

Egypt to be among first to issue new climate targets ahead of UN summit

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Fri, 2022-05-13 23:02

DUBAI: Egypt plans to issue a new national target to cut its greenhouse gas emissions within weeks, Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said on Friday. The country prepares to take the lead on global climate negotiations as host of a UN summit in November.

Last year, countries agreed at the COP26 UN summit in Glasgow to revisit and strengthen their 2030 climate targets in time for the COP27 meeting to be held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

But so far virtually no country has submitted an enhanced target since Glasgow, according to David Waskow, a director of the non-profit World Resources Institute, who tracks the talks.

Egypt could be among the first. Shoukry, who also serves as COP27 president, called on all countries to submit their new targets, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and urged stronger action to stop climate change.

"Egypt will be declaring its revised NDCs, hopefully within a matter of weeks," he said.

"I hope others will pay attention to what we will demonstrate in terms of ambition and commitment when our revised NDCs are issued."

Waskow said that Egypt has lagged other countries in submitting climate targets. Egypt submitted its most recent NDC in 2017 and failed to submit a new one by a deadline last year for COP26.

But depending what the new target says, it could still be helpful in driving others to act, Waskow said.

"It is helpful for (Egypt) to get the ball rolling and to, we hope, set an important marker for what countries do need to do," Waskow said.

Shoukry spoke alongside Great Britain's Alok Sharma, president of COP26, at the conclusion of two days of meetings among ministers from more than 40 countries, held to discuss progress toward meeting climate commitments.

Sharma said that last year's Glasgow climate deal was a "fragile win." He said countries must now follow through on their commitments for there to be any hope of limiting the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the threshold beyond which climate change will become significantly worse.



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Egypt, World Bank hold talks over COP27
Sharm El-Sheikh hotels begin green practices ahead of COP27

[President Biden, King Abdullah II discuss West Bank violence during meeting](#)

Author:

Fri, 2022-05-13 21:07

LONDON: US President Joe Biden and King Abdullah II of Jordan on Friday discussed ways to “urgently address” a rise in violence in Israel and the West Bank.

The region has been in the grip of a wave of deadly unrest since late March, with Israeli security forces and Palestinians clashing regularly.

“The leaders consulted on recent events in the region and discussed urgent mechanisms to stem violence, calm rhetoric and reduce tensions,” the White House said in a statement.

Tensions remain high with a wave of attacks that have killed at least 18 people since March 22. A total of 31 Palestinians and three Israeli Arabs have died during the same period, according to tallies.

The two leaders reaffirmed the close and enduring nature of the friendship between the US and Jordan, according to a White House readout.

“Jordan is a critical ally and force for stability in the Middle East, and the President confirmed unwavering US support for Jordan and His Majesty’s leadership,” it added.

During the talks, Biden affirmed his strong support for a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and cited the need to preserve the historic status quo at the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount.

The President also recognized Jordan’s crucial role as the custodian of Muslim holy places in Jerusalem.

The leaders discussed the political and economic benefits of further regional integration in infrastructure, energy, water, and climate projects, with Jordan a critical hub for such cooperation and investment.



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UK MPs asked to end Israeli apartheid in national lobby for Palestine
Israel resumes raids in West Bank area where journalist was killed

[Baton-wielding police clash with mourners at Palestinian journalist's funeral](#)

Author:

Fri, 2022-05-13 21:16

RAMALLAH: Israeli troops stormed the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank on Friday, arresting a wanted member of the Islamic Jihad militant group and demolishing his house.

At least 13 people were injured in the raid, which followed clashes between Israeli police and mourners at the funeral of veteran Al-Jazeera reporter Shireen Abu Akleh in East Jerusalem.

Abu Akleh was shot and killed earlier this week while covering a military raid in the occupied West Bank. The Palestinian Authority has blamed Israeli gunfire for her death.

Israeli police moved in on a crowd of mourners in front of the French Hospital in Jerusalem, beating demonstrators with batons and forcing pallbearers to briefly drop the casket.

Masked police faced scores of flag-waving and chanting Palestinians in the St. Joseph's Hospital compound in Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem.

Officers charged the crowd, pushing the group carrying Abu Akleh's coffin back against a wall.

Police lobbed tear-gas shells and fired rubber bullets at the chanting mourners in a bid to stop them raising Palestinian flags in the old city. Through loudspeakers, an Israeli officer warned the hospital would be stormed within minutes if the chants continued.

Police imposed strict conditions for the burial, including a ban on chanting and the raising of flags.

Israel's military said earlier that its initial investigation showed that a heavy firefight was underway about 200 meters from the spot where Abu Akleh died, but that it was unable to determine whether she was shot by Israeli forces or Palestinian militants.

Israel has called for a joint investigation with the PA and for the bullet to

be handed over for forensic analysis to determine who fired the fatal round. The PA has refused, saying it will conduct its own investigation and send the results to the International Criminal Court, which is already investigating possible Israeli war crimes.

The US administration has also urged the PA to cooperate with Israel in the probe, but the authority has rejected that request.

An Israeli soldier died from wounds suffered during Friday's raid near Jenin. A large number of Israeli troops stormed Jenin camp early on Friday, sparking armed clashes with Palestinian fighters.

Israeli forces blew up the house of the wanted man, Mahmoud Al-Daba'i from the Islamic Jihad militant group. Four other civilian homes were shelled. Mohammed Al-Daba'i, the father of the wanted man, confirmed that his son had been arrested after their homes were targeted.

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, the spokesperson for the Palestinian presidency, said the attack on Jenin came "as a continuation of the ongoing Israeli war against our people, coinciding with the current settlement policy in all Palestinian territories, which creates more tension and escalation for which the Israeli government bears full responsibility."

