

# BAHRAIN

*Issued by the "Bahrain Freedom Movement" to promote human and constitutional rights*

## **The Bahrain story; the unmissable tale of heroism**

Despite the passage of seven years since the popular Revolution started to shape the future of Bahrain, the people have remained both steadfast and resilient. They have been adding nails in the coffin of the rotten regime that is both illegitimate and criminal. Cracks are appearing fast in the files and ranks of this despotic junta that has mastered one thing only: violence against the peaceful people of Bahrain. Violence cannot lead to lasting solutions. This is a fact that our people have learnt over the years and cannot ignore it in favour of bloodshed and meaningless violence. In over two centuries of the Alkhalifa tribal rule, not a single member of the ruling family has been attacked or injured by the native Bahrainis while hundreds of citizens were killed, maimed, terrorised, banished or had their nationality confiscated. The policy of exile has been adopted by the ruling tribe and its British supporters for decades. A house at the top of mountain at St Helena testifies to this fact. In mid fifties three leaders of the opposition were exiled to that island which is completely cut off from the outside world. It was served by a weekly boat trip before the first airport was opened last month. Bahrainis in the diaspora have suffered immensely in their exile while their families remained at the receiving end of more repression and reprisals by the Alkhalifa inhumane regime.

Nonetheless, the people have remained both vigilant and steadfast. They have never blinked or raised white cloth once despite their enormous suffering. For example, the people of Duraz have been under siege for more than one year as the regime attempted to break their will and that of their leader, Sheikh Isa Qassim. The regime became more frustrated and sought to exact revenge on those remarkable people. At least five citizens of Duraz were forcibly disappeared for almost a year before trumpeted charges were brought against them in recent days. The world knows that Alkhalifa dictators had been inundated with calls to reveal the fate of these people especially that of Sayed Alawi Al Durazi and were thus forced to make up a false case involving terrorism against these innocent people. When the regime was condemned for re-arresting Mrs Ibtisam Al Sayegh claiming she had been involved in terrorism the human rights world erupted in anger and demanded her immediate and unconditional release. Suddenly, following the visit to Bahrain by

Alistair Burt, the UK's minister for foreign affairs in the third week of October, the dictator was humiliated into releasing her and three other human rights activists. By arresting those human rights activists and linking them to terrorism the dictator caused great embarrassment to its UK supporters who had been implicated in defending Alkhalifa violence against peaceful Bahrainis. The regime was, once again, humiliated into submission while its victims walked free with honour and dignity. This the fate of the freedom lovers while humiliation pursued dictators until their downfall.

Thus the story of Bahrainis struggle continues with new chapters added all along. These are often tales of bravery, steadfastness, honourable stands, dignified struggle and peaceful civil resistance. These tales will remain in the memory of the heroes like Hassan Mushaima, Abdul Wahab Hussain, Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace, Abdul Hadi Al Khawaja, Sheikh Ali Salman and Nabeel Rajab. Those who carry the flag outside jail also share this honourable history. People like Ibrahim Sharif, Ibtisam Al Sayegh and others have carved their names in the list of heroes of Bahrainis who resisted repression, oppression, dictatorship, tribal reactionary regimes and evil tyranny. They will pursue the goals of freedom and liberty, but may also be subjected to more regime's crimes. The history of their struggle indicate that they will persevere and will not bow down to pressure or intimidation. Heroes often emerge at times of crisis when they defeat the circumstances and refuse to buckle under the pressures of the calamities. The making of heroes is not easy. In a small country like Bahrain that seems even more remote. But those men and women who sacrificed their lives, children, property, jobs and social status, to stand by the victims of oppression and defend the defenceless, have turned into real heroes. People like Hassan Mushaima and Abdul Wahab Hussain have spent more than 13 years each behind bars for one thing: challenging injustice and shouting against dictatorship. The thousands of young men who are cramped into small dungeons infested with rats, insects and various diseases are the forgotten heroes of the struggle. They teach the generations lessons in dignity, sacrifice and selflessness.

Those who perished under the sadistic torture administered by the Alkhalifa with the full knowledge of their backers, are the living; their foes are the dead. The many youths who suffer terminal diseases (Ilias Al Mulla who has cancer, and, of course, Hassan Mushaima who also suffers from Cancer, and Dr Abdul Jalil Al Singace with his life-long polio disease) are the ones who are immortalised, alive or dead.

