VP highlights economic preparation for possible UN sanctions

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (C) chairs a session of the Economic Council in Tehran on September 22, 2025.
fvpresident.ir

Economy Desk

Iran is prepared for any attempt by European nations to reimpose United Nations sanctions, First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref said on Sunday, stressing that the government has economic plans for "special circumstances."

Speaking at a session of the Economic Council, Aref said the country is not "volunteering for war or the return of sanctions," but economic forecasts have been made in case a "trigger mechanism" is implemented, IRNA reported.

Britain, France and Germany launched a 30-day process last month to reimpose sanctions, accusing Tehran of failing to abide by the 2015 deal with world powers, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Iran has rejected their claims and says that it is Europe that failed to fulfil its commitments under the deal after the US unilaterally withdrew from the agreement in 2018.

The snapback would reimpose an arms embargo, a ban on uranium enrichment and reprocessing, a ban on activities with ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons as well as a global asset freeze.

Aref added, "Nation and government have performed well against the West's unjust sanctions. Of course, we are not volunteering for sanctions to return and we hope European countries at least exercise reason and learn from their experience confronting our system and people."

Aref noted that the government had prepared programs for special situations from the start of its term, though the baseline approach is to govern the country under normal conditions. In addition to these ordinary operations, he said, "We also have plans for special circumstances, particularly in the economic sphere, which include targeted livelihood packages."

He also highlighted that governance frameworks for exceptional conditions have been established, citing the country's experience during the 12-day Israeli-imposed war in June as an example. Strategic reserves are in "very good condition," Aref said, ensuring that essential goods will last into next year, with even non-essential items stockpiled.

The vice president underscored the role of the steering council for the Seventh Development Plan, saying its regular activity and inter-agency cooperation have successfully complemented government efforts. Moving forward, he said, "monitoring the implementation of the Seventh Development Plan must be pursued seriously," adding that some revisions are needed and must be applied through a clear mechanism. Funding for the plan's execution remains "the most important issue," he said, noting that sources of financing must be clarified.

Aref also spoke about next year's budget bill (to start on March 21, 2026), emphasizing "the necessity of focusing on the government's and the president's priorities in the bill, including people's livelihoods, structural reforms, reduction of overlaps, balanced budgeting, a stronger role for the private sector, governance of advanced technologies, and increased productivity."

Iran's sophisticated pistachio processing tech boosting global demand: *Association head*

Economic logic behind cultivation drives stable income

By Sadeq Dehqan & Zohreh Qanadi
Staff writers

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Iran's technological advances in pistachio processing are helping the country's pistachio kernels shine in international food markets, generating higher income and supporting economic growth in key agricultural regions, Mohammad Salehi, head of the Iranian Pistachio Association, said in an interview with Iran Daily.

Salehi noted that "the use of Iranian pistachio kernels in the world's food industries is increasing," attributing this growth to domestic innovations in processing that allow Iran to meet rising global demand.

He noted that the share of pistachio kernel exports in total exports has been increasing due to strong sales and that "Iranian pistachio kernels have a wide variety of types, sizes, colors, appearances, and prices, making them highly competitive in international markets."

The pistachio sector is witnessing robust growth, with the cultivation of the crop generating higher foreign exchange revenues and employment while strengthening the country's position in global food markets, the head of the Iranian Pistachio Association said.

Salehi provided details on export destinations, saying East Asia accounted for 26% of Iran's pistachio exports, making it the largest market. Re-export markets, including Turkey and the UAE, also held a 26% share, followed by the Indian subcontinent with 19%, Commonwealth of Independent States countries 15%, the Middle East 10%, and the European Union 4%, which primarily imported pistachio kernels.

According to Salehi, Iran exported 192,000 tons of pistachios this year (began on March 21), generating approximately $1.7 billion in foreign revenue.

"Pistachio harvesting usually begins in early September and continues through the fall. This year, the harvest is expected to increase to around 240,000 tons nationwide, with 40% of the yield consisting of round varieties, and 60% elongated types. About 28,000 tons are consumed domestically each year," he said.

