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CONTROLS

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WARNING: TOPIC: URGENT, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL, MILITARY
 SERIAL: IML2016011351214466

BODY

COUNTRY: IRAN, UNITED STATES

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SUBJ: (U) IRAN: COMMANDER SAYS US NAVY'S 'IRRESPONSIBLE' MOVEMENTS in Gulf Could Have Led to 'Disaster'

SOURCE: Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1 TV in Persian 1030 GMT 13 Jan 16 (U)
TEXT:

[TELEVISION]

[OSC Summary]

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Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1 TV in Persian at 1030 GMT on 13 January broadcast a live interview with IRGC Navy Commander Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi following the arrest and subsequent release of 10 US sailors.

Fadavi criticized the American Navy's initial reaction to the arrest of 10 US sailors in the Persian Gulf and said that the American Navy's "unprofessional and irresponsible movements could have led to disaster for the American Navy."

Asked to provide an update on the incident, Fadavi said: "As you mentioned, a few minutes ago the armed US sailors who had been arrested yesterday following their illegal entry into the Farsi Island waters have been released. Following the investigations, which were carried out last night, it became clear that the Americans did not enter the Iranian waters based on a pre-determined plan with the aim of carrying out illegal activities, including spying activities and the like. They mistakenly entered the Iranian territories due to a technical fault in some of their systems. They were seized at about 1600 [local time], showing almost no resistance and were transferred to Farsi Island.

Investigations were made last night and today, American politicians made some assurances and [Iranian] politicians made the final decision in Tehran and informed us about their decision. We followed the orders and it was made apparent that, as I said in my interview earlier this morning, their entry into Farsi Island's territorial

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waters -- about three miles away from Farsi Island -- was due to a mistake and not a pre-planned arrangement and therefore they were released within a short time.

Asked about the exact location where the sailors were arrested and the international regulations regarding territorial waters of countries and small islands, Fadavi said: "As I said they were arrested three miles away from Farsi Island. The accepted distance determining the territorial waters of each country is about 12 miles.

Oil, commercial, and even military vessels can sail in other countries' territorial waters after following certain procedures -- one of which is the coastal country's assurance that the passage of military vessels is harmless. We have announced to the Americans years ago that the passage of American ships in Iranian territorial waters and their presence in the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz is

not considered harmless. Based on international regulations, the coastal country should determine whether it considers passage of vessels as harmless. This means that we need to decide whether the trespassing or presence of the Americans is harmless or not.

According to international law, in particular the 1982 convention, these terms are clearly stated. Some countries have officially accepted it and some have not officially accepted it but practically abide by it. This convention is accepted by most countries.

The Navy force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps [IRGC], which for many years has had the responsibility to control the whole of the

Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf area has been safeguarding the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic with full authority and the Americans know it.

Last night following our authoritative actions for about 40 minutes, some of the American destroyers, the Truman aircraft carrier, showed certain non-professional and irresponsible behavior. This is while we, with our various tools, including our coast-to-sea missiles, missile launching speed vessels, and all other capabilities at the disposal of the IRGC, were on high alert and fully prepared [to take action]. Based on the warnings broadcast through international systems, we stopped the [American ships'] next movements and prevented their irresponsible moves and it was proved to them that the IRGC's Navy has the first and last word. If the Americans continued their irresponsible and unprofessional moves, it could have

resulted in such a disaster that would have been a first in American history. The Truman aircraft carrier, various warships, and the Charles de Gaulle were all within the range of our fire, and this

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would have resulted in them being instantly destroyed.

Our insight and complete control over the situation prevented any incident. This is an issue that has been apparent for years. Very dangerous incidents can happen because of the harmful presence of the

Americans in our region. A dangerous incident in the Persian Gulf will result in insecurity in the whole world. This is a very important issue and other governments and countries, as well as our dear nation, must be aware that the IRGC is very capable and determined to safeguard the Islamic Revolution and its achievements."

Asked what the first reaction of the arrested American sailors were, Fadavi said: "Because our behavior was based on the Islamic teachings, they were not concerned. Also, they explicitly stressed that they were not aware that they had entered our territorial waters

or that they were near Farsi Island. Our inspections and investigations into the vessels' navigation systems showed that what they claimed was correct." "In the end, they and the American politicians accepted that they had made a mistake and promised to try

to prevent such incidents in the future. They apologized and our officials decided that the sailors should be released a few minutes ago. Our vessels took them back to the American ship."

Fadavi was then asked about the interrogation of the American sailors

and what they said during the interrogations, he said: "One issue that is surprising is that the distance between Kuwait and Bahrain is

quite long. And they claimed that they were going from Kuwait to Bahrain. Apparently, there was no proper coordination between the vessels and the Truman aircraft carrier, which was present in that area. They were sailing this long distance and in principle they should not have used those vessels. Their systems had broken down and

their communications were disrupted and it was clear after our investigations that this claim was true. They were armed and young and one of them was female and our treatment of that lady had to be specifically respectful."

Asked if they were carrying GPS devices, and why their navigation systems were not working, Fadavi said: "Yes, they did have all the navigation systems including GPS, but it seems that there was a problem with their systems, which resulted in this mistake."

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Asked about the reason why the American vessels showed "unusual actions" at the beginning and if they were trying to free the arrested sailors, Fadavi said: "No, American forces -- especially those linked with the American Navy, which has experience of being present in the Persian Gulf in the past years -- are certain that in the Persian Gulf area and the Strait of Hormuz, America will never be the winner of any battle and they are aware that any battle in that region will result in their ships being destroyed and sunk. But in those first 40 minutes, it was clear that due to the psychological pressures they were under, they did not carry out their duties as one expects from a professional and responsible Navy force. It seems that they have or will be reprimanded for creating such a dangerous situation in a sensitive area like the Persian Gulf. The security of the Persian Gulf has an international effect. Any problems in the Persian Gulf will create problems for the whole world. In the history of the Islamic Revolution, the Americans have proved that their presence in the Persian Gulf will create insecurities."

Asked about the message of the IRGC in this incident, Fadavi explained about the capabilities of the IRGC in maintaining security in the region and called for the withdrawal of the American vessels from the Persian Gulf. He said: "Not only does the presence of American ships not bring security to the region but it compromises it."

[Description of Source: Tehran Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1 TV in Persian -- State-run television]

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