These episodes of heroism and selflessness are lessons for those seeking to alleviate the suffering of their people, whether in the Arab world or anywhere else. Each human being lives one life only, Lucky are those who defeat temptations and succeed in turning it into a living example of nobility, love, peace and pride through internal struggle with the self and external one against evil dictators, despots and tyrants. Many of our Bahraini compatriots have achieved this high status of dignity and sacrifice. If we take how heroes in other countries have succeeded in defeating evil regimes and turning their countries into beacons of hope, justice and democratic practice, then we are justified in proposing that our forgotten heroes, languishing behind bars, are capable of achieving similar results. That makes us hopeful that the situation in Bahrain and possibly Saudi Arabia may have become the end game for the dictators, and the executioners.

Despair is not part of the culture of the Bahraini struggle. Even those who spent years at St Helena in mid fifties, never lost hope of eventual change. The thousands of political prisoners who spent good parts of their lives at the notorious jail at the island of Jida (which was closed in the eighties) contributed to the spirit of the struggle that the later generations inherited. Even more significant are those who were cramped in the underground dungeons of the National Security Agency (NSA) which was run by senior Alkhalifa members especially the group of 500 who were rounded up in August 2010. Their ordeal had paved the way for the largest ever Revolution that erupted only six months later. The Bahrain story is fascinating for its volumes of personal experiences, tragedies, truthfulness, sincerity of its leaders and grass roots and the nobility of its causes. It is a story that must not missed or ignored by the novelists, analysts, story-tellers, compilers or those aspiring to achieve richness of ideas, feelings and thoughts.

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## Saudi Davos of the desert ridiculed, Bahraini inmates infected with AIDS

Scepticism is gradually replacing optimism about the seriousness of the Saudis to develop their political system, despite the massive media, public relations and economic campaigns undertaken in recent months. The "Davos of the Desert" conference held this week in the capital, Riyadh was intended to push forward the so-called 2030 vision presented by the self-declared crown prince, Mohammad bin Salman earlier this year. His assertions that Saudi Arabia was "returning to what we were before, a country of moderate Islam that is open to the world and open to all religions" sounded hollow to many people, given the inextricable links between the Saudi regime and the Wahhabi Salafist religious doctrine that negates the other. This claim is in stark contradiction to the ongoing criminal destruction of Yemen and the town of Awwamiyah in the Eastern Province. They also contradict the Saudi failed campaign against neighbouring Qatar. These claims aim to deflect the world's attention away from the criminal activity of the Saudi regime and its continued enslavement of the people, especially women. The prince is too weak to abandon the extremist Wahhabi doctrine which is the main ally of the Saudi tribal regime and the main ideology of extremist and terrorist groups like ISIS and AlQa'ida.

After three months of the ill-fated adventure, the American Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has little hope that a Saudi Arabia-led bloc's standoff with Qatar will end anytime soon, blaming the four countries lined up against the emirate for a lack of progress and casting doubts on U.S. efforts to mediate the crisis. "There seems to be a real unwillingness on the part of some of the parties to want to engage,"

Tillerson said in an interview Thursday 19th October in Washington. "It's up to the leadership of the quartet when they want to engage with Qatar because Qatar has been very clear -- they're ready to engage." Tillerson made the comment days before he embarked on a trip to the region, including stops in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, in a renewed push to resolve the dispute. The crisis flared in June when Saudi Arabia and three other U.S. allies in the region -- the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain -- severed diplomatic and transport links with the gas-rich state over accusations that it supports terrorist groups. Qatari officials deny the charges. Meanwhile, forty members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have called for the release of the family of Sayed Ahmad Al Wadaei who are being persecuted in revenge for his activism. They represent various parties and groups and signed the letter directed to the European Commission's foreign spokesperson, Federica Mogherini. The letter said that Mr Al Wadaei's mother in law Hajar Mansoor Hassan, 49, her son, Nazar Al Wadaei, 18 and his cousin, Mahmood Marzooq Mansoor, 29 had been in jail for more over six months on trumpeted charges. It also pointed out that six UN experts and Amnesty International had raised this case before; Their detention is a clear attempt to force him to stop his peaceful activities" The signatories also urges Ms Mogherini "to condemn all forms of intimidating the opposition" and calls for the release of all human rights activists.

