

# Iran-Russia treaty to cement economies, defense capabilities: *Lavrov*

## International Desk

Russia's foreign minister said a long-term cooperation agreement, which is set to be signed between Tehran and Moscow on Friday, aims to strengthen both countries' economies, solving social issues, and ensuring their defense capabilities.

Sergey Lavrov told a news conference on Tuesday that the strategic partnership treaty will not be aimed against any country.

"This question is usually asked by our Western colleagues because they always want to find some topic in any issue to show that Russia, Iran, China, or North Korea are constantly preparing something against someone. However, this document, like the agreement with North Korea, is not directed against any country and is constructive in nature."

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian will meet in Moscow on Friday to sign

the long-awaited strategic partnership agreement.

"On January 17, Vladimir Putin will hold talks with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Masoud Pezeshkian, who will come to Moscow on an official visit," the Kremlin said in a statement on Monday.

"Following the talks, Vladimir Putin and Masoud Pezeshkian will sign the Treaty on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Russia and Iran," the statement added.

The two leaders will discuss expanding cooperation between Moscow and Tehran, including in "trade, investment, transport, logistics, humanitarian sphere, and current issues on the regional and international agenda," the statement said.

## 'Important event'

Meanwhile, the Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov underscored the importance of the agreement, saying, "It is a

very important event for us."

Iran's ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali also said the cooperation agreement will shape relations between the countries for twenty years.

"After the agreement is signed, it must be ratified by Iran's Parliament. Once ratified by the Parliament, it will be in effect for 20 years," he said on Iranian state television.

The ambassador did not say whether the treaty could be extended automatically.

## 'Balanced' treaty

Jalali also described the long-awaited historic agreement between Tehran and Moscow as "balanced."

The Russian Federation has signed similar agreements with the likes of China, Belarus, India and a host of former Soviet Union countries.

In 2001, Tehran and Moscow signed a long-term cooperation deal, officially known as the Treaty of the Foundation



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov delivers his annual end-of-year press conference at the Russian Foreign Ministry headquarters in Moscow on January 14, 2025.  
● NATALIA KOLESNIKOVA/AFP

of Mutual Relations and the Principles of Cooperation. It was initially set for 10 years but was extended up until 2026.

Iran and Russia are both subject to illegal Western sanctions. They have over

the past years deepened their cooperation in various fields.

Iran has also signed a long-gestating 25-year cooperation accord with China as both countries remain under United States sanctions.

## Iran, European troika hold 'constructive' nuclear talks



Iran and European powers said they held "frank and constructive" talks on Monday about Tehran's nuclear program, just a week before US President-elect Donald Trump takes office.

It was the second round of such talks in less than two months, following a discreet meeting in Geneva last November between Tehran and the three European powers, Britain, France and Germany, known as the E3, AFP reported.

Few details were revealed about the topics discussed Monday or even the venue of the talks, but both sides said they were "constructive" and that the parties agreed to carry them on.

Iran's ISNA news agency reported that Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Majid Takht-Ravanchi met "his counterparts from the E3."

"They discussed issues of mutual interest, including negotiations for lifting sanctions, the nuclear issue and the worrying situation in the region," it added without elaborating.

Later, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi termed the talks as "serious, frank, and constructive."

"We discussed ideas involving certain details in the sanctions-lifting and nuclear fields that are needed for a deal," he said in a post on X.

"Sides concurred that negotiations should be resumed and to reach a deal, all parties should create and maintain the appropriate atmosphere. We agreed to continue our dialogue," he added.

British, French and German foreign affairs representatives afterwards called the talks "serious, frank and constructive."

"Against a challenging context, we discussed concerns and reiterated our commitment to a diplomatic solution. We agreed to continue our dialogue," they said in a statement posted on their X accounts.

Before the meeting, the German Foreign Ministry told AFP that the talks were "not negotiations" while Iran said they were merely "consultations."

The talks, scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, will cover a "wide range of topics," Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said during a weekly press briefing.

