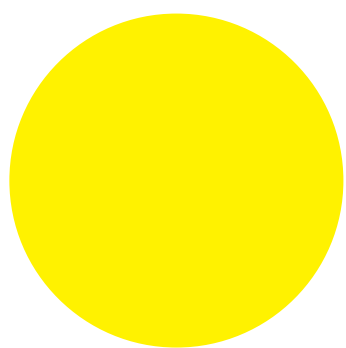


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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (2nd L) speaks at a joint press conference with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (1st R) in Islamabad, Pakistan on August 3, 2025.  
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### Diplomacy in shadow of conflict US B-2 strike on Iran's nuclear sites and future of dialogue

By Kamran Yeganegi  
Foreign policy analyst

#### O P I N I O N E X C L U S I V E

Amid a prolonged stalemate in US-Iran relations, the recent airstrike by American B-2 stealth bombers on nuclear facilities in Iran marks a deeply alarming escalation. The attack reportedly inflicted material damage and endangered the safety of nuclear infrastructure under international safeguards. Beyond its immediate military implications, this event signals a dangerous shift from strategic containment to direct confrontation. In such a volatile environment, a central question arises: Is there still space for diplomacy, or has the logic of force eclipsed all avenues for dialogue? From the perspective of international law, the US airstrike constitutes a flagrant violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. Iran, a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has consistently declared that its nuclear program remains peaceful and under the close inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Striking facilities that operate under IAEA oversight lacks legal legitimacy and may well be categorized as an act of aggression under international law. Moreover, the potential risks to civilian populations and environmental harm raise additional concerns under international humanitarian law.

Politically, this attack reflects the exhaustion of Washington's "maximum pressure" policy, a paradigm that over the past two decades has caused substantial economic harm on Iranian civilians without achieving its stated goal of altering Iran's strategic posture. The shift from sanctions to direct military action is not a demonstration of resolve—it is a signal of conceptual failure. When coercive tools exhaust their political utility, the temptation to escalate militarily grows—but at a cost that may far exceed any anticipated gain. Regionally, the strike is a destabilizing shock to an already fragile Middle East. With proxy wars, deepening power rivalries, and widespread governance vacuums, the region now faces a heightened risk of proliferation, strategic miscalculation, and an arms race. The US action may also embolden hardliners, erode trust in international oversight mechanisms, and push other regional players toward reevaluating their security doctrines—developments that could unleash cascading instability far beyond Iran's borders.

Yet even amid this tense atmosphere, diplomacy must not be dismissed as naïve idealism. On the contrary, the current moment calls for diplomacy grounded in strategic realism. Iran has responded to the B-2 strike with restraint and resolve, opting to pursue its case through diplomatic and legal channels, including formal complaints to the United Nations Security Council, appeals to the International Court of Justice, and calls for independent inspections to assess damages. This posture underscores Tehran's commitment to international norms—even in the face of unlawful aggression.

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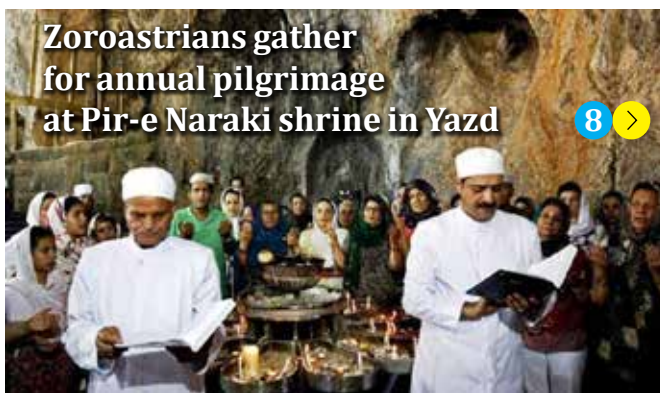


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