

Aref: Tehran concerned regional aggression becomes routine

UN chief raps US-Israel onslaught against Iran as 'illegal'

International Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said on Tuesday that Iran is concerned that acts of aggression against countries, like the July US-Israel's strikes on Iran, may become routine and destabilize the West Asia region.

"If the United Nations had taken more appropriate action, we would not be witnessing these events and tragedies in Palestine and Gaza today," Aref told the UN Secretary General António Guterres in a meeting held in Awaza, Turkmenistan, where they participated in the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.

"We expect the United Nations to actively take effective measures and increase its support to deter the Zionist regime. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always declared its cooperation and assistance to the United Nations in pursuit of establishing peace in the world, and we expect that the Iranophobia policy being pursued by the West will be condemned by the United Nations," Iran's vice president said.

The UN secretary general called the strikes by Israel and the US on Iran "illegal and in violation of international law."

He stressed that the issue of Iran's

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (L) shakes hands with UN Secretary General António Guterres in a meeting in Awaza, Turkmenistan, on August 5, 2025.

● fvpresident.ir

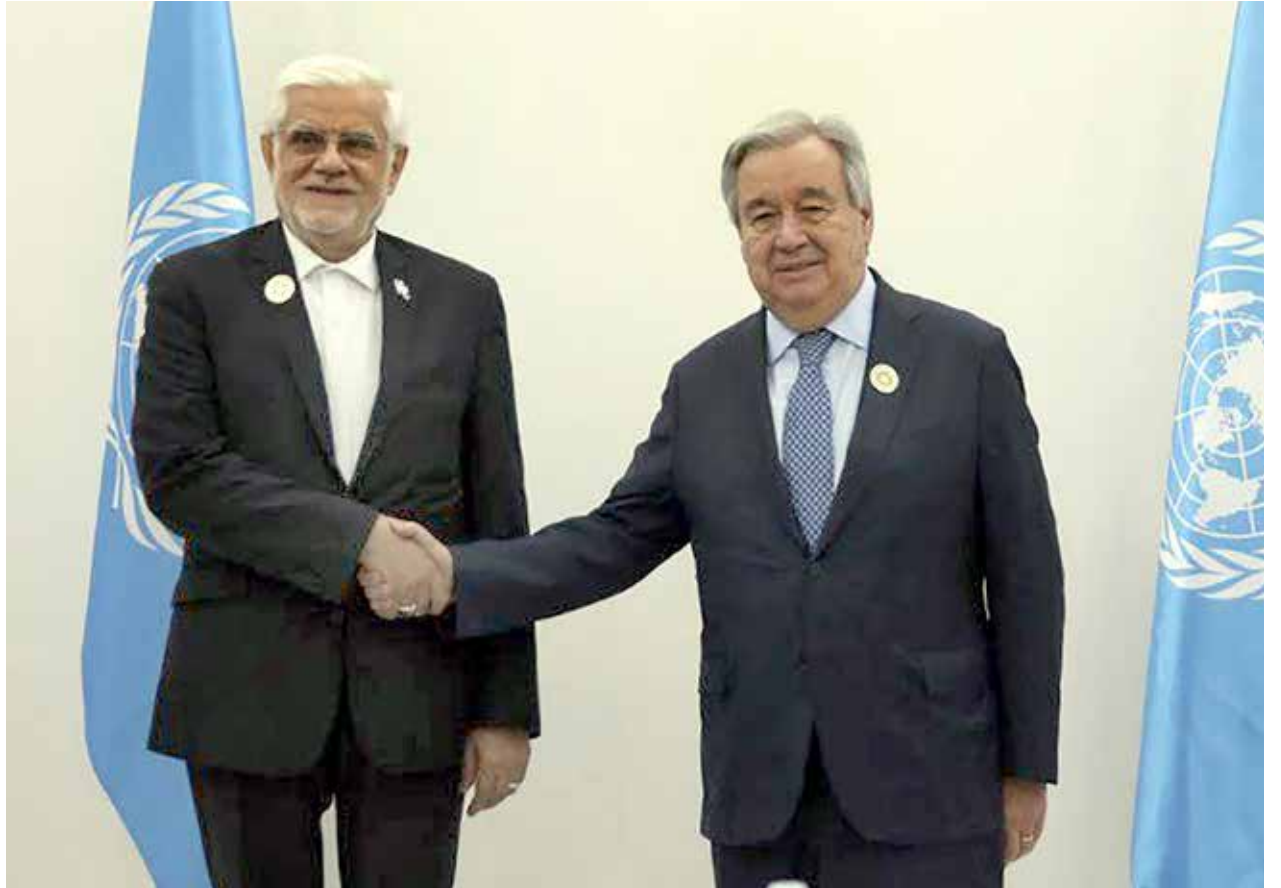
nuclear program should be resolved through diplomatic means, saying, "We are prepared to make use of all the UN's capacities to help settle Iran's nuclear issue diplomatically." On June 13, the Israeli regime assaulted Iran by attacking several civilian, military, and nuclear facilities. The regime's strikes killed nearly 1,100 Iranians, including civilians and top military commanders, and wounded 5,750 people.

