

Tehran's comprehensive diplomacy in first year

From crisis management to broadening new horizons

ANALYSIS

The first year of the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under the "national unity" government kicked off amid one of the most sensitive and critical phases in contemporary Iranian history; a time when the Zionist regime and the United States tried to carry out 12 days of attacks aiming to shake up the country's security and stability. Under such circumstances, Iran's diplomatic apparatus was handed a tough mission, including keeping a lid on the crisis, neutralizing the political and legal consequences of this aggression, and at the same time holding onto and building up the Islamic Republic of Iran's standing on the international stage. This complex mission was shaped by a strategy based on "comprehensiveness, agility, and influence," which ended up delivering significant achievements.

From confronting aggression to political, legal initiatives

During the imposed war, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to forge a global consensus against the US and Israel's aggressions by leveraging multi-level diplomacy. More than 10 official letters from the foreign minister and Iran's permanent missions in New York, Vienna, and Geneva were sent to the United Nations (UN), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Following these moves, emergency meetings of the UN Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors were called to order on Iran's agenda. The outcome of these efforts was the condemnation of the Zionist regime's aggression by over 120 countries and international organizations — an unprecedented consensus that proved Iran's diplomacy can step up and play a decisive role in times of crisis. Simultaneously, legal reports and documentary evidence regarding the crimes committed by the Zionists, especially in attacks against civilians and the martyrdom of women and children, were gathered and logged in at the Human Rights Council. This legal documentation, also recorded at the UN, placed Iran not just as a defender of its national interests but also as an advocate for international justice.

Supporting the Palestinian people and the Resistance Axis formed another cornerstone of Iran's diplomacy during this period. The Foreign Ministry played an active role in calling together extraordinary meetings of the foreign ministers of the OIC and took the initiative in holding a joint summit of Arab-Islamic leaders in Riyadh — a meeting focused on condemning Israeli aggressions and strengthening political backing for the Palestinian resistance. Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran registered a bill at the International Court of Justice to ensure the Zionist regime's crimes are pursued within an international legal framework. In line with this, Foreign Minister Araghchi kept up multiple con-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (back-R) and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (back-L) attend a meeting with the personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran, Iran, on July 26, 2025.

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tacts with counterparts in Islamic countries, and through a visit to Beirut and meetings with the Resistance leaders, tightened up the battlefield and political coordination. At the same time, Iranian missions abroad kept up public awareness through World Quds Day events and extensive media activities, keeping the issue alive in public opinion about Palestine's plight and Iran's role.

In relations with Europe, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs worked to keep the lines open and even enhance engagement. Over 50 contacts by the foreign minister and 12 by President Pezeshkian were made with European officials. After a three-year pause, Iran's new ambassador was sent to the UK, and diplomatic immunity was restored to three Iranian consulates in Germany. On the economic front, Iran's pharmaceutical and agricultural exports to Europe continued despite sanctions pressure, highlighting the flexibility of the country's economic diplomacy.

Thus, in its first year, the Foreign Ministry not only fought back against threats from a defensive stance but, with legal, political,

and media initiatives, also laid the groundwork for strengthening Iran's role and position in international affairs. This performance in political and security diplomacy paves the way for a sustained, active, and impactful diplomatic course in the coming years.

Economic diplomacy: from BRICS to Iran Expo

In its first year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prioritized economic diplomacy as one of the main pillars of the country's foreign policy. The international situation, sanction pressures, and the nation's growing economic need for regional and global ties led the diplomatic apparatus to adopt an active, multi-layered approach focusing on diversifying trade partners and utilizing regional economic organizations' capacities.

Membership in economic pacts and forums, as well as expanding Iran's role in existing organizations, gained special importance in this trajectory. Iran's official membership in the BRICS group in January 2025 marked a turning point in foreign economic policy as this bloc, recognized as

an emerging economic power, opened up avenues for financial, banking, and investment cooperation between Iran and major Asian and Latin American economies.

Simultaneously, in May 2025, the free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) went into effect, opening the door to easier trade exchanges with member states. Meanwhile, in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Iran took on a more active role and pushed for structural reforms and long-term plans aimed at improving its regional economic standing. Iran's presence also stepped up in the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation as well as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), where Tehran, as host of key meetings, sent a clear message demonstrating its seriousness about expanding multilateral cooperation.

The Iran Expo 2025 was another highlight in the ministry's economic portfolio. This event, with the participation of 1,210 Iranian companies and over 3,100 foreign traders from 112 countries, represented an unrivaled opportunity



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to showcase Iran's export capabilities. Iran Expo not only drew widespread coverage in the media but also served up a platform for signing new trade contracts and expanding cooperation networks between domestic and international businesses.

In energy and transportation, the ministry actively followed through on strategic projects. The launch of Turkmenistan's gas swap through Iran to Turkey stood out as a major achievement that, beyond economic benefits, bumped up Iran's geopolitical standing in energy. Electricity imports from Turkmenistan were extended, and talks to renew the gas contract with Turkey continued. Regionally, 90% of the third electricity transmission line from Armenia to Iran was also completed. Advancing the North-South International Corridor and the Rasht-Astara railway project were top priorities, with ongoing negotiations around financing and execution. The development contract for Chabahar port with India also moved into its operational phase, leading to new partnerships in transit and maritime infrastructure between the two countries.

Balancing in Caucasus, linking in East, presence in Africa, Latin America

The good neighborliness and regional engagement policy was among the Foreign Ministry's most important activities in the first year of the national unity government. This policy, anchored in the principles of "neighbors first" and "broad regional engagement," effectively unlocked significant political, economic, and cultural capacities in Iran's surrounding environment and lifted relations with neighboring and regional countries to a new level.

Within this framework, the Iranian president's and foreign minister's foreign visits played a pivotal role. The president traveled in his first year to Iraq, Qatar, Oman, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, with practical follow-up on bilateral and regional issues prioritized at every stop. A tangible outcome of this policy was the complete abolition of visas between Iran and Tajikistan, facilitating travel and boosting cultural and economic exchanges. Meanwhile, Iran and Uzbekistan agreed to wipe out road tolls between the two, directly opening up road trade and easing transit. The Iran-Turkey Joint Economic Commission also met during this period, initiating talks on preferential tariffs and broadening trade exchange.

In the Caucasus, the Foreign Ministry stuck to a balanced policy. The foreign minister's visits to Baku and Yerevan and direct talks with both countries' leaders sent out clear signals of Iran's determination to support regional stability and security. Infrastructure projects like completing the Iran-Armenia power transmission line were pushed forward, and agreements on energy and transit with Azerbaijan were



Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Amir Saeid Iravani (2nd-L) attends an emergency meeting of the United Nations Security Council at the UN's headquarters in New York City, US, on June 13, 2025, the day Israel attacked Iran unprovoked.

EDUARDO MUNOZ/REUTERS