

Islamic State

Kerry Says US Open To Talks With Iran

BY ELAINE GANLEY AND LARA JAKES
Associated Press

PARIS — As more than two dozen nations pledged Monday to help Iraq fight the Islamic State militants, the United States said it was open to talking to Iran about a role in resolving the crisis, despite Washington's earlier opposition to Tehran even attending the conference.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry ruled out any military coordination with Iran, which in the end was not invited to Paris.

"That doesn't mean that we are opposed to the idea of communicating to find out if they will come on board, or under what circumstances, or whether there is the possibility of a change," Kerry told a small group of reporters.

France and Iraq see Shiite-powerhouse Iran as an interlocutor who could bring its influence to bear in the region against the Sunni extremists of the Islamic State group, but some Arab states, like Saudi Arabia, disagree.

The U.S. opposed a place for Iran at the conference. But Tehran, which has political and military influence with its neighbor Iraq, still managed to be part of the conversation.

The absence of Iran underscored the conflicting sensitivities and complex politics in the region as Western countries seek to battle the Islamic State group, which has taken control of large parts of Iraq and Syria.

The meeting of foreign ministers from Asia, the Middle East and the West was a first step toward deciding who does what in a multilayered offensive against the Islamic State group. As envisioned by France and Iraq, the effort would include intensifying airstrikes, cutting off financing and helping Baghdad cope through humanitarian aid and reconstruction. There would be no combat troops on the ground, however.

As the conference began, two French jets took off over Iraq in France's first reconnaissance missions over the country



Kerry

in a sign of the larger battle ahead. The United States has led airstrikes over Iraq since August.

"We are asking for airborne operations to be continued regularly against terrorist sites. We must not allow them to set up sanctuaries. We must pursue them wherever they are," Iraqi President Fouad Massoud said, an apparent reference to neighboring Syria.

Syria, deep in a civil war waged in part by rival extremist groups, was the wellspring for the Islamic State group, with its fighters sweeping across the border into Iraq, overwhelming the military in Sunni-dominated Anbar province and capitalizing on grievances against the Shiite-led government in Baghdad.

The fighters went on to conquer Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, with the U.S.-trained military crumbling, and seized tanks and other military equipment, then steamrolled across northern Iraq.

The CIA estimates the group has access to between 20,000 and 31,000 fighters in Iraq and Syria — including foreigners lured to the cause.

The recent execution of three Western hostages — British aid worker David Haines and two American journalists — added new urgency to the task of creating a viable strategy to knock out the Islamic State group.

"We must cut off their financing. We must bring them to justice and we must stop the fighters in neighboring countries from joining them," Massoud said at the conference opening.

The group brings in more than \$3 million a day from oil smuggling, human trafficking, theft and extortion, according to U.S. intelligence officials and private experts.

The Paris meeting was a coalition of strange bedfellows, some of whom have allegedly financed extremist groups in Syria and Iraq, and others, like Russia,

which backs Syria's Bashar Assad who is also supported by Iran.

Less than a week ago in Baghdad, Kerry was clear about the U.S. position regarding Iran, embroiled in a years-long dispute with the West over concern that Tehran wants nuclear weapons.

"The United States does not cooperate, militarily or otherwise, nor does it have any intention in this process of doing so, with Iran," he had said.

France, stressing a pragmatic approach, felt Iran could be an ally against a common enemy if, as President Francois Hollande said, Tehran "abides by principles permitting a sincere and useful conversation."

On Monday, Kerry, in an apparent about face, said he wouldn't shut the door to talking to Iran about a common enemy.

"We're not coordinating with Iran, but as I said, we're open to have a conversation at some point in time if there's a way to find something constructive," he said.

Kerry spoke after Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said the U.S. had in fact requested that Tehran join the fight against the Islamic State group but it rejected the overture because of Washington's "unclean intentions."

Kerry did not respond directly to questions about that claim. He said there are often discussions on the sidelines of nuclear talks.

"I'm never going to shut the door to something that could solve a problem if there's a way to do it," Kerry said.

