

Iran, US reach 'better understanding' of goals in nuclear talks: *Araghchi*

'Expert-level talks to be held on Wednesday'

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said that Iran and the United States reached better understanding of a series of principles and goals during the second round of negotiations over Tehran's nuclear program. In a live televised interview shortly after the end of nearly four hours of negotiations in Rome on Saturday, Araghchi said that the talks were held in a "constructive atmosphere" and are "moving forward".

Iran's top diplomat added that technical negotiations at the expert level will be held in Oman on Wednesday and "experts will have more time to design a framework for an agreement."

The two sides will review the result of the Wednesday's negotiations in separate talks which is scheduled to be held in Oman on Saturday to "see how close we are to the principles of an agreement".

"I hope that we will be in a better position after the technical talks."

Talks only on nuclear issue

The Iranian foreign minister underlined that only the nuclear issue was raised by the American side during the discussion. "The Americans have not raised any issues unrelated to the nuclear topic so far," Abbas Araghchi told the Tasnim News Agency.

There was no immediate readout from the US side after the meeting at the Omani Embassy in Rome's Camilluccia neighborhood. However, President Donald Trump has been pushing for a rapid deal with Iran while threatening military action against it.

'Fair, binding deal'

Oman's Foreign Ministry in a statement after the talks said that Araghchi and US special envoy in the Middle East, Steve Witkoff agreed to enter into the next phase of the discussions that would aim to "seal a fair, enduring and binding deal" which would ensure "Iran completely free of nuclear weapons and sanctions and maintaining its ability to develop peaceful nuclear energy".

Araghchi and Witkoff led the first round

of the negotiations in Oman, which were described by the two sides as "positive and constructive".

The negotiations are aimed at reaching a diplomatic agreement surrounding the Iranian nuclear program and to put an end to decades of disputes over the issue.

The talks are even happening represents a historic moment, given the decades of enmity between the two countries since the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Trump, in his first term, unilaterally withdrew from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2018, setting off years of negotiations that failed to restore the accord.

Western countries including the US have long accused Iran of seeking to acquire nuclear weapons – an allegation Tehran has consistently denied, insisting that its program is for peaceful civilian purposes.

Araghchi-Tajani meeting

Before talks with the US delegation, Araghchi held talks with Italian Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani.

Tajani said Italy was ready "to facilitate



the continuation of the talks even for sessions at the technical level."

A diplomat deal "is built patiently, day after day, with dialogue and mutual respect," he said in a statement.

Reaffirming Iran's commitment to diplomacy, Araghchi urged all parties to seize the opportunity for a "logical and

reasonable understanding" that would recognize Iran's legitimate rights and lift "unjust and illegal sanctions."

He emphasized Iran's peaceful nuclear intentions, reiterating the country's rejection of weapons of mass destruction based on its religious and national values and defensive doctrine.

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill over 90 in 48 hours



People run for cover as a plume of smoke rises above tents at a camp for displaced Palestinians in northern Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip, during an Israeli strike on April 19, 2025.

● AFP

according to the United Nations. On Friday, the head of the World Health Organization's eastern Mediterranean office, Dr. Hanan Balkhy, urged the new US ambassador in Israel, Mike Huckabee, to push the country to lift Gaza's blockade so medicines and other aid can enter. "I would wish for him to go in and see the situation firsthand," she said.

Israel's offensive has since killed over 51,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants.

The war has destroyed vast parts of Gaza and most of its food production capabilities. Around 90% of the population is displaced, with hundreds of thousands of people living in tent camps and bombed-out buildings.

Israel shattered a cease-fire last month and continued its deadly strikes on the Palestinian territory.

Israeli strikes in Gaza have killed more than 90 people in 48 hours, Gaza's Health Ministry said Saturday, as Israeli troops increase their attacks on the besieged territory. Children and women were among the 15 people killed overnight, and some had been sheltering in a designated humanitarian zone, according to hospital staff, AP reported.

At least 11 people were killed in the southern city of Khan Yunis, several of them in a tent in the Muwasi area where hundreds of thousands of displaced people are staying, hospital workers said. Israel has designated it as a humanitarian zone.

Four other people were killed in

strikes in Rafah city, including a mother and her daughter, according to the European Hospital, where the bodies were taken.

There was no immediate Israeli military comment. Israel has vowed to intensify attacks across Gaza and occupy indefinitely large "security zones" inside the small coastal strip of over 2 million people.

Israel also has blockaded Gaza for the past six weeks, again barring the entry of food and other goods. This week, aid groups raised the alarm, saying thousands of children have become malnourished and most people are barely eating one meal a day as stocks dwindle,

Iran in no rush to establish ties with new Syrian government



Members of Syria's new authorities' security forces gather in Sanamayn, in the southern province of Dara'a, during a military campaign on March 5, 2025.

● AFP

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Tehran has no intention to establish contacts with Syria's new rulers until they ensure security in the Arab country.

"Iran is not engaging with the current Syrian government. We have no contacts and we are not in a hurry to establish relations. At the same time, we are not taking any measures against it, the Iranian foreign minister said in an interview with Russia Today.

"We are just waiting for them to complete their work to ensure security, stability and to establish an inclusive

legitimate government that includes all ethnic groups," the Iranian foreign minister said.

Araghchi paid a two-day visit to Russia on Thursday and Friday, during which he held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin and his counterpart Sergei Lavrov.

Araghchi said that the issue of Syria was raised during his meeting with Lavrov.

Both Iran and Russia are extremely concerned about the situation in Syria, Araghchi added.

Tehran and Moscow were the main allies of the former Syrian government during nearly a decade of war with the foreign-backed terrorists.

Expert-level meet means ...

Iran's biggest red line in the nuclear negotiations has always been to

preserve the right to have its enrichment program—something enshrined in the statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency that allows member states to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, including enrichment, provided they adhere to safeguards under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Iran has time and again maintained that its nuclear work is entirely peaceful for purposes such as power generation and medicine.

Expert-level talks typically drill down into technical and specialized issues and the most technical matter under dispute in the talks between

Iran and the US seems to be uranium enrichment by Tehran.

The very fact that both parties have agreed to hold technical discussions is a strong indication that the US may have come round to the idea of Iran retaining some level of enrichment under a possible agreement.

It now seems President Donald Trump, who once mocked the JCPOA and labeled it a "bad deal" before pulling out of it in 2018, might be warming to the idea of returning to a similar arrangement.

The fine details of any potential accord will emerge in time, but early signs suggest it would mirror the JCPOA, with minor tweaks that could go down well with both sides, particularly Trump, who may wish

to sell it to the American public and the international community.

Should such a win-win deal be clinched, it would be a major achievement for Iran and its negotiating team, who are going into these talks with the backing of the Leader and as per his advisor with "full authority."

Trump is still struggling to chalk up a meaningful foreign policy victory and has yet to deliver on key campaign promises such as ending the war between Russia and Ukraine or halting Israel's aggression on the Gaza Strip in favor of a cease-fire acceptable to the Palestinians. Therefore, under such circumstances, striking a deal with Iran could count as a feather in his cap.

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