

# *Pezeshkian:* Iran after no war, seeks to 'live in peace and tranquility'

Trump hopes for striking nuclear deal with Tehran

**International Desk**

Positive signals are coming from Tehran and Washington as the two countries' presidents prioritize negotiations to settle their disputes, not least over Iran's peaceful nuclear program. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Thursday that Iran is not seeking war with any country but "we seek to live in peace and tranquility." In a meeting with elites in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, Pezeshkian said that he believes Iran should speak to the world with the language of peace. The Iranian president said China, which considers the United States as its number one enemy, tolerates the Washington's threats because it wants to gain maximum benefits from the relations with the US. The Iranian president, however, said threats and sanctions by the enemies cannot bring Iran to its knees. Since taking office in July, the new Iranian administration has repeatedly voiced its readiness to hold talks with the Western countries to resolve their disputes over the Islamic Republic's nuclear program. Ahmad Bakhsayesh, an Iranian lawmaker, recently said Pezeshkian favors direct negotiations with the United

States to put an end to long-standing differences, including Iran's nuclear issue. Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Kazem Gharibabadi also said on Tuesday that Tehran is ready to start negotiations to lift "illegal and unilateral" sanctions imposed on Iran. In recent months, Iran and European parties to the nuclear deal - France, Germany and the UK - have held several rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program and have agreed to resume the negotiations in the future. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump said on Thursday that he would look to do a deal with Iran. When asked if he would support Israel striking Iran's nuclear facilities, he said, "It would really be nice if that could be worked out without having to go that further step." He added, "Iran hopefully, will make a deal." "The only thing I've said about Iran - and I want them to have a great country, they have great potential, the people are amazing - The only thing I said about Iran, is they can't have a nuclear weapon and they are religious zealots," Trump said during an interview with Fox News. People familiar with the matter also



Donald Trump



Masoud Pezeshkian

said Trump is to put his Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff in charge of managing Iran nuclear file, suggesting the US president is willing to test diplomacy before increasing the pressure on Tehran. In an interview with Fox News two weeks ago, Witkoff said Trump

wants to try and get a deal with Iran. Senior diplomats from France, Germany, the UK and the EU met with their Iranian counterparts in Geneva 10 days ago and discussed Iran's nuclear program. In 2015, Tehran proved the peaceful nature of its nuclear program to the

world by signing the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), with six world powers. However, Washington's unilateral withdrawal in 2018 and its subsequent re-imposition of sanctions against Tehran left the future of the deal in limbo.

## *Iran:* US blacklisting of Yemen's Ansarullah contravenes int'l law



Esmail Baqaei

**International Desk**

Iran's Foreign Ministry condemned the United States for re-designating Yemen's Ansarullah resistance movement as a "terrorist" organization, casting the move as "contrary to international law." Foreign Ministry's spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Thursday that designation of the resistance movement as a "terrorist" organization is only an excuse to impose "anti-human sanctions against the Yemeni people."

"Such arbitrary, unilateral, and baseless actions further undermine the rule of law in international relations and pose a threat to regional peace and stability," Baqaei said. US President Donald Trump on Wednesday officially re-designated Ansarullah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), returning the movement to the same status it held at the end of his first administration. "The Houthis' activities threaten the security of American civilians and personnel in the Middle East, the safety of our closest regional partners, and the stability of global maritime trade," an order said. The Houthis said the move targeted Yemen's "entire population" over their sup-

port for the Palestinians. "The US designation reflects the extent of the current administration's bias toward the usurping Zionist entity," a statement by the resistance movement said, referring to Israel. Former US President Joe Biden had lifted the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) designation in 2021, citing the need to mitigate one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. Since November 2023, the Yemeni movement has targeted dozens of Israeli-bound ships with missiles, drones and small boat attacks in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. They say they are acting in support of the Palestinians in the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

## UN concerned by Israel's 'war fighting' methods in West Bank

The United Nations voiced serious concerns Friday over the Israeli military's use of force during its raid this week in the West Bank, including methods "developed for war fighting". The Israeli military this week launched a raid in the Jenin area, days into a cease-fire in its war in the Gaza Strip, AFP reported. "We are deeply concerned by the use of unlawful lethal force in Jenin, in the occupied West Bank," UN human rights office spokesman Thameen Al-Kheetan told a media briefing in Geneva. "The deadly Israeli operations in recent days raise serious concerns about unnecessary or disproportionate use of force, including methods and means developed for war fighting, in violation of international human rights law, norms and standards applicable to law enforcement operations. "This includes multiple airstrikes and apparently random shooting at unarmed residents attempting

to flee or find safety." UN human rights chief Volker Turk has called for Israel to adopt and enforce rules of engagement that are fully in line with applicable human rights norms. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has claimed the objective of the operation, dubbed "Iron Wall", was to "eradicate terrorism" in the area. Kheetan said the UN rights office had verified that at least 12 Palestinians had been killed and 40 injured by Israeli security forces since Tuesday, adding that most of them were reportedly unarmed. He called for all killings in a law enforcement context to be thoroughly and independently investigated. "Those responsible for unlawful killings must be held to account," the spokesman added. Kheetan said that following the Gaza cease-fire announcement, Israeli settlers in the West Bank had been "attacking Palestinian villages and stoning vehicles", with



AFP

houses and cars torched. "We are also concerned by repeated comments from some Israeli officials about plans to expand settlements further still, in a fresh breach of international law. We recall again that the transfer by Israel of its own civilian population into territories it occupies also amounts to a war crime," he said. "We call for an immediate end to the violence in the West Bank. We also call on all parties, including third States with influence, to do everything in their power to ensure peace is achieved in the region."

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Araghchi raps UN chief 'audacious' remarks on Iran's nuclear program

**International Desk**

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi reacted to recent remarks by UN chief on Iran's nuclear activities, describing them as "audacious." Araghchi took to the X on Thursday, saying that Iran has shown its long-standing commitment to the global nonproliferation regime to the world. He blasted UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for preaching the Islamic Republic, which is pursuing a civilian nuclear program as a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the US-abandoned 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "Here, my hope is that the Iranians understand that it is important to

once and for all make it clear that they will renounce to have nuclear weapons, at the same time that they engage constructively with the other countries of the region," Guterres said on Wednesday while addressing a meeting at the World Economic Forum in Davos. The Iranian foreign minister also highlighted a fatwa (religious decree) by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei that bans the production, possession and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). "It is audacious to preach that Iranians must once and for all make it clear that they will renounce to have nuclear weapons." The top Iranian diplomat also noted that the most relevant question in the



Abbas Araghchi

region is Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip, as well as the regime's occupation of Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territory. He further warned of the threat posed by Israel's actual nuclear arsenal and refusal to join the NPT. Israel is estimated to possess 200 to 400 nuclear warheads in its arsenal, making it the sole possessor of non-conventional arms in West Asia.