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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (C) poses for a family photo with party members of Iran's Reform Front following a meeting at the presidential office in Tehran on July 22, 2025. president.ir

Iran's expectation that China, Russia could help curb nuclear tensions is reasonable

By Nematollah Izadi
Iran's ex-ambassador to Russia

OPINION

Iran, with its extensive relations with China and Russia, has legitimate, political and friendly expectations of these nations. Both countries have woven broad ties globally and play key roles economically, politically and culturally. Russia now faces challenges with Europe and the US due to the Ukraine war, but it has maintained ties with Israel, even as it waged a 12-day aggression against Iran.

In past crises—such as the US invasion of Iraq—Russia repeatedly sent special envoys, due to its good relations with Iraq and concern about US operations. It was reasonable to expect similar initiatives in the recent war, given Russia's standing with both Iran and Israel. Even if driven by a desire to preserve its international standing, such engagement

would have been welcome—but it did not happen. Considering Tehran's extensive and friendly relations, expecting action from Moscow appears both logical and well-founded.

Regarding the mechanism to possibly snap back sanctions on Iran under the 2015 nuclear deal, it is often overlooked that China and Russia are also parties to the JCPOA, not only the three European states—Britain, France and Germany. Both nations were expected to lean on European counterparts to prevent snapback, especially as Iran—despite recent strikes—has stayed engaged in negotiations.

Iran has stated it stands ready to continue diplomacy, with the US signaling willingness too. The move by the European trio to trigger the snapback mechanism could derail this process. Therefore, a proactive role by Russia and China could help shore up the negotiating environment.

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