



Int'l Iranology forum opens in Tehran

Minister hails unceasing cultural heritage



Ali Akbar Salehi, president of the Iranology Foundation, speaks at the opening of the Iranology Forum hosted by the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) in Tehran, on November 15, 2025.
● iranology.ir

past and shape the future."

Iranology must portray Iran 'as it is'

Ali Akbar Salehi, president of the Iranology Foundation, followed with a call for scholars to reclaim what he called "the true image of Iran," free from stereotypes or politically filtered narratives.

"Iranology, in the proper sense, is part of the broader effort to link civilizations," he said. Such connections, he added, are forged "not by power, but by knowledge, culture and human experience."

He told delegates the forum was both an academic conference and "a chance for Iranian and global thinkers to sit together, speak and rediscover the art of good listening."

Salehi urged scholars to portray Iran as "plural, dynamic and far beyond clichés," insisting that Iran must be presented "with truth and justice."

The Iranology Foundation, he said, served as "a bridge between past and future," but one that must avoid being reduced to "mere memory." Instead, he argued, it should channel the "living spirit of Iranian identity." In an era of selective images and "directed narratives," he said, Iran's story should be told "in Iran's own language," anchored in historical experience and scholarly integrity.

Iranologists, he said, act as "cultural ambassadors" whose

words, articles and daily interactions help shape international perceptions.

He warned that global media often produce "distorted images" of Iran, and he cast the conference as a chance to "challenge those misperceptions." Accurate knowledge, he said, was both "a service to the country" and "an antidote to Iranophobia." Mutual understanding, he added, required respect and human dignity, "Dialogue is the gateway to peace."

Salehi highlighted the presence of more than 60 scholars from 24 countries, calling it "a sign of affection for a culture with deep roots." He said knowing Iran meant experiencing it firsthand, "walking its streets, drinking tea in its homes, seeing the world through its people's eyes."

The Iranologists come from countries including Spain, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Oman, Qatar, Tunisia, India, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Sri Lanka.

Diversity, source of strength

Iran's Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Reza Salehi-Amiri told the conference that Iran's identity is defined by "layers of deep history, culture and civilization."

"Iran is more than a geography," he said. "It is a land of symbols and mysteries." He recalled writing "eleven reasons, three decades ago," for why Iran was such a land, adding, "I still stand by them."

Iran's cultural identity, he said, emerged from "a continuous, creative process, not from ruptures," which is why its endurance has outlasted centuries of

conflict. Persia's historical experience, he argued, offers "one of the finest examples of cultural resistance."

He called Persian "the inner code of Iranian identity," a language that binds myths, poetry, wisdom and collective memory. He described modern Iran as "a rare case of diversity within cohesion," where Azeris, Kurds, Baluchis, Turkmens, Arabs and countless dialects "live under the large canopy of Iranian culture." Diversity, he said, was "a source of strength."

Salehi-Amiri also stressed Iran's civilizational role as a cultural mediator along the Silk Road, "drawing from many traditions and influencing them in turn," producing a "globally oriented identity."

He cited the UNESCO inscription of the Cyrus Cylinder, which he described as embodying justice, tolerance and human dignity, as proof of Iran's lasting ethical influence.

The minister portrayed Iran's capacity for regeneration as "the vital spirit of Iranian identity." "Iran has rebuilt itself time and again," he said. "The truth lies in movement and transformation, not stasis. That resilience has empowered Iran in its hardest crises."

He pointed to Iran's tourism potential, one of the few nations offering "nearly every type of tourism," and to its 299 registered handicraft branches, which he described as "aesthetic texts and historical memory." The forum will close in Shiraz on November 18, hosted by Shiraz University, where Iranian and foreign scholars will launch final discussions aimed at establishing a permanent secretariat for an international forum of Iranologists.

Arts & Culture Desk

Iran opened its largest Iranology forum in years on Saturday, using the gathering in Tehran to underline the government's view that the country's cultural development has unfolded without any historical rupture from ancient eras through to the Islamic period.

