

President upbraids global silence on Israel's crimes in Gaza

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday criticized the silence of international organizations on the crimes committed by the Israeli regime in the Gaza Strip where it has killed nearly 53,000 people since 2023.

"The world sees but is silent, the United Nations sees but still defends such a crime. This is the problem we have. When they are behind the podiums, they talk about freedom and peace, but in action, they are more ferocious than the most ferocious animals," the Iranian president said while addressing a conference com-

memorating the Red Crescent Week in Iran.

"How can those who talk about human rights and humanity accept that women, children, and the elderly are easily bombed?" Pezeshkian added. At least 52,862 Palestinians have been killed, mostly women and children, and another 119,648 individuals injured in the brutal Israeli military onslaught on Gaza since October 7, 2023.

Israel has also blocked all humanitarian assistance from reaching Palestinians in Gaza since March 2. UNRWA, the main UN agency for Palestinian refugees, estimates that up to 1.9 million people in Gaza have

been internally displaced – about 90% of the population of the Strip, estimated by the UN to be around 2.1 million people. The number of displaced people rose from 1.7 million since Israel launched its offensive on the southern city of Rafah in May.

The regime has also restricted Palestinians' access to 70 percent of Gaza, either by declaring large areas as no-go zones or issuing forced displacement orders, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

UNRWA has described the humanitarian situation in Gaza as a crisis

"beyond imagination."

"Air strikes, blockades, and starvation continue, with tens of thousands killed and injured," UNRWA said in a post on X.

"Displaced families face collapsing infrastructure, sewage overflows, and empty markets. The siege must be lifted to ensure vital humanitarian and commercial supplies reach Gaza," it said.

Israel launched its genocide in Gaza on October 7, 2023, after the Hamas resistance group carried out the historic Al-Aqsa Flood operation against the usurping entity in retaliation for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.



AFP

Pezeshkian: Iran 'serious' in nuclear talks with US

Trump: Very good things happening with Iran

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Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Sunday that Tehran is "serious" in its nuclear negotiations with the United States and seeks to reach an agreement to put an end to decades of tensions on the issue.

Addressing a cabinet meeting, Pezeshkian assured that Iran has never pursued, is not pursuing, and will never pursue nuclear weapons.

Since April 12, the two countries have held four rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program and removal of sanctions imposed on Iran. Both sides have described the negotiations mediated by Oman as "positive and constructive."

However, the US officials' recent demands for dismantlement of Iran's entire uranium enrichment infrastructure caused Iranian officials to raise an eyebrow and quickly react to the demands.

'Unacceptable' demand

The Iranian president clarified that the Islamic Republic found the demand for dismantlement of its entire nuclear infrastructure "unacceptable."

The US officials, including Washington's chief negotiator Steve Witkoff have called Iran's uranium enrichment a red line for the US. Witkoff said in a Friday interview

that Iran's "enrichment facilities have to be dismantled."

"That's our red line. No enrichment," he told US right-wing outlet Breitbart News, after initially suggesting flexibility on Tehran maintaining low-level enrichment of uranium for civilian purposes. Pezeshkian on Monday underscored that Iran would not give up its nuclear achievements, particularly in the realm of peaceful energy.

Iran is decisively following up its nuclear energy work since nuclear technology significantly benefited the nation, not just in terms of energy production, but as far as vital sectors such as medicine, agriculture, and environmental protection were concerned, he said.

Iran and the US wrapped up the fourth round of nuclear talks in Oman on Sunday.

US President Donald Trump, who is scheduled to travel to visit Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates this week, said on Monday that there are "very good things happening" with Iran.

Iranians 'talking intelligently'

"They can't have a nuclear weapon, but I think that they are talking intelligently," Trump said during a White House press conference.

"We're in the midst of talking to them, and they're right now acting

very intelligent."

"We want Iran to be wealthy and wonderful and happy and great, but they can't have a nuclear weapon," Trump said.

After the Sunday talks in Oman, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who leads the Iran's delegation in negotiations, said that Tehran and Washington narrowed their differences and at the very least, the two sides reached a better understanding of each other's positions.

Araghchi described the latest round of negotiations as "more serious" and "more detailed" than previous meetings, adding that "more detailed issues" were discussed and that the negotiations were "moving forward."

The top Iranian diplomat also reaffirmed that the issue of uranium enrichment is absolutely non-negotiable. But he said that Iran may be open to limit the extent, level, or capacity of enrichment for the purpose of confidence-building over a specified period, similar to what has been experienced in the past.

