

Pezeshkian: US obliteration of Iran's nuclear program 'an illusion'

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian rejected as an "illusion" US president's claim of total obliteration of Iran's nuclear program, stressing that the Islamic Republic will continue the development of its peaceful nuclear industry "within the framework of international laws." In an exclusive interview with Al Jazeera aired on Wednesday, Pezeshkian said the claim made by Donald Trump "that our nuclear program is over is just an illusion," adding that the country's nuclear capabilities reside in the minds of its scientists and not in the facilities. Pezeshkian said Iran would continue its uranium enrichment program despite opposition from some Western countries, saying the development of its nuclear abilities would be car-

ried out "within the framework of international laws."

"[US President Donald] Trump says that Iran should not have a nuclear weapon and we accept this because we reject nuclear weapons and this is our political, religious, humanitarian and strategic position," he said.

"We believe in diplomacy, so any future negotiations must be according to a win-win logic, and we will not accept threats and dictates."

Pezeshkian's comments echoed earlier remarks by Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who said in an interview with US broadcaster Fox News aired Monday that Tehran would never abandon its uranium enrichment program, but was open to a negotiated solution to solve a decades-long dispute over its nuclear program.

Elsewhere in his remarks,

Pezeshkian said that his country is prepared for any fresh act of aggression by the Israeli regime, adding that he was not optimistic about a cease-fire announced by the US president to end the last month's aggression by the Israeli regime against Iran, in which the US intervened on Israel's behalf, launching strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities.

"We are fully prepared for any new Israeli military move, and our armed forces are ready to strike deep inside Israel again," Pezeshkian told Al Jazeera.

Iran was not relying on the cease-fire that ended the 12-day war to hold, he said.

"We are not very optimistic about it," said Pezeshkian. "That is why we have prepared ourselves for any possible scenario and any potential response. Israel has harmed us, and we have also harmed it. It has dealt

us powerful blows, and we have struck it hard in its depths, but it is concealing its losses."

He added that Israel's strikes had sought to "eliminate" Iran's hierarchy, "but it has completely failed to do so."

Last month, Iran's Armed Forces fired hundreds of missiles toward the occupied territories in response to the regime's aggression against Iran on June 13, which claimed the lives of nearly 1,100 Iranians, including civilians, military figures and nuclear scientists.

Iran's retaliatory attacks forced the regime to request a cease-fire only after 12 days.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during an exclusive interview with Al Jazeera aired on July 23, 2025.

● [president.ir](https://www.president.ir)



Araghchi voices Iran's determination to repatriate illegal Afghans

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Tuesday that Tehran is determined to repatriate Afghan volunteer refugees and illegal migrants to Afghanistan as Tehran has begun a plan to deport undocumented Afghan nationals.

During a meeting with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi in the capital, Iran's top diplomat highlighted Iran's five decades of hosting Afghan refugees and underscored the Iranian government's commitment to facilitate their voluntary return and to provide a dignified repatriation process for those residing without valid documents.

Araghchi also called on the international community to fulfill its responsibilities and provide the required assistance in the matter.

Grandi, for his part, expressed gratitude for Iran's long history of excellent cooperation with the UNHCR and its service to Afghan refugees.

He expressed hope that, given the cooperation and coordination between the two neighboring countries, the return of Afghan nationals would proceed in a manner that upholds their rights and dignity.

Iran began deporting Afghan refugees



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (r) talks with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi at a meeting in Tehran, on July 22, 2025.

● [IRNA](https://www.irna.ir)

in late June.

On Sunday, Malek Hosseini, who leads employment affairs at Iran's Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare, said that less than 700,000 Afghan refugees have left Iran as part of a program to deport the refugees.

The official also said that less than 10% of the Afghan refugees, or nearly 434,000 people, have the legal documents to live and work in Iran.

Economic experts have warned that any plan for the mass deportation of Afghans from Iran could seriously harm the country's labor market.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

Tehran agrees to IAEA technical team's visit in coming weeks: Deputy FM

Gharibabadi asserts non-diversion of Iran's nuclear program based on UN reports



● [REUTERS](https://www.reuters.com)

International Desk

The Islamic Republic has agreed to allow a technical team from the UN nuclear watchdog to visit in the coming weeks to discuss "a new modality" on relations between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Tehran, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said on Wednesday.

