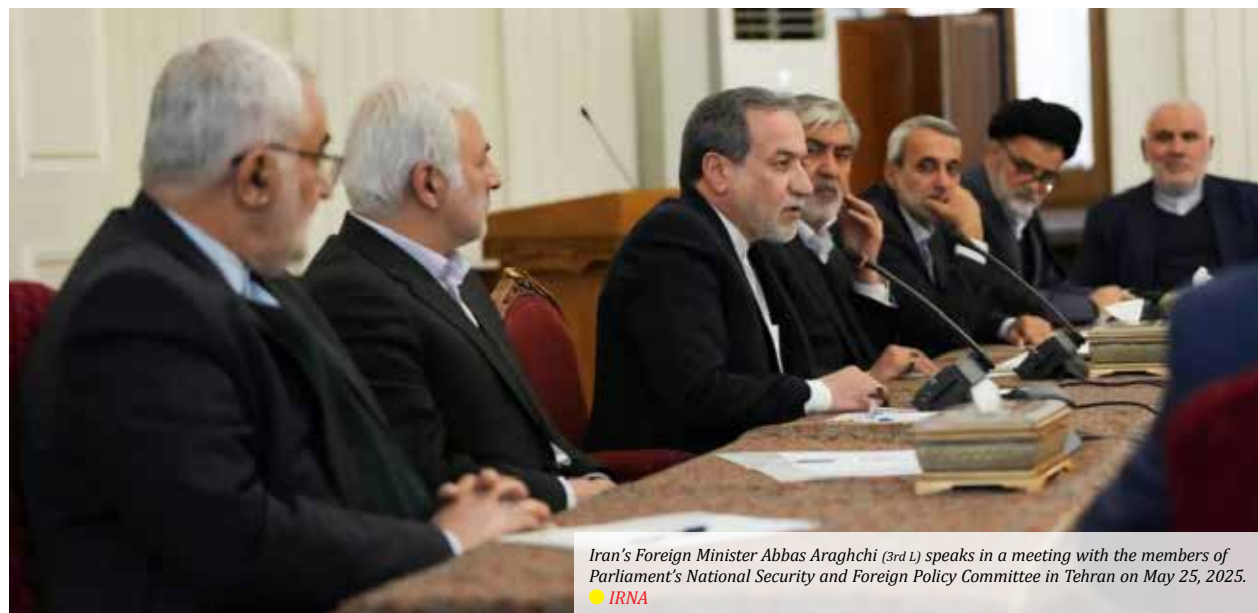


## Iran, US engaged in 'battle of wills'

**FM: Talks will yield results only if  
Iranians' rights secured**

Araghchi warns of 'harsh' response over triggering snapback mechanism



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (3rd L) speaks in a meeting with the members of Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee in Tehran on May 25, 2025.  
● IRNA

**International Desk**

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Sunday described the ongoing nuclear negotiations between Tehran and Washington as a "battle of wills," say-

ing that the talks would yield results once the rights of the Iranian people were secured. Speaking to reporters after a meeting with the members of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy

Committee, Araghchi said Tehran was "neither in any rush to reach an agreement with the US nor causing delays in the talks." However, he said that the officials would do their utmost to lift sanctions

as soon as possible but not at the expense of Iranians' rights.

"Therefore, we negotiate with patience and we will not back down on the people's rights, including the issue of [uranium] enrichment," said Araghchi who leads the Iranian negotiating team in the talks mediated by Oman.

Since April 12, Iran and the US have held five rounds of negotiations in Oman and Italy to settle a decades-long dispute on Iran's nuclear program. Both sides have so far described the talks as constructive. But disagreement over uranium enrichment in Iran has hindered progress in the negotiations.

US top negotiator Steve Witkoff has said Washington "could not authorize even one percent" enrichment—a position Tehran called a red line, citing its rights under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

**Snapback mechanism**

Ebrahim Rezaei, the spokesman of the Parliamentary panel said Araghchi also warned of "harsh" response if the European countries invoked the so-called snapback mechanism to re-

impose the United Nations sanctions on Iran.

The UK, France, and Germany—three European parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal—have recently threatened to trigger the mechanism, which would bring back a broad range of international sanctions on Iran that had been suspended under the tattered nuclear pact.

The lawmaker quoted Araghchi as saying that Iran would continue to pursue its "wise and clear nuclear policy," which he said was not subject to pressure, threats, or enticements.

Pointing to proposals drawn up in the fifth round of talks which were held in Italy's capital Rome, Araghchi said Iran welcomed the establishment of a regional enrichment center, according to the MP.

However, the minister clarified that enrichment activities would continue inside Iran, Rezaei explained.

Also on Sunday, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei dismissed media reports about the timing and location of the next round of the negotiations, saying that the date for the next round of talks had not yet been set.

**Israeli forces in control of 77% of Gaza****International Desk**

The Israeli military now in effect controls 77 percent of the total geographical area of the Gaza Strip, according to the Gaza's Government Media Office.

