

Pezeshkian in Armenia to discuss foreign meddling in Caucasus, sign deals



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a meeting with Armenian Iranologists in Yerevan, Armenia, on August 18, 2025.
● president.ir

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, who has embarked on a two-nation trip to Armenia and Belarus, said on Monday that he will sign sev-

eral agreements with Armenian officials and will discuss serious concerns regarding the United States' presence in the region. Heading a high-level delegation, Pezeshkian arrived in Ye-

revan on Monday on the first leg of his trip.

During his two-day stay in Armenia, Pezeshkian is scheduled to hold talks with the country's prime minister and president and sign documents for bilateral cooperation. He will also meet the elites and Iranian expats and attend a meeting with economic actors. Speaking before departure for the trip, the president said the expansion of relations with the neighboring and allied countries are among Iran's macro priorities.

"During this visit, important memoranda of understanding and agreements will be signed, opening new horizons for preparing the appropriate economic and social ground in the country, which will be beneficial to the progress and advancement of our dear na-

tion."

He said Iran has always tried to maintain and improve the highest level of political, economic, cultural and social cooperation with the friendly and neighborly countries, particularly Armenia.

The Iranian president explained that the North-South will be among the key topics of discussions as it can provide new opportunities for the development of bilateral cooperation.

Pezeshkian expressed Iran's serious concern about the presence of American firms in the region, saying, "Past experience showed that some of these companies have carried out unexpected and undesirable actions under the guise of commercial activities."

"For this reason, we will have serious discussions regarding

the concerns and challenges related to this issue."

On August 8, Armenia and Azerbaijan signed a US-brokered peace agreement in Washington, under which a transport corridor linking Azerbaijan to its landlocked exclave Nakhchivan is to be established.

Under the deal, Armenia granted exclusive rights to the United States to develop a corridor in its southern province of Syunik, which borders Iran, to connect Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan.

Iran has long opposed the idea, saying it would change the geopolitical order of the Southern Caucasus and would restrict Iran's ability to use transport networks in the region.

Pointing to the objectives of his visit to Belarus, Pezesh-

kian said the two countries have in recent years managed to improve relations in the social, economic, cultural, and scientific fields.

It is expected that Tehran and Minsk would also accelerate cooperation in areas such as transfer of technology, agriculture, industry and social issues, the Iranian president said.

"It is noteworthy that Belarus has consistently taken principled and firm positions in international forums in support of the Islamic Republic of Iran, including by condemning the Israeli attacks on our country and the acts of aggression in Gaza."

The president said Iran enjoys high capacities for cooperation with countries in alignment with the Islamic Republic on many strategic issues.

Iran, IAEA to hold new round of talks in coming days: *FM spox*

International Desk

Iran will continue talks with the UN nuclear watchdog and the two sides will probably have another round of negotiations in the coming days, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said on Monday.

"We had talks (with the IAEA) last week. These talks will continue and there will be another round of talks between Iran and the agency probably in the coming days," Baqaei said during his weekly press conference.

Tehran has accused the IAEA of effectively paving the way for the Israel-US strikes with a report on May 31 that led the IAEA's 35-nation Board of Governors to declare Iran in breach of its non-proliferation obligations.

Israel's aggression against Iran claimed the lives of nearly 1,100 Iranians, including ordinary people, nuclear scientists and top military commanders.

The Islamic Republic has long denied Western suspicions of a covert effort to develop nuclear weapons capability, saying it remains committed to the Non-Proliferation Treaty that mandates peaceful uses of atomic energy for signatories.

"The level of our relations (with the IAEA)

has changed after the events that took place, we do not deny that. However, our relations...remain direct," Baqaei said during a televised weekly news conference.

Last month, Iran enacted a law passed by parliament suspending cooperation with the IAEA. The law stipulates that any future inspections of Iranian nuclear sites need approval by Tehran's Supreme National Security Council.

Israel's attacks on Iran derailed months of nuclear negotiations between Tehran and Washington which itself joined Israel's aggression and bombed Iran's three nuclear facilities at the end of the 12-day imposed war. In response to a question about Europe's threat to trigger the so-called snapback mechanism which allows for the return of anti-Iran sanctions suspended under the 2015 nuclear deal, Baqaei said European powers' exploitation of the mechanism to pressure Iran is an illegal and irrational act.

