

Iran envoy to Uganda asks countries to condemn war

BY RASHUL ADIDI

KAMPALA. Iran's ambassador to Uganda, Mr Majid Saffar, has urged the international community, particularly Islamic nations and members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), chaired by Uganda, to condemn the ongoing war against Iran, warning that it is a ticking time bomb for global peace and security.

The call comes as Iran's leadership affirms its readiness to defend its homeland with all resources, stressing that diplomacy should not be mistaken for weakness. This followed remarks by Israel's Ambassador to Kenya, Gideon Behar, who defended his country's attack on Iran. He said Israel was left with no option after the Islamic nation continued its nuclear ambitions and increased stockpiles of ballistic missiles.

Mr Saffar emphasised that Uganda's stance on the Iran war is pivotal, given its role as chair of NAM.

Speaking to this publication yesterday, he noted that the conflict not only wounds Iran but also shakes the foundations of global peace.

He underscored the importance of dialogue, cautioning that Iran's willing-



By choosing to bomb the negotiation table out of spite, the American regime has shown that it has no respect for international dialogue or the peace process.

- Mr Majid Saffar, Iran envoy to Uganda

ness to talk should not be seen as weakness.

"Iran has always believed in solving problems through dialogue. However, diplomacy must not be mistaken for weakness," Mr Saffar said in Kampala.

The war has snowballed into a regional conflict, with ripple effects already felt far beyond the Middle East. Petroleum prices are skyrocketing, and international trade is being strangled.

While US President Donald Trump stated that the strikes aim to change Iran's regime, Mr Saffar countered: "We reject the big lies and false claims made by the American regime officials to justify this violence, treating complex nuclear negotiation like a 'real estate transaction' is a dangerous mistake."

He added that Iran's retaliation against Israel and the US is in line with Article 51 of the UN Charter.

"Under Article 51 of the UN Charter, the Islamic Republic of Iran has the inherent and legal right to defend itself. Our armed forces have reacted swiftly and decisively, and we have launched missile and drone strikes against military targets in occupied territories and US bases in the region. We officially state that targeting these bases is an act

of legitimate self-defense against clear aggression," the envoy stated.

Mr Saffar described the attack as a betrayal of diplomacy, noting that it was launched during Ramadhan and on the eve of Nowruz, just as negotiations seemed closer than ever.

"By choosing to bomb the negotiation table out of spite, the American regime has shown that it has no respect for international dialogue or the peace process," Mr Saffar said. He lamented the onslaught: "We mourn the martyrdom of His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Sayed Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, alongside senior political and military leaders."

Mr Saffar alleged that more than 200 children have been killed.

"The aggression targeted dozens of Iranian cities and claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent citizens. Among the martyrs are approximately 200 children, including young schoolgirls. The barbaric nature of these strikes is clear in the destruction of medical facilities, schools, and sports venues, among others," he said.

Uganda's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Henry Okello Oryem, reiterated the country's position in a phone inter-

view last evening.

"Uganda's position is very clear: any conflict, any misunderstanding between countries can't be resolved by war fighting or use of force. It should be resolved through dialogue, talking and taking diplomatic opportunities."

"So what is happening in the Middle East is not different. We urge the parties to seriously consider ceasefire and hostilities and engage in dialogue and take diplomatic and political opportunities to resolve the matter rather than the continue to fight," Mr Oryem said.

He added that the government is working to repatriate Ugandans caught in the war zone, though challenges remain due to the lack of a clear database of Ugandans abroad.

"When Ugandans are in such stress, they need to be evacuated. Unfortunately, even when government can assist them, Ugandans don't want to register with high commissions and embassies when they are abroad. They claim that they went there with their own money. Therefore, we never know the total number of Ugandans in those countries. Yet when problems like this arise, they start looking for government," Mr Oryem concluded.