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Press&Dakotan

US Has Few Military Objectives In Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama's new military strategy in Iraq amounts to trying to contain - not destroy - the Islamic militant group that now controls much of the country's northern region. That leaves open the questions of how deeply the U.S. will be drawn into the sectarian conflict, and whether airstrikes alone can stop the militants' momentum.



Obama

Obama insists he will not send American

ground troops back to Iraq after having withdrawn them in 2011, fulfilling a campaign promise. Still, even the limited airstrikes against the vicious insurgency show the president's conviction that the U.S. military cannot remain dormant after having fought an eight-year war that temporarily neutralized Sunni extremists but failed to produce lasting peace.

U.S. military jets dropped food and water to imperiled refugees in northwestern Iraq and launched several airstrikes Friday on isolated targets, including two mortar positions and a vehicle convoy in northeastern Iraq, near the country's Kurdish capital of Irbil. Additional airdrops and targeted strikes were thought likely. The next move may be up to the Islamic State group, the al-Qaida inspired extremists who have chewed up Iraqi opposition so far.

About three dozen U.S. military trainers and a U.S. consulate are in Irbil, where Kurdish forces are fighting off a militant advance. That's no easy defense.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said of the Islamic State group, "They are well organized and they're armed and they are a significant threat to the stability of Iraq.

Hawaii: Tropical Storm Causes Flooding

HONOLULU (AP) — As the first tropical storm to hit Hawaii in 22 years passed by the islands, some coffee farmers on the Big Island began navigating flooded roads to assess damage to their crops Friday while tourists wandered the beaches of Oahu and surfers took to the waves despite driving rain and wind.

The first storm in a one-two punch heading for Hawaii clamored ashore overnight Friday as a weakened tropical storm. A second system close behind it also weakened and was on track to pass north of the islands by several hundred miles.

Tropical Storm Iselle knocked out power, caused flooding and downed trees when it crossed onto the Big Island. There have been no reports of deaths or major injuries, Gov. Neil Abercrombie said Friday.

About 21,000 homes remained without power on the Big Island where the main part of Iselle came ashore in a rural and sparsely populated region, Hawaii County Civil Defense spokesman John Drummond said.

Those staying in shelters were told to return home, while crews cleared trees from roads, county spokesman Kevin Dayton said.

Canada Sends Icebreakers To Arctic

TORONTO (AP) - Canada has sent two icebreakers to the High Arctic to gather scientific data in support of its plan to bid for control of the sea floor under and beyond the North Pole.

The coast guard vessels Terry Fox and Louis St. Laurent set out Friday on a six-week journey that will take them to the eastern side of the Lomonosov Ridge, a long undersea feature that runs from near Ellesmere Island in Nunavut northward over the pole.

If ice conditions permit, this survey will include areas in the vicinity of the North Pole," said a government statement. The trip comes after Canada made a partial submission in

December to the United Nations body that is considering claims from different countries to sections of the Arctic sea floor. That submission involved 1.2 million square kilometers (460,000 square miles), but Prime Minister Stephen Harper stepped in at the last minute to insist Canada extend its claim

Scientists have suggested it looks as if the ridge is connected to the Canadian land mass, but Canada has only done aerial surveys of the ridge once it gets past the pole.

Arctic experts point out that Russia and Denmark also argue the Lomonosov Ridge extends from their shores. The North Pole actually lies on the Danish side of the ridge, as well as on the Danish side of a line that runs equidistant between Ellesmere Island and Greenland.

The government offered no information Friday on the cost of the mission. A second mapping trip is planned in 2015.

Countries, including the U.S., are increasingly looking to the

Israel-Hamas Truce Falls Apart Amid New Violence

BY JOSEF FEDERMAN AND MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH Associated Press

JERUSALEM — A threeday truce collapsed Friday in a new round of violence after Gaza militants resumed rocket attacks on Israel, drawing a wave of retaliatory airstrikes that killed at least five Palestinians, including three children.