Key challenges

Salehi highlighted Iran's high potential for expanding pistachio orchards but noted that summer water shortages and winter frost remain key challenges.

According to him, the highest production is in Kerman province, followed by Razavi Khorasan, Yazd, Fars, South Khorasan, Markazi, Isfahan, Sistan and Baluchestan, Qom, Qazvin, and Tehran provinces.

The cultivation of pistachios contributes to sustainable income in producing regions, Salehi said. "Evidence shows that currently, pistachio cultivation in the country is based on economic logic, and this development has generated more stable income and net benefits compared to other agricultural investment options in these regions, playing a positive role in improving development levels," he added.

The crop's labor-intensive nature has also reduced unemployment in pistachio-producing areas. It is estimated that direct and indirect employment from pistachio cultivation supports about one million jobs. Considering an average family size of five, the sector contributes to the livelihoods of approximately five million people nationwide, making it a significant economic and social driver.

Iran ranks 70th worldwide in 2025 innovation index; excels in domestic market, patents

Economy Desk

The latest 2025 Global Innovation Index (GII) showed that Iran ranks 70th among 139 countries worldwide, while achieving notable positions in specific indicators such as "domestic market size" at 8th and "patents relative to GDP" at 14th.

In an interview with ISNA, Amir Abbas Mohammadi Koushki, an expert on the United Nations Innovation Committee said, "The Global Innovation Index (GII), published annually by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), evaluated the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran among 139 countries in 2025. Based on the report, Iran ranked 70th globally in 2025."

The head of Iran's national inventions and innovation team added that Iran's innovation inputs ranked 109th, while outputs ranked 46th. "In other words, Iran has the capacity to produce innovative and creative outputs, but structurally it is weak in creating the necessary inputs and infrastructure for innovation," Koushki explained.

With a population of 91.6 million and a GDP based on purchasing power parity of $1,698.5 billion, Iran is classified as an upper-middle-income country, he said. The country's per capita GDP is estimated at $19,606. In the GII 2025 among 36 upper-middle-income countries, Iran ranks 17th, and among the 10 economies of Central and South Asia, Iran is in 2nd place.

Analytical report

Also, Arnoush Shakeri, professor of Technology Management at the Science and Research Unit of Azad University, told ISNA that with a score of 28.5, the country has performed strongly in several indicators despite an average overall rank. These include domestic market size (8th globally), patents by origin (14th), scientific and technical articles (28th), knowledge impact (24th), and high-tech imports (23rd).

Oil exports continue uninterrupted amid market disruption rumors, NIOC says

Economy Desk

Iran's oil exports are continuing without interruption, the CEO of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), Hamid Bovard, said on Monday, rejecting claims that changes in sales methods had caused losses.

In an interview reported by IRNA, Bovard dismissed claims that the export and sales methods of oil products had changed and incurred losses, emphasizing, "We are pursuing both diversity and multiple supply channels for oil products in various markets, but I deny that this action has caused any loss."

The NIOC head highlighted that, "As part of determined efforts, the representatives of the Iranian nation in the oil sector are appropriately advancing the sale of oil and oil products." He added that the company does not feel the need "to respond to all rumors," stressing that it aims "to keep the country's economic light on with double efforts."

Earlier, Oil Minister Mohsen Paknejad told reporters that the sale of Iranian oil has "never stopped" and, although fluctuating, continues strongly. He added that no oil shipments have been left unsold "on water or at sea."

On Wednesday, Reuters, citing six trade sources, reported that discounts for Iranian oil in China have widened on record stock levels at a major refining hub and as a shortage of import quotas towards year-end hindered buying by independent processors.

Slowing demand from Chinese independent refiners in Shandong Province, known as teapots, adds to pressure on Iran to sustain its oil revenue amid Western sanctions aimed at its nuclear program, the report said.

China has bought over 90% of Iranian oil exports in the past few years, with January-August imports at an average of 1.43 million bpd, up 12% annually, according to estimates by tanker tracker Vortexa.

China defends its oil trade with Iran as conforming with international law, and describes unilateral US sanctions as illegitimate.