

Araghchi: No deal if goal is to 'deprive' Iran of peaceful nuclear activities

Egypt welcomes efforts for conclusion of Iran-US talks

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Monday that a nuclear deal with the US would not be possible if the goal of the negotiations is to "deprive Iran of its peaceful nuclear activities."

"If the goal of the negotiations is to gain reassurance and confidence that Iran is not seeking nuclear weapons, then in my view, reaching an agreement is possible," he said in a joint press conference with Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty in Cairo where he also met with the head of the UN atomic agency Rafael Grossi.

"But if the goal is to deprive Iran of its peaceful activities, then certainly no agreement will be reached," he continued.

Araghchi, who arrived in Cairo on Sunday night for a two-day visit to Egypt and Lebanon, said that Iran has a peaceful nuclear program and is prepared to provide this assurance to any party or entity.

"We have nothing to hide in this regard."

The remarks came after Grossi on Monday called for more transparency from Iran following a leaked report

that claimed Tehran had stepped up uranium enrichment.

Since April 12, Iran and the US have held five rounds of nuclear talks to resolve a decades-old dispute over Iran's nuclear program.

Both sides have described the talks as "positive and constructive."

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.

Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi, who has been mediating between Iran and the US, presented elements of a US proposal for a nuclear deal between during a short visit to Tehran on Saturday.

Response to US proposal

"We will give an appropriate response to the American proposal soon. This response will be based on the positions and principles of the Iranian nation and will protect the rights of the Iranian nation," the Iranian foreign minister said.

Araghchi emphasized that there will

be no agreement without respect for Iran's right to enrichment. He underlined that Iran's uranium enrichment is entirely peaceful and a scientific achievement.

"Enrichment is our right based on international treaties, and this right cannot be taken away from Iran."

Removal of sanctions

Araghchi also said that Iran's main demand in the negotiations is the lifting of the "oppressive sanctions against the Iranian nation."

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said on Monday that it would have to see if there are changes in the US position on sanctions.

"I regret to inform you that the American side has not yet been willing to clarify this issue," he said in a weekly press conference in Tehran.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said Cairo welcomes Oman's mediating efforts in the talks, adding that, "We are ready to provide any necessary support for the success of the peaceful path to reaching an agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue."

Israel's crimes in Gaza

The Iranian foreign minister also held



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi meet in Cairo on June 2, 2025.
● IRAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

a separate meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, during which Araghchi called on Muslim countries to take "collective and effective" measures to end Israel's crimes in Gaza and the regime's expansionism and occupation in Lebanon and Syria.

He said the oppressed people of Palestine in Gaza are suffering a "painful" situation as the Israeli regime contin-

ues its genocidal war in the besieged Strip.

The Egyptian president, for his part, said his country has made efforts to stop Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Sisi added that Egypt's stance is based on controlling and preventing the escalation of tensions and establishing peace in the region as well as safeguarding the interests of Muslim nations.

Tehran rejects Finland's espionage claims as 'strange'

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry on Monday rejected claims made by Finland's government that Iran had spied on the European country.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said that such a report was strange to us from a country with which we have had "logical relations and we have never heard such cases from them."

"We consider this claim in line with the coordinated approach of European countries to exert pressure on Iran," Baqaei said in his weekly press conference.

Th spokesman said that Iran summoned Finnish ambassador on Saturday and asked for an explanation for the claims for which no documents have been presented.

Finland's Security and Intelligence Service (Supo) on Friday accused Iran of espionage and the possible use of criminal groups for subversive activities in the country.

The country's security service did not specify what kind of information Iran seeks but cited a broader



Esmail Baqaei
● IRNA

rise in espionage threats.

Supo claimed that Iran's tactics could include recruiting organized crime groups to carry out operations in Finland. The agency did not provide details on what kinds of acts might be involved but claimed that similar Iranian-linked plots have been uncovered elsewhere in Europe.

It is noted that for the first time, Finland has officially added Iran to the list of countries that conduct espionage activities against Helsinki. Previously, only Russia and

China were publicly named.

