Amos calls impact of terrorist acts on Iraqis, Syrians ‘horrific’

UN undersecretary: It’s critical to cut off funding to ISIL

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Baroness Amos made the remarks in an interview with the Tehran Times on Sunday in the Iranian capital Tehran.

Amos, a British citizen who took office on September 1, 2010, was in Tehran to hold talks with Iranian officials to improve regional cooperation on humanitarian assistance and discuss major humanitarian crises affecting the Middle East.

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Following are excerpts of the interview:

Is the UN engaged in preventive diplomacy to stop terrorist groups like ISIL?

Vengeance Amos: The UN is using preventive diplomacy all the time, that’s why the UN was created because the world recognized that we need to have some kind of multilateral body to work with different member states to try to prevent wars and conflicts from escalating. But I think that when you’re talking about the spread of a terrorist organization like ISIL, these are groups that don’t follow the rules of international diplomacy. So, what the UN can do, and you have seen that the member states of the Security Council passed the resolution condemning the financing, for example, of ISIL, what the UN member states can do is use the Security Council, like the tools of the United Nations to try to prevent the funding and spread of these kinds of organizations. The UN can also, of course, where you have armed and terrorist groups on the ground, can try to find ways of engaging in some kind of discussion. Obviously, we do that not something that we discuss, but it’s a part of a process of trying to use the good offices of the United Nations to mediate. So I think there are different ways in which the UN plays a role in preventive diplomacy.

What has been the impact of ISIL’s activities on neighboring countries?

As: Obviously, in Syria and Iraq, which is where we have seen the main impact, it’s been horrific in terms of the impact it had on the ordinary people, the brutality and violence. I think, well, we are extremely concerned about the impact on women, for example.

In terms of neighboring countries, I think there is a worry in many neighboring countries that this could spread, and this could spread into those countries and destabilize those countries. So there are debates and discussions going on between the presidents and prime ministers, the foreign ministers of those countries with respect to what can be done to halt the advance of ISIL, and indeed to ensure that in the longer-term, this kind of terrorism is rooted out over time. You will know that the Security Council has passed resolutions which have resulted in the sanctioning of certain individuals engaged in terrorist activities across the world. This, of course, itself is not enough. Stopping the funding and financing of those terrorist networks is also absolutely critical. And I think this is what neighbo