

Araghchi: Calls on Iran for negotiation have been reinitiated

Diplomacy remains definitive modus for resolution

CONFERENCE

On Sunday, November 16, 2026, Abbas Araghchi, Iran's minister of foreign affairs, took part in a specialized panel of an international conference entitled "International Law Under Attack, Aggression, and Defense," hosted by Kazem Sajjadpour in Tehran. Earlier in the day, the foreign minister also delivered the opening speech of the conference, which was then followed by four panels comprised of Iranian officials and experts from within and without the country. A translation of the full text of Araghchi's panel discussion with Sajjadpour follows below.

SAJJADPOUR: In light of the American assault upon diplomacy, what trajectory does diplomacy now assume, and what is the prospect of resolving issues through diplomacy? Has diplomacy been entirely annihilated, or does it persist as one of the oldest institutions of human existence for the resolution of disputes?

ARAGHCHI: I am convinced that the recent military assault against Iran, which in reality constituted a kind of assault against diplomacy as well, and the first missile discharged by the United States and Israel essentially struck the table of negotiations between Iran and the United States. From one perspective, it created such a situation; yet from another, this very war revealed that no avenue exists except diplomacy. They attained none of their objectives; rather, they were defeated. If their objective consisted of annihilating Iran's nuclear program, this objective did not materialize. I have repeatedly stated: installations may be destroyed and obliterated, yet technology does not vanish through aerial bombardment, and more importantly, the resolute volition of nations does not vanish through aerial bombardment. Our installations were destroyed, yet our technology remains intact, and our determination has become even more adamant.

Now, the solicitation for negotiation has likewise been reinitiated, and this is natural because they did not attain what they intended regarding Iran's nuclear program through military assault, and this is precisely what we had repeatedly asserted: the Iranian nuclear issue possesses no military solution. They experimented with it and discerned that this solution is not valid. It is not the case that what one has failed to attain in war can be acquired through negotiation, nor can one impose one's demands. The first step in diplomacy and negotiation is that we accept that negotiation diverges from dictation and coercion. In negotiation, exchange and mutual interests are on the agenda. It is not the case that one side can attain whatever it desires. Negotiation and diplomacy must possess a rational and logical foundation and must be conducted with seriousness.

If such conditions for negotiation are furnished, the Islamic Republic of Iran has demonstrated that it is perpetually prepared for negotiation. We have never abandoned the negotiation table; it has invariably been our interlocutors who have betrayed the negotiation table. Even in the 2015 JCPOA agreement, the Islamic Republic of Iran negotiated in good faith, agreed with good faith, and implemented in good faith. Yet the United States, without any rationale, while Iran fully adhered to its commitments, withdrew from the agreement and betrayed diplomacy — betrayed an agree-

ment that was the product of diplomacy and which the entire world celebrated in 2015.

This time as well, this betrayal manifested in a worse form and through an assault against Iran. It was not Iran that absented itself from diplomacy; it was the United States and the Western countries that perpetually sought the imposition of their inclinations throughout the negotiation. In my estimation, diplomacy can still remain alive and remains the definitive modus for the resolution of disputes, yet one must adhere to its criteria, regulations, and principles.

In light of post-war conditions, how do you perceive the general prospect of Iran, Iran and the region, and Iran and the world?

Before addressing that, I wish to elucidate once more a point connected to the previous question. As I stated, the Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to peaceful resolution and the utilization of diplomacy and discourse for the resolution of issues, particularly in the region. In my previous statement, I mentioned two solutions: a solution grounded in coercion, aggression, and violence, and a solution grounded in discourse and diplomacy. The choice of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the second solution.

However, regarding the prospect, I perceive the prospect and future of the Islamic Republic of Iran, within the movement we have initiated in the region and at the international level, as exceedingly promising and affirmative. It is a reality that we succeeded in traversing an exceedingly arduous and intense war with success.

