

Iran says to present own nuclear proposal to US soon

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Monday that Tehran will soon present a counter-proposal in response to a US offer on a nuclear deal, which had been described by Iran "ambiguities and unacceptable".

Tehran and Washington have held five rounds of talks since April to thrash out a new nuclear accord to replace the deal with major powers that US President Donald Trump abandoned during his first term in 2018.

The two countries have been locked in a diplomatic standoff over Iran's uranium enrichment, with Tehran defending it as a "non-negotiable" right and Washington describing it as a "red line". Tehran maintains its nuclear program is exclusively for civilian purposes and views its enrichment industry as a "red line".

On May 31, after the fifth round of the talks, Iran said it had received "elements" of a US proposal, with Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi saying later the text contained "ambiguities". Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei criticized the US proposal as

"lacking elements" reflective of the previous rounds of negotiations.

Reporting on the alleged contents of the proposal earlier this month, the American website Axios said it contained, among other things, a "three-percent" cap on the Islamic Republic's enrichment activities, downsizing of the country's nuclear infrastructures, roll-back of its developmental efforts, "conditioned sanction relief," and formation of a reported "regional consortium" that would host enrichment activities.

"The US proposal is not acceptable to us. It was not the result of previous rounds of negotiations. We will present our own proposal to the other side via Oman after it is finalized. This proposal is reasonable, logical, and balanced," Baqaei told a weekly press briefing. "We strongly recommend that the American side value this opportunity", he added.

Iran's key demand

The Iranian official also regarded the removal of anti-Iran sanctions as a serious demand on the part of Iran.

"Do not doubt that this matter has been

raised decisively multiple times. Iran's most important demand is the effective removal of sanctions. The reason why this issue has not been properly addressed in the US proposal is something that they have been asked about."

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf has also said the US proposal failed to include the lifting of sanctions – a key demand for Tehran. Trump, who has revived his "maximum pressure" campaign of sanctions on Iran since taking office in January, has repeatedly said it will not be allowed any uranium enrichment under a potential deal.

On Wednesday, Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the US offer was "100 percent against" notions of independence and self-reliance.

He insisted that uranium enrichment was "key" to Iran's nuclear program and that the US "cannot have a say" on the issue.

Regarding the next round of the negotiations, Baqaei said there was not yet any detail on the timing of the sixth round of nuclear talks between Tehran



and Washington.

The Foreign Ministry's spokesman also said that sensitive Israeli documents, which Iran has previously managed to obtain and promised to unveil them, would demonstrate "that parties constantly questioning Iran's peaceful nuclear program actively work to strengthen Israel's military nuclear program".

The negotiating parties should not allow Israel to disrupt diplomatic processes, he added.

Iran's Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib said on Sunday that Iran has managed to acquire thousands of secret Israeli documents related to the regime's nuclear facilities and its relations with the US, European countries and several other countries.

IAEA chief: Uranium enrichment not a forbidden activity

Grossi confirms Iran's acquisition of documents about Israeli nuclear facilities



Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), speaks to journalists during a press conference, shortly after the IAEA's Board of Governors meeting at the agency's headquarters in Vienna, Austria on June 9, 2025.

● JOE KLAMAR/AFP

International Desk

The head of the UN nuclear agency said on Monday that uranium enrichment is not a forbidden activity under international law but the high-grade enriched uranium that Iran is stockpiling cannot be ignored.

"Uranium enrichment per se is not a forbidden activity, which is something my Iranian counterparts always tell me," Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Grossi told reporters after the agency's Board of Governors opening meeting in Vienna.

"At the same time, when you accumulate and continue to accumulate, and you are the only country in the world doing this at a level very, very close to what is needed for a nuclear explosive device, then we cannot ignore it."

"There is no medical or civilian use for it," he said. "That is why it is important for us."

An IAEA report on May 31 claimed that Iran has sharply increased its stockpile of uranium enriched to up to 60 percent, close to the roughly 90 percent level needed for atomic weapons.

The latest IAEA report came as Iran and the United States have been engaged in indirect negotiations, mediated by Oman, since April 12 to find a replacement to the 2015 nuclear agreement.

However, the talks have faced an obstacle over the US demand for Iran to stop enriching uranium under any new deal. Washington says

must be brought to zero while Tehran maintains its nuclear program is exclusively for civilian purposes and views its enrichment industry as a red line.