"This is achieved through direct ground incursions and the deployment of occupation forces within residential and civilian areas, through heavy fire control that prevents Palestinian citizens from accessing their homes, areas, lands, and property, or through unjust forced eviction policies," it said in a statement.

The office called on the UN and the international community to take action to stop the Israeli expansion.

"The continued genocide, ethnic cleansing, colonialism, aggression, and occupation control over the vast majority of the Gaza Strip reflects an Israeli political will to impose a 'final solution' by force, in blatant defiance of all international laws and norms," the statement said.

Since the beginning of its war on Gaza in October 2023, the Israeli military have repeatedly displaced Palestinians and has restricted their access to more than 70 percent of Gaza, either by declaring large areas

as no-go zones or issuing forced displacement orders.

The Israeli attacks have so far claimed the lives of nearly 54,000 Palestinians – mostly women and children. At least 22 Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks across Gaza since on Sunday.

Ramy Abdu, chairman of the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, said on Sunday that the Geneva-based organization has verified the killing of thousands of Palestinian families in Gaza by the Israeli military.

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, has called for an end to "indiscriminate attacks" against Gaza's children, 950 of whom have reportedly been killed in the past two months.

Since the beginning of Israel's onslaught on Gaza, cities across the world have been the scene of protests in support of Palestinians.

On Saturday, thousands of people gathered in Stockholm, Paris, and Berlin to protest their governments' silence on Israel's occupation and ongoing military offensives in the Gaza Strip, calling for immediate international intervention and sanctions against Tel Aviv.

In Stockholm, hundreds of people gathered at Odenplan Square in



● AFP

response to calls from various civil society organizations urging the Swedish government to take a stand against Israel's ongoing war crimes in Gaza.

In Paris, Palestinian supporters gathered at Bourse Square to demand sanctions against Israel and unhindered passage of humanitarian aid convoys into Gaza.

Demonstrators highlighted the dire food shortage by banging empty pots and pans and chanting slogans such as "Israel is a murderer, Macron is an accomplice" and "There is genocide in Gaza, we will not remain silent."

In Berlin, around 1,000 people gathered at Oranienplatz to protest Israel's attacks on Gaza.

Protesters chanted slogans such as "Freedom for Palestine," "Germany finances, Israel bombs," "Israel is a terrorist state," and "Stop the genocide."

**Spain calls for sanctions on Israel to end war in Gaza****International Desk**

The international community should look to sanction Israel to stop the war in Gaza, Spain's foreign minister said, ahead of a Madrid meeting of European and Arab nations on Sunday to urge a halt to its offensive.

Countries Israel had long counted on as allies have been adding their voices to growing international pressure after it expanded military operations in Gaza, AFP reported.

A two-month aid blockade has worsened shortages of food, water, fuel and medicine in the Palestinian territory, sparking fears of famine.

Aid organizations say the trickle of supplies Israel allowed to enter in recent days falls far short of needs.

Madrid hosted 20 countries as well as international organizations on Sunday with the aim of "stopping this war, which no longer has any goal", Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares told France Info radio. Humanitarian aid must enter Gaza "massively, unimpeded, neutrally, so that it is not Israel who decides who can eat and who cannot", he said.



Jose Manuel Albares  
● AFP

On May 14, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez called Israel a "genocidal state." He has imposed an arms embargo on Israel and recognized a Palestinian state.

A previous such gathering in Madrid last year brought together countries including Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Turkey as well as European nations such as Ireland and Norway that have recognized a Palestinian state.

After the European Union decided this week to review its cooperation deal with Israel, Albares said "we must consider sanctions, we must do everything, consider everything to stop this war".

Israel's offensive has killed almost 54,000 people, mostly civilians, according to the Gaza's health ministry.

**Sharif's regional tour ...**

As part of measures to facilitate trade, the two sides can rev up border mar-

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kets, and boost connectivity through rail, maritime, and air transport. As far as border markets are concerned, security becomes an important issue, which can be addressed through bringing economic prosperity. In fact, economic development brings about security, and the two are somehow inter-related. If local populations in border regions benefit from legitimate economic opportunities, the appeal of groups working to sabotage

security will dry up.

Of course, regional diplomacy has its own challenges. Some nations may feel threatened by bilateral ties between neighboring states and may attempt to muscle in or undercut existing arrangements. Nevertheless, in case of Pakistan and Iran, the political will in both Islamabad and Tehran is so strong that it rises above such maneuvering.

When it comes to the issues of the Islamic world, the cooperation between Iran and Pakistan proves to be fruitful as well. Both are key members of the

Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and share common concerns on the most pressing issue of the Muslim world, which is Palestine, and particularly Gaza, where the Israeli war has been ongoing for nearly 19 months now.

Tehran-Islamabad cooperation on Gaza can set an example for other countries, and can be inspiring for other aligned countries to amplify their collective voice against aggressive policies of Israel in order to bring an end to them and stop the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