"The delegation will come to Iran to discuss the modality, not to go to the (nuclear) sites," he told reporters during a visit to New York.

"We are in contact with the International Atomic Energy Agency to discuss a new process regarding Iran-IAEA relations in the new circumstances. In this regard, we have actually agreed to accept an IAEA technical delegation to travel to Iran very soon, within the next two to three weeks, to discuss this process." Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian gave a final approval to a law approved by the Parliament to suspend cooperation with the IAEA following its politically-motivated resolution which paved the way for US-Israeli

acts of aggression against the country last month.

Gharibabadi also discussed with reporters his country's recourse against further financial punishment ahead of a critical meeting Friday with Britain, France and Germany in Istanbul.

The three European countries have suggested triggering a so-called snapback provision in the 2015 nuclear agreement that would reimpose sanctions on Iran if there is no progress on a deal by August. Gharibabadi said Friday's meeting is very important but that its success will depend on how the Europeans approach Iran this time around.

"We have always valued our meetings with the European countries. But there is an important issue: I think we have always told them that the policies of the European countries should be independent," he said. "They should not coordinate their positions with the Americans." He added, "If this is the case, why should we negotiate with the Europeans when we can negotiate with the Americans?"

In a meeting with UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Rosemary DiCarlo, in New York on Tuesday, he underscored the peaceful nature of the country's nuclear program, saying none of the reports published by the IAEA indicates any deviation in Tehran's nuclear activities.

Pointing to regularly-issued reports

by the IAEA on the Islamic Republic's compliance with Iran's nuclear deal obligations, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Gharibabadi said, "Not a single word about the diversion of Iran's nuclear program has been mentioned in any of these reports."

Rejecting as baseless and repetitive the Israeli regime's claims over the past three decades regarding Iran's attempt to acquire nuclear weapons, Gharibabadi said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran, based on religious principles and decrees, has never sought weapons of mass destruction. These claims are leveled while the Zionist regime is not a member of any disarmament treaties for weapons of mass destruction and is equipped with all types of such weapons."

The Iranian diplomat also rebuked the double standards of international institutions, including the United Nations, demanding that the world body play a more effective and impartial role in addressing the acts of aggression committed by the US and Israel against the Islamic Republic.

The Israeli regime launched an aggression on Iran's military and civilian infrastructure on June 13 that killed nearly 1,100 people, including women and children, as well as a dozen top military brass.

The US, which had been in talks with Tehran about its nuclear program since April, joined the war on June 22 by targeting several key nuclear sites.

Over 100 humanitarian groups warn of 'mass starvation' in Gaza

More than 100 aid and human rights groups have called on governments to take urgent action as Israel's forced "mass starvation" of Palestinians engulfs Gaza, including by demanding an immediate and permanent cease-fire and the lifting of all restrictions on humanitarian aid. In a statement signed and released on Wednesday by 109 organizations, including Mercy Corps, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Doctors Without Borders, the groups warned that deepening starvation of the population was spreading across the besieged enclave, Al Jazeera reported.

Tons of food, clean water, medical supplies and other items sit untouched just outside Gaza as humanitarian organizations are blocked from accessing or delivering them by Israel.

Israel, which controls all supplies, food, medicine and fuel entering Gaza, has imposed a punishing blockade for months.

As the Israel's siege starves the people of Gaza, aid workers are now joining the same food lines, risking being shot just to feed their families, the statement said.

"With supplies now totally depleted, humanitarian organizations are

witnessing their own colleagues and partners waste away before their eyes," they said.

The statement added that Israel's restrictions, delays, and fragmentation under its total siege have created chaos, starvation, and death.

At least 111 deaths linked to famine and malnutrition have been recorded by hospitals in the Gaza Strip, according to the Ministry of Health. In recent weeks, more than 1,000 desperate people have been killed trying to reach food, mostly in mass shootings by Israeli soldiers posted near GHF distribution centers, according to the United Nations.

