Pezeshkian: Policies to shift if 'snapback' moves ahead

Solution 'within reach' but hinges on fairness

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) meets his Bolivian counterpart Luis Arce on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York on September25, 2025.
● *president.ir*

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian warned Thursday that Tehran will recalibrate its policies if European powers push ahead with triggering the "snapback" mechanism to restore UN sanctions, even as he voiced hope the process would not go through.

"The type of engagement and our policies will be adjusted to the new situation," Pezeshkian said during a meeting with Bolivian President Luis Arce on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

The Iranian president slammed Washington's unilateral approach, saying it targeted not only Iran but any country unwilling to toe the line. "In such circumstances, nations seeking independence must boost their scientific and professional capacities in order to safeguard their sovereignty," he argued.

Following a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron a day earlier, Pezeshkian stressed that Iran has "no intention whatsoever of building a nuclear bomb" and is ready to talk with Europe within a framework that addresses "European concerns while ensuring Iran's interests". On his X account, he later described the exchange as "frank and detailed," adding that "a definitive solution is within reach" if the other sides act with fairness.

In other bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the assembly, Pezeshkian repeated that Tehran's nuclear program has never been aimed at weapons, blaming Western mistrust on "misunderstandings" and Israeli "propaganda". He told Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre that Western countries must stick to their commitments for any deal to hold water.

"The current situation is the result of the Western parties' failure to uphold their commitments."

The president told Swiss counterpart Karin Keller-Sutter that Iran is ready to prove the peaceful nature of its nuclear work "within international law and its rights," but warned: "If snapback is activated, dialogue will lose its meaning."

Meeting Finnish President Alexander Stubb, Pezeshkian admitted relations with Europe had not gone as planned, citing "broken promises" by the West and even military strikes on Iran during negotiations earlier in June. Still, he said, diplomacy is "the only way to overcome this mistrust".

He also told European Council President António Costa that Tehran is prepared to cooperate on transparency to disprove what he called "false narratives". Responsibility for the current crisis, he added, lies with those who "violated their commitments and walked away from the [2015 nuclear deal]."

Pezeshkian accused world powers of a double standard: "They raise an outcry over minor issues in Iran, while staying silent on Israel crossing every red line. Did we assassinate the scientists of other countries — or are we among the greatest victims of terrorism?"

France, Germany, and Britain launched the snapback process on August 28, setting off a 30-day countdown to the automatic return of UN sanctions lifted under the 2015 deal. They accused Iran of violating its commitments, whereas Iran's measures were a response to the US unilateral exit from the deal in 2018 and the subsequent reimposition of sanctions, as well as the European parties' failure to offset the effects of those restrictions.

The European trio considered Iran's agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Cairo inadequate and continued to push for activation of the snapback mechanism. Sanctions are due to come back into force as early as September 28 unless a compromise is found.

Pezeshkian also met UN Secretary-General António Guterres, signed the UN memorial book, and penned a note sharply critical of Israel and its supporters.

UNSC votes on Russia-China bid to extend Iran nuclear resolution

A general view of the United Nations Security Council
● *AFP*

The UN Security Council was set to vote on Friday on a draft resolution tabled by Russia and China that sought a technical extension of Resolution 2231, in a last-ditch effort to prevent the automatic return of international sanctions on Iran.

Under UN rules, any resolution requires at least nine votes from the 15-member Council and no veto from its five permanent members — the United States, Britain, France, Russia, and China — to pass.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's deputy foreign minister for Legal and International Affairs, had also described the Russia-China draft resolution as "the last opportunity to prevent the escalation of self-inflicted European-American tensions".

In a post on X, he warned that Iran would respond appropriately to any hostile measures, including the reinstatement of "expired UN Security Council resolutions," adding that the first step would be to terminate the Cairo agreement between Iran and the IAEA.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, posting on X ahead of the vote, described the moment as "a fleeting opportunity" for the Council to say 'No' to confrontation and 'Yes' to cooperation, allowing diplomacy the time and space it needs to succeed. He noted that Iran had submitted several proposals aimed at preserving the diplomatic track, while accusing the E3 of failing to respond in kind and criticizing the US for intensifying its unilateral demands.

