

Leader: Expanding ties with neighbors Iran's 'definitive policy'

'Tehran expects Doha to unblock frozen assets'

International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said in a meeting with visiting Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani that expanding relations with neighbors is Tehran's "definitive policy."

The Leader praised the good measures taken by Iran's government in this regard.

The Leader also said that Iran expects Qatar to give back Iran's assets blocked in the Arab country under the US pressure.

"We consider Qatar a friendly and brotherly country, although there are still unclear and unresolved issues, such as the return of Iranian assets that were transferred from South Korea to Qatar, and we know that the main obstacle to the implementation of the agreement that was reached in this regard is the United States," Ayatollah Khamenei told the Qatar's emir.

"If we were in Qatar's place, we would not take heed of American pressure and would reject the other side's demands, and we expect such action from Qatar," the Leader said.

In August 2023, Iran and the United States agreed to a Qatar-brokered deal to secure the release of some \$6 billion of Iranian funds that had remained frozen in two South Korean banks since 2018 under the pretext of US sanctions.

The money was successfully transferred to bank accounts in Doha.

Later, however, American media re-

ported that the US had reached a "quiet understanding" with Qatar to stop the Islamic Republic from accessing its funds after Palestinian groups launched Operation al-Aqsa Storm in October 2023.

'Good decisions'

Earlier on Wednesday, Qatar's emir held a separate meeting with Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian.

During the meeting, Pezeshkian said Iran and Qatar have made "good decisions" to deepen their cooperation in various fields, stressing that Qatar enjoys a high standing with the Islamic Republic.

The Iranian president described strengthening relations in political, economic, cultural, military and security fields with neighboring and regional countries as one of the key policies of his government, saying that, "Among friendly and brotherly countries, Qatar maintains a high standing with us."

"In our consultations with my brother, the Emir of the state of Qatar, we discussed bilateral issues and both countries' interests and we made good decisions to develop and deepen relations and open new doors for cooperation."

Pezeshkian said that they also discussed developments in the region, especially situation in Gaza and Syria. He said that Iran believes that regional countries can take steps based on good neighborliness, mutual respect, and constructive interaction to maintain stability and security in the region and pave the way for the establishment of a



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) walks alongside Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani during a welcoming ceremony in Tehran on February 19, 2025.
● president.ir

joint cooperation framework. The Iranian president also thanked Qatar for its role in mediating a cease-fire agreement between Palestinian resistance group Hamas and Israel, which has led to the release of hundreds of Palestinians from the Israeli jails. The Qatari emir, for his part, expressed satisfaction with his visit to Iran, and

said such trips can help expand the brotherly and historical relations between the two countries, which are based on good neighborliness.

He said they discussed cooperation in various fields, and underscored the need for creating more opportunities for potential cooperation, especially in the commercial and economic fields.

The Qatari Emir said they also emphasized the importance of following up on the results of the recent Joint Economic Commission meetings and increasing the volume of trade exchanges to achieve stated goals.

Sheikh Tamim said they also discussed the challenging conditions the region is facing.

Iran upbraids Trump's 'colonial' plan to relocate Gazans

International Desk

Iran has once again denounced a plan put forward by the US president to relocate Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, calling it a flagrant violation of international law.

Iran's permanent ambassador to the United Nations in an address to an open debate of the Security Council about "Practicing Multilateralism, Reforming and Improving Global Governance" said that the Gaza Strip is the rightful land of the Palestinian people and described the US plan as a blatant disregard for human rights.

Amir Saeid Iravani said the Security Council must resolve conflicts through multilateral cooperation and not coercion.

"The Security Council must uphold its mandate to resolve conflicts through multilateral cooperation. However, its current structure fails to reflect global power shifts and the legitimate aspirations of the Global South. To restore its credibility, the Council must become more representative, democratic, and accountable," the envoy said.

The Iranian diplomat censured the United States for abusing its veto power to shield Israel from accountability for its systematic violations of international law during its decades-long crimes against Palestinians.

"Regrettably, certain permanent members have repeatedly exploited the Council to advance ... own political interests. A glaring example is the United States' persistent use of its veto to



Amir Saeid Iravani
● AFP

shield Israel from accountability for its systematic violations of international law and the UN Charter, particularly its genocidal crimes against the Palestinian people and acts of aggression against other nations in the region," Iravani said.

"Gaza is the rightful land of the Palestinian people and Iran strongly condemns the US colonial plan to forcibly displace and uproot Palestinians from their own land, a flagrant violation of international law and a grave assault on fundamental human rights," he added.

At a joint press conference with prime minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu earlier in the month, US President Donald Trump said Washington would take over control of the Gaza Strip—possibly with the help of American troops—to create a "Riviera of the Middle East."

Trump had previously suggested that displaced Palestinians could be resettled elsewhere.

The US president's proposal caught huge flak from the international community, rights groups and activists as well as Washington's allies.

Qalibaf: Iran-Pakistan border insecurity imperils economic ties

International Desk

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf called insecurity along the Iran-Pakistan common border one of the important issues that can create challenges for economic and cultural relations between the two countries.

The Parliament speaker made the remarks in a meeting with the Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan Yusuf Raza Gilani on the sidelines of the 15th General Assembly of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) in Tehran on Wednesday.

Qalibaf praised the level of security and military cooperation between the two countries, which have been formed alongside the political and economic activities, stressing that Tehran and Islamabad should pay special heed to the issue.

Iran and Pakistan share a long border and have often cooperated on security issues, particularly in combating terrorism and cross-border militancy. Iran has consistently voiced its support for Pakistan's stability and security, underscoring the need for joint efforts to tackle terrorism and protect innocent lives in the region.

In recent years, the border between the two countries have seen many terrorist attacks.



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf (L) shakes hands with Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan Yusuf Raza Gilani on the sidelines of the 15th General Assembly of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) in Tehran on February 19, 2025.
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Banking relations

Given the US sanctions imposed on Iran, Qalibaf said that the two countries should take measures to facilitate non-dollar trade in their banking systems in order to improve economic relations between the two countries.

He also referred to the developments in the region, saying that the most important issue in the Muslim world is now the issue of Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria.

He described the Israeli regime as a cancerous tumor which has set the entire region on fire and endangered the security of all Muslims.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