The eruption of fighting shattered a brief calm in the monthlong war and dealt a blow to Egyptian-led efforts to secure a long-term ceasefire between the bitter enemies.

A delegation of Palestinian negotiators remained in Cairo in hopes of salvaging the talks. But participants said the negotiations were not going well, and Israel said it would not negotiate under fire. The Palestinian delegation met again late Friday with Egyptian mediators.

Azzam al-Ahmad, head of the Palestinian delegation, said the delegation would stay in Egypt until it reaches an agreement that "ensures" the rights of the Palestinian people. "We told Egyptians we are staying," he told reporters.

The indirect talks are meant to bring an end to the deadliest round of fighting between Israel and Hamas since the Islamic militant group seized control of Gaza in 2007. In four weeks of violence, more than 1,900 Gazans have been killed, roughly three-quarters of them civilians, according to Palestinian and U.N. officials. Sixty-seven people were killed on the Israeli side, including three civilians.

The Palestinians are seeking an end to an Israel-Egypt-



The blockade, which Israel says is needed to prevent arms smuggling, has constrained movement in and out of the territory of 1.8 million people and brought Gaza's economy to a stand-

still. Israel says any long-term agreement must include guarantees that Hamas, an armed group sworn to Israel's destruction, will give up its weapons.

În Cairo, Palestinian participants in the talks were pessimistic about the chances of a deal. They said Israel was opposing every Palestinian proposal for lifting the blockade. For instance, the Palestini-

ans are seeking greater movement of goods through Israeli-controlled cargo crossings, while Israel wants restrictions on "dual-use" items that could potentially be used for military purposes, they

Israel also was resisting demands to allow movement between Gaza and the West Bank — Palestinian territories that are located on opposite sides of Israel, they said.

"Israel in these talks wants to repackage the same old blockade. Öur demands are ending the blockade and having free access for people and goods. This is what ending the blockade means. But Israel is not accepting that," said Bassam Salhi, a Palestinian negotiator.

Negotiators said they expected to remain in Cairo for several days. But with violence resuming, it was un-clear how much progress could be made.

The Israeli delegation to the Cairo talks left Egypt on Friday morning, and it was not clear if it would return.

'There will not be negotiations under fire," Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev said.

In Cairo, Khaled al-Batch, a leader of Islamic Jihad, a smaller militant group in Gaza, said that without a deal on easing the blockade, an informal truce might be the best that could be achieved.

"When there is no ceasefire, that does not mean there is escalation," he said. "Our priority now is to focus on stopping the Israeli aggression against our people and achieving our demands.'

Egypt's Foreign Ministry urged restraint by both sides and called for a new ceasefire to resume negotiations. The ministry said progress had been made in the talks but did not explain.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed "deep disappointment" at the failure to extend the cease-fire and urged the parties to swiftly find a way back to the negotiating table, U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said.

The original, three-day truce expired at 8 a.m. Friday. But Gaza militants began firing rockets even before then. By late Friday, nearly 60 rockets had been fired. Two Israelis were hurt, and one of the rockets damaged a home.

Israel responded with a series of airstrikes. Palestinian officials said at least five people were killed in three separate strikes, two of them near mosques. Among the dead were three boys, a 10year-old and two cousins, aged 12. At least five boys were wounded.

The deaths brought the overall Palestinian toll since July 8 to 1,902, said Palestinian health official Ashraf al-Kidra.

Ebola Outbreak N Declares Health Emergency

BY MARIA CHENG AP Medical Writer

LONDON — The World Health Organization urged nations worldwide to donate money and resources to stop the spread of Ebola as it declared the outbreak in West Africa to be an international public health emergency.

The latest Ebola outbreak is

even as she acknowledged that many countries would probably not have any Ebola cases.