The Russian-Chinese proposal came just days before the "snapback" mechanism was set to take effect on September 28 — 30 days after it was triggered by Britain, France, and Germany. It was stipulated that if no agreement is reached during this month-long window, sanctions that were lifted under the 2015 nuclear accord would automatically be reimposed. Moscow and Beijing had called for a six-month technical rollover of Resolution 2231, with the possibility of further extensions, to allow parties to the deal to hammer out a diplomatic solution.

The vote followed an earlier failed attempt to secure broader relief for Iran. On September 19, a draft submitted by South Korea, as the rotating Council president, to permanently lift sanctions in line with paragraph 11 of Resolution 2231 was voted down. That proposal received only four votes in favor, with nine against and two abstentions.

Resolution 2231, adopted unanimously in 2015, had endorsed the landmark nuclear agreement between Iran and six world powers — the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and China. It provided for the lifting of UN sanctions in exchange for intrusive inspections and substantial curbs on Tehran's nuclear program. The text envisioned a permanent lifting of sanctions after 10 years.

But the deal unraveled after the United States unilaterally withdrew in 2018 under then-president Donald Trump and reimposed sweeping sanctions. Tehran, after a year of waiting for European powers to compensate for the loss, began rolling back its nuclear commitments as a retaliatory measure.

Tensions further escalated after an Israeli aggression in June this year, where the US also carried out strikes on Iranian nuclear sites. In response, Iran suspended cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On August 28, Britain, France, and Germany initiated the snapback procedure, arguing that Iran had failed to comply with its obligations. They dismissed as insufficient a framework reached in Cairo between Tehran and the IAEA for renewed cooperation.

The three European governments have since doubled down on their push to restore UN sanctions. They urged Iran to grant unrestricted access to UN nuclear inspectors, promptly return to the negotiating table, and clarify the status of its stockpile of highly enriched uranium.

Iranian FM urges fair burden-sharing on Afghan crisis

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Thursday called on the international community to ensure that the burden of the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan does not fall disproportionately on a handful of neighboring states.

Speaking at a four-party meeting with China, Pakistan, and Russia on the sidelines of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Araghchi said Iran has shouldered the heavy responsibility of hosting millions of Afghan nationals, often "with little or insufficient international assistance".

He stressed that the burden has imposed billions of dollars in costs on Iran's economy and security, while the country itself faces "the most severe unilateral sanctions, in violation of international law".

"We have sought to ensure that the return of Afghan nationals takes place with full respect for their dignity. However, it should not be expected that Iran bears this burden alone," he said.

Turning to security concerns, Araghchi warned that the continuing presence of extremist and terrorist groups in Afghanistan remains a serious threat to neighbors and the wider region. He urged the Taliban authorities to take "transparent, verifiable, and decisive measures" against such dangers.

The minister cautioned that sanctions should not become a tool to block Afghanistan's economic recovery or legitimate engagement with Kabul. "We reiterate that Afghanistan's assets frozen abroad must be released unconditionally to revive the country's economic stability and serve the Afghan people," he said.

Araghchi reaffirmed Tehran's firm adherence to the

● *IRNA*

principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states and voiced support for the inherent right of the Afghan people to determine their own political, economic, and social future, in line with the UN Charter and recognized norms of international law. He delivered a sharp rebuke of Washington's record in Afghanistan. "US intervention and two decades of military presence brought nothing but misery and insecurity," he said, adding that the 2021 withdrawal was "not an end to responsibility but rather a disgraceful retreat that left Afghanistan and its neighbors to face the consequences."

He stressed: "The fact is that the United States and NATO remain responsible for many of the challenges Afghanistan and the region are facing today."

Araghchi reiterated that Tehran categorically rejects any foreign political or military interference and any exploitation of Afghanistan's plight for geopolitical purposes. Above all, he warned, "the re-establishment of foreign military bases inside or around Afghanistan would violate its sovereignty, threaten regional peace and security, and fuel extremism and instability."

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