

Iran: Nuclear deal ‘possible’ if Washington is realistic

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday that reaching a nuclear agreement with the United States is possible if Washington does not make unrealistic demands. "Although we have serious doubts about the intentions and motivations of the American side, in any case we will participate in tomorrow's negotiations with seriousness," Araghchi said during a press conference in Moscow with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. "If the other side also demonstrates seriousness of intent (like Iran) and does not make unrealistic demands, reaching agreements is possible," the Iranian foreign minister said. Araghchi said Tehran will assess and decide on the path ahead of negotiations based on the approach of the US in the second stage of talks.

Peaceful solution

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio also said on Friday that the US administration is looking for a peaceful solution with Iran but will never tolerate the Islamic Republic developing

a nuclear weapon.

Araghchi and the US special envoy in the Middle East, Steve Witkoff, are set to hold the second round of negotiations in Rome today a week after they held the highest-level talks in Oman since US President Donald Trump abandoned a landmark nuclear deal in 2018. Both sides described the first round of talks as "positive and constructive", which are aimed at reaching a diplomatic agreement surrounding the Iranian nuclear program. But on Tuesday, Witkoff said Iran must "stop and eliminate" its enrichment of uranium as part of any nuclear deal. He had previously demanded only that Iran return to the 3.67 percent enrichment ceiling set by the 2015 accord between Iran and major powers that Trump withdrew from. In response, Araghchi said on Wednesday that Iran's enrichment of uranium is "non-negotiable."

Trump's threats

The US president, who has repeatedly threatened strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities if no deal is reached, said on Thursday that he was in no



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov attend a joint press conference following their talks in Moscow on April 18, 2025.

● TATYANA MAKEYEVA/AFP

hurry to launch an attack on Iran after a New York Times report that said he had waved off an Israeli attack.

"I wouldn't say waved off. I am not in a rush to do it because I think Iran has a chance to have a great country." Speaking to reporters in the Oval Office alongside Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Trump said, "Iran has a chance to have a great country, and to live happily without death, and I'd like to see that. That's my first option."

"If there's a second option," he went on, "I think it would be very bad for Iran, and I think Iran is wanting to talk. I hope they're wanting to talk. It's going to be very good for them if they do. Iran can't have a nuclear weapon. It's pretty simple."

Leader's letter for Putin

Iran's foreign minister, who had trav-



eled to Moscow at the head of a diplomatic delegation for consultations with high-ranking Russian officials, submitted a written message of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The minister presented the Leader's message to the president of Russia and explained the views and positions of the Islamic Republic regarding issues on the agenda of bilateral relations, as well as regional and international developments.

President lauds Armed Forces' prowess on Iran's Army Day

National Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Friday praised the country's Armed Forces for their strength and self-sufficiency in defense capabilities as the country marked the National Army Day. Addressing a military parade in Tehran on the occasion of the National Army Day, Pezeshkian hailed the role played by the country's Army in achieving peace and security across the country and the entire region.

"The security and peace of the society are possible with the presence of a strong and prepared army, and if this blessed power didn't exist in the society, security would have disappeared from our society," he said.

"The existence of a strong and prepared Army has enabled Iran to powerfully implement its discourse of establishing communication, peace and tranquility in the region," Pezeshkian added.

The president reaffirmed that Iran has become an "undisputed power in the



region" thanks to the country's army troops and security forces.

Pezeshkian also noted that the Army has managed to achieve self-sufficiency in producing all needed military equipment.

"Today, we are proud that our powerful Army has achieved progress with strength in the production of all military and defense tools needed by the country in the air, on land and at sea, as well as in the production of all precision equipment." The National Army Day was marked with military parades that were held by various army units in Tehran and other provinces across the country. Some of the army's achieve-



An Iranian drone is displayed during a military parade held on the occasion of the National Army Day in Tehran on April 18, 2025.