There are extremely worrying news from the notorious Jaw prison that the inmates have been intentionally infected with AIDS in revenge for their continued protests and demands. In one part of the pris-

on at least 28 cases were recorded in September as a result of a systematic policy targeting the young men. Regime's torturers have also spread the use of drugs both for profiteering and as a weapon against native Bahraini prisoners of conscience. Criminal policies include depriving the political prisoners of their right for family visits and health care. Mr Mohammad Hassan Jawad, the eldest prisoner who is over 70, has been denied medical care by the prison staff. They insist that he be shackled as a condition to allow him to get medical treatment at the hospital. Another inmate, Ahmad Mirza, from Bilad Al Qadeem has been denied medical treatment to remove his gallbladder. He has been in constant pain for months. Another victim, Hamed Jaffar, 33, has also been left to suffer from acute diabetes for which he has not been provided with adequate medication. His condition needs three daily Insulin injections before meals. That is not happening. His condition has deteriorated seriously in recent weeks.

The Bahrain 13 group (the leaders of the Revolution) and several families have been denied visits by their children. AlKhabbani family has not met their jailed sons for ten months. Persecution of women has also continued. Mrs Najah Al Sheikh has had her illegal imprisonment extended by 15 more days. Since her detention in April, she has been subjected to physical and sexual abuses. The regime justifies these abuses claiming Mrs AlSheikh had "promoted hatred of the regime". Another inmate, Montadar Al Sammak has been forcibly disappeared since his abduction by regime's forces two weeks ago.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
25th October 2017

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## Labour promises to stop arming Saudis, Alkhalifa torture intensifies

Human rights and anti-war activists have welcomed the commitment by the Labour Party to ban exports of British-made weapons to all members of the Saudi-led bombing campaign against Yemen, Jeremy Corbyn's shadow minister for peace has told Middle East Eye. "We should not be selling weapons to any state that uses, or could potentially use, weapons we supply for internal repression or for foreign wars," said Fabian Hamilton MP in his first major interview since he was appointed shadow minister for peace and the Middle East last year. Hamilton said that the Labour leader's recent calls to halt arms sales to Saudi Arabia over its bombardment of Yemen would be widened to include all nations involved in the bloody conflict. It would be the first move by a future Labour government that would overhaul the arms sales regime to ensure exports would only be made to "states with a long history of using weapons solely for defensive purposes". On the sales of arms to the Saudi-led coalition engaged in the bombardment of Yemen, he said: "I

don't believe we have any business providing weapons of war for proxy wars."

The Saudi-led aggression in Yemen is beginning to hurt the people of the countries involved in this illegal war. Two days ago two UAE pilots were killed when their Apache helicopter crashed in a raiding mission. While Sudan lost several of its fighter aircrafts and more than 400 troops, both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are losing soldiers and mercenaries on daily basis. Alkhalifa tribal rule of Bahrain has also lost at least one F16 aircraft and several mercenaries. Al Qa'ida is expanding its influence in the areas under the Saudi control and is prepared to wage terrorist attacks on the West.

On a parallel track many have been disgusted by the Trump administration's decision to supply Alkhalifa tribal dictatorship with 16 fighter aircrafts at a cost of \$3.8 billion. Bahrain's annual budget is \$9.6 billion. The deficit is \$6.6 billion and the state's debts are put at \$23.6 billion. This means that the regime would spend more than the annual revenue on arming itself

against the people. The intended F16 deal is thus intended to kill the people in three ways; bombing them, subjecting them to hunger due to lack of funds, and buying off any international negative reaction to the regime's crimes.

The situation on the ground in Bahrain is extremely alarming. As the human rights crisis in Bahrain intensifies the regime is resorting to more vicious methods of revenge from the natives. This week young native, Mahdi Ahmad Meftah, 16, has been enduring merciless torture to the extent that he had to undergo an emergency operation to remove one of his testicles. The use of electric torture on his private and sensitive parts has been so severe that it turned that part into burnt out chunk, threatening his life. His case has now become the latest in the most severe torture cases in recent times.