"Iran has never experienced a historical break," Iran's Culture and Islamic Guidance Minister Abbas Salehi declared on Saturday, telling delegates that the country's cultural and civilizational continuity has endured natural disasters, foreign invasions and modern political shocks.

Speaking at the international Iranology gathering at the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), Salehi said

Iran's "creativity and flourishing" stretch across every era.

"We have not had two centuries of silence," he insisted, arguing that the nation's cultural trajectory, "before and after Islam", has been defined by seamless evolution rather than rupture. Salehi said Iran's endurance was "neither accidental nor fragile," citing 5,800 destructive natural events recorded across Iranian history, quakes, floods, droughts, a scale he said "Europe never faced collectively." Yet, he added, "this land still stands."

Salehi also framed Iran's history as a record of strategic cultural resistance. Positioned at a "historic crossroads," Iran faced incursions from East, West, North and South, yet unlike other ancient powers, "Egypt after Cambyes, Rome after invasions,

Greece after Macedonian assaults," Iran, he said, "absorbed and dissolved" aggressors. The Mongols, who "burned and plundered everything," eventually left behind creations like the vast-domed Soltaniyeh complex, whose decorations contain "not one centimeter of Mongol art," he said, calling it evidence of Iran's capacity to internalize and transform foreign influence.

Pointing to contemporary cultural output, Salehi said Iran, despite economic pressure, "is alive" and pushing ahead across literature, music, visual arts, animation, video-game design, and cinema.

Addressing foreign guests, he said Iranologists were engaging not with "a lifeless soil" but with "a living identity," one that could help scholars "revisit the

President calls for trust, family cohesion

Social Desk

Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian urged families and society to embrace differing viewpoints and highlighted youth as the cornerstone of the country's future during the third National Population Youth Award in Tehran on Saturday.

Pezeshkian likened life to "climbing a summit," saying achievements emerge through effort and resilience, president.ir reported.

He warned that societal and familial tensions often stem from rejecting opposing opinions, and stressed that disagreements should be managed calmly to nurture growth. He urged young Iranians to develop in an environment of trust, honesty, and friendship, noting that "the future of the country is built by its youth." The president also called for unity across the nation, citing Iran's experience in the "12-day war," where public solidarity bolstered the government and disappointed



adversaries.

Marzieh Vahid-Dastjerdi, the secretary of the National Population Headquarters, said that population policies must be "scientific, logical, and practical," and called for enhanced coordination between cultural, social, and economic institutions with the National Population Headquarters.

Highlighting the government's new measures, she outlined four



Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during the third National Population Youth Award in Tehran on November 15, 2025.
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key strategies: Cultural awareness campaigns, simplifying family formation, high-quality child care services, and financial incentives for parents.

Iranian curator named ICOM vice-president in Dubai

Arts & Culture Desk

Iranian museum curator Golnaz Golsabahi was elected one of two vice-presidents of the Executive Board of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) at its triennial general conference in Dubai on Saturday, securing a senior seat in the Paris-based body that shapes global museum policy.

Golsabahi, who had already served two consecutive terms on the Executive Board, was chosen alongside Emirati cultural adviser Nasir Al-Darmaki for the 2025-2028 cycle, IRNA reported.

The vote took place during ICOM's 27th General Conference, a

week-long gathering that opened on November 15 with more than 4,500 participants from 119 countries.

Antonio Rodríguez of the United States will chair the Executive Board for the same three-year period, with the next triennial assembly scheduled to convene in the Netherlands in 2028.

The Dubai meeting, the largest in the museum sector's calendar, has drawn hundreds of speakers and delegates who are thrashing out the fast-evolving challenges facing museums, from digital curation and conservation pressures to shifting visitor expectations.

Dubai was formally designated as host city

for the 2025 triennial after the advisory council handed over the ICOM flag to its organizing committee during the 2022 assembly in Prague, a symbolic ritual that marks the transfer of stewardship for the next global gathering.

Founded in 1946, ICOM brings together museum directors, academics, conservators and policy specialists to set professional standards and steer international cooperation. Its general conferences, held every three years, have become a central forum for exchanging ideas and airing concerns about everything from illicit trafficking and heritage protection to climate-driven risks to collections.