

# Iran-US nuclear talks ‘well implemented’ in first step: *Leader*

## International Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the negotiations between Iran and the United States over Tehran's nuclear program have been “well implemented in their initial steps”. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with the heads of the Islamic Republic's executive, judicial, and legislative branches on Tuesday.

“Talks are one of a dozen dossiers followed up by the Foreign Ministry. We are neither overly optimistic nor pessimistic regarding them. After all, it is a process which was decided and its first steps have been well implemented”, he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei added that the development of the country's various affairs should not be linked to the negotiations, asserting that the country had to lead those various affairs independently and rely on its own resources.

“Let us not tie the country's issues to the

talks,” the Leader said, adding that despite Iran's sentiment of great skepticism regarding the talks, “We are optimistic about our own capabilities.”

“At the time (of the JCPOA), we made everything conditional on the progress of the negotiations,” he said.

“This mistake... should not be repeated here.”

“When an investor sees that the country is conditional on negotiations, they do not invest,” he said.

Tehran and Washington are due to meet again in Oman's capital on Saturday to hold the second round of negotiations on Iran's nuclear program a week after top officials from both sides held the first meeting described by the both sides as “positive and constructive”.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that the second round of the talks will also be held in Oman after some Western media reported that Italy's capital, Rome, will host the negotiations.



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addresses senior officials from the Islamic Republic's executive, judicial, and legislative branches in Tehran on April 15, 2025.

● [khamenei.ir](https://khamenei.ir)

On Monday, US President Donald Trump said he believes Iran is intentionally delaying a nuclear deal and that it must abandon any drive for a nuclear weapon or face a possible military strike on Tehran's atomic facilities.

“I think they're tapping us along,” Trump told reporters.

“Iran has to get rid of the concept of a nuclear weapon. They cannot have a nuclear weapon,” Trump said.

Asked if US options for a response include a military strike on Tehran's nuclear facilities, Trump said: “Of course it does.”

Trump said the Iranians need to move fast to avoid a harsh response because



“they're fairly close” to developing a nuclear weapon.

Iran has repeatedly rejected the US

claims, saying its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, especially energy production.

## UN report raises fresh concerns over UAE's role in Sudan war

### Iran expresses concern about dire situation in Darfur

## International Desk

Pressure is mounting on the United Arab Emirates over its presence at a conference in London aimed at stopping the war in Sudan after a leaked confidential UN report raised fresh questions over the UAE's role in the devastating conflict.

The UAE has been accused of secretly supplying weapons to Sudanese paramilitaries via neighboring Chad, a charge it has steadfastly denied.

However, an internal report – marked highly confidential and seen by the Guardian – detected “multiple” flights from the UAE in which transport planes made apparently deliberate attempts to avoid detection as they flew into bases in Chad where arms smuggling across the border into Sudan has been monitored.

The allegations raise complications for the British foreign secretary, David Lammy, who controversially invited the UAE alongside 19 other states for Sudan peace talks on April 15.

The date marks the second anniversary of a civil war that has caused the world's biggest humanitarian crisis, displacing more than 12 million people. A senior diplomat, who



People fled attacks by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in an open field near the town of Tawila in war-torn Sudan's western Darfur region on April 13, 2025.

● [AFP](https://afp.com)

is familiar with the leaked report but requested anonymity, said: “The UK needs to explain how it is responding to massacres of children and aid workers while hosting the UAE at its London conference.”

Sudan's government has not invited to the conference. Sudan's Foreign Minister Ali Yousif warned of the dangerous precedent being set by sidelining Sudan's internationally recognized transitional government, while inviting the UAE, a country standing trial at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for allegedly aiding genocide in Darfur.

Questions over the UAE's alleged role

in backing the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) arrive after a weekend that saw its fighters kill more than 200 civilians in a wave of violence against vulnerable ethnic groups in displacement camps and around the city of El Fasher, the last major city still held by the Sudanese Army in Darfur, the vast western region of Sudan.

Iran's Foreign Ministry expressed concern about the dire situation in El Fasher and called for the lifting of the siege on the city and an end to attacks, and the protection of civilian lives based on the principles of international humanitarian law.

## IRGC: Iran's defense capabilities, national security ‘non-negotiable’

## International Desk

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said Tuesday the country's national security and defense capabilities are not up for any negotiations as Iran and the US are scheduled to hold the second round of talks on Iran's nuclear program in the coming days.

“National security and defense and military power are among the red lines of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which cannot be discussed or negotiated under any circumstances,” IRGC spokesman Ali Mohammad Naeini said.

Iran and the United States will hold another round of talks in Muscat on Saturday, a week after top officials met in the Omani capital for the highest-level discussions since the 2015 nuclear deal collapsed.

On April 12, Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas Araghchi, met with US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff in Oman for talks.

Witkoff said on Monday that any nuclear deal be-



Ali Mohammad Naeini

tween the US and Iran will hinge on verification of Tehran's enrichment and weaponization capabilities.

“The first meeting, was positive, constructive, compelling,” Witkoff said in a televised Fox News interview.

Witkoff appeared to stop short of calling for a complete dismantling of Iran's nuclear program, saying “this is going to be much about verification on the enrichment program.”

“They do not need to enrich past 3.67 percent,” the real estate magnate said, referencing the maximum level allowed under the prior nuclear agreement that Trump exited

during his first term, in 2018.

“In some circumstances, they're at 60 percent, in other circumstances 20 percent,” Witkoff said.

“That cannot be, and you do not need to run, as they claim, a civil nuclear program where you're enriching past 3.67 percent.”

Verification of “weaponization” capabilities will be another “critical” point in the negotiations with Iran, Witkoff said.

“That includes missiles, the type of missiles that they have stockpiled there, and it includes the trigger for a bomb,” he told Fox host Sean Hannity.

## Media buzz vs ...

What gets written down is what counts. Diplomacy and media narratives often go down different paths. The media in each country builds a narrative that fits its own goals.

Witkoff's comments, in this view, are part of that narrative-building. Iran will not budge on its missile program. If the issue ever enters the talks, then and only then can its inclusion be analyzed. For now, Iran's position remains firm.

## Missiles off table, nuclear issues take center stage

By [Sirous Borna-Boldaji](#)  
International affairs analyst

Two key factors will shape the outcome of the Muscat talks – mutual

concessions and synchronized steps. Both sides need a reliable framework for give-and-take.

Iran is clearly pushing to keep the talks confined to nuclear matters. That means multiple details must be hammered out. One sticking point is the system of inspections of its nuclear work: Will they be random or prearranged? Will they be under the IAEA's oversight or carried out by the US unilaterally?

Another hot-button topic is Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium. The US is said to favor moving it out to a third country, especially since some of it is enriched beyond 20 percent. The enrichment level itself—now at 60 percent—is also a major topic, especially since the collapse of the JCPOA.

Another hot-button topic is Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium. Whether these enriched materials are kept in Iran or in a third country, apparently is a serious concern for the Americans. Top of Form Time is also not on their side. Trump is in a hurry and wants results fast.

With snapback of sanctions on Iran looming in October, Washington wants to wrap things up before the clock runs out.

The US is using media to gain leverage and test the waters, but Iran will likely play ball only on nuclear issues. On matters like moving enriched material abroad, Tehran might be flexible. But when it comes to missile capabilities, Iran sees that as a red line—non-negotiable and off the table.

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