US sanctions illegal as American arms used against Palestinians, Yemenis - Iranian FM

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A spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Hossein Jaberi Ansari, says that Tehran will continue to enhance its missile capabilities, despite Washington introducing fresh sanctions, following a missile test by Iran in October, Press TV reports.

"The US sanctions against Iran's ballistic missile program ... have no legal or moral legitimacy," Reuters cited Ansari as saying in a televised news conference.

"America sells tens of billions of dollars of weaponry each year to countries in the region," Ansari said. *"These weapons are used in war crimes against Palestinian, Lebanese and most recently Yemeni citizens."*

US Treasury imposes new ballistic missile sanctions on Iran after 5 US prisoners released http://on.rt.com/721k

The Foreign Ministry concluded by saying that they would not negotiate with the US on other issues, while sanctions introduced by the Washington, which Iran called *"propaganda measures,"* would be met with a firm response.

"We will respond to such propaganda stunts and measures meant to harm [us], by more robustly pursuing our lawful missile program and promoting our defense capabilities and national security," the statement said, as cited by Press TV.

DETAILS: EU, US lift Iran sanctions as UN watchdog says Tehran 'has kept nuclear promises' http://on.rt.com/720l

On Sunday, the US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on 11 companies and individuals for helping to supply Iran's ballistic missile program.
"Iran's ballistic missile program poses a significant threat to regional and global security, and it will continue to be subject to international sanctions," Adam J. Szubin, acting Undersecretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence, said in a statement.

"We have consistently made clear that the United States will vigorously press sanctions against Iranian activities outside of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – including those related to Iran's support for terrorism, regional destabilization, human rights abuses and ballistic missile program."

On December 31, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that Tehran should expand its missile program in response to threats of new US sanctions.

In a letter to Defense Minister Hossein Dehghan, Rouhani said that Iran needed to step up its missile capabilities in response to aggressive actions by the US, which was threatening to impose more sanctions over a missile test that Tehran held in October. Rouhani said Iran had a right to continue developing its missiles, since they are not capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

"As the US government is clearly still pursuing its hostile policies and illegal meddling... the armed forces need to quickly and significantly increase their missile capability," Rouhani wrote.