Back-door dealings are common in Middle East diplomacy, but it was unclear whether Iran would cooperate. Khamenei said Iran is proud not to be part of the U.S.-led coalition and warned it will suffer the same problems it suffered in the past should it enter Iraq and Syria without authorization.

Massoud would have liked Iran at the talks.

House GOP Eyes Syrian Rebel Training

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawmakers raced Monday to authorize an expanded mission to arm and train moderate Syrian rebels before heading back to the campaign trail, with House Republicans preparing legislation backing a central plank of President Barack Obama's strategy against the Islamic State group.

The Obama administration says the training operation is needed to establish credible, local ground forces to accompany U.S. air strikes against the militants who have conquered large parts of Iraq and Syria, beheaded two American journalists and become a top U.S. terrorism threat in the region and beyond. The House and Senate are both on a tight schedule, looking to wrap up work Friday before an almost two-month recess in preparation for November's midterm elections.

The authorization under consideration will likely be included as an amendment to a spending bill Congress must pass to keep the government open until mid-December. That would give lawmakers the opportunity to hold a separate debate and vote on the matter — something members of both parties want.

Qatar A Wild Card In Mideast Conflicts

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just miles from where former Guantanamo Bay terror suspects have resettled, American warplanes take off from Qatar's al-Udeid air base in the global war on extremism.

The contrast in images illustrates why tiny but rich Qatar is an intriguing player in what President Barack Obama says will be a long battle to stop and eventually destroy the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

Qatar plays an outsize role as a U.S. military partner. It gained public praise from Obama for brokering the controversial deal that freed Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl from Taliban captivity in May in exchange for the release of five senior Taliban officials who had been imprisoned for years at the U.S.-run Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba. Qatar promised Obama it would keep the five under watch for one year, although they would then be free to leave. The Obama administration also praised Qatar for its role in securing the release of extremist hostage Peter Theo Curtis.

But Qatar also has a reputation as a supporter of Islamist groups in disfavor in Washington. Some in Congress suspect Qatar of funneling money to Islamic State militants, though the State Department says the U.S. has no evidence of it.

Qatari officials in Doha had no immediate comment for this story, but the government has unequivocally denied that it backs the Islamic State group. Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid bin Mohammed al-Attiyah said last month that his country "does not support extremist groups, including ISIS, in any way."

Generation Gap Looms In Scottish Vote

GLASGOW, Scotland (AP) — Across Scotland, dinner table talk is getting heated as families argue over how to vote in Scotland's independence referendum. A generation gap has opened up, with younger voters more inclined to back independence and their elders tending to say they want to remain in the United Kingdom.

Support for the status quo is strongest among the over-60s, who worry about the consequences that breaking free would have on pensions, health care and savings; the pro-independence movement is largely being driven by under-40s. Neck-and-neck in the polls, the rival campaigns have called on core supporters to make a last ditch attempt to swing the vote by making the debate a family affair.

The young have been urged to visit parents and grandparents to explain why they should support separation. The No camp has launched a counteroffensive by asking seniors to win young hearts and minds with their wisdom.

"I was so proud of my grandpa when he told me he was voting Yes that I burst into tears," said 23-year-old Miriam Brett, a campaigner for Generation Yes. "A Yes vote means so much to my generation. We want to let all our grandparents know that their future is secure in our hands, and with a Yes we can build a better future for ourselves and for our children."

Some polls suggest the No camp is trailing in every age group except the over-60s. Opinion surveys indicate more than 63 percent of that age group is expected to vote in favor of the union. As older people are more likely to be on the electoral roll, there has been a huge drive to get younger people engaged in the Yes campaign.

Hurricane Leaves Extensive Damage

CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico (AP) — Hurricane Odile blazed a trail of destruction through Mexico's Baja California Peninsula on Monday that leveled everything from ramshackle homes to luxury hotels and big-box stores, leaving entire neighborhoods as disaster zones.

About 30,000 tourists were being put up in temporary shelters in hotels and Los Cabos international airport remained closed. Emergency officials reported that 135 people were treated for minor injuries from things like flying glass or falling objects, but there were no serious injuries or deaths so far.

