

Iran poised to engage in 'fair, balanced' nuclear talks with US

Tehran sees 'no reason' to resume negotiations with E3



National Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi reiterated that Tehran is ready to engage in nuclear negotiations if the United States

is prepared for a "fair and balanced dialogue," while saying that the Islamic Republic sees no grounds for negotiations with Europe. "Our position towards America has always

been clear; if they are ready to negotiate from an equal footing, to achieve common interests based on mutual respect, and if they do not mistake negotiation for dictation and are prepared for a fair and balanced dialogue, we too will be ready to engage in such negotiations," Araghchi said in a televised interview on Saturday. However, he said that due to the reimposition of international sanctions under pressure by the US and three European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal, Tehran does not see any basis to start new negotiations unless a proposal is presented that can secure Iran's interests. "In that case, we will definitely consider it," Araghchi said.

Confidence-building measures

The Islamic Republic, the official said, was ready, as in the past, to work towards confidence-building and ensuring transparency to prove the peaceful nature of its nuclear activities.

"Provided that, in return, they also build trust with us and lift the unjust sanctions they have imposed." Therefore, in order for fresh talks to take

place, the US should "not mistake negotiation for dictation" of its preferences, he added.

The Iranian top diplomat addressed US President Donald Trump's having tried to tie other issues with the issue of talks concerning Iran's nuclear energy program. He ruled out any connection between the two matters.

"We have always stated firmly that our negotiations are limited solely to the nuclear issue," Araghchi stated.

"Neither in the past nor recently have we ever, ever, held any talks with the Americans or any other party on any matter beyond the nuclear issue, especially as far as the resistance is concerned."

No talks with E3

Araghchi separately pointed to the issue of the European trio of the UK, France, and Germany's having proposed fresh talks with Iran.

He noted that the offer came, while the countries in question had triggered the so-called "snapback" mechanism inside the 2015 nuclear deal that has re-imposed

nuclear-related sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

"We do not see any grounds for negotiation with the Europeans," he said, reiterating Tehran's position that by triggering the mechanism, the Europe had lost its role in the nuclear issue.

"They should give us just one reason why we should negotiate with them again."

"What can they possibly do, and what positive outcome could such negotiations have?" The three European countries said on Friday that they will seek to restart stalled nuclear talks with Iran and the United States. "We are determined to reinstate negotiations with Iran and the United States towards a comprehensive, durable and verifiable agreement that ensures Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon," they said.

The European countries activated a so-called "snapback" mechanism of the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran – a move that triggered the re-imposition of sanctions against Iran in September.

Since then, relations between Tehran and the three countries have hit a new low.

Deadly clashes unfold along Pakistan-Afghanistan border

Iran calls for restraint, immediate dialogue

International Desk

Intense fighting erupted along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border on Saturday night, after an attack by the Afghan Taliban on Pakistani military posts led to a heavy exchange of fire which has claimed the lives of dozens of soldiers from both sides.

According to officials, Afghan troops opened fire on Pakistani army posts along the north-western border with Pakistan and seized several of the posts. The attacks came after the Taliban accused Pakistan of carrying out airstrikes on Afghan territory, including in the capital, Kabul, earlier this week.

On Sunday, Pakistan responded with retaliatory strikes, gunfire and ground raids on Afghan Taliban posts along the border.

Pakistan's military said 23 of its troops and more than 200 Taliban and affiliated fighters on the Afghan side were killed in the clashes. It also closed border crossings with Afghanistan on Sunday, Pakistani officials said.

However, Taliban have released different figure from the casualties. Taliban said their forces killed 58 Pakistani soldiers but gave no details on how it knew of the casualty figures. It also said that 20 Afghan troops were killed or injured.



The clashes signal a new low in Afghan-Pakistan relations, which have become increasingly hostile amid claims that Afghanistan is giving a safe haven to terrorists carrying out an escalating number of deadly attacks on Pakistani soil.

The cross-border strikes came after two explosions were reported in the Afghan capital and another in south-eastern Afghanistan on Thursday. The Defense Ministry of the Taliban-ruled government in Afghanistan subsequently accused Pakistan of "violating its sovereignty" in connection with the attacks. Pakistan has neither denied nor confirmed carrying out the Kabul strike, only stating that it had carried out "a series of retribution operations."

