

# Leader: US 'brainless plans' for Gaza to go in vain

## National Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the US "brainless plans" for the Gaza Strip will go nowhere after American President Donald Trump proposed his plan to take over the blockaded territory and relocate Palestinians from the area. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with Secretary General of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement, Ziyad al-Nakhleh, and his accompanying delegation in Tehran on Tuesday.

"These plans will not go anywhere, and those who a year and a half ago claimed to eliminate the resistance in a short time are now receiving their prisoners in small groups and releasing a large number of Palestinian prisoners in exchange."

He was referring to the prisoners exchange deal between Hamas and Israel under a Gaza truce which took effect on January 19 after more than 15 months of fighting.

US President Donald Trump this month proposed a plan for a US takeover of the war-battered Gaza Strip and its Palestinian inhabitants to be relocated elsewhere, including to Egypt and Jordan.

Trump's plan sparked an outcry from

Arab governments including Egypt and Jordan as well as from world leaders, and the United Nations warned against "ethnic cleansing" in the Palestinian territory.

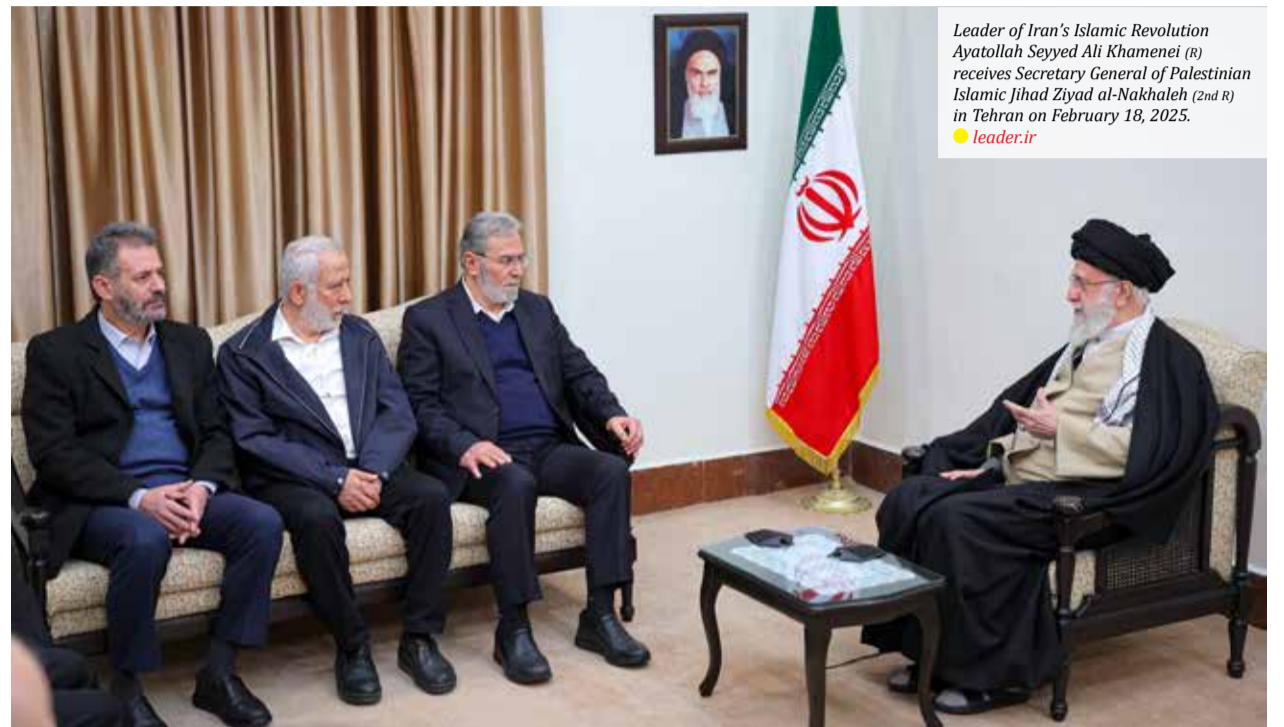
The Leader also congratulated the Palestinian resistance on its victory against Israel in Gaza, where the regime was forced to enter into a ceasefire agreement with Hamas after failing to dismantle the resistance group, a main objective of its genocidal war in the Palestinian territory.

He described as magnificent the victory of the Resistance and the people of Gaza against the "Zionist and American enemies," saying that it has set "a new benchmark" in resistance's battles against Israel.

He emphasized that the great work done by Palestinian resistance leaders and fighters in maintaining unity and cohesion, standing firm against enemies, and navigating the complex process of ceasefire talks, as well as the Gazan people's resilience and patience has made the resistance proud in the region.

Ayatollah Khamenei commended the way resistance handled prisoner exchanges as a testament to its strength before global audiences.

"Currently, international public opinion is in favor of Palestine, and thus



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (R) receives Secretary General of Palestinian Islamic Jihad Ziyad al-Nakhleh (2nd R) in Tehran on February 18, 2025.  
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no plan can succeed without consent from Gaza's resistance and people," the Leader said.

In this meeting, Nakhleh congratulated Ayatollah Khamenei on Gaza's victory and attributed it to Iran's consistent

support and guidance from late Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. "The Palestinian resistance was effectively fighting America and the West over the past 18 months and despite the inequality of the balance of power,

it could achieve major victories," Nakhleh said.

