

Pezeshkian: Iran favors dialogue 'on equal footing'

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said the Islamic Republic is willing to engage in nuclear talks with the United States "on an equal footing." Pezeshkian made the remarks in a meeting with the country's state and military officials on Saturday.

"If you want negotiations, then what is the point of threatening?" Pezeshkian asked.

"Today, America is not only humiliating Iran, but also the world," he added, in an apparent reference to recent policies adopted by Washington, including the imposition of tariffs on imported goods from other countries to the US.

Pezeshkian's remarks came after US President Donald Trump, who has called on Tehran to hold direct negotiations on its nuclear program, has repeatedly threatened to bomb Iran if diplomacy fails to resolve issues related to its nuclear program.

Trump said last month he had written to Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to call for nuclear negotiations and warn of possible military action if Tehran refused.

Ayatollah Khamenei responded to Trump's threats by saying that US threats "will get them nowhere," and warned of reciprocal measures "if they do anything malign" against Iran.

Later, Iran sent a response through Oman to Trump's letter.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araçchi said Tehran has rejected direct talks with the US under pressure.

"Our policy is still to not engaging in direct negotiations while under maximum pressure and military threats, however, as it was the case in the past, indirect negotiations can continue," IRNA cited him as saying.

On Thursday, Trump reiterated that he would prefer to hold "direct talks" with Iran.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) speaks during a meeting with the country's state and military officials in Tehran on April 5, 2025.

president.ir

"I think it goes faster and you understand the other side a lot better than if you go through intermediaries," the US president argued.

In 2015, the Islamic Republic reached a landmark deal with the permanent members of the UN Security Council, namely the United States, France, China, Russia, and the United Kingdom, as well as Germany, on its nuclear activities.

The agreement provided sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on Iranian nuclear activities.

In 2018, during Trump's first term in office, the US withdrew from the agreement and re-instated sanctions on Tehran. In response, Iran rolled back on its commitments under the



agreement and accelerated its nuclear program. Western countries including

the United States have long accused Iran of pursuing a nuclear weapon, which Tehran has

denied, insisting its enrichment activities were solely for peaceful purposes.

Trump's global tariffs trigger outrage, bear heavily on Wall Street

International Desk

The US President Donald Trump's baseline tariff of 10% on products from all countries worldwide took effect on Saturday, sparking protests in the US and several other countries and causing worst crisis for Wall Street since COVID pandemic.

The blanket tariff was announced by the US president on Wednesday evening, when his speech on so-called "Liberation Day" sent shockwaves across the global stock market as he unleashed sweeping taxes on imports. Much higher tariffs against what Trump branded as the "worst offenders", such as a 20% rate for the EU and a 34% one for China, are set for 9 April.

A 25% tariff imposed on all foreign cars imported into the US came into effect on Thursday.

American customs officials began collecting the new 10% tariff on Saturday morning.

World's response

Various countries are still deciding how to respond (or not), and companies have begun adjusting to the new reality — largely by raising prices.

Some countries responded with new tariffs of their own.

Canada announced new duties on certain vehicles imported from the US, and China announced that it will impose countermeasures against the US starting April 10.

China's response to US tariffs caused an immediate acceleration of losses in markets worldwide. The Commerce Ministry in Beijing said it would respond to the 34% tariffs imposed by the US on imports from China with its own 34% tariff on imports of all US products beginning April 10. The United States and China are the world's two largest economies.

Worst daily drop

The UK's leading stock market, the FTSE 100, suffered its worst daily drop in more than five years, closing on Friday 4.95% down, a level not seen since March 2020.

All three of the US's major indexes, including The Dow Jones Industrial Average, the S&P 500 and the Nasdaq Composite, were down by more than 5% at market close on Friday, making for the worst day in American markets since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ever since the US president an-

nounced the tariffs, analysts estimate that around \$4.9trn has been wiped off the value of the global stock market.

As stock markets reeled, Trump was largely out of public view at his golf course where he sent multiple defiant social media messages guaranteeing victory for the US economy.

One of his messages on Truth Social read, "Big business is not worried about the Tariffs, because they know they are here to stay, but they are focused on the BIG, BEAUTIFUL DEAL, which will SUPERCHARGE our Economy. Very important. Going on right now!!!"

