

providing any degree of economic or financial relief to Iran.'

The author of the report argued that revoking Iraq's sanctions waiver should be seen as part of Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Tehran, claiming that the move aims to push Iraq toward energy independence and away from reliance on Iran. The analysis further asserted that the threat of ending Iraq's waiver now forces Baghdad, for the first time, to urgently seek alternatives to Iranian energy and accelerate its plans to import electricity from Saudi Arabia.

The decision was "regrettable," Farhad Alaaldin, foreign affairs advisor to Iraq's Prime Minister, said Sunday. "As a strategic partner, Iraq expected the US authorities to recognize this partnership, particularly since Iraq's elec-

tricity transactions have always been transparent and fully compliant with sanctions regulations." "Anticipating this outcome, the Iraqi government pro-actively implemented alternative measures to ensure stable electricity supply and minimize potential disruptions," Alaaldin said, citing intensified maintenance of existing power stations and accelerated renewable energy projects. The chairman of the Iraqi parliament's finance committee warned that any move by Washington to restrict power imports from Iran would cause Iraq's electrical grid to collapse. Iraq currently relies on natural gas for approximately 80% of its electricity generation, leaving its power grid deeply dependent on Iranian energy imports. This dependency was formalized in July 2022 when the two nations signed

a five-year bilateral agreement, under which Iraq secured 400 megawatts of electricity daily from Iran. Building on this energy partnership, a March 2024 deal expanded Iranian gas imports to 50 million cubic meters per day — a volume estimated at \$6 billion annually — to address Iraq's chronic power shortages. Meanwhile, Iran slammed the US move as extremely deplorable." Foreign Minister Abbas said that the US administration has decided to target the innocent people of Iraq "by attempting to deprive them of access to basic services such as electricity, especially ahead of the coming hot months of the year."

Tehran's response

The return of Trump to the White House, marked by a strict enforcement

of the "maximum pressure" policy, has elicited a reciprocal reaction from Iran — despite his altered tone expressing willingness to negotiate and reach an agreement with Tehran. Iran emphasizes that the trajectory of its actions regarding the revival of the nuclear deal and sanctions relief will be determined by the conduct of the United States, not its seemingly eloquent rhetoric. The deal, reached in 2015, required Iran to implement confidence-building measures to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for sanctions relief. In the latest development, the US decision not to extend Iraq's sanction waivers has been interpreted within Iran as another hostile move with a singular aim: intensifying pressure on Iran's economy. While the Trump administration appears to be considering intermediaries

like Russia to break the current deadlock in negotiations with Tehran, these mediation efforts will lead nowhere. This is due to the White House's daily escalation of pressure — adding new layers to the "domino effect" against Iran — and its continuous reinforcement of the wall of distrust between Tehran and Washington. Currently, Iran's stance, both in official statements and in discussions with representatives of countries expressing interest in mediating between Tehran and Washington, remains unambiguous: Tehran will not yield to direct negotiations under maximum pressure with a government that insists on a language of coercion and imposing its will.

The full article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.

Iran's clear policy toward Trump: No negotiations under threat

INTERVIEW

In analyzing Tehran's approach to Washington, the geopolitical expert states, First, Iran must understand the White House's demands and whether its media threats will persist in closed-door negotiations.

US President Donald Trump claimed in an interview with Fox last Wednesday that he had sent a letter to Iran's Leader ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei reiterating his priority to negotiate and reach a deal with Iran on its nuclear program. This comes despite his recent executive order doubling down on the "maximum pressure" policy against Tehran, including refusing to extend Iraq's sanctions waiver for electricity imports from Iran. In response to the US president's contradictory rhetoric, the Islamic Republic has declared it will not engage in direct talks while Washington combines maximum pressure with a coercive facade of diplomacy.



Abdolreza Faraji-Rad

Abdolreza Faraji-Rad, a former diplomat and geopolitical analyst, in an interview with IRNA, addressed Trump's claims of sending a letter to Iran's leadership and whether this indicates a shift in US policy. He elaborated on Trump's statements and actions since returning to the White House, stating: Trump is in a hurry to advance his agenda, which extends beyond Iran—Ukraine, Middle East issues, strategic matters like the Panama Canal and Greenland, and economic policies such as tariffs all demand his urgent attention. Regarding Iran, after a brief lull following his executive order, Trump revived the topic in his Business Fox interview. Despite no direct question about Iran, he emphasized his desire

for a deal and mentioned the letter to Iran's Leader.

In the interview with Fox host Maria Bartiromo for "Sunday Morning Futures," Trump said, "I've written them a letter saying, 'I hope you're going to negotiate because if we have to go in militarily, it's going to be a terrible thing'."

The White House confirmed that Trump's letter to Iran's leaders is seeking to negotiate a nuclear deal. The president's comments in the Oval Office echoed his sentiments from the interview, in which he said the letter had been sent Wednesday.

"I would rather negotiate a deal. I'm not sure that everybody agrees with me, but we can make a deal that would

be just as good as if you won militarily," Trump said in the interview. "But the time is happening now. The time is coming up. Something's going to happen one way or the other."

Trump likely assumes the Ukraine issue is "on track," freeing him to focus on Iran. A letter may have been sent through diplomatic channels. While Trump claims dialogue is his priority, he has also threatened military action if Iran refuses to negotiate. However, I believe his letter or negotiation terms would be milder than his public threats, as he tends to project strength publicly.

The letter's content must be scrutinized, but Iran's response will remain firm: no talks under threat. Iranian



The content of Trump letter must be scrutinized, but Iran's response will remain firm: no talks under threat. Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi recently reiterated that Tehran will not engage unless Trump suspends his maximum pressure policy — a step he has yet to take.

US President Donald Trump speaks before signing executive orders in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC, on March 06, 2025.

GETTY IMAGES

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On whether a post-October 2025 agreement could prevent the snap-back mechanism's activation without US involvement: Negotiating with the remaining Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) (parties 1+4) could yield solutions, such as Iran reducing enrichment levels or uranium stockpiles. The core issue remains US unilateral sanctions, which severely strain Iran's economy. Without resolving this, Trump's renewed pressure policy will persist. Tighter sanctions will further slash the country's oil exports, especially if tankers are blocked.

Effective sanctions relief requires dialogue — even indirect — with the US. A trial dialogue would be more productive than media exchanges. Talks with China, Russia, or European JCPOA members alone cannot resolve the country's economic challenges.

Regarding Russia-mediated talks, Iran has a history of successful dialogue with the US, resulting in the JCPOA. Channels like Oman and Switzerland previously facilitated communication. Crucially, Iran must first discern the White House's true intentions: Are its public threats mere posturing, or will they resurface behind closed doors? Many internationally argue that direct, high-level engagement is the only way to secure concessions from Trump.

The full article first appeared in Persian on IRNA.



An Iranian flag at the Bushehr nuclear power plant during an official ceremony to kick-start work on a second reactor at the facility on Nov. 10, 2019.

ATTA KENARE/AFP