Taliban security personnel arrive to patrol along a road in the Zazai Maidan district of Khost Province near the Pakistan border on October 12, 2025.

● AFP

Iran on Sunday reacted to the developments on its two eastern neighbors with the Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei expressing concern over the clashes. Baqaei emphasized the necessity of mutual respect for the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of both countries.

He also called for restraint and the immediate dialogue between the two parties to reduce tensions and resolve disputes through diplomacy.

Cease-fire lingering in Gaza ahead of Egypt's summit

International Desk

A cease-fire between Israel and Hamas held in Gaza for a third day on Sunday ahead of the expected release of Israeli captives and Palestinian prisoners and a summit in Egypt's Sharm El Sheikh resort city on ending the war in Gaza. Thousands of Palestinians continued to travel north towards Gaza City, the focus of Israeli attacks over the past two months, hoping the cease-fire would bring an end to the war that has killed more than 67,000 Palestinians so far.

Israeli cabinet official Shosh Bedrosian that Tel Aviv expected the captives to start being released early Monday morning with the 20 living captives to be released together. Their release is to be followed later by the handover of bodies of the remaining 28 deceased captives. Under the cease-fire agreement, Hamas is due by noon on Monday to release the remaining hostages, taken captive on October 7, 2023, when the group launched the surprise attack on the occupied territories.

Trump is due to arrive in Israel on Monday to address the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, before traveling to Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt for a world leaders' peace summit on ending the Gaza war. No Hamas or Israeli officials to attend Egypt peace summit. The United States, along with Egypt, Qatar and Turkey, mediated what has been described as a first phase agreement between Israel and Hamas for the cease-fire.

Iran welcomes cessation of genocide

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said



on Saturday that Iran welcomes cessation of the Israeli regime's genocide in the Gaza Strip, while advising serious caution in light of multiple instances of Tel Aviv's betrayal of previous agreements. "We have always supported any plan or initiative that would put an end to the crimes and genocide against the people of Gaza," he said, but cautioned, "There is absolutely no trust in the Zionist regime, and there have been multiple instances where it has violated ceasefires." The Israel Prison Service said it had transferred some Palestinian prisoners to other facilities ahead of their release. The Israeli ministry of justice has released the names of 250 Palestinians, convicted of murder and other serious crimes, who are to be freed under the deal. The list does not include senior Hamas commanders that the group had sought to free, or prominent figures from other factions such as Marwan Al-Barghouti or Ahmed Saadat. Israel is also to release 1,700 Palestinians who have been detained in Gaza since October 7, 2023 and 22 Palestinian minors, along with the bodies of 360 fighters.

Opposition to Abraham ...

At the same time, the Palestinian Authority — recognized internationally as the representative of the Palestinian people — is taking part in the summit. So, claims by some commentators that "the real representatives of the Palestinian people" are absent are unfounded. Representatives of the Palestinian political spectrum are present, including the PA, which administers the self-rule government and is officially acknowledged as speaking on behalf of the Palestinian nation.

Considering the historically fraught relations between Iran and the United States, can this invitation be interpreted as a sign of a shift in Washington's approach toward Tehran — or just a

tactical move within the Gaza issue? Trump seems to view US-Iran relations in far simpler terms. There are different schools of thought on how to interpret the long-standing confrontation between Tehran and Washington. One holds that there is an essential contradiction between the two systems — meaning that no negotiation can truly alter the nature of their relationship, and any deal on paper will eventually collapse under ideological strain.

A second view argues that all disputes — over missiles, the nuclear issue, regional policies, and human rights — should be resolved in one go. Trump, to some extent, leaned toward this comprehensive approach. Democrats, by contrast, have long fa-

vored separating files: first resolve the nuclear issue, then move on to missiles or regional matters.

Trump's approach is somewhat hybrid — closer to the "all issues at once" stance, yet also notably pragmatic. He tends not to get bogged down in the history of hostilities and is keen to strike a deal that works in practical terms, much like the short, symbolic statement he signed with North Korea's Kim Jong Un during his first term. So yes, Iran's participation in such a summit — had it happened — would undoubtedly signal a change in the atmosphere of US-Iran relations. But it is too early to judge how far such a shift could go, even if Tehran had attended and fully agreed with the ideas put forward there.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