The British maker of Jaguar and Land Rover cars is pausing shipments to the US as it works to mitigate the impact of a 25% tax on vehicle imports.

Also on Saturday, thousands of people gathered on Washington's National Mall and other cities across America in opposition to the policies of Trump, in the largest protests since he returned to the White House.

At a time of spreading global resentment against the Republican president, rallies took place earlier in international capitals including Paris, Rome, London, Berlin and Lisbon.

Video footage appears to contradict Israeli account of Gaza medic killings

Phone video from one of 15 Palestinian medics killed by Israeli forces last month appears to contradict Israeli claims that the medics' vehicles did not have emergency signals on when troops opened fire on them in southern Gaza.

The footage shows the Red Crescent and Civil Defense teams driving slowly with their emergency vehicles' lights flashing, logos visible, as they pulled up to help an ambulance that had come under fire earlier. The teams do not appear to be acting unusually or in a threatening manner as three medics emerge and head toward the stricken ambulance, AP reported.

Their vehicles immediately come under a barrage of gunfire, which goes on for more than five minutes with brief pauses. The owner of the phone can be heard praying. "Forgive me, mother. This is the path I chose, mother, to help people," he cries, his voice weak.

Eight Red Crescent personnel, six Civil Defense workers and a UN staffer were killed in the shooting before dawn on March 23 by Israeli troops conducting operations in Tel al-Sultan, a district of the southern Gaza city of Rafah. Troops then bulldozed over the bodies along with their mangled vehicles, burying them in a mass grave. UN and rescue workers were only able to reach the site a week later to dig out the bodies.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Society's vice president, Marwan Jilani, said the phone



Palestinian Red Crescent Society

with the footage was found in the pocket of one of its slain staffers. The Palestinian ambassador to the United Nations distributed the video to the UN Security Council.

Israel claimed a number of Hamas and Islamic Jihad fighters had been killed in the incident, but it has not provided any evidence or further explained the threat to its troops. Asked about the video, the Israeli military said Saturday that the incident was "under thorough examination." It said "all claims, including the documentation circulating about the incident, will be thoroughly and deeply examined to understand the sequence of events and the handling of the situation."

The Israeli military earlier said it opened fire on the vehicles because they were "advancing suspiciously" on nearby troops without headlights or emergency signals.

The head of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, Younes Al-Khatib, called for an independent investigation. "We don't trust any of the army investigations," he told a briefing at the UN on Friday.

All Iranians to ...

Stance of domestic critics on democracy, foreign intervention

Despite our criticisms of the Establishment and its policies, we believe that Iran's independence, security, and democracy should be shaped by its people without foreign intervention. Democracy cannot be achieved through the interference of foreign powers, especially those who openly display their tyranny, support the criminal regime of Israel, and send advanced weapons and financial and political backing. This is while Israel's genocide and war crimes have been condemned by all international human rights organizations and are under investigation by the International Criminal Court, and have faced widespread student and popular protests in the US and Europe. Iran, with its ancient history, much older than most of the current countries in the world — which Hegel called the beginning of world

history and Kant, Nietzsche, and many great thinkers spoke of its splendor — does not need the sympathy of such forces.

Concern for global peace

We are not only concerned about Iran but also about global peace. In the past 15 months, the Israeli regime has blatantly trampled on all human rights norms, international humanitarian laws, and the values of peace, democracy, and humanity, and has undermined the credibility of international organizations, continuing its human rights violations with the support of the US and some European governments. We now face a US administration led by an individual who, contrary to his claims of seeking peace during the election campaign, wants to resolve international issues through force, bombs, and war. His behavior toward Greenland, Canada, Europe, Ukraine, and Gaza also demonstrates

his preference for the language of force over diplomacy and legal discourse. He has repeatedly stated that Iran will either negotiate or be bombed. These statements are a flagrant violation of the UN Charter and a threat to global peace.

Declaration of position

We, the signatories of this statement, in defense of Iran, humanity, and global peace, will, regardless of our differing viewpoints with the Establishment, defend our country with all our might in case of any aggression. We call upon the world to stand against the crimes of the Israeli government and the warmongering threats of the new US administration. Any aggression against Iran and any action against our country's defense capabilities is not just an action against the Establishment but also against the Iranian people, and it will plunge the region into chaos and harm the world.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

