

# Iran's president felicitates Christian countries on New Year

Pezeshkian hopes war, genocide to end in 2025

## International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in separate messages on the occasion of the New Year and Christmas expressed hope that oppression, violence, war, and genocide will end in 2025.

Pezeshkian extended Christmas and New Year greetings to the leaders and people of the countries celebrating the auspicious occasions.

He expressed hope that peace and tranquility would be established worldwide in 2025.

The Iranian president noted that Jesus Christ is the prophet of light and mercy whose birth is the celebration of peace and morality in human societies.

Like all divine prophets,

Christ's teachings are the solution to eliminating injustice, he added.

In a post on his official X account on Wednesday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei extended Christmas and New Year greetings to Christians around the globe, including "fellow Christian compatriots" in Iran.

As the world begins new year, people in many countries including Palestine, Ukraine and Sudan, are struggling to survive severe conditions caused by the conflicts in their countries.

In the Gaza Strip where Israel has launched a devastating war since October 2023, more than 45,000 Palestinians have been killed and most of the ter-

ritory's population have been forcibly displaced.

Conflicts in other parts of the world have also caused severe conditions for the people.

## Call for solidarity with Palestine

The Hamas resistance group, which has been fighting Israeli military in the Gaza Strip since 2023, has called on "all free people in the world, who celebrate Christmas, to translate these celebrations into a mass movement against the war of genocide" against Gaza.

"Let these celebrations be a global occasion to continue and escalate all forms of demonstrations and marches" against Israel's aggression, a statement said.



Palestinians take shelter from the rain at a makeshift camp housing displaced Palestinians in Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip on December 31, 2024, amid the continuing Israel's strikes.

● BASHAR TALEB/AFP

## Bahrain says continues coordination with Iran to restore ties

Bahrain's Foreign Ministry said Manama is continuing coordination with its Iranian counterpart aimed at reconciliation between the two countries and restoration of diplomatic ties.

The ministry announced Bahrain pursues a balanced approach in its foreign policy on the basis of defending its sovereignty and independence, serving the Persian Gulf kingdom's national interests, and enhancing its regional and international standing, Press TV reported. The kingdom also adheres to the principles of good neighborliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and focuses on promoting relations and consolidating cooperation and dialogue through mutual respect and common understanding, the Bahraini Foreign Ministry said.

The ministry said it will continue coordination with its Iranian counterpart in order to establish the necessary legal frameworks to restore diplomatic relations between the two countries, stating that the mutual visits between the two sides have contributed to reaching an agreement on resuming talks aimed at restoring bilateral relations between the two countries.

Bahrain followed Saudi Arabia's suit and severed diplomatic relations with Iran on January 4, 2016, after



Iranian protesters, enraged by the execution of prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr Baqir al-Nimr by the Saudi government, stormed its diplomatic mission in Iran.

Bahrain was among several Persian Gulf states that sided with Riyadh and cut ties with Iran.

However, after the restoration of ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia following marathon negotiations mediated by Iraq, Oman and China in March last year, many Persian Gulf countries followed suit and extended an olive branch to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Back on October 21, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and King Hamad of Bahrain met in Manama and discussed relations and the latest developments in the region.

King Hamad expressed hope that he would pay a visit to Tehran.

Both countries agreed in June to start negotiations on the resumption of political after a hiatus of more than eight years.

**Mohammad Ali Rajabi**  
Cartoonist



## Iran rejects US-UK 'baseless claims' on Red Sea tensions

### International Desk

Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the UN Amir Saeed Iravani harshly reacted to the latest rhetoric by the United States and Britain at a UN Security Council meeting, saying the accusations of Iran's involvement in tensions in the Red Sea are "baseless claims" designed to escalate chaos and create an excuse for further instability in the region by the US and its allies.

Regarding the situation in the Red Sea, the envoy said that Iran once again emphasizes its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of international maritime lanes and said, "The baseless accusations made by the Zionist representative, which is supported by its closest ally, the United States, are a clear attempt to shift responsibility from their illegal actions and destructive activities against Iran," according to IRNA.