"The primary objective of these talks is to remove the

sanctions" on Iran, he noted, adding that Iran was also "listening to the topics that the opposite parties want to raise."

ISNA reported that Takht-Ravanchi will meet on Tuesday separately with the European Union diplomat Enrique Mora in Geneva.

On Thursday, France's Foreign Ministry said the meeting was a sign that the E3 countries were "continuing to work towards a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear program, the progress of which is extremely problematic."

The talks come with Iran's nuclear program under renewed focus in light of Trump's return to the White House on January 20.

During his first term, Trump pursued a policy of "maximum pressure," withdrawing the United States from a landmark nuclear deal which imposed curbs on Iran's nuclear program in return for sanctions relief. Tehran adhered to the deal until Washington's withdrawal, but then began rolling back its commitments.

## Presidential aide says NBC to air 'important message' by Pezeshkian

### International Desk

Mohammad-Mehdi Tabatabaai, an aide to the Iranian president, said NBC television will broadcast an "important message" from the President Masoud Pezeshkian on January 15.

Tabatabaai, deputy director of communication and information at the presidential office, made the remarks in a message posted on his X account on Tuesday.

In his message, Tabatabaai said Iran seeks peace and de-escalation in the region and the world, condemns warmongering, encroachments, and genocide by the Israeli regime and is ready for equal and honorable negotiation. Pezeshkian has consistently advocated for regional and global peace.

"We desire friendly relations with the countries of the region and the world, and we are striving to establish peace and security both inside and outside the country," he said last month during a visit to North Khorasan province.

Since taking office in July, the Iranian president has also repeatedly called for negotiations with the West and easing tensions over the country's nuclear program in order to remove illegal sanctions imposed on Iran.

Pezeshkian's interview with the



Masoud Pezeshkian  
● IRNA

American television comes days before the beginning of the US President Donald Trump's new term.

During his first term, Trump ordered the withdrawal of the US from the UNSC-endorsed 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers and re-imposed severe economic sanctions against Tehran while Iran was adhering to its commitments under the deal and even continued to do so for a year after the US withdrawal.

Tehran scaled back its commitments to the agreement in a series of pre-announced and clear steps after witnessing the other parties' failure to secure its interest under the agreement.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Tehran-Moscow long-term ...

Given their huge gas reserves, Iran and Russia are poised to join forces in international trade and energy sectors. The agreement also opens the door for cooperation in technology, particularly new technologies, information security and cybersecurity. Peaceful nuclear energy, defense and military cooperation, as well as joint efforts in combating terrorism, environmental challenges, money laundering and organized crime, are other key components of this pact. While immediate gains from this treaty might not be around the corner, it holds the promise of significant medium to long-term benefits for Iran. Thus, the treaty is expected to go the extra mile beyond addressing current needs and capabilities, charting out a course for the

coming decades.

Mahmoud Reza Sajjadi, Iran's former ambassador to Russia, believes that the long-term economic, political and security cooperation agreement between Iran and Russia is "the largest deal" Iran has made with one of its most important neighbors that will give a boost to the Iranian economy.

"The current policies of countries in the region and much of the world are focused on moving away from a unipolar world and creating a balance of power. In this context, the Middle East and Asia, particularly Iran's position, play a crucial role," Sajjadi points out.

He highlights the economic importance of this comprehensive agreement for Iran.

"Russia, being a country with a major

economy, holds special significance for Iran as a target market."

Despite the market's allure, Sajjadi notes that Iran has yet to hit its stride and tap into its full potential due to various factors. Nevertheless, the economic opportunities between Iran and Russia are vast and Tehran should seize the moment to take advantage of these prospects.

He underscores that Iran's quest for geopolitical stability, development and strength depends on building bridges with neighboring countries through similar long-term economic and political ties. "These relationships bring about social connections, economic growth and enhanced export performance. Such a strategy can help stabilize the currency, attract foreign investments and accelerate Iran's overall economic growth."