The phenomenon of the "disappeared" is escalating. In addition to the hundreds of detentions last year the number of those who are considered "disappeared" has reached 18. *Continued on Page 4*

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## Saudi coalition killed & maimed children, mass arrests in Bahrain

The Saudi-led coalition which is waging war on Yemen has been included on a draft United Nations list of parties that kill and maim children in war. The text says the coalition's actions resulted in 683 child casualties during 2016, and accuses it of carrying out 38 attacks on schools and hospitals. More than 8,530 people, 60% of them civilians, have been killed and 48,800 injured in air strikes and fighting on the ground since March 2015, according to the UN. "In Yemen, the coalition's actions objectively led to the listing for the killing and maiming of children, with 683 child casualties attributed to this party, and, as a result of being responsible for 38 verified incidents, for attacks on schools and hospitals during 2016," a draft of the latest report says. Save the Children said it had seen few signs of improvement on the ground in Yemen, with 58 civilian casualties recorded in one week in August alone. Forty-two were the result of coalition attacks, according to UN human rights officials. Last year, the Saudi-led coalition was removed from the 2015 list despite what Save the Children said was "clear, UN-verified evidence of a pattern of grave violations". Former Secretary General Ban Ki-moon ordered a "joint review", reportedly after Saudi Arabia threatened to withdraw funding for UN programmes. The Saudi regime, meanwhile, has detained at least 45 people including scholars, journalists and activists. From Al-Awwamiya Town in the Eastern Province, regime forces arrested Yousuf Al Meslab. This is in line with ongoing attacks on the Eastern Province, especially Al Awwamiya, town of Sheikh Al Nimr. Another mass arrest onslaught has been taking place in Bahrain since last week.

Scores of natives including under-aged children have been rounded up and taken to the torture chambers. In a house raid in Daih Town at dawn on 8th October both Abdul Aziz AlMutawwa and Hussain Fadhel were detained. From Duraz several children were arrested including Ali Mohammad Jaffar Al Mutaghawi, Ali Al Rayes and Mahdi Ahmad Meftah. From Karzakkan Mahmood Zuhair was snatched from his mother's hands. 15 year old Essam Hadi Jassim was arrested yesterday morning and he was taken to the infamous CID building. From Karranah Town 15 years old Isaam Hadi Jassim was detained and taken to the notorious CID headquarters. Ibrahim Kwaitan was arrested at the town of Al Ekr. This comes at a time when calls are made to determine the fate of the disappeared. They include Sayed Alawi Al Durazi who had been snatched by masked members of Alkhalifa Death Squads one year ago and Mohammad Al Shehabi who has disappeared for five months. From Bani Jamra Town Hussain Yousuf Habib was detained in a house raid at dawn. Muhsin Adel, 17, from Abu Guwwa Town was as snatched in dawn raid on his home.

On 6th October the Washington-based Americans for Democracy and Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB) issued a statement on revocation of citizenship by the Gulf regimes. It said: Arbitrary citizenship revocation has particularly increased since 2012, with nearly 500 persons stripped of their nationality in the last five years, including more than a hundred so far this year. Of these persons, the vast majority are members of the country's Shia majority population, which experiences discrimination across most aspects of Bahraini society. Bahrain's broad anti-terror and nationality legislation allow the authorities to

strip individuals of their citizenship for exercising their basic rights. The Ministry of Interior is empowered to issue administrative denaturalization orders that are typically un-appealable. For example, Bahraini human rights lawyer Taimoor Karimi saw his citizenship revoked in 2012 for participating in demonstrations during the pro-democracy movement, and was deported to Iraq in 2016. Likewise, Husain Abdulla, executive director of Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain, was stripped of his citizenship for his international human rights work. Furthermore, arbitrary and politically motivated denaturalization amplifies the negative effects of gender discrimination in the nationality law: when the authorities strip a man of his Bahraini citizenship, his entire family is at risk of statelessness and all of the attendant problems.

