

Iran neither retreats from principles in talks, nor seeks tension: *Pezeshkian*



President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a meeting with a number of Iranian lawmakers in Tehran on May 13, 2025.
● president.ir

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Tuesday that Iran would neither back down from its principles in the ongoing nuclear talks with the United States, nor would it seek tension.

In a meeting with a number of Iranian lawmakers, Pezeshkian said the negotiations are carried out in full coordination with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

"We have not tied the people's livelihood and living conditions to the talks, nor will we ever do so," the Iranian president added.

Since April 12, the two countries have held four rounds of talks on Iran's nuclear program and removal of sanctions imposed on Iran.

Iran described the latest round of the talks held on Sunday as "difficult but useful" while a senior US official said Washington was "encouraged" and both sides confirmed plans for future negotiations.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem

Gharibabadi, who is a senior member of Iranian delegation in the negotiations, on Tuesday gave some details of the fourth round of the talks in Oman.

Gharibabadi said the Iranian side criticized the contradictory positions of the American officials and the sanctions recently imposed on Iran.

Respecting Iran's red lines

Gharibabadi also said the Iranian delegation underlined that reaching an agreement depends on respecting Iran's red lines.

"Therefore, if the Americans are after zero enrichment (in Iran), we see no need to continue the negotiations."

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

Witkoff said on Friday that Iran's "enrichment facilities have to be dismantled."

In a separate meeting on Sunday, Pezeshkian clarified that the Islamic Republic found the demand for dismantlement of its entire nuclear infrastructure "unacceptable."

He underscored that Iran would not give up its nuclear achievements, particularly in the realm of peaceful energy.

Pezeshkian stressed that Tehran is serious in the negotiations and seeks to reach an agreement to put an end to decades of tensions on the issue.

He assured that Iran has never pursued, is not pursuing, and will never pursue nuclear weapons.

Regarding the uranium enrichment, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who leads the Iran's delegation in negotiations, has also said it is absolutely non-negotiable. But he said that Iran may be open to limit the level and volume of enrichment as a confidence-building move over a specified period.

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Mohammad Eslami stressed that, "The path of nuclear progress (in Iran) is clear, peaceful, and unstoppable — something the enemies have repeatedly admitted to."

Iran currently enriches uranium to 60 percent purity — far above the 3.67 percent limit set in the 2015 deal.

US, Saudi Arabia sign \$142b arms deal as Trump begins Middle East tour

International Desk

US President Donald Trump signed a host of economic and bilateral cooperation agreements in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, including a \$142b arms deal, as he kicked off a four-day Middle East trip that will also include Qatar and the UAE.

The White House released details on some of the US-Saudi agreements signed by Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, describing them as "historic and transformative."

The deals include nearly \$142b in defense sales — what the White House called the largest-ever agreement of its kind — as well as tens of billions in energy and technology investments, which it says are "just a few of the many transformative deals" reached.

Altogether, the agreements are part of a broader package the White House said will total \$600bn.

"I really believe we like each

other a lot," Trump told crown prince, the Saudi de facto ruler. "We have the biggest business leaders in the world here today and they're going to walk away with a lot of cheques," Trump told the prince.

For "the United States, it's probably two million jobs that we're talking about," Trump said.

They signed more than a dozen agreements to increase cooperation between their governments' militaries, justice departments and cultural institutions. Additional economic agreements were to be inked later Tuesday at a US-Saudi investment conference convened for the occasion.

The White House said that Saudi company DataVolt will invest \$20 billion in artificial intelligence-related sites in the United States, while tech firms including Google will invest in both countries — welcome news for Saudi Arabia which has long faced restrictions in US advanced technology.

Visits to Qatar, UAE

Trump picked the kingdom for his first stop, because it has pledged to make big investments in the US, but he ended up traveling to Italy last month for Pope Francis' funeral. Riyadh was the first overseas stop of his first term.

The three countries on Trump's itinerary — Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates — are places where the Trump Organization, run by Trump's two oldest sons, is developing major real estate projects. They include a high-rise tower in Jeddah, a luxury hotel in Dubai and a golf course and villa complex in Qatar.

Before the trip, Trump announced Washington was halting a nearly two-month US airstrike campaign against Yemen, saying Yemen has pledged to stop attacking ships along a vital global trade route.

Trump leaves Israel in the dark

The US administration didn't no-



tify Israel — which the Yemen's Armed Forces continue to target — of the agreement before Trump publicly announced it. It was the latest example of Trump leaving the Israelis in the dark about his administration's negotiations with common adversaries.

In March, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wasn't notified by the administration until after talks



US President Donald Trump (L) and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman applaud after the signing of agreements during a bilateral meeting in Riyadh on May 13, 2025.

● [BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP](#)

began with Hamas about the war in Gaza. And Netanyahu found out about the ongoing US nuclear talks with Iran

only when Trump announced them during an Oval Office visit by the Israeli leader last month.

"Israel will defend itself by itself," Netanyahu said last week following Trump's Yemen truce announcement. "If others join us — our American friends — all the better."

William Wechsler, senior director of the Rafik Hariri Center and Middle East Programs at the Atlantic Council, said Trump's decision to skip Israel on his first Middle East visit is remarkable.

Trump, meanwhile, hopes to restart his first-term effort to normalize relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia. Trump's Abraham Accords effort led to Sudan, the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco agreeing to normalize relations with Israel.

But Riyadh has made clear that in exchange for normalization it wants US security guarantees, assistance with the kingdom's nuclear program and progress on a pathway to Palestinian statehood.

Iran welcomes PKK dissolution as 'important step'

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry on Tuesday welcomed the dissolution of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), calling it "an important step towards rejecting violence and strengthening security."

"We hope that the completion of this process will lead to the promotion of stability and peace in Turkey and the region," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said in a statement.

The PKK, founded in the late 1970s by Abdullah Ocalan, on Monday announced its dissolution and the end of its four-decade armed struggle against Turkey, which has killed more than 40,000 people.

"The PKK 12th Congress decided to

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

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 Ocalan, who has been imprisoned on an island south of Istanbul since 1999.

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.

Party of Free Life of Kurdistan (PJAK), a PKK offshoot founded in 2004, has



been also involved in operations against Iran over the past two decades.

The group is labelled a terrorist organization by Iran, Turkey and the US. The decision was welcomed by many countries in the world as well as the European Union and the United Nations.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hailed the PKK move, calling it an "important decision for maintaining peace and fraternity" in the country.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

