

# Leader: US 'cannot have a say' on uranium enrichment

Tehran preparing new counter-proposal to US offer: *Advisor*

## International Desk

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Wednesday that uranium enrichment is the key to the country's peaceful nuclear program, and that the United States "cannot have a say" on the issue. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks at the mausoleum of the founder of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini in Tehran, where people had gathered to mark the 36th anniversary of the passing of Imam Khomeini. Since April 12, Iran and the US have held five rounds of nuclear talks mediated by Oman 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. Ayatollah Khamenei rejected the US proposals for Tehran to ultimately stop all enrichment in the country. "If we have 100 nuclear power plants

but don't have enrichment, they will be of no use to us," because "nuclear power plants need fuel" to operate, he said. "The first word of the US is that Iran should not have a nuclear industry and should rely on the United States," the Leader said. "Our response to the US' nonsense is clear: they cannot do a damn thing in this matter," he added. "The proposal presented by the Americans is 100 percent against" notions of independence and self-reliance, the Leader said, adding that, "Independence means not waiting for the green light from America and the likes of America." On Saturday, Iran said it had received "elements" of the US proposal through Omani mediators, the details of which have not been publicly disclosed.

## Preparing counter-proposal

Ali Shamkhani, a political advisor to the Leader said on Wednesday that Iran is drafting a counter-proposal to the latest US nuclear offer. He added that the US proposal for a nuclear agreement was not well thought out and made no mention whatsoever of lifting the sanctions. Shamkhani criticized the omission

of sanctions relief in the US offer, describing it as a "fundamental" issue for Tehran.

"There is no mention whatsoever of lifting sanctions in the latest American proposal, even though the issue of sanctions is a fundamental matter for Iran," the Leader's aide said. Shamkhani underlined, "Iran will never relinquish its natural rights." He said Iran will not allow the United States to achieve its objectives regarding the elimination of Tehran's peaceful nuclear program and reduction of the level of uranium enrichment to zero.

## Limited uranium enrichment

US media reports said Tuesday the US administration is proposing an arrangement that would permit "limited low-level uranium enrichment on Iranian soil for a to-be-determined period of time." "Under the proposal, the United States would facilitate the building of nuclear power reactors for Iran and negotiate the construction of enrichment facilities managed by a consortium of regional countries," The New York Times wrote. "Once Iran began receiving any benefits from those promises,



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei addresses a ceremony marking 36th anniversary of the passing of the founder of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini in Tehran on June 4, 2025. [khamenei.ir](http://khamenei.ir)

it would have to stop all enrichment in the country." Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin has told US President Donald Trump that he was ready to use Russia's close partnership with Iran to help with negotiations over Iran's nuclear program, the Kremlin said on Thursday. Trump said after a phone call with Putin on Wednesday that time was run-

ning out for Iran to make a decision on its nuclear program. "We have close partner relations with Tehran and, naturally, President Putin said that we are ready to use this level of partnership with Tehran in order to facilitate and contribute to the negotiations that are taking place to resolve the issue of the Iranian nuclear dossier," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Thursday.

## Araghchi warns E3 of backing anti-Iran IAEA draft resolution

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Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Friday warned European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal against supporting a draft resolution at the UN nuclear agency next week that accuses Tehran of non-compliance, calling it a "strategic mistake." "After years of good cooperation with the (International Atomic Energy Agency) IAEA—resulting in a resolution which shut down malign claims of a 'possible military dimension' (PMD) to Iran's peaceful nuclear program—my country is once again accused of 'non-compliance,'" Araghchi said on X. "Instead of engaging in good faith, the E3 (Britain, France, Germany) is opting for malign action against Iran at the IAEA Board of Governors," he added. "Mark my words as Europe ponders another major strategic mistake: Iran will react strongly against any violation of its rights." Araghchi said the false accusations that Iran is violating the Safeguards Agreement – on the basis of shoddy and politicized reports – are clearly designed to produce a crisis. The three European countries reportedly plan to submit the draft resolution to the IAEA Board of Governors at its next meeting on June 9, creating a window to trigger the snapback of all the UN sanctions on Tehran before the mechanism expires in October. The resolution would accuse Iran of failing to



Abbas Araghchi

meet its nuclear obligations and carries the threat of referral to the UN Security Council if Tehran "does not show goodwill," sources said. Iran has repeatedly warned that invoking the so-called snapback by three European members of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) will be reciprocated by a firm and proportionate response. The so-called snapback mechanism allows for the return of anti-Iran sanctions suspended under the deal. In late April, French Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said that France, along with Germany and Britain, "will not hesitate for a single second to reapply all the sanctions" scrapped a decade ago if European security is threatened by Iran's nuclear activities. The IAEA resolution follows a quarterly report from the IAEA last week which cited a "general lack of cooperation" from Iran and raised concerns over undeclared nuclear material. Tehran rejected the report as politically motivated and based on "forged documents" it said had been provided by the Israeli regime.

