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## Tehran blends de-escalation with engagement in Paris outreach

INTERVIEW  
EXCLUSIVE



After months of frozen dialogue between Iran and the West, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi is now heading to Paris for talks with his French counterpart. The meeting comes shortly after France, along with Germany, the UK and the United States, backed a resolution at the IAEA that obliges Iran to grant access to nuclear sites damaged during the 12-day war and to provide details regarding its stockpile of highly enriched uranium. Araghchi previously stated that the three European had undermined their role in Iran's nuclear file by activating the snapback mechanism to reinstate UN

sanctions. Given this backdrop, the question now is whether the forthcoming meeting signals a shift in Iran's approach toward reducing tensions with the Agency, once again through Western channels. According to Kamran Yeganeghi, an expert on international affairs who spoke to Iran Daily, the visit could be an important step toward dialing down tensions and reflects a wider Iranian approach that blends de-escalation with efforts to revive constructive bilateral engagement.

**IRAN DAILY:** To what extent can the Iranian Foreign Minister's trip to Paris be considered part of Tehran's strategy to manage international pressure and lower tensions with the IAEA, rather than a step focused mainly on bilateral ties with France?

**YEGANEHI:** This visit should not be interpreted through a single prism. It

reflects a layered diplomatic tactic that aims to manage Iran's broader international environment, reduce misunderstandings with the IAEA, and recalibrate relations with key European actors. On the international front, Tehran has in recent months sought to head off further escalation by advancing technical and political engagement with both the Agency and European states, ensuring that unresolved issues do not become politicized.

Paris offers an opportunity for Iran to lay out its views directly and help steady the atmosphere at a sensitive moment. At the same time, France remains a significant player in European diplomacy, energy, industry and regional security. Maintaining open channels is mutually beneficial: closing the door on engagement would narrow opportunities for economic and technological cooperation and limit France's room to play a meaningful role in Middle Eastern affairs,

where Iran is an indispensable actor. Seen in this light, the Paris trip signals Tehran's broader strategy: a calibrated mix of targeted de-escalation and the rebuilding of constructive bilateral interactions.

**How far can this meeting help reduce the current tensions between Iran and the West?**

Araghchi's visit can be viewed as part of a broader political process that may create breathing space in Iran-West relations. While no single meeting can be expected to resolve longstanding disputes overnight, lowering tensions and reopening communication channels is achievable.

History also shows that direct diplomacy between Tehran and Paris has played a stabilising role during past crises. Whenever dialogue occurred at the right political level and with genuine intent, it not only improved bilateral ties

but also contributed to a more balanced dynamic between Iran and the West.

This trip matters for three main reasons:

First, it re-establishes a credible line of communication at a time when media narratives risk muddying the waters. Direct conversation enables Iran to clarify its positions and prevent technical matters from being pushed toward crisis. Second, France's weight as a European actor means neither side benefits from prolonged hostility; both have incentives to keep channels open.

Third, high-level contact between Iran and a major EU state sends a signal to other Western capitals that engagement is still possible and that diplomacy can keep a lid on unnecessary escalation. If followed by sustained technical, regional and economic talks, the visit could help ease the broader climate between Iran and the West.

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# Israel only obstacle to WMD-free Mideast: *Araghchi*

## International Desk

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Tuesday that Israel had acceded to no disarmament treaty and remained the only obstacle to the establishment of a Middle East free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Addressing the 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in the Hague, Araghchi said such weapons had always been dangerous and inhuman.

"But when they are in the hands of wanted criminals that have been engaged in ongoing massacre and genocide for the past two years, constitute an existential threat to human civilization and to our planet," he added in a clear reference to Israel and its war on the Gaza Strip.

Citing the Israeli regime's use of banned weaponry including cluster ammunitions on Gaza and Lebanon over the past two years, Araghchi said that Tel Aviv must have been compelled to accede to the Convention and to submit to full-scope inspections, as a priority for Organization for the Prohibition

of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The Iranian foreign minister also pointed to Israel's war against Iran in June, saying that the aggression "was not only a blatant attack on the tenets of the UN Charter and international law but also a huge blow to NPT regime and the CWC's founding pillars."

"They attacked not only our safeguarded nuclear facilities but also the installations and sites under the OPCW's verification mandate, thereby triggering the risk of the release of chemical and radioactive materials – a danger that could have threatened human health and the environment well beyond Iran's borders."

## Iraq's chemical attack on Iran

Referring to Iran's experience of chemical attacks, Araghchi said that the CWC, as an outstanding legacy of human collective wisdom and conscience, was created to prevent the horror of the use of chemical weapons from recurring.

"We, the Iranians, feel the extreme pain and suffering inflicted on our soldiers and civilians by (former Iraqi dictator) Saddam regime's chemical attacks

during his war of aggression on Iran. Our wounds are still bleeding after 4 decades; and we can see the horror of chemical weapons as our war heroes and veterans as well as their families continue to suffer extreme pain", he said.

The top diplomat said that the use of chemical weapons in armed conflicts is a heinous war crime that does not disappear with the passage of time.

"Iran persists, therefore, in its call for accountability and justice regarding Saddam regime's use of chemical weapons against Iranians. Those who provided Saddam regime with necessary materials and know-how to develop its military chemical program must be held to account".

On June 28, 1987, the Saddam regime dropped mustard gas bombs on Iranian western city of Sardasht, killing at least 119 Iranian civilians and injuring another 8,000, leaving some of them permanently disabled.

Western countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, Britain, France, and the United States, contributed to the Iraqi regime's chemical weapons program at the time.



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi addresses the 30th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention in the Hague, Netherlands, on November 25, 2025.  
● IRNA

## Principles of equality, impartiality

In his speech, Araghchi also called for safeguarding