Araghchi, who leads the Iranian delegation in the negotiations with the US, added that the primary objective of the negotiations is to get the sanctions lifted, and the issue has always been – and remains – one of the fundamental pillars of the talks.

Kurdish militant group PKK says disbanding, ending armed struggle



Head of the Kurdistan Workers' Party Murat Karayilan (c) announces the dissolution of the PKK party at an undisclosed location in northern Iraq on May 12, 2025. AFP

The Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militant group, which has been locked in bloody conflict with Turkey for more than four decades, decided to disband and end its armed struggle, group members and Turkish leaders said on Monday.

Since the PKK launched its insurgency in 1984 – originally with the aim of creating an independent Kurdish state – the conflict has killed more than 40,000 people, exerted a huge economic burden and fueled social tensions, Reuters reported.

The PKK's decision could boost NATO member Turkey's political and economic stability and encourage moves to ease tensions in neighboring Iraq and also in Syria, where Kurdish forces are allied with US forces.

While Ankara welcomed the decision to dissolve, it does not guarantee peace. Rather it paves the way for agreeing a tricky legal framework for securely disarming the PKK, which is designated a terrorist group by Turkey and its Western allies.

"The PKK 12th Congress decided to dissolve the PKK's organizational structure... and end the armed struggle," Firat news agency reported the group as saying in the closing declaration of a congress held last week in northern Iraq, where the group is based.

A PKK official separately confirmed the decision and said all military operations would cease "immediately," adding weapon handovers were contingent on Ankara's response and approach to Kurdish rights, and the fate of PKK fighters and leaders. Kurds make up some 20% of Turkey's 86 million population.

The PKK held the congress in response to a February call to disband from its jailed leader Abdullah Ocalan, who has been imprisoned on an island south of Istanbul since 1999. It said on Monday that he would manage the process.

However, it was not clear whether Ankara agreed to Ocalan's continued role, which polls suggest could be unpopular among Turks. Nor were details available on how the disarmament and breakup of the PKK would happen in practice.

It was also unclear how the process would affect the Kurdish YPG militia in Syria, if at all. YPG leads a US-allied force and is regarded by Turkey as a PKK affiliate.

YPG has previously said Ocalan's call did not apply to it, contradicting Ankara's view. It did not immediately comment on the PKK's announcement.

The disbanding will give President Tayyip Erdogan a chance to boost development in Turkey's mainly Kurdish southeast, where the insurgency has impaired the regional economy for decades.

The European Union called on "all parties to seize the moment" and begin "an inclusive process based on dialogue and reconciliation."

The president of Iraq's Kurdistan region, Nechirvan Barzani – who is a crucial powerbroker in Kurdish affairs and has close ties with Turkey – hailed the move as a boost for regional security.

The PKK decision "demonstrates political maturity and paves the way for a dialogue that promotes coexistence and stability in Turkey and the region," he said in a statement.

Hamas frees last American captive

Palestinian resistance group Hamas said on Monday it had freed an Israeli-American captive as fighting paused in Gaza on Monday.

Fighting stopped at midday in Gaza after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would pause its operations to allow safe passage for the hostage release.

Hamas said in a statement it had freed Alexander, the last American it held, and a source familiar with the matter said Edan Alexander had been handed to the Red Cross, Reuters reported.

"The (Ezzedine) Al-Qassam Brigades have just released the Zionist soldier and American citizen Edan Alexander, following contacts with the US administration, as part of the efforts undertaken by mediators to achieve a cease-fire," Hamas said.



The release, after four-way talks between Hamas, the United States, Egypt and Qatar, could open the way to freeing the remaining 59 hostages held in the Gaza Strip, 19 months after Hamas' attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Qatar and Egypt said Alexander's release was an encouraging step towards new truce talks. Israel will

send a delegation to Qatar on Thursday to discuss a new proposal aimed at securing further hostage releases, Netanyahu's office said.

Netanyahu has insisted that Israel's planning for an expanded military campaign in Gaza will continue, as one of his coalition partners, national security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, said the war on Hamas must not end and aid should not be let in to the territory.

Gaza health authorities said an Israeli strike killed at least 15 people sheltering at a school on Monday before fighting paused.

The global hunger monitor, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) reported on Monday that half a million people in the Gaza Strip face starvation and there is a critical risk of famine by September.

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Cartoonist

