

Russia voices commitment to military cooperation with Iran



International Desk

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reaffirmed Moscow's continued commitment to military-technical cooperation with Iran, stressing that such collaboration fully complies with international law and post-sanctions frameworks. Speaking at a meeting with Arab journalists, Lavrov noted that following the lifting of UN Security Council restrictions, Russia faces no legal barriers in developing defense cooperation with Iran. He emphasized that Moscow provides Tehran with the defense equipment it requires "in full conformity with in-

ternational law," RIA Novosti reported.

The Russian top diplomat's remarks came in response to a question about the supply of S-400 systems and fighter jets to Iran.

Without addressing specific details, Lavrov underlined that all aspects of Russia's cooperation with Iran are conducted transparently and within legal parameters.

At the instigation of European governments, the United Nations reinstated an arms embargo and other sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program on September 27. Russia has said it does not recognize the move.

In an interview with RT last

week, the Russian top diplomat denounced the Western countries' move to reimpose sanctions on Iran as "utterly outrageous," saying, "They punished a country that had not violated a thing."

"The idea of re-imposing the sanctions which the West is trying to present as a legitimate legal procedure is utterly outrageous."

On September 19, the 15-member Security Council failed to adopt a resolution that would have prevented the re-imposition of UN sanctions on Iran after the three European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal — France, Germany and Britain — triggered the "snapback" mech-

anism and accused Tehran of failing to comply with the agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The United States unilaterally abandoned the deal in 2018, and Europe failed to deliver on its commitments. Iran gradually reduced its obligations, while Western powers escalated pressure. In August, the European trio invoked the snapback mechanism to restore sanctions, a move Iran rejected as illegitimate.

The sanctions will again freeze Iranian assets abroad, halt arms deals with the Islamic Republic and target the country's defensive missile program.

Palestinian detainees, Israeli captives freed as part of Gaza truce

International Desk

Hundreds of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel and all 20 living captives held by the resistance movement Hamas walked free Monday as part of a cease-fire pausing two years of Israel's onslaught that decimated the Gaza Strip and killed tens of thousands of Palestinians.

Hamas said Monday it will hand over the bodies of four of 28 deceased captives. Israel said it freed more than 1,900 Palestinian prisoners as part of the Gaza cease-fire deal.

Speaking to the regime's parliament, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared he was "committed to this peace," raising hopes that the ruinous war, which triggered other conflicts in the Middle East, might come to an end. But fundamental questions remain over whether Hamas will accept disarmament and who will govern Gaza.

Cheering crowds greeted buses of released prisoners in the West Bank and Gaza, while families and friends of the captives gathered in a square in Tel Aviv, Israel and cried out with joy and relief as news arrived that the captives were free.

While major questions remain about the future of Hamas and Gaza, the exchange of captives and prisoners raised hopes for ending the deadliest war between Israel and Hamas. The cease-fire deal calls for a surge of humanitarian aid into Gaza which is experiencing famine.

The Israel's onslaught on Gaza began on October 7, 2023, after Hamas



launched an operation on the regime's positions in the occupied territories, killing some 1,200 people and taking 251 captives.

In Israel's offensive, more than 67,000 Palestinians have been killed, according to Gaza's Health Ministry. The toll is expected to grow as bodies are pulled from rubble previously made inaccessible by fighting.

The war has destroyed large swaths of Gaza and displaced about 90% of its some 2 million residents. It has also triggered other conflicts in the region, sparked worldwide protests and led to allegations of genocide that Israel denies.

Tens of thousands of Israelis watched the captive transfers at public screenings across the occupied territories. Palestinians in the occupied West Bank rejoiced as buses carrying dozens of released prisoners from Ofer Prison arrived in Beitunia, near Ramallah.

Later, giant crowds were gathered to



A Palestinian prisoner makes the victory sign after being released from an Israeli prison as part of a cease-fire deal between Israel and Hamas, upon his arrival in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah, on October 13, 2025.

● MAJDI MOHAMMED/AP

greet buses carrying other prisoners arriving at Nasser Hospital in Gaza's southern city of Khan Younis.

The prisoners include 250 people serving life sentences for convictions in attacks on Israelis, in addition to 1,700 seized from Gaza during the war and held without charge. They will be returned to the West Bank or Gaza or sent into exile.

More than 150 prisoners were sent to Egypt by Israel and arrived at Gaza's Rafah crossing with Egypt early Monday afternoon, according to an Egyptian official, who had direct knowledge of the deal's implementation. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to brief the media.

Tehran skips Cairo meeting in rebuke of 12-day war, US sanction threats



International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi rejected an invitation on Monday to partake in an international peace summit on the Gaza Strip in Egypt's Red Sea city of Sharm el-Sheikh.

Araghchi said the Iranian officials cannot sit down with leaders who "have attacked the Iranian people and continue to threaten and sanction us."

Araghchi, in a post on X, expressed gratitude for Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's invitation but made clear that neither President Masoud Pezeshkian nor himself would meet with hostile counterparts.

Araghchi was referring to US airstrikes on Iran's nuclear facilities during Israel's 12-day war of aggression, as well as sanctions targeting the country's economy and energy sector.

In a televised interview on Saturday, the Iranian foreign minister reiterated that Tehran is ready to engage in nuclear negotiations if the United States is prepared for a "fair and balanced dialogue."

"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. Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump on Monday pled for a peace deal with Iran, more than three months after Washington joined the Tel Aviv regime in striking the Islamic Republic's nuclear sites and civilian infrastructure during a 12-day war of aggression.

"You know it would be great if we could make a peace deal with them," Trump said of Iran during a speech to Israel's parliament (Knesset).

"Would you be happy with that? Wouldn't it be nice, I think. Because I think they want to."

Trump claimed that the ball was in Tehran's court for any agreement to come to pass.

"We're ready when you are," Trump said during his address which was briefly interrupted as two left-wing lawmakers were expelled, who called for the recognition of the State of Palestine and a halt to Gaza genocide.

Trump also defended pulling Washington out of an agreement brokered under ex-president Barack Obama on Iran's nuclear program.

"I terminated the Iran nuclear deal and I was very proud to do it," Trump said.

He told the Knesset that, "The hand of friendship and cooperation is open" to Iran.

"They want to make a deal and we're going to see if we can do something," he added.

"Neither the United States nor Israel bear the people of Iran any hostility. We merely want to live in peace."



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

Tehran offers to mediate Afghanistan-Pakistan border tensions

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman on Monday warned against the consequences of recent tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan beyond their borders, reiterating its readiness to mediate between its eastern neighbors.

"Among the important points for us is the issue of security and stability in neighboring states. Afghanistan and Pakistan are both our Muslim neighbors, and we believe that any estrangement in relations between the two countries can have consequences extending beyond their borders," Esmail Baqaei said during his weekly press conference. Dozens of soldiers were killed on

Saturday night in the most serious fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan since the Taliban came to power in Kabul.

The cross-border fighting erupted along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border after an attack by the Afghan Taliban on Pakistani military posts led to a heavy exchange of fire.

According to officials, Afghan troops opened fire on Pakistani army posts along the north-western border with Pakistan on Saturday night 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.

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 figures 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 Islamic Republic of Iran has called for dialogue and restraint from both sides, and emphasizes that the differences between Afghanistan and Pakistan must be resolved through dialogue and interactions," Baqaei said on Monday.