Odile, which made landfall near Cabo San Lucas the previous night as a powerful Category 3 hurricane, toppled trees, power poles and road signs along the main highway, which at one point was swamped by rushing floodwaters. Countless windows were blown out of rental cars and high-end hotel rooms, and resort facades crumbled to the ground.

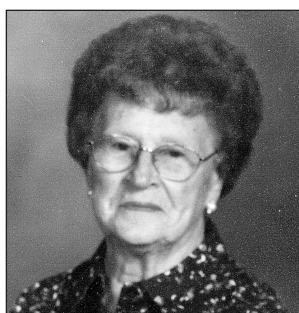
OBITUARIES

Delores Vellek

Funeral mass for Delores Vellek, 93, of Yankton, will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 17 at St. Leo Catholic Church in Tyndall with Fr. Joe Forcelle officiating. Organist will be Marcene Kniffen. Burial will follow at St. Leo Catholic Cemetery. Honorary casketbearers are Delores's grandchildren, great grandchildren, and great great grandchildren. Active casketbearers are Mike Oien, Troy Hauglin, Chris Bye, Nick Knutson, Mark Gustad, and Nick Saylor.

Arrangements are being handled by Goglin Funeral Home of Tyndall. Online condolences may be sent at www.goglinfh.com.

Delores Ellen Vellek was born on Wednesday, August 17, 1921 on a farm south of Wagner, Charles Mix County, South Dakota to Severin and Tillie (Giedd) Peterson. She attended school in Charles Mix County. In 1938 at Lake Andes, she was united in marriage to Theo Stock and four children were born to this union: Robert Stock, Norma (Robert) Oien, Yankton, SD, Betty Hauglin, Sioux



Delores Vellek

Falls, SD, and Bonnie (Dick) Sejba, Apple Valley, MN. In 1959, she married William Vellek at Yankton, SD. Together they moved to Chamberlain, following William's transfer, where Delores worked 3 years at St. Joseph Indian School until William got transferred once more to Pierre where Delores worked at St. Mary's Hospital for 16 years. After working 32 years, William retired and they moved to Tyndall to care for his mother. In 1980, Delores began working at the Good Samaritan Center of Tyndall. Following William's passing in 1992, she moved to Yankton to be closer to her family. Delores was a hard worker. She loved doing yard work,

keeping up beautiful flowers, and much more. She was a member of St. Leo Catholic Church in Tyndall and of the St. Leo Altar Society. She was also a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Delores died on Saturday, September 13, 2014 at the Yankton Care Center in Yankton having attained the age of 93 years and 27 days.

She is survived by her four children: Bob, Norma, Betty, & Bonnie; one brother, John Peterson of Tripp, SD; and many friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband William Vellek, brother James Peterson, sister Christine Steffen, and half-sister Mae Engel.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
September 16, 2014

Goglin
Funeral Home

Tyndall - Scotland - Tripp



www.goglinfh.com

Charles (Chuck) Jacobson

Charles (Chuck) Jacobson, 75, of Freeman died Monday, Sept. 15, 2014, at the Freeman hospital.

Funeral services are planned for 10:30 a.m. Thursday at the Salem Free Lutheran Church of rural Freeman.

Further arrangements are pending with the Walter Funeral Home in Freeman.

IN REMEMBRANCE

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US Expands Iraq Airstrikes

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. officials said Monday the United States has taken the first step in its planned expanded fight against Islamic State militants, going to the aid of Iraqi security forces near Baghdad who were being attacked by enemy fighters.

The U.S. Central Command said it conducted two airstrikes Sunday and Monday in support of the Iraqi forces near Sinjar and southwest of Baghdad.

The strikes represent the newly broadened mission authorized by President Barack Obama to go on the offensive against the Islamic State group wherever it is. Previous U.S. airstrikes in Iraq were conducted to protect U.S. interests and personnel, assist Iraqi refugees and secure critical infrastructure. These strikes were in direct support of Iraqi forces fighting the militants.

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