

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran's envoy to  
assume office  
in Riyadh

## National Desk

Iran's new Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Alireza Enayati held a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian before his departure for the kingdom to lead Tehran's diplomatic mission.

Enayati presented a report to Amir-Abdollahian about the plans for expansion of bilateral ties between the two countries.

Amir-Abdollahian underlined the importance of strengthening of relations between the two countries.

Breaking a seven-year diplomatic rift, Tehran officially reopened its embassy in Riyadh in June, followed by its consulate in Jeddah and its representative office with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The two countries had severed diplomatic relations in 2016 after demonstrators stormed Saudi missions in Iran following the kingdom's execution of a prominent Shia cleric.

'US does not  
deserve roles  
in UN Human  
Rights Council'

Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva Ali Bahreini said the United States with its dark human rights record does not deserve roles in the Human Rights Council. Bahreini made the statement in a post on his X account on Saturday in reaction to remarks by the US ambassador against Tehran, who is set to chair the UN Human Rights Council Social Forum this November, Press TV reported.

He attached a video clip to his post showing some cases of the US human right crimes, including the downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a US Navy guided-missile cruiser over the country's territorial waters in the Persian Gulf in 1988, which killed all 290 people on board. Bahreini added that Washington "continues to occupy undeservingly a seat in the UN Human Rights Council." The Iranian envoy's post came after US Ambassador to the UN's Human Rights Council Michèle Taylor claimed that Iran has an appalling human rights record and should not have any place in leadership roles within the UN human rights ecosystem.

Iran, Turkey considering trilateral  
trade meeting with Saudi Arabia

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian (1st L) and his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan (1st R) hold talks in Tehran, Iran, on September 3, 2023.

● ALI HASSANPOUR/IRAN DAILY

## International Desk

Iranian and Turkish foreign ministers held a meeting in Tehran on Sunday, which lasted nearly four hours. According to Iran Daily's reporter, the two sides discussed a range of issues, including bilateral cooperation, developments in the Caucasus region, Syria, and Afghanistan.

During a joint press conference after their meeting, the Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that delegations of the two sides discussed the follow-up of the agreements reached during a recent meeting between the presidents of the two countries.

He also referred to the two countries' goal of reaching a 30-billion-euro trade volume, saying, "We are now in the middle of the road." Amir-Abdollahian

added that the two sides announced their readiness to sign a comprehensive document on joint cooperation.

## Water dispute

They also emphasized the resolution of the water shortage which has created problems for both countries. In this regard, a joint technical committee, which was formed last year, is scheduled to meet in Tehran to continue consultations on the issue, the Iranian foreign minister said.

Amir-Abdollahian emphasized that the two sides agreed on the fair use of the water of the Aras River, which rises in eastern Turkey and separates Iran from Armenia and Azerbaijan. Iran's top diplomat said that his Turkish counterpart is set to issue the necessary orders to re-

solve the concerns in this regard.

The Iranian official said that the Turkish side gave assurance that there is no plan in Turkey to limit or reduce the amount of water flowing towards Iran's northwestern provinces. Following the restoration of diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and considering the Arab country's desire to increase economic relations with Iran, Tehran and Turkey agreed to arrange a trilateral meeting with Riyadh to expand economic cooperation between the three countries, he said. Regarding the ongoing tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Caucasus region, Amir-Abdollahian said that time is ripe to ease tensions and establish peace and enhance cooperation in the region.

## Tensions in Caucasus region

The Iranian foreign minister also reiterated Tehran's support for peace talks between Yerevan and Baku. However, Amir-Abdollahian noted that Iran does not allow any changes in the region's geopolitics. Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a brief but bloody war over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region in 2020. The ex-Soviet countries have been locked in a decades-old conflict over the region.

The Iranian foreign minister also welcomed the constructive positions and positive ideas of his Turkish counterpart regarding the security of common borders, the fight against terrorism, and the return of Syrian refugees to their country, stressing that concerns of Turkey and Syria regarding these is-

ssues should be addressed through diplomacy and dialogue.

The Turkish foreign minister Hakan Fidan, for his part, said that Ankara is waiting for Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi's visit to Turkey to participate in the meeting of the two countries' Supreme Council of Strategic Relations.

Fidan also expressed his satisfaction with the détente between Iran and Saudi Arabia, noting that friendly relations between Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, as the region's major countries, is important for the stability of the region. He also said that resumption of negotiations on Iran's nuclear program is important for Ankara.

Later in the day, the Turkish foreign minister also held a separate meeting with the Iranian president.

## Setting the stage for Tehran-Ankara ties



By Firouz Dolatabadi  
Iran's ex-ambassador to Turkey

OPINION  
EXCLUSIVE

The first visit of Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan to Tehran after President Recep Tayyip

Erdogan secured another term in highly contested election is significant as it sets the groundwork for the future prospects of Tehran-Ankara relations. It is important to understand the purpose and agenda of Fidan's visit to Iran. Talks between Iran and Turkey have always been crucial, encompassing various

areas of bilateral, regional, and international cooperation. Available information about Fidan suggests that he is a reserved politician, not particularly fond of media attention. His focus is mainly on political and security matters, and he has shown an interest in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This raises hopes that he has flown to Tehran with a logical and strategic agenda to foster cooperation.

Iran always welcome the development of relations with its neighbors. While Iran's foreign policy in the past 15 years lacked cohesion in the region, it seems that President Ebrahim Raeisi's government has a greater inclination toward strengthening ties with the regional nations and neighbors. Iran has initiated a de-escalation process in the region in recent months, which promises greater peace and stability in the future, potentially encouraging economic cooperation. Turkey, on the other hand, has not maintained a steadfast position on regional developments, changing its stance every now and then. Therefore, even though Turkey might not actively engage in the regional de-escalation process, it is unlikely to obstruct it. As increased stability in the region would also

serve Turkey's interests and improve the investment climate in regional countries, including Turkey itself.

In Iran-Turkey relations, political, security, and military matters have always been prioritized alongside economic issues. Therefore, negotiations between Turkey's top diplomat and Iranian authorities will undoubtedly include topics such as developments in the Caucasus region and the contentious issue of the Zangezur corridor. Syria's developments, Turkey's positions and actions in that country, as well as Iran's relations with Russia and the presence of Kurdish militias in Iraq are also expected to be on the agenda. Iran has already voiced its vehement opposition to the establishment of the Zangezur corridor, as it disrupts the land connection between Iran and Armenia, altering the geopolitical landscape of the region. Turkey had also previously rejected Iran's plan

to export natural gas to Europe through its territory, proposing to buy the commodity and then transport it. It is natural for Iranian authorities to remind Turkey's foreign minister that the altering geopolitics of the region and the creation of the Zangezur corridor, if not under Armenian control and ownership, are non-negotiable for Iran. Economically, Iran and Turkey do not currently have any major new projects on their agenda, as both countries are not in favorable economic conditions. However, they have always maintained their traditional economic ties. In addition to these ties, Tehran and Ankara share many common interests in bilateral cooperation, energy exchange, and trade, which can be further promoted in the future. Therefore, Fidan's visit can be seen as a step toward improving future cooperation and a platform for discussing regional developments, particularly in Syria.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