Stung by the people's rejection of their tribal tyranny, Alkhalifa have waged more destructive raids on homes to intimidate people and push them into submission. Yesterday they attacked the home of martyr Sami Mushaima who was executed in January and caused extensive damage to the house and its occupants. The family contacted human rights activist, Zainab AlKhamis and gave her some details of the destruction the aggressors had inflicted inside the house and the fear they created in the hearts of the grief-stricken family. Other units attacked houses in Aali Town for no clear reason except intimidation and evil-doing. These criminal acts often lead to negative outcomes. People are now much more adamant on achieving regime change as it has become impossible for the natives to co-habit with Alkhalifa.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**  
11th October 2017

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## UK sales of arms and military kit to Saudi Arabia hit £1.1bn in 2017

Jessica Elgot, The Guardian 24 October  
British sales of military equipment to Saudi Arabia topped £1.1bn in the first half of this year, with government data showing a spike in sales since the spring. The statistics from the Department for International Trade (DIT) show the UK sold £836m of arms and military hardware to Saudi Arabia between April and June, up from £280m between January and March. Saudi Arabia – which was visited by the UK prime minister, Theresa May, as one of her first trips after triggering the formal Brexit process in March – has purchased arms including air-to-air missiles, aircraft components and sniper rifles. The sales also include anti-riot gear, ballistic shields and body armour.

The latest export licence figures are released amid continued concern over the Saudi military intervention in Yemen. DIT is facing criticism after it was revealed that UK soldiers were carrying out demonstrations for weapons manufacturers. The department refused to say which countries had attended.

DIT said identifying the delegations

would "prejudice the relationship between the UK and other states". A freedom of information request by the Observer showed British forces were involved in demonstrating the Firestorm targeting systems, used by Gulf coalition forces involved in airstrikes in Yemen.

The department added that the increase in the value of licences issued this quarter was due to a single licence for approximately £830m, originally granted in 2015 which expired without being completed.

A government spokesperson said the licence was "not for use in any ground campaign" and the majority of the export licences issued by the UK were for non-military goods, though their value is far lower. The goods include intelligence equipment, such as telecommunications jamming and security software.

The deputy leader of the Liberal Democrats, Jo Swinson, said the huge sums were "shameful profiteering by the arms companies from a conflict which has killed thousands of civilians and subjected millions to famine and disease".

Swinson said the government should immediately

suspend arms sales to Saudi, regardless of the cost. "There is no justification for the UK to continue selling billions of pounds worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia while they continue their operation in Yemen," she added.

"We must suspend arms sales to Saudi immediately. Britain is better than this – we should stand firm for our values, not sell them to the highest bidder."

The shadow foreign secretary, Emily Thornberry, said in her party conference speech last month that a Labour government would overhaul the process of approving export licences, which she said currently took place "behind closed doors, and shrouded in secrecy".

Thornberry said Labour would commit to "wholesale reform of the legal and regulatory framework fully implementing the International Arms Trade Treaty", and introduce a new, more transparent system.

A government spokesman said: "The UK government takes its export responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust export control regimes in the world."



# Lawyers accuse UK-backed Bahrain watchdogs over torture inquiry

5th October

DUBAI (Reuters) - A group of British human rights lawyers have accused Bahraini oversight bodies funded by Britain's government of violating international law by allegedly failing to investigate torture allegations against two inmates on death row.

Mohamed Ramadan and Husain Moosa face imminent execution in Bahrain after its Supreme Court last year confirmed death sentences imposed by a lower tribunal based on false confessions extracted through torture, according to legal charity Reprieve.

The two men had been convicted for a 2014 bomb attack in the village of al-Dair that killed a policeman.

Reprieve said the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales (BHRC) had petitioned Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa for clemency for Ramadan and Moosa, arguing that their trial did not comply with fair legal standards.

It said the Bahraini government-appointed Ombudsman had agreed to open an investigation into the torture allegations after coming under pressure from international rights groups.

"However, in the 15 months since, the

Ombudsman has disclosed no information about its findings, and has indicated that it has referred that case to the Special Investigation Unit (SIU), a British-trained body, for further investigation," Reprieve's statement said.

"Despite claiming to have opened investigations, neither the Ombudsman nor the SIU have communicated any findings to Mr Ramadan, Mr Moosa, their lawyer or their families. This too constitutes a serious breach of international law."

The Gulf Arab state's government and its Ombudsman's office did not reply to requests for comment.

A British Foreign Office spokesman said Bahrain's SIU was pursuing an investigation into the torture allegations.

"We encourage a thorough, transparent and swift investigation," the spokesman said. "The UK continues to encourage the government of Bahrain to deliver on its international and domestic human rights commitments."