## Tehran rejects 'unfounded' US allegations at UN meeting

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Iranian Ambassador to the United Nations, Amir Saeid Iravani, strongly rejected as "unfounded" the US accusations that Iran is "fomenting instability" in the region. In a letter to the UN chief and the president of the Security Council on Thursday, Iravani said US' allegations during a meeting of the UN Security Council "were entirely unfounded, devoid of credibility, or legal foundation." Addressing a UN Security Council meeting on Gaza on Wednesday, the US ambassador to the UN Dorothy Shea accused Iran of fomenting instability by supporting Palestinian resistance groups including Hamas. During the meeting, the United States on Wednesday vetoed a UN Security Council resolution calling for an "immediate, unconditional and permanent" cease-fire in Gaza. The US was the only nation to oppose the resolution. Fourteen others, including the United Kingdom, voted in favor. There were no abstentions. Iravani stressed that Washington's anti-Iran allegations were aimed at shielding the Israeli regime from accountability for its ongoing violations of international law in Gaza.

"At a time when the Security Council must act with unity and urgency to end the unparalleled suffering of the Palestinian people, enduring relentless bombardment, forced displacement, famine, and the systematic destruction of civilian infrastructure, it is regrettable and shameful that the United States has once again chosen to obstruct the Council from fulfilling its mandate and to divert attention through politically motivated accusations against others," he wrote. "This calculated deflection serves a single, cynical purpose: to shield the occupying and illegitimate Israeli regime from accountability for its ongoing and egregious violations of international law," the Iranian diplomat said. "Even more egregiously, the United States' veto of the draft resolution, proposed by the Council's elected members and intended to establish an immediate, permanent, and unconditional cease-fire, as well as to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access, represents a blatant dereliction and abuse of the responsibilities entrusted to the Security Council under the UN Charter," Iravani stated. "This is not an isolated incident, but rather a continuation of a deeply troubling pattern we have



Dorothy Shea

witnessed throughout the past 19 months of Israel's genocidal war against the people of Gaza," he noted. "By once again shielding the occupying regime from accountability, the United States has actively enabled the continuation of a catastrophic military campaign that has already killed tens of thousands of civilians, most of them women and children, and driven Gaza to the edge of absolute collapse," he continued. Iravani emphasized that Iran's principled position in support of the Palestinian people and their legitimate resistance against occupation is fully grounded in the UN Charter, international law, and relevant UN resolutions. Iravani said blaming others for the consequences of Israel's unlawful and brutal campaign is nothing but a willful distortion designed to absolve the Israeli regime of its crimes.

## Israel's new strikes on Lebanon draw condemnations

### International Desk

A series of Israeli strikes targeted Beirut's southern suburbs on Thursday, almost an hour after the Israeli army issued a forced evacuation order to residents in areas that it claims held underground facilities used by the Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah for drone production. The attack was the fourth time Israel has bombed Beirut since a cease-fire with Hezbollah went into effect in November. It has carried out assassinations and announced strikes that it said targeted Hezbollah sites.

Israel has violated the cease-fire on a near-daily basis for seven months, according to the Lebanese government led by President Joseph Aoun, Arab nations and rights groups. Aoun has recently appealed to the United States and France to rein Israel in. Aoun, in a statement on Thursday after the strikes, voiced "firm condemnation of the Israeli aggression" and "flagrant violation of an international accord ... on the eve of a sacred religious festival." The Wafa news agency reported that 100 housing units were destroyed in Israel's strikes on southern Beirut.

Later Thursday night, Israeli strikes also targeted the southern Lebanese village of Ain Qana, according to Lebanese state media, shortly after further Israeli army evacuation warnings were issued for the area. Israel warned Friday that it would keep striking Lebanon until Hezbollah has been disarmed. Iran also on Friday condemned the Israeli strikes. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei described the Thursday evening strikes "as a blatant act of aggression against Lebanon's territorial integrity and sovereignty."

Under the cease-fire, overseen by a monitoring committee whose members include the United States, France and United Nations peacekeepers, Lebanon should disarm Hezbollah. The conflict between Hezbollah and Israel began on Oct. 8, 2023 when the Lebanese resistance group began launching rockets across the border in support of Palestinians in Gaza. Israel responded with airstrikes and shelling and the two were quickly locked in a low-level conflict that continued for nearly a year before escalating into full-scale war in September 2024. It killed more than 4,000 people in



Lebanon, including hundreds of civilians, while the Lebanese government said in April that Israeli strikes had killed another 190 people and wounded 485 wounded since the cease-fire.