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ments and domestically-made military equipment, including drones and missiles, were also displayed on this occasion. Meanwhile, a naval parade was held in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, with a number of the navy's vessels, including destroyers and indigenous submarines, participating.

Army Day is celebrated annually on the 29th of the Persian calendar month of Farvardin (which falls on April 18, this year).

Leader: Tehran-Riyadh relationship beneficial for both nations

International Desk

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia would be beneficial for both countries.

"We believe that the relationship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia will be beneficial for both countries and the two countries can complement each other," the Leader said during a meeting with Saudi Arabia's visiting Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman. Ayatollah Khamenei also said enemies are against the expansion of relations between Tehran and Riyadh. "These hostile motives must be subdued, and we are ready for this," he said.

Khalid bin Salman, who is brother of Crown Prince and de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman, traveled to Tehran to present the message of Saudi Arabia's King Salman to Ayatollah Khamenei. The Saudi defense minister said his visit was aimed at expanding relations with Iran and cooperation in all fields.

"And we hope that the constructive talks will provide for stronger relations between Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran than in the past," he added. The Saudi official also held a separate meeting with Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian. During the meeting, Pezeshki-



an said Iran and Saudi Arabia can serve as a model for regional cooperation, stressing that the unity of Islamic countries is a prerequisite for achieving peace, security, and sustainable economic development in the region.

"We consider you our brothers, and since the beginning of this government's tenure, we have made efforts to strengthen fraternal ties among Islamic nations," Pezeshkian said, adding that if Islamic countries achieve a common language and genuine unity, the Israeli regime will no longer cause human tragedies like those unfolding in the besieged Gaza Strip nowadays. He also touched on the importance of setting aside differences and boosting regional cooperation. He also hailed the idea of establishing joint working groups in various political, economic, and security areas between Iran and



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei (R) meets with Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman (C) in Tehran on April 17, 2025.

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Saudi Arabia.

"Iran and Saudi Arabia, by relying on their shared capacities and without foreign interference, can resolve many of the region's problems. We hope the goodwill that has emerged between the two countries will strengthen the interests of the Islamic world and discourage enemies from interference and sowing discord," Pezeshkian emphasized.

Prince Khalid bin Salman also said Iran and Saudi Arabia's strong relations between the two countries can serve as an effective model for convergence and synergy in the Islamic world.

'Crucial stage': Grossi says visit to Tehran aims to facilitate Iran-US deal



UN nuclear watchdog chief Rafael Grossi said Thursday that Iran and the United States were running out of time to secure a deal as they prepare to hold fresh nuclear talks to resolve a dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

"We are in a very crucial stage of these



Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency Rafael Grossi speaks to reporters during a visit to Tehran on April 17, 2025.

● AEOI

important negotiations. We know we don't have much time. This is why I am here... to facilitate this process," Grossi said on a visit to Tehran, AFP reported. "We are working hard and we want to succeed," he told a joint news conference with Iran's atomic energy agency chief Mohammad Eslami, acknowledging that the effort to secure a deal was "not an easy process."

On Wednesday, Grossi met with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who led the first round of talks with US Special Envoy

Steve Witkoff on Saturday.

"The IAEA can play a crucial role in peaceful settlement of the Iranian nuclear file in the coming months," Araghchi said.

Araghchi called on the IAEA chief to "keep the agency away from politics" in the face of those seeking to "derail current negotiations". He did not elaborate. Before heading to Iran, Grossi told French newspaper Le Monde that Tehran was "not far" from possessing a nuclear bomb.

Western governments have long accused Iran of seeking to acquire nuclear weapons capability, an ambition Tehran has consistently denied.

A year after the US pulled out of the 2015 nuclear deal in 2018, Iran began rolling back its own commitments under the agreement, which gave it relief from sanctions in return for IAEA-monitored restrictions on its nuclear activities.

In its latest report, the IAEA said Iran had an estimated 274.8 kilograms (605 pounds) of uranium enriched to up to 60 percent.