On June 22, the US joined the Isreal's aggression and attacked three Iranian nuclear facilities.

Israel's aggression on Iran came two days before the sixth round of nuclear negotiations between Iran and the US.

"The United States, by supporting the Zionist regime and even directly intervening in this aggression and attack on Iran's peaceful nuclear facilities, torpedoed the negotiation table," Aref said in his address to the international conference.

He said that Iran has never been the initiator of war, but it has confronted the aggressor with full force, de-



fended its territorial integrity, and is pursuing compensation for the dam-

age caused by the aggression against the people and the country's devel-

opment infrastructure through legal and international bodies.

President appoints Larijani head of top security body

National Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Tuesday appointed Ali Larijani, a senior adviser to Iran's Leader, as the secretary of the country's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC).

In his decree, Pezeshkian asked Larijani to prioritize threats against national security to help the country achieve sustainable security at the national, regional, and international levels.

Larijani held the same top security position from 2005 to 2007 and was parliamentary speaker from 2008 to 2020. He now replaces Ali Akbar Ahmadian, who become SNSC sec-



Ali Larijani

retary in 2023.

On Sunday, Iran revived an Iraq war-era Defense Council to review defense plans and enhance the capabilities of its armed forces. Both the Defense Council and the SNSC are headed by Iran's president.

Iran intelligence forces nab MKO-linked sabotage team in Tehran

National Desk

Iran arrested three members of a cell affiliated with the terrorist Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO) in the southeastern capital for attempting to disrupt public order.

The suspects were detained by the country's intelligence forces in the county of Pakdasht, southeast of Tehran.

"Three members of MKO-linked sabotage cells who sought to disrupt public order and security were identified and arrested," Pakdasht's governor Mohammad Hassanpour said in a statement on Tuesday.

Hassanpour noted that enemies have always sought to hire individuals to perpetrate acts of violence and form sabotage teams, stressing that all three detainees are undergoing technical and specialized interrogations.

"The Judiciary and security forces will decisively deal with any criminal action against public security, and will not allow hostile elements to infiltrate [into the country] and operate," he said.

The arrests come after the execution late last month of two alleged long-term members of the terror outfit. They had been found



guilty of producing improvised mortars to attack civilians, homes and public institutions. The MKO has carried out numerous terrorist attacks against Iranian civilians and government officials over the past three decades. Out of the nearly 17,000 Iranians killed in terrorist attacks since the victory of Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution, about

12,000 have fallen victim to the acts of terror carried out by the MKO. The group was viewed by the European Union as a terrorist organization until January 2009, when the EU Council lifted the designation under immense pressure from political lobbies. The decision was followed by the United States in September 2012.

Israel considers full Gaza takeover amid rising hunger victims

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu favors a complete military takeover of Gaza, media reported.

Mediation between Israel and Palestinian resistance group Hamas has collapsed despite intense international pressure for a cease-fire to ease hunger and appalling conditions in the besieged Palestinian territory. Eight more people died of starvation or malnutrition on Tuesday, Gaza's health ministry said, while another 79 died in the latest Israeli fire.

Netanyahu was to meet military affairs minister Israel Katz and military chief of staff Eyal Zamir to decide on a strategy to take to cabinet later this week, an Israeli official told Reuters.

Israel's Channel 12, citing an official from Netanyahu's office, said the prime minister was leaning towards taking control of the entire territory. That would reverse a 2005 decision to pull settlers and military out of Gaza while retaining control over its borders, a move right-wing parties blame for Hamas gaining power there. It was unclear, however, whether Netanyahu was foreseeing a prolonged occupation or a short-term operation freeing Israeli hostages.

"It is still necessary to complete the defeat of the enemy in Gaza, release our [captives] and ensure that Gaza never again constitutes a threat to Israel," Netanyahu told new recruits at a military base. "We are not giving up on any of these missions."



● AFP

A Palestinian official said the threat of a full takeover of Gaza may be a tactic to pressure Hamas into concessions, while the Palestinian Foreign Ministry urged foreign nations to take heed of the reports.

"The ministry urges countries and the international community to treat these leaks with utmost seriousness and to intervene urgently to prevent their implementation, whether these leaks are meant to exert pressure, test international reactions, or are genuine and serious," it said.

Israel's cabinet, the most right-wing and conservative in its history, includes far-right politicians who advocate for the annexation of both Gaza and the West Bank and encourage Palestinians to leave their homeland.

Nearly two years of fighting in Gaza has strained the military, which has a small standing army and has had to repeatedly mobilize reservists. It has

throughout the war pushed back against the idea of Israel fully occupying Gaza.

In a sign of differences between some members of Israel's ruling coalition and the military, far-right security minister Itamar Ben Gvir on X challenged military head Zamir to state he would comply with cabinet directives even if a decision was made to take all of Gaza.

Israel's onslaught on Gaza has devastated the tiny, crowded region and has killed more than 61,000 people - mostly civilians - according to Palestinian health authorities.

Israel's campaign has forced nearly all of Gaza's over 2 million people from their homes and caused what a global hunger monitor called last week an unfolding famine.

Some 188 Palestinians, including 94 children, have died from hunger since the war began in October 2023, according to Gaza authorities.