He warned that events in Jerusalem and the rest of the Palestinian territories "will push matters toward a comprehensive explosion that cannot be controlled."

Abu Rudeineh called on the US to stop the Israeli attacks, "which are making the situation reach the point of no return."

Ghassan Al-Khatib, a Palestinian political analyst, told Arab News that Abu Akleh's funeral showed the world, via a live broadcast, the tragedy and daily suffering of Palestinians at the hands of occupation forces.

"For the first time, the world was informed live about the brutal and unjustified attacks of the Israeli occupation forces on the Palestinians. Even a deceased Christian civilian who held American citizenship was not spared and was subjected to this degree of brutality."

Prominent Palestinian journalist Mohammed Daraghmeh, Abu Akleh's close friend, told Arab News that the funeral had restored Jerusalem's Palestinian identity.

"It is forbidden to raise Palestinian flags in Jerusalem, but the flags were raised, and a sea of people amid tears bid her farewell on her last journey. Christian churches of various denominations rang bells, and mosques performed prayers for her, even though she was Christian."

Daraghmeh added: "The Palestinians felt that the targeting of Abu Akleh with Israeli bullets amounted to an attack on their voice, so they went out to express their anger over this atrocity."



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IDF official: Al Jazeera journalist may have been shot by Israeli soldier
Israel resumes raids in West Bank area where journalist was killed

[Pope appoints Lebanese priests to lead Eastern Churches dioceses](#)

Fri, 2022-05-13 19:29

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis appointed three Lebanese Catholic priests to lead some of the most prominent dioceses in the Eastern Catholic Churches, in a move seen by Vatican observers as a “further sign of attention toward that country’s clergy and faithful.”

The leader of the Catholic Church granted his assent to the election of Rev. Joseph Abdel-Jalil Chami as archbishop of Hassake-Nisibi, Syria.

Rev. Elie Joseph Warde was appointed bishop of the Syrian Catholic Eparchy of

Cairo and patriarchal vicar for Sudan and South Sudan, and Rev. Jules Boutros was posted to the position of bishop of the Syrian Patriarchal Curia of Antioch.

All the new bishops were born in Lebanon, where they completed all their theological studies, a communique issued by the Vatican Press Office said. The Catholic Church in Lebanon is considered the most important and influential in the Middle East, representing today nearly 50 percent of the Christian population.

“This clearly represents a further sign of attention by Pope Francis toward the clergy and the faithful who live in Lebanon, an Arab country where the Catholic presence has historically been remarkable, and the cohabitation between different religions is fruitful,” Fr. Giuseppe Ciutti, an Italian priest who spent time in Iraq, told Arab News.

He added that the pontiff “has always expressed his closeness and appreciation for Lebanese Christians.”

The pope’s planned trip to Lebanon next month was postponed as the 85-year-old Francis experienced difficulty walking due to a flare-up of pain in his right knee, in addition to a long-term case of sciatica, which also causes pain in the legs.

The trip had been announced by the Lebanese government for June 12-12. The Vatican never officially confirmed the trip, but the pope referred to plans relating to it several times in recent interviews. It is now likely to take place in the autumn.



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Vatican preparing for possibility of women Swiss GuardsLebanese president sparks Christian anger by defending Hezbollah at the Vatican

[Palestinians honor slain journalist, reject joint probe](#)

Thu, 2022-05-12 23:56

RAMALLAH: Thousands of Palestinians on Thursday honored Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh at a memorial service in the occupied West Bank, a day after she was shot dead during an Israeli army raid.

Israel and the Palestinians have traded blame over the killing of Palestinian-American Abu Akleh, 51, a veteran of the network's Arabic service, during clashes in the Jenin refugee camp.

The US, EU and the UN have backed calls for a full investigation into what Al Jazeera labeled a deliberate killing "in cold blood," but the Palestinian Authority has rejected holding a joint probe with Israel.

In a sign of Abu Akleh's stature among Palestinians, she received what was described as a full state memorial at the Ramallah compound of President Mahmoud Abbas, attended by foreign diplomats, prominent Arab Israeli politicians, and senior Palestinian leaders.

Thousands lined the streets as her coffin, draped in the Palestinian flag, was driven through the West Bank city.

Many held flowers, wreaths and pictures of Abu Akleh, who has been widely hailed for her bravery and professionalism and was well known to Arabic audiences since she covered the second Palestinian Intifada, or uprising, from 2000 to 2005.

"This crime should not go unpunished," said Abbas.

He stressed that the PA held Israel "completely responsible" for her death, and had "refused and rejected" an Israeli proposal for a joint investigation.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett had said on Wednesday it was "likely" Abu Akleh was killed by stray Palestinian gunfire – but Defense Minister Benny Gantz later conceded that it could have been "the Palestinians who shot her" or fire from "our side."

"We are not certain how she was killed," Gantz said. "We are investigating."

Draped in a Palestinian scarf under the late morning sun, Tariq Ahmed, 45, described the death as a “tragedy for all the nation,” comparing his grief to that he felt at the funeral of iconic Palestinian President Yasser Arafat.

“I have not felt this pain since Arafat died,” Ahmed said.

As Abu Akleh’s coffin was taken out of the presidential compound to the drumbeat of a marching band, crowds chanted slogans demanding an end to Palestinian security cooperation with Israel.

Men ran alongside the ambulance as it drove to the checkpoint barrier between Ramallah and Jerusalem.



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Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh shot dead in West Bank, channel blames Israeli troops
Japan’s Foreign Press Club demands investigation into Palestinian journalist’s killing in West Bank