Supo said Iran's actions reflect deteriorating relations with Western countries and highlighted that the threat is growing in other Nordic countries as well.

The warning from Supo came amid similar concerns raised by Sweden earlier this year. In its March annual threat assessment, the Swedish Security Police (SAPO) claimed that Iran had escalated its intelligence activities and was increasingly using "criminal networks" within Sweden.

Ukraine attack on Russian bombers overshadows peace talks in Turkey

Peace talks between Russia and Ukraine in Istanbul ended barely an hour after they began on Monday, a day after a massive Ukrainian drone attack on Russia's nuclear-capable strategic bombers.

The talks – the second such direct contacts between the sides since 2022 – had already begun nearly two hours later than scheduled with no explanation of the delay, Reuters reported.

Although the atmosphere was subdued and dialogue brief, the talks did yield an agreement to conduct a new prisoner exchange and Ukraine said another round of talks was on the agenda.

In Russia, before the talks began, angry war bloggers had called on Moscow to deliver a fearsome retaliatory blow against Kiev after Ukraine on Sunday launched one of its most ambitious attacks of the war, targeting Russian nuclear-capable long-range bombers in Siberia and elsewhere.

Ukraine and Russia have issued starkly different assessments of the damage done to Russia's fleet of strategic bombers – a key element in its nuclear arsenal – but it was clear from publicly available satellite imagery that Moscow had suffered some serious equipment losses.

"The eyes of the whole world are focused on the contacts here," Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan had told the Russian and Ukrainian delegations at the start of talks as



● MURAD SEZER/REUTERS

they faced off against each other on opposite sides of the room in the sumptuous Ciragan Palace by the Bosphorus.

He said the aim of the meeting was to evaluate the conditions for a cease-fire, to discuss a possible meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents, and to look at more prisoner exchange opportunities.

Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov, who headed Kiev's delegation, announced after the talks that a new prisoner exchange had been agreed to follow up on the biggest prisoner swap of the war brokered at the last round of talks.

He said the new exchange would focus on those severely injured in the war and on young people.

Umerov also said that Moscow had handed its own draft peace accord to Ukraine and that Kiev – which has drawn up its own version – would review the Russian document.

Regional shifts set ...

On Monday, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi visited Egypt on his third official trip to the North African country since taking office in 2024. Also last year,

President Masoud Pezeshkian met with his Egyptian counterpart on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia. Proposals were exchanged, and dialogue was kept alive.

The region has since been shaken up by major developments, including in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine, particularly in the Gaza Strip in the wake of the Israeli war. Perhaps the most significant shift has been the dissolution of the Muslim Brotherhood, an event that is far from minor. This move has reshaped the strategic landscape of the Arab world, especially in relation to Turkey, with consequences both positive and negative. Savvy diplomacy means using these developments as openings for new strategies and decisions.

In light of these development, the dynamics on the ground have changed. For some countries, these changes have proved costly, while others have reaped benefits. It now appears that a golden window of opportunity has opened

for Iran and Egypt to restore their diplomatic ties, as a new regional arena has emerged in the aftermath of the Gaza conflict. Israel has once again surfaced as the central concern for Arab nations and regional states. Countries like Egypt and Jordan Lebanon are viewing Israel with renewed seriousness, a regime, which by its very nature, has never taken a benevolent stance toward Muslim nations or its surrounding region, and it continues to pursue longstanding ambitions.

Given these threats and surrounding developments, a new diplomatic mission is not only appropriate, but it is timely. Of course, its success depends on the practicality of the proposals on offer, but even mere dialogue is a significant move. Progress must be made step by step. Egypt holds enormous potential in terms of population, geography, and strategic location. Most importantly, both Iran and Egypt are home to two of the oldest civilizations in the Islamic world. Such heritage provides fertile ground for expanding cooperation in various sectors. Such an endeavor will require serious work and expert-level discussions, but the potential for mutual gain is unmistakable.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

