

Pezeshkian: Israel-US aggression part of West's plan to expand domination

Iran, Belarus sign 12 cooperation documents



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (5th R) and his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko (5th L) co-chair a high-level meeting between Iranian and Belarusian delegations in Minsk, Belarus on August 20, 2025.
● [president.ir](#)

countries as well. Pezeshkian arrived in the Belarusian capital on Wednesday for a two-day visit, during which he held talks with his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko and took part in a press conference, before attending a high-level meeting with Iranian and Belarusian delegations. Pezeshkian called the June aggression by the US and Israel against Iran "clear violation of international law and the United Nations Charter". He noted that the strikes took place amidst indirect nuclear negotiations between Iran and the US.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has never started a war or aggression, but in the event of any aggression by its enemies, it will give a decisive and deterrent response", the Iranian president said. In mid-June, Israel launched a bombing campaign against Iran, triggering a war in which Iran responded with missile and drone strikes. The Israeli offensive killed senior military commanders, nuclear scientists and hundreds of civilians, striking both military sites and residential areas. The United States briefly joined the war with strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities. A cease-fire between Iran and Israel has been in place since June 24.

Threats to global security

The Belarusian leader, for his part, stressed that the US-Israel aggression against Iran poses a serious threat to regional and international

stability and security.

"We stand behind Iran's legitimate right to develop peaceful nuclear energy. For a lasting peace, it is important to refrain from any action that could lead to renewed tension," Lukashenko said.

In a separate meeting with Belarusian president, Pezeshkian said the US and some of its Western allies are seeking to expand unilateralism across the globe and impose their dictates upon other nations, emphasizing that neither Iran nor Belarus will tolerate such an approach.

Tehran-Minsk relations

Pezeshkian then hailed the amicable bilateral relations between Iran and Belarus, stating that the two countries share identical stances on many regional and international subjects, and have constructive cooperation in international spheres. "Additionally, the Eurasian Econom-

ic Union, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and BRICS serve as frameworks and platforms for facilitation and expansion of constructive interactions between Iran and Belarus," he noted.

For his part, Lukashenko described Belarus as a friendly country and a reliable partner for Iran.

He stated that Minsk and Tehran, in an atmosphere of interaction and friendship, can expand cooperation and completely resolve possible problems facing some bilateral agreements.

The two presidents also oversaw the signing of 12 cooperation agreements and a joint statement on Wednesday.

High-ranking officials signed documents in the fields of politics, international law, tourism, arts, media, health, pharmaceuticals, industry, environment, free trade zones, as well as special industrial and economic zones and investment.

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Wednesday that a recent aggression by Israel and the United States against Iran is part of the West's efforts to expand its global

influence and domination.

Addressing a meeting with Belarusian officials in the country's capital Minsk, the Iranian president warned that threats by the West will not be limited to Iran and will target the independence of other

New missiles will be deployed in case of fresh Israeli attacks: *Defense minister*

National Desk

Iranian military officials once again warned Israel against resuming strikes with the defense minister saying that the Armed Forces would use more powerful missiles in case of new aggression. Brigadier General Aziz Nasirzadeh said on Wednesday the Armed Forces were prepared for any new Israeli attacks, announcing Iran had developed missiles with greater capabilities than those used during Israel's 12-day aggression.

"The missiles used in the 12-day war were manufactured... a few years ago," Nasirzadeh said.

"Today, we have manufactured and possess missiles with far greater capabilities than previous missiles, and if the Zionist enemy embarks on the adventure again, we will undoubtedly use them."

On June 13, Israel launched an air campaign targeting several civilian, military, and nuclear facilities in Iran, which led to the assassination of several military commanders and nuclear scientists as well as hundreds of ordinary people. On June 22, the US also joined the aggression and bombed three Iranian nuclear facilities.

In retaliation, Iran unleashed waves of drones and missiles at the occupied territories, inflicting significant dam-



A drone view shows an impacted building following a missile attack from Iran in Be'er Sheva on the occupied territories on June 24, 2025.
● [REUTERS](#)

age on both settlements and military installations.

On June 23, Iranian forces retaliated US strike with over 30 drones and missiles against the American military base in Qatar.

Finally, on June 24, Israeli was forced to agree to a cessation of hostilities brokered by the US.