He added that France, Britain and Germany, which along with China and Russia, are the remaining parties to the nuclear deal, have no right to activate the mechanism as they failed to fulfill their obligations stipulated in



the nuclear deal.

"This indicates that the three European countries' effort to continue playing a destructive role in the issue of Iran's nuclear program. We have maintained our interactions with these three countries. Negotiations with them have not been cut off."

Last week, the foreign ministers of the so-called E3 group wrote to the UN to raise the possibility of "snapback" sanctions unless Iran takes action, according to a letter shared by the French Foreign Ministry.

"We have made it clear that if Iran is not willing to reach a diplomatic solution before the end of August 2025, or does not seize the opportunity of an extension, E3 are prepared to trigger the snapback mechanism," the ministers said in the letter.

Araghchi: Geopolitical changes Iran's main concern over Zangezur agreement

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday that Tehran's main concern regarding a recent agreement reached between Armenia and Azerbaijan is that it may lead to geopolitical changes in the region.

Back on August 8, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev signed the US-mediated peace deal at the White House. The accord includes the creation of a transit corridor through Armenia to connect Azerbaijan to its exclave of Nakhchivan – a longstanding demand of Baku.

Under the deal, the United States will have development rights to the corridor – dubbed the "Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIIPP) – in the strategic, resource-rich region.

Iran has long opposed the modification of the corridor – often referred to as Zangezur – fearing it would cut the Islamic Republic off from the Caucasus.

Araghchi in an interview with IRNA stressed that Tehran remains firmly opposed to any changes in borders or foreign military presence in that region.

"We have stated very clearly that we will not tolerate such a thing, and our policy has always been clear."

He described the plan to link Nakhchivan to the mainland Azerbaijan as a sensitive issue that has caused concerns in Iran



Abbas Araghchi
● AFP

and other regional countries.

Araghchi pointed to the US-brokered peace agreement signed by Armenia and Azerbaijan, noting that both Baku and Yerevan have explicitly pledged to respect existing borders and sovereignty.

"From this perspective, our geopolitical concerns appear to have been addressed for now," he said. "But whether they remain committed to this in the future is something we will closely monitor."

The foreign minister also voiced Tehran's reservations about potential US involvement under the pretext of infrastructure projects.

"Another concern is that this road could become an excuse for the presence of American forces in the region," he said.

He pointed out that in recent days, senior Armenian officials, including Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, have given Tehran assurances that in no way will American forces, or even private US security companies, enter Armenia because of the road.

Aref: Iran will not start a war, but will determine its end IRGC says Israel suffered miscalculation in 12-day imposed war

National Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said on Monday that while the country is not seeking war, its strategy is clear: if they begin a war against Iran, it will be Iran that decides its end. Speaking at a meeting with Iranian university chancellors, Aref stated, "We are in a situation where a war was imposed on us. We are not in a cease-fire, but rather in a state of cessation of fire. Therefore, we must be prepared at any moment to confront the enemy."

He stressed that Iran prefers dialogue to resolve disputes but questioned whether the opposing side genuinely believes in negotiations or not.

On June 13, 2025, the Israeli regime launched a 12-day aggression against Iran, targeting several civilian, military, and nuclear facilities.

In retaliation, Iran unleashed waves of drones and missiles at the Occupied Territories, inflicting significant damage

on both settlements and military installations.

On June 22, 2025, the US Air Force and Navy carried out airstrikes against three Iranian nuclear facilities in an attempt to relieve pressure on the Israeli regime. The following day, June 23, Iranian forces retaliated with over 30 drones and missiles against the US base in Qatar, damaging multiple parts of the facility.

Finally, on June 24, after suffering heavy losses at the hands of Iran's Armed Forces, both the Israeli regime and the US were forced to agree to a cessation of hostilities.

The deputy commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) also said on Monday Israel suffered miscalculation in the 12-day war, even though the regime used full force against the Islamic Republic.

"The Zionist enemy and the US entered the war with their full power, but they suffered a miscalculation as they were certain of success, which did not hap-



Mohammad Reza Aref

pen," Brigadier General Ali Fadavi said on Monday.

He said that in the early days of the war, there were communications between regional leaders and the Israeli aggressors, but after a few days, the "situation turned in our favor."

Warning against enemy miscalculations, he asserted, "If this trend continues, they will soon realize the gravity of their mistakes."

General Fadavi added that Iran's "missiles crossing the skies over Iraq and striking critical positions of the Israeli regime during the 12-day war demonstrate such victories."



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