The Nigerian government declared containing the Ebola virus in Africa's most populous country a national emergency Friday, after two Ebola patients died and the health ministry said seven other cases were confirmed. President Goodluck Jonathan approved spending

swine flu pandemic in 2009 and for polio in May.

The impact of WHO's declaration Friday is unclear; its similar declaration about polio doesn't yet seem to have slowed the spread of the paralytic virus.

"Statements won't save lives," said Dr. Bart Janssens, director of operations for the Doctors Without Borders charity

and strengthen public health systems across West Africa.

On Friday, the European Union said it would chip in an additional 8 million euros (\$10.7 million) to Ebola efforts and send a second mobile lab to help with diagnostics. USAID also announced it would invest an extra \$12.45 million to support the fight against Ebola.

In the United States, the Cen-

Graphic: Erik Rodriguez Source: AP, U.N., Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs ian blockade imposed on Gaza after the Hamas takeover. Militants had warned they would resume fighting after the cease-fire said. expired unless there was a deal to ease the restrictions.

ic as a source of natural resources and snipping lanes. The U.S. Geological Survey says the region contains 30 percent of the world's undiscovered natural gas and 15 percent of oil.

New Ukraine Rebel Leader Reinforces Feelings Of Betrayal

ONETSK, Ukraine (AP) — A Ukrainian has replaced a Russian at the helm of the insurgency in eastern Ukraine and declared that he wants "only moral support" from Moscow, as the Kremlin apparently tries to rebut Western claims that it is calling the shots among the rebels.

Many in the rebel ranks decry what they call Russia's betrayal of their cause, but most vow to keep on fighting even as Ukrainian government troops close in on the main rebel stronghold, the eastern city of Donetsk.

In an ominous sign that the fighting may escalate further, the new leader of the insurgency has boasted of hundreds of new recruits and says a lot of rocket launchers and tanks have been seized from a Ukrainian unit.

Alexander Zakharchenko, a native of mostly Russianspeaking eastern Ukraine, took over late Thursday as prime

minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, which has declared independence from the central government in Kiev.

He succeeded Alexander Borodai, a Moscow political consultant who reportedly played a role in Russia's annexation of Crimea in March before moving into eastern Ukraine. Borodai has worked for a nationalist tycoon with alleged connections to the Kremlin.

the largest and longest ever recorded for the disease, which has a death rate of about 50 percent and has so far killed at least 961 people, according to the U.N. health agency. It emerged in Guinea in March and has since spread to Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria.

"Countries affected to date simply do not have the capacity to manage an outbreak of this size and complexity on their own," WHO chief Dr. Margaret Chan told a news conference Friday in Geneva. "I urge the international community to provide this support on the most urgent basis possible."

She added that the world's "collective health security" depends on curbing the spread of the killer virus in West Africa,

\$11.7 million to fight the disease and urged schools to extend a current holiday to give experts more time to assess the Ebola threat.

Since Ebola was first identified in 1976, there have been more than 20 outbreaks in central and eastern Africa: this is the first to affect West Africa. The virus causes symptoms including fever, vomiting, muscle pain and bleeding. It is spread by direct contact with bodily fluids like blood, sweat, urine, saliva and diarrhea. The U.N. agency convened

an expert committee this week to assess the severity of the Ebola epidemic. WHO declared similar emergencies for the

group. "For weeks, (we) have been repeating that a massive medical, epidemiological and public health response is desperately needed. ... Lives are being lost because the response is too slow.'

"I don't know what the advantage is of declaring an international emergency," added Dr. David Heymann, who directed WHO's response to the SARS outbreak and is now a professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. "This could bring in more foreign aid

but we don't know that yet.' Earlier this week, the World Bank pledged up to \$200 million in emergency funding to help the countries affected by Ebola

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ters for Disease Control and Prevention has already warned Americans against traveling to West Africa due to the Ebola outbreak. The agency also put U.S. hospitals on alert for symptoms so they can spot potential cases.

Two Americans infected with Ebola recently received a drug never before tested in people.



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