

# 'Renunciation of domination' Iran's key principle in nuclear talks: *FM*

Trump says US 'fairly close' to clinching deal with Iran

## International Desk

Iran's foreign minister said that the "renunciation of domination" has always been one of the ministry's strategic principles in nuclear talks with the West which is pressuring Iran to give up its right to enrich uranium. Abbas Araghchi was speaking during a visit alongside the employees of the Iranian Foreign Ministry to Imam Khomeini's mausoleum in southern Tehran on Saturday to renew their allegiance to the ideals of the late founder of the Islamic Revolution.

"The main foundation of [Iran's] foreign policy is based on the mentality and principle of renouncing foreign domination," Araghchi said.

The top Iranian diplomat underlined that the same policy is pursued in Tehran's ongoing talks with Washington over the Islamic Republic's nuclear energy file.

"There is much to say about the nuclear issue and enrichment as one of the country's necessities, but in nuclear negotiations, another focus of our work relates to the issue of rejecting domina-

tion; this has always been our guiding principle in the current negotiations," Araghchi said.

"The statement that you should not carry out enrichment is itself domination. Why shouldn't we have enrichment? This is absolutely unacceptable to the Iranian nation."

Stressing that the Islamic Republic has been pioneering in the denunciation of nuclear weapons, Araghchi added, "They are by no means entitled to deprive the Iranian nation of its rights. Nuclear energy is the inalienable right of the Iranian people."

## Supporting negotiating team

Seyyed Hassan Khomeini, the grandson of the late founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran Imam Khomeini, also met with the employees of the Foreign Ministry on Saturday and threw its support behind Iran's negotiating team in the nuclear talks. Referring to the capabilities of the negotiating team led by Araghchi, he expressed hope that the negotiations would lead to "good results."

Since April 12, Iran and the US

have held five rounds of nuclear talks described by both sides as "positive and constructive" and are expected to meet again for negotiations aimed at reaching a new agreement aimed at resolving a decades-old dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said Wednesday that "consultations are ongoing regarding the time and location of the next round of talks, and once finalized, they will be announced by Oman."

## Progress in talks

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said on Saturday that, "We are witnessing some progress in indirect negotiations with the United States."

However, in recent weeks, the two countries have clashed over the issue of uranium enrichment in Iran, which Washington says must be brought to zero. Tehran maintains its nuclear program is exclusively for civilian purposes and views its enrichment industry as a red line.

Eslami said that talks of zero enrichment are more applicable



to "the Zionist society." In an interview with Oman's state television on Wednesday, President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran is prepared for relevant cooperation aimed at proving the peaceful nature of

its nuclear activities, but will not relinquish its nuclear rights under any circumstances.

In his latest comments about the nuclear talks, the US President Donald Trump on Friday reiterated his belief that

Washington was "fairly close" to reaching a nuclear deal with Iran.

"I think we have a chance of making a deal with Iran," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office.

## Iran says IAEA report based on 'fabricated' docs provided by Israel

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Iran on Saturday adamantly dismissed the latest report by the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), describing it as politically motivated and "based on fabricated documents" provided by Israel.

A joint statement released by Iran's Foreign Ministry and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said the report, presented to the IAEA Board of Governors in June 2025, repeated "baseless and biased allegations" and accused IAEA chief Rafael Grossi of acting "beyond the scope of his assigned duties" and "in contradiction with the professional standards governing international institutions, including the principle of impartiality."

Iran maintained that the allegations contained in the report relate to "a few alleged activities and undeclared sites from decades ago," and insisted that it has "never had any undeclared nuclear site or activity."

It further stated that Tehran had fully cooperated with the agency by granting access to the disputed sites, allowing sampling, and providing detailed explanations.

The UN agency in a report on Saturday claimed that Iran had further increased its stockpile of uranium enriched to near weapons-grade levels. In a separate report, the agency called on Tehran to urgently change course and comply with its years-long probe.

The report claimed that as of May 17, Iran has amassed 408.6 kilograms (900.8 pounds) of uranium enriched up to 60%.

That's an increase of 133.8 kilograms (294.9 pounds) — or almost 50% — since the IAEA's last report



in February.

Iran's joint statement also criticized the IAEA for misrepresenting Iran's voluntary actions as "binding commitments," arguing that such interpretation "lacked legal basis" and was not supported by the agency's foundational documents. "Iran has no such legal obligation," the statement pointed out. Tehran objected strongly to the IAEA's reliance on intelligence from Israel, which it described as "an NPT non-signatory party possessing weapons of mass destruction."

It said such sources were "unreliable and misleading" and contradicted the IAEA's own verification principles. Expressing "deep regret" over the publication of the report, Iran said the document had been prepared under political pressure and "merely serves as a pretext for politically motivated campaigns against the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Iran reiterated that nuclear weapons had no place in its defense doctrine, citing a religious decree issued by the country's Leader. It further said that its uranium enrichment program was entirely peaceful, fully transparent, and conducted under the oversight of the IAEA in accordance with the comprehensive safeguards agreement.

The statement added that had it not been for what it described as the "politicization and duplicity" of the United States and three European countries (France, Britain and Germany), the IAEA would not have issued such a repetitive and unjust report.

Iran also warned that any political exploitation of the report or Tehran's voluntary cooperation with the agency would trigger an "appropriate response," saying the consequences and responsibility would rest with those countries.

## Gaza paying price ...

Given internal Israeli dynamics, there is a strong chance Netanyahu might shift gears from the Gaza offensive to an extensive campaign in the West Bank instead. Looking at Israel's military history, only a few wars, like the 1967 War, stand out as unequivocal victories.

Conversely, more contentious or drawn-out conflicts, such as the 1973 Yom Kippur War, initially caught Israel off guard, though success eventually followed. Yet, in its aftermath, a fact-finding committee led to the political retirement of then prime minister Golda Meir. Similarly, after the 2006 Lebanon War, which Israel failed to wrap up successfully, the Winograd Commission was set up, and then prime minister Ehud Olmert, in an attempt to divert the heat, launched the 22-day Gaza war. That, too, ended poorly, and Olmert, like Meir, was politically sidelined, never returning to the electoral field and forced out of his party.

This context is highly significant. Netanyahu now faces a parallel moment. By his own admission, Israel was blindsided on October 7, 2023. That element of surprise has ignited intense domestic pressure

for a fact-finding panel. For nearly seven months, demands had been mounting, but Netanyahu refused, dodging accountability by leaning on the pretext of a "wartime emergency." He might eventually agree to a cease-fire in Gaza, but this would not spell the end of hostilities, rather it would only signal a change in battleground, with operations potentially shifting to the West Bank or Lebanon. Netanyahu needs war to politically survive, either in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank. Even his recent declaration, in which he said he would go ahead with a cease-fire if Hamas accepts Trump's relocation plan for Gaza, is more tactical than genuine. It is designed not to reject Trump outright but rather to maintain his support, knowing full well Hamas is unlikely to accept a proposal that contradicts its narrative of Gaza as Palestinian territory. Israel's blueprint for Gaza is becoming clearer. It wants to force Palestinians out of Gaza even through its so-called aid distribution plan that forces residents to register in certain areas and then receive humanitarian aid. This framework seeks to lay the groundwork for Israel's occupation of Gaza indefinitely.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

