

## Top Iranian, Saudi diplomats to meet in Beijing today



### Political Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Saudi counterpart, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, will reportedly meet in the Chinese capital, Beijing, today.

According to reports published on Wednesday, the meeting, which will be the first of its kind in more than seven years, is aimed at activating a recent agreement between Tehran and Riyadh to revive ties.

Today's meeting follows three telephone conversations between the top Iranian and Saudi diplomats, during which they discussed future steps regarding the landmark China-brokered reconciliation pact as well as other bilateral deals.

Beijing was chosen as the venue for the meeting as an extension of its positive role in mediating the Iran-Saudi rapprochement and facilitating communication between the two Middle Eastern powers.

Meanwhile, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi has already accepted an invitation from Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to visit Riyadh.

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani visited Beijing on March 5 to finalize the terms of the agreement in trilateral meetings with Chinese State Councilor and former Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Saudi National Security Adviser Musaed bin Mohammed al-Aiban.

After several days of intensive negotiations hosted by China, Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed on March 10 to resume their diplomatic relations and reopen their embassies and diplomatic missions after seven years of estrangement.

In a joint statement after signing the agreement, Tehran and Riyadh highlighted the need to respect each other's national sovereignty and refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of one another.

They agreed to implement a security cooperation agreement signed in April 2001 and another accord reached in May 1998 to boost economic, commercial, investment, technical, scientific, cultural, sports, and youth affairs cooperation.

To the dismay of the U.S. and Israel, the detente has the potential to ease tensions across a region characterized by turbulence.

# Leader: Arab world's relations with Iran improving



● khamenei.ir

"The U.S. started the war in Ukraine. However, this war has caused it to drift apart from its European allies, who are actually the ones taking the brunt of the war, while the U.S. reaps its benefits." Referring to the Israeli regime as another enemy of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out that during the regime's 75 years of existence it has never faced problems like the

dire ones it is facing today. "The Zionist regime is politically unstable and has changed four prime ministers in four years; party coalitions collapse before forming; there is an extreme bipolarity throughout the fake regime, which is highlighted by demonstrations of hundreds of thousands of people in some cities. It is not possible for them to try to make up for these weaknesses by firing a few rockets," stated the

Leader, while giving examples of the Israeli regime's chaotic state. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution considered the warnings of Israeli officials regarding the approaching collapse of the regime as another sign of their weakening. "We had mentioned [in 2015] that the Zionist regime would not exist 25 years hence, but it seems as though they themselves are in a big rush and want to leave sooner."

## Temporary deal on JCPOA mutually unfavorable

But the second approach argues that a comprehensive and sustainable agreement should be reached to give investors a long-term and forward-looking outlook, rather than ask them to rely on unstable and temporary conditions.

Iran's reluctance to accept a temporary agreement is understandable and rooted in the fact that it may not have long-term benefits for the country's economy. Although a temporary agreement may help alleviate some of the economic pressure caused by sanctions, it is unlikely to attract foreign investment and long-term economic cooperation programs with foreign countries. Investors re-

quire stability and predictability, which a temporary agreement cannot provide. It can only serve as a pain reliever but cannot solve the fundamental problem and fix Iran's economy.

Moreover, Iran has made it clear that it will only return to compliance with the JCPOA if all sanctions are lifted, which a temporary agreement cannot achieve.

Although many believe that the current conditions have pushed Iran and the West toward the formula of "no agreement, no crisis", the continuation of the situation raises concerns for both sides. That's because the two issues of Iran's developing peaceful nuclear program and the econom-

ic pressure caused by the imposition of unilateral sanctions on the Islamic Republic would remain unattended and a thorn in the sides of the West and Tehran, respectively. Therefore, it is essential for Iran and the US to engage in face-to-face talks to reach a stable and long-term agreement on the revival of the JCPOA. Direct negotiations could prove to be a logical and effective way for assessing the JCPOA's conditions and facilitating its return.

Some may argue that conducting negotiations is a risky tool in foreign policy, but it is better for Iran to sit down for direct talks for its national interests. There should be no fear of negotiation, as the worst-case scenario



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in diplomatic negotiations is that the negotiators do not reach a result. The reality is that the US and Europe are not as keen as they once were to finalize the JCPOA's revival due to Iran's alleged military cooperation with Russia over the war in Ukraine, which Tehran

denies, as well as its handling of last year's street protests which the West claims was harsh. Therefore, direct negotiations may be a practical option to break the impasse, resolve the issue of sanctions, and promote economic cooperation with foreign countries.

## Iran welcomes U.S. call for peace in Yemen

### Political Desk

Iran on Wednesday welcomed a U.S. call to help end the long-running conflict in Yemen by backing a peace process, one year after a United Nations-brokered truce dramatically reduced fighting.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani described the envoy's call as "grati-

fyng", stressing that Tehran had been "striving for a peace process since the beginning of the war".

U.S. special envoy for Yemen Timothy Lenderking said Tuesday that Washington "would like to see the Iranians show support for the political process that we hope is coming."

Diplomatic efforts to

resolve the conflict have increased since Saudi Arabia signed a Chinese-brokered deal to restore relations with Iran last month.

Saudi Arabia, in the form of a coalition of several Arab countries, including the UAE and with the United States' green light, started a full-fledged war against Yemen on March 26, 2015.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Iran: MAV attack on Isfahan military site not confirmed

### Political Desk

Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi does not confirm the report of a Micro Aerial Vehicle (MAV) attack on one of the workshop complexes belonging to the Ministry of Defense in Isfahan province. Earlier on Wednesday, media reports indicated that a MAV attack on one of the workshop complexes belonging to the Ministry of Defense in Isfahan province of Iran was successfully repelled on Tuesday night.

The MAV was hit by the peripheral protection forces stationed in the complex and the defense systems and could not cause any damage to the complex, according to the reports.

In a statement on January 29, the Iranian Defense Ministry announced that one of its workshop complexes in Isfahan had come under attack from a number of MAVs, but the complex's air defenses successfully repelled the attack.



Iran's Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi  
● IRNA

The ministry underscored that the unsuccessful attack did not cause any loss of life and only led to minor damage to the roof of a work-

shop. The complex, it added, continues its ordinary operations following the attack. Iran's Nour News, affiliated with the country's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), further reported that anti-Iran terrorists operating in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region were involved in the drone strike. It said the terrorists, ordered by a foreign intelligence service, smuggled the constituent parts of a micro aerial vehicle and explosive materials from the Kurdistan region into Iran through far-flung and arduous routes and handed them over to a liaison in a border city in the northwestern part of the country.