"We will never forget our path of resistance, and we will continue this path as soldiers of the resistance," Nakhleh said.

## Iran FM: Policy of Iran's exclusion from regional plans hit dead end

### International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the trans-regional powers' policy of excluding Iran from regional arrangements has failed to achieve its goals.

Addressing the 8th Conference on the History of Iranian Foreign Relations on Tuesday, the top Iranian diplomat said that despite Tehran's principled policies, some trans-regional powers have made every effort to turn the Persian Gulf into a center of crisis and conflict in order to secure their "illegitimate interests."

Araghchi added that certain powers have been trying for decades to keep the Persian Gulf in a state of "permanent tension" by militarizing the region and selling billions of dollars' worth of weapons and preventing cooperation between the regional nations.

However, he said that not only their policy of excluding Iran from regional arrangements and sowing discord between Iran and its neighbors in the Persian Gulf has failed but also with Iran's active diplomacy as well as the changes made in some regional coun-



tries, the Persian Gulf is entering a new era of cooperation.

He cited the full-scale economic war launched against Iran through imposing illegal sanctions as one of the efforts by the trans-regional powers to sideline Iran from the regional arrangements.

Iran has always said that the Persian Gulf countries are able to ensure their security and there is no need to the military presence of extra-regional states. In recent years, relations between the Persian Gulf countries have seen a continuously positive trend and that Iran has been trying to expand its economic and security cooperation with the Arab countries in the Persian Gulf region.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Gov't spox terms negotiations under pressure as meaningless

### International Desk

Iran's government spokeswoman Fatemeh Mohajerani said on Tuesday that the door to negotiations has always been open, but "it makes no sense under maximum pressure."

In her weekly press conference in the southern city of Asaluyeh in Bushehr Province, Mohajerani said that it was the other side that blocked the way to talks by abandoning the negotiating table and imposing the "maximum pressure" on Iran.

She was referring to the United States which withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear agreement in 2018 and reimposed sanctions on Iran - a move that left the future of the deal in limbo.

Mohajerani said that Iran negotiated and another party to the

agreement left the negotiating table, and they were the ones who did not adhere to what they had signed.

"Therefore, naturally, in conditions when maximum pressure is being announced, negotiation makes no sense, but we are people who are willing to negotiate, and the whole world knows this," the government's spokeswoman said.

Officials of the new US administration have frequently claimed that Washington is interested in negotiating with Iran over its nuclear program.

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said US's words cannot be taken seriously.

"These words cannot be taken seriously because words must be proportionate to actions. You cannot threaten to destroy on one

hand and on the other hand claim that you are interested in dialogue and talks," Baqaei said.

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian also said on Wednesday that the US president wants to engage in talks with Iran while closing all the doors for negotiations. He threatens the world not to establish relations with Iran and on the other hand, he suggests that we negotiate.

Pezeshkian added that Iran will not back down and will not surrender in the face of any threat.

Since taking office in January, US President Donald Trump has repeatedly expressed his eagerness for talks with Iran to strike a deal on Tehran's nuclear program.

At the same time, he has reinstated his so-called "maximum pressure" policy and has threatened military action against Iran.

## Trump's claim about ...

Against this backdrop, Trump appears hell-bent

on fueling his aggressive stance toward BRICS as an anti-Western coalition. However, as is often the case, he wraps his policy in his own brand of rhetoric. While China and Russia remain key BRICS members, others—such as India, South Africa, and Brazil—do not necessarily fall into the revisionist camp. On the contrary, these countries maintain strong trade ties with the West, particularly with the US. In fact, India has often been viewed as Washington's strategic proxy in the Indian Ocean to counterbalance China. Given these dynamics, a

pressing question arises: Will pressure be applied to BRICS members that do not explicitly challenge the status quo? Recent developments offer some clues. Just days ago, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Trump at the White House, where discussions kicked up a notch regarding military cooperation, technology transfers, and trade.

This sends a crystal-clear signal that Washington and New Delhi are drawing even closer, forming what appears to be a counterweight to the so-called China-Pakistan axis. If the US turns the screws on certain BRICS members—excluding China, Russia, and Iran—it

is likely that, in the coming months and years, these states may start pulling away from BRICS, reducing their involvement to a mere formality or refraining from major strategic initiatives, such as the creation of a common reserve fund or a shared currency. However, if India has managed to get the green light from the US to remain in BRICS, the bloc could well carry on business as usual. One thing is certain, though: as geostrategic rivalry between China, Russia, and the US heats up, tensions between these global heavyweights will only ratchet up further.

What is unfolding today reflects Trump's commitment

to a Jacksonian and Hamiltonian brand of foreign policy—one that zeroes in on US national interests. Unlike the Democratic approach, which saw Washington spread itself too thin across global affairs, Trump's strategy is more hard-nosed and results-driven.

Given all this, Trump's assertion about BRICS' imminent collapse warrants closer scrutiny. For now, however, it is difficult to take such claims at face value. Writing off years of BRICS cooperation on the back of a statement from a newly elected president—one who has been in office for barely a month—would be a rash and premature conclusion.