Iranian officials have since warned that another round of fighting could erupt at any moment, emphasizing that Tehran does not seek war but remains prepared for any confrontation.

On Monday, First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said Iran should be "prepared at every moment for confrontation."

"We are not even in a cease-fire; we are

in a cessation of hostilities," he added.

Also on Wednesday, the commander of Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Central Military Headquarters underlined the combat readiness of the country's Armed Forces in fighting off any potential acts of aggression.

The announcement came as the Iranian Navy is scheduled to kick off the operational phase of its Eghtedar 1404 missile exercise today (Thursday).

Navy spokesman Rear Admiral Abbas Hassani said the two-day missile exercise would take place in the Sea of Oman and the northern Indian Ocean, involving surface and subsurface vessels, aerial units, coast-to-sea missile sites, sea-based missile platforms, and electronic warfare units.

FM says Iran 'cannot completely' break with IAEA

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Tehran "cannot completely cut cooperation" with the UN nuclear watchdog but the return of its inspectors is up to the country's security chiefs, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said.

The remarks came nearly two months after Iran suspended cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) following Israel's 12-day aggression against Iran.

Tehran said the IAEA effectively paved 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.

Iran also denounced the IAEA's failure to condemn Israeli and US strikes on its nuclear facilities as a reason for its decision, which saw the watchdog's inspectors leave the country following the passing of new legislation by the Iranian Parliament.

"We cannot completely cut cooperation with the agency," Araghchi said, noting that new fuel rods need to be installed at Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant in the coming weeks which will require the presence of IAEA inspectors.

"Under the law passed by Parliament, the return of (IAEA) inspectors will be possible through a decision of the Supreme National Security Council," he told IRNA news agency in an interview published Wednesday, referring to Iran's top secu-



Abbas Araghchi

urity body.

On June 13, Israel launched an unprovoked assault on Iran, striking not only nuclear and military sites but also residential neighborhoods. The attacks that lasted for 12 days, took the lives of nearly 1,100 Iranians.

Shortly afterward, the United States carried out its own strikes on Iran's Fordow, Isfahan, and Natanz nuclear facilities.

The war derailed nuclear talks between Iran and the United States on a new nuclear deal to replace the one abandoned by President Donald Trump during his first term in 2018.

Iran has since said cooperation with the agency will take "a new form" and earlier this month the agency's deputy head visited Tehran for talks.

At the time, Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said Iran and the agency had agreed to "continue consultations."

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said on Monday Iran and the IAEA will probably have another round of negotiations in the coming days.

Israel approves plan to occupy Gaza City, calls up 60,000 reservists

International Desk

Israel's military called up tens of thousands of reservists on Wednesday in preparation for an expected assault on Gaza City, which has drawn condemnations from many countries.

Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz approved the plan on Wednesday for the conquer of Gaza City and authorized the call-up of around 60,000 reservists.

The call-up signals Israel is pressing ahead with its plan to take control of Gaza's biggest urban hub despite international criticism of an operation likely to force the displacement of many more Palestinians. But a military official briefing reporters said reserve soldiers would not report for duty until September, a move that gives mediators some time to bridge gaps between the Palestinian resistance group Hamas and Israel over cease-fire terms. Israel's security cabinet, chaired by

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, approved the plan this month to expand the campaign in Gaza, with the aim of seizing Gaza City, sparking fears it will worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Many of Israel's closest allies have urged it to reconsider but Netanyahu is under pressure from some far-right members of his coalition to reject a temporary cease-fire, continue the war and pursue the annexation of Gaza. Israel's onslaught on Gaza has claimed the lives of more than 62,000 Palestinians and caused widespread devastation across the Gaza Strip, which before the war was home to about 2.3 million Palestinians. Many buildings, including homes, schools and mosques have been destroyed. Most Gazans have been displaced multiple times and forced into densely packed areas along the Mediterranean coast, including in Gaza City. Netanyahu has come under growing pres-



AFP

sure at home and abroad to end the war, with the German government saying on Wednesday that it "rejects the escalation" of Israel's campaign.

French President Emmanuel Macron said Wednesday that Israel's "military offensive" to conquer Gaza City "can only lead to a complete disaster for both peoples". Israel's plan "will drag the region into a permanent war," the French president posted on social media, reiterating his call for an "international stabilization mission".



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