Reprieve said Britain spends 1.2 million pounds (\$1.59 million) annually on training and support for the two Bahraini oversight agencies.

BHRC chairwoman Kirsty Brimelow called for a transparent investigation of the alleged use of torture. "Also, at mini-

mum, the UK government should join the Bar Human Rights Committee's call for clemency to be applied to the death penalty sentences."

Bahrain has seen a wave of deadly bomb attacks since a 2011 uprising led by majority Shi'ite Muslims was crushed with help from some Gulf Arab neighbours. Several people have been sentenced to death over the attacks, including Ramadan and Moosa.

In January, Bahrain executed three Shi'ite men convicted of killing three policemen in a 2014 bomb attack, the first death sentences to be carried out in over two decades.

(\$1 = 0.7535 pounds)

## Labour promises to stop arming Saudis

*Continued from page 2*

Nothing is known of those who had been snatched by masked members of the Death Squads over the past 12 months. For two weeks now, no news has been heard of Hassan Jaffar AlAbu. He was arrested at the beginning of October and taken to unknown location without any trace or contact. On 13th October two cousins; Mohammad Ali AlAmm and Khalil Ibrahim Al Amm were detained in a dawn raid on their home at the town of Aali. From Malikiya town, two youths were also detained; Ammar Hani and Sayed Ali, 18. They were severely beaten at the scene before being transferred to unknown location.

On Monday 16th October, regime's Death Squads attacked the cells of the Bahrain 13, the leaders of the people, intimidating them, searching their belongings and threatening to impose more draconian measures against them. The leaders have been denied family visits for more than eight months. They receive minimum medical care and are subjected to continuous attacks and threats by the regime's agents. Almost all international human rights bodies as well as the Bissiouni Commission have called for their release, but they have remained behind bars for the past seven years.

Ibrahim Sharif, the former secretary General of Wa'ad Society, has been summoned to appear before Alkhalifa prosecution office to answer for a tweet about the economic and political disasters committed by the regime. Tweeting comments that are not in line with the ruling tribe is now considered a crime. The trial of Sheikh Mohammad Saleh Al Qash'ami and his family has been postponed until 30th October. The whole family of this elderly native was snatched from their home at Barbar Town in February for sheltering a peaceful protester. They include his son, daughter and four other women.

**Bahrain Freedom Movement**

18th October 2017

## Tillerson faults Saudi-led bloc in Qatar Crisis

By Nick Wadhams, Bloomer 19 October Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has little hope that a Saudi Arabia-led bloc's stand-off with Qatar will end anytime soon, blaming the four countries lined up against the emirate for a lack of progress and casting doubts on U.S. efforts to mediate the crisis.

"There seems to be a real unwillingness on the part of some of the parties to want to engage," Tillerson said in an interview Thursday in Washington. "It's up to the leadership of the quartet when they want to engage with Qatar because Qatar has been very clear -- they're ready to engage."

Tillerson made the comment days before he embarks on a trip to the region, including stops in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, in a renewed push to resolve the dispute. The crisis flared in June when Saudi Arabia and three other U.S. allies in the region -- the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain -- severed diplomatic and transport links with the gas-rich state over accusations that it supports terrorist groups. Qatari officials deny the charges.

Read More: A QuickTake Q&A on How Saudis Got Into the Qatar Crisis

Tillerson, the former CEO of Exxon Mobil Corp., last visited the region in July. At the time, the top U.S. diplomat said he was hopeful that he could help resolve the dispute, which has been officially mediated by Kuwait. Tillerson's remarks Thursday suggested that attitude has now

changed.

"I do not have a lot of expectations for it being resolved anytime soon," Tillerson said. He declined to say which country bears the most responsibility for the lack of progress.

In September, President Donald Trump said he would be willing to serve as a mediator "right here in the White House" if the issue wasn't solved soon.

"I have a very strong feeling that it will be solved, and pretty quickly," Trump predicted at the time.

In the interview, Tillerson emphasized that the main responsibility for a way out of the crisis now rests with the countries at the center of it.

"Our role is to try to ensure lines of communication are as open as we can help them be, that messages not be misunderstood," Tillerson said. "We're ready to play any role we can to bring them together but at this point it really is now up to the leadership of those countries."