In separate letters to the UN secretary-general and the president of the Security Council on Monday, Iravani said, "It is the hostile Zionist regime, not

Iran, which has always pursued a policy of provocation and destabilizing activities and is considered a serious threat to peace and security in the region and beyond."

He emphasized that Iran as a responsible UN member has always adhered to its obligations under international law and the UN Charter and has not been involved in any activity inconsistent with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

"Therefore, Iran categorically denies any violation of arms embargoes or any involvement in fueling the conflict in Yemen or elsewhere," he stated.

The ambassador described it as both deeply troubling and highly ironic that the US and Britain, instead of upholding their responsibilities as permanent members of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security, persist in providing political cover and military support for Israel's reckless actions and violations while fabricating baseless accusations against Iran. "This blatant complicity has embold-



Amir Saeed Iravani

ened Israel to act with impunity, fueling regional conflicts and undermining any prospects for lasting peace in Yemen under UN leadership," he noted.

Iravani emphasized that Iran's position on Yemen has been consistent and unwavering. From the very onset of the crisis in 2015, Tehran has supported a political resolution to the conflict and called for a comprehensive ceasefire, inclusive dialogue, and a peaceful process that respects the Arab nation's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Since the beginning of Israel's onslaught on the Gaza Strip in October 2023, Yemen has been targeting Israeli-owned and -bound shipping in support of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

## People paying for ...

The sanctions and the failure to join the FATF have resulted in Iran being unable to utilize its revenues abroad, making it necessary to incur additional costs for transferring these funds. To leverage the economic opportunities available globally, the only way is to join the FATF and similar conventions.

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### Lack of engagement with FATF amplifies impact of US sanctions

By Mehdi Hosseini  
Former deputy oil minister

The newly elected US President Donald Trump is likely to ratchet up sanctions on Iran, aiming to further disrupt the return of financial resources from oil sales. For this reason, it is anticipated that Iran will face difficult days ahead. In such circumstances, Iran's diplomacy can play a very effective role.

Relations with other countries are of great importance; even the Iranian government's ties with the US should not be overlooked, as utilizing diplomacy to mitigate impending risks is vital and unavoidable.

Iran has made many mistakes in the past that have contributed to the

effectiveness of US sanctions. For example, the failure to engage with the FATF has essentially resulted in a self-imposed sanction, and as a consequence, Iran is now excluded from the global banking system.

This is despite the fact that many of the FATF's recommendations are adhered to in Iran, and measures against money laundering and support for terrorism are actively implemented. It seems that by correcting some mistakes and taking appropriate actions, conditions can be improved to a certain extent, enabling Iran to navigate these challenging circumstances.

### Despite delays, losses, Iran will join FATF

By Hamidreza Jalaeipour  
Iranian journalist

Those who opposed the FATF were frequently individuals who, over the past two decades, disagreed with Iran's development, viewing it as a Western initiative. However, we now find ourselves in a situation where these individuals are directly witnessing the detrimental effects of opposing development—along with its essential requirements, such as transparent financial relations with the global economy—in Iran. For in-

stance, they observe that over the past decade, an additional ten million people have fallen into poverty; a country that once exported electricity is now struggling to meet the energy demands of its industrial and residential sectors.

One of the reasons for the opposition to the FATF inside the country was that Iran backed the "regional Resistance Front" fighting Israel, leading them to resist accepting this transparency mechanism.

In reality, supporting the Palestinian cause is a regional and global idea that involves interactions between states and flows through cultural, media, and economic spheres. In other words, the opposition to the FATF stemmed from a "militaristic perspective" on the Resistance, but now the shortcomings of this one-dimensional approach are glaringly evident to those who resisted transparency.

These days, ordinary people are also becoming aware that trade ties are tied to many international organizations.

This time, Iran's Leader has also expressed a favorable opinion toward the FATF, and it seems that the number of opponents is diminishing. This issue needs to be resolved without further delay.