related to the collapse of peace talks in 2017, experts say.

While negotiations to reunify the island have not restarted, Cyprus has moved to start gas and oil exploration by issuing licenses.



Main category:
[Middle-East](#)

[Workers recover over 300 bodies from Syrian mass grave](#)

Author:
Mon, 2019-07-15 22:28

BEIRUT: A local official in Syria's Raqqa said workers have unearthed 313 bodies from a mass grave discovered last month near the northern city.

Yasser Al-Khamees who leads a team of first responders says among the bodies found are those belonging to civilians, including women and children, as well as people believed to have been shot dead by Daesh militants.

The mass grave was discovered in mid-June on the southern edges of Raqqa. The city was the de facto capital of the Daesh's so-called Islamic caliphate, which spanned territories in Syria and Iraq.

US-backed Syrian forces retook the city from Daesh in 2014 after gruesome

battles that killed thousands and left the city in ruins.

Several other mass graves have previously been discovered in and around Raqqa.

Separately, the Syrian regime said a gas plant resumed operations Monday after repairs to a key pipeline put out of service by a sabotage attack at the weekend.

“The Ebla gas plant resumed production at full capacity” at dawn Monday after repair of the sabotaged pipeline, the Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources said in a statement.

The pipeline in the Badiya desert, where Daesh is present, transports gas from the regime-controlled Shaer gas field, the country’s largest, in the central province of Homs to the Ebla plant.

It feeds the Ebla plant with 2.5 million cubic meters of gas per day, according to the ministry.

On Sunday, regime’s news agency SANA said that a “terrorist attack” by unidentified perpetrators had put the pipeline out of service.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said a bomb blast targeted the pipeline.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

The Badiya desert is the scene of regular clashes between regime forces and Daesh, which retains the ability to strike despite losing all the territory it once held in Syria.

The country’s eight-year war has seen the regime lose control of key oil fields and caused state hydrocarbon revenues to plummet by billions of dollars.

The regime of President Bashar Assad has been slapped with a raft of Western economic sanctions, extending to hydrocarbons.

Last month, underwater pipelines connected to a refinery in western Syria were sabotaged.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Syria](#)

[Raqqa](#)

[mass grave](#)

[Daesh](#)

Car bomb at rebel checkpoint in Syria's Afrin kills 13: monitorSyrian airstrikes intensify in northwest

[Suicide bombers attack Baghdad mosque](#)

Mon, 2019-07-15 20:00

BAGHDAD: Two suicide bombers have blown themselves up inside a Shiite mosque in southern Baghdad. The number of casualties are unclear.

The attack targeted a funeral ceremony iunderway at the mosque.

Earlier Monday, a car bomb was dicovered in Al-Na'iriya in northern Baghdad. Police dismantled the boimb before it exploded.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Iraq](#)

[Baghdad](#)

Mortar attack kills three people in northern Iraq: police7 killed in Baghdad explosion at Shiite mosque

[Hamas rebuffs leader's call for worldwide attacks on Jews](#)

Author:

Associated Press

ID:

1563204073614420400

Mon, 2019-07-15 15:12

GAZA CITY: The militant Hamas group is distancing itself from a leader who called for the slaughter of Jews worldwide.

In a statement Monday, the Islamist movement said recent remarks by Fathi Hammad, a member of its politburo, "don't represent the movement's official positions."

Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip, said Hammad's remarks conflicted with its amended charter that restricted Hamas's conflict to the Israeli occupation, "not the Jews or their religion," according to the rare statement. Speaking to demonstrators in Gaza on Friday, Hammad called for attacks on "every Jew on the globe."

The United States and European Union list Hamas as a terrorist organization. The group's original 1988 charter called for "struggle against the Jews." But in 2017, Hamas issued a new version without mentioning the Jewish people, saying their struggle was against Israel.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Palestinians](#)

[Israel](#)

Hamas chief: Israel ignoring cease-fire terms for Gaza
Israel targets Hamas in Gaza after 'balloon bombs' launched

[Lebanese Hezbollah lawmaker in violent](#)

[standoff with ex-son-in-law](#)

Author:

Sun, 2019-07-14 21:06

BEIRUT: A leaked police report says a Lebanese lawmaker from the Hezbollah group and a dozen gunmen attempted to storm a police station following a family dispute involving a high-speed car chase.

Nawaf Musawi's daughter and her ex-husband were inside the police station Sunday south of Beirut, following the previous night's car chase and verbal abuse from the ex-husband, all of which she filmed with her phone.

After Musawi's group was denied entry to the station, the report said a gunshot was fired, hitting the ex-son-in-law in his wrist. Musawi denied firing.

The dramatic dispute, apparently over child visitation rights, dominated local media. Divorces and custody battles in Lebanon are often fought in public because of a maze of personal status laws dictated by the country's religious authorities.



Main category:

[Middle-East](#)

Tags:

[Lebanon](#)

[Hezbollah](#)

Don't ruin summer, Lebanon tourism minister pleads after shootoutUS imposes sanctions on Hezbollah 2 MPs and security official in Lebanon