Our war constituted the defense against the assaults and aggression of the United States and the Zionist regime, with the collaboration of a large number of other countries that I do not wish to name, yet some of them confessed that they assisted both in defense and, occasionally, in the offensive actions of the forces of the Israeli regime. Their objectives in this



war were in no manner realized. Yet on the 12th day of the war, they conveyed a message that they desired an unconditional cease-fire. This occurred because they were unsuccessful in attaining all their objectives, and Iran succeeded on the first day of the war, within several hours, in preparing itself for defense and conducting a very robust defense of itself, and this defense assumed stronger dimensions each day. If war is repeated, we shall be capable of confronting it better and more powerfully than before, and this very reality constitutes a deterrent against war.

It is occasionally asserted that the skies of Iran were under the control of Israeli aircraft, yet the other side of the matter is not articulated — that the skies of Israel and the Zionist regime were under the control of Iranian missiles. In the final days, these missiles operated with such strength, authority, and precision that the regime possessed no avenue except an urgent solicitation for an unconditional cease-fire.

We passed this war successfully. Our nuclear technology, which they intended to annihilate, remains in its place. Installations and equipment, as I indicated, if destroyed, are reconstructed.

What is significant is the volition of the Iranian nation and the national cohesion that they intended to target, yet they failed to fracture it. The people of Iran, in the face of this assault, became stronger, more cohesive, and more supportive of the state and government.

Now, several months after the 12-day war, I affirm with confidence that from the perspective of defensive capability, we are incomparably stronger than prior to June 13. Our entire capability has been reconstructed. We derived numerous lessons from this war; we comprehended our weaknesses and the weaknesses of the enemy, just as we accurately discerned our strengths and the strengths of others. Now, if such a war is repeated, we shall be capable of confronting it better and more powerfully than before, and this very reality constitutes a deterrent against war.

The conception that engendered the 12-day war was an erroneous conception and calculation by our adversaries; they imagined that Iran lacked the preparedness to defend itself, yet, in practice, they observed that this conception was mistaken. Today, we are stronger than that time, and without doubt, this preparedness for war is the

most significant factor preventing the occurrence of another war. If the failed experience of the past is repeated, the result will be nothing but the repetition of that same defeat.

Concurrently, we succeeded in reviving numerous capabilities of our own. On the other hand, for more than 40 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has confronted sanctions and has opened its path through the sanctions. I do not assert that sanctions possess no cost or produce no difficulties; certainly, they possess cost and certainly they have produced numerous difficulties for us and for our people, yet nevertheless they have been unable to fracture our volition or limit our capabilities. All individuals who, at present, travel to Iran, in the meetings I have had, are astonished at how the Islamic Republic of Iran, after 40 years of American sanctions, has succeeded in continuing its trajectory of development and advancement. Economic difficulties exist, and I do not deny them. The government, with its entire being, is engaged in confronting these difficulties. We possess the capability to discover our path through these difficulties, and I think we have thus far achieved a successful trajectory.

The United States and others must understand that no avenue exists for resolving issues with the Islamic Republic of Iran except the avenue of diplomacy and except the utilization of the language of respect and dignity. If they address the Iranian people with the language of dignity and respect, they shall receive a response in the same language. In the 2013–2015 JCPOA negotiations, for example, we were addressed with respect, and we responded with respect; we entered into negotiations, and the negotiation was successful because the principles of negotiation were observed. But if they address the Iranian people in another language, the Iranian people shall respond in that same language. They experienced this in the 12-day war.

Politicians must recognize historical experiences and derive lessons from them, and utilize them for the future. We possess two experiences before us in the contemporary past: the experience of the 2015 negotiations that resulted in an agreement that the entire world celebrated as an achievement of diplomacy, and afterward the United States betrayed it; and the experience of the recent war in which the Iranian people responded with the same strength with which they were confronted and assaulted, and the other side observed its outcome. These two experiences now lie before us. Those who seek interaction with Iran must choose which experience they desire to consider as their criterion. We are prepared for both experiences.

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Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Abbas Araghchi (R) participates in a specialized panel hosted by Kazem Sajjadpour, president of the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS), at an international conference entitled "International Law Under Attack, Aggression, and Defense," in Tehran on November 16, 2026.

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Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (C) meets with Qatar's Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani (R) and Oman's Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr al-Busaidi in Tehran, Iran, on May 18, 2025, before starting the fifth and last round of nuclear negotiations with the US.

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