In his introductory statement to the Board of Governors earlier on Monday, Grossi called on Iran to cooperate fully and effectively with the agency after he claimed that the agency has found man-made uranium particles at three undeclared locations in Iran.

"Unless and until Iran assists the Agency in resolving the outstanding safeguards issues, the Agency will not be in a position to provide assurance that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively peaceful", he said.

"As you know, the Agency found man-made uranium particles at each of three undeclared locations in Iran – at Varamin, Marivan and Turqzabad – at which we conducted complementary access in 2019 and 2020. Since then, we have been seeking explanations and clarifications from Iran for the presence of these uranium particles, including through a number of high-level meetings and consultations in which I have been personally involved".

He claimed that Iran has repeatedly either not answered, or not provided technically credible answers to the agency's questions.

Anti-Iran resolution

The IAEA Board of Governors started its regular June meeting in Vienna on Monday amid reports that the United States and the European troika, France, Germany, and Britain, plan to submit a draft resolution to

35-member board, creating a window to trigger the snapback of all UN sanctions on Tehran under a previous 2015 nuclear deal before the mechanism expires in October.

The resolution, which Iran views as a politically motivated step, would accuse Iran of failing to meet its obligations under the agreement. Referring to the anti-Iran draft resolution, Grossi said it is separate from the talks between Tehran and Washington.

"There is no formal link between one thing and the other," Grossi said. "But it is obvious, I think for all of us, that there is an interrelation and perhaps a mutual influence. Not perhaps—for sure. It is a mutual influence."

Grossi emphasized that the draft resolution should be viewed as part of the agency's technical oversight role, not as a political maneuver aimed at pressuring Iran.

Israel's secret documents

He also pointed to secret Israeli documents recently obtained by Iran, saying that the information that Iran has acquired regarding Israel's nuclear program "seems to refer" to the regime's Soreq Nuclear Research Center, the first acknowledgment outside of Tehran of the acquisition of the documents.

"We have seen some reports in the press. We haven't had any official communication about this," Grossi told reporters. "In any case, this seems to refer to Soreq, which is a research facility which we inspect by the way. We don't inspect other strategic parts of the program, but this part of the program we do inspect."

Iran's Intelligence Minister Esmail Khatib said on Sunday that Iran has managed to acquire thousands of secret Israeli documents related to the regime's nuclear facilities and its relations with the US, European countries and several other countries.

Israel seizes Gaza-bound aid boat, detains activists

Iran calls attack on ship act of piracy

International Desk

Israeli forces seized a Gaza-bound aid boat and detained Greta Thunberg and other activists who were on board early Monday, enforcing a longstanding blockade of the Palestinian territory that has been tightened during the regime's war on Gaza.

The activists had set out to protest Israel's ongoing military campaign in the Gaza Strip, which is among the deadliest and most destructive since World War II, and its restrictions on the entry of humanitarian aid, both of which have put the territory of around 2 million Palestinians at risk of famine.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition, which had organized the voyage, said that the activists were "kidnapped by Israeli forces" while trying to deliver desperately needed aid to the territory.

"The ship was unlawfully boarded, its unarmed civilian crew abducted, and its life-saving cargo — including baby formula, food and medical supplies — confiscated," it said in a statement. It said the ship was seized in international waters about 200 kilometers (120 miles) from Gaza.

Thunberg, a climate campaigner, was among 12 activists aboard the Madleen, which set sail from Sicily a week ago.

Game of Thrones" actor Liam Cunningham and Rima Hassan, a French member of the European Parliament who is of Palestinian descent, was also among the volunteers on board. Rima Hassan has been barred from entering Israel because of her opposition to



Israeli policies toward the Palestinians. She was among six French citizens aboard the boat. French President Emmanuel Macron asked Israel to allow them to return to France as soon as possible, his office said in a statement.

In a statement, the Turkish Foreign Ministry slammed the seizure of the vessel, which was carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza and included Turkish nationals on board.

"The intervention of the Israeli forces against the ship Madleen, which set sail to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza, including our citizens on board, while it was in international waters, is a clear violation of international law," it said.

Iran's Foreign Ministry also reacted to the incident. The ministry's spokesman Esmail Baqaei said the attack is tantamount to "one of the very significant and horrifying" developments that the international community is witnessing.

"The attack on this ship is undoubtedly considered to be an act of piracy under the international law, but since it is aimed at preventing aid to people who are facing genocide, it also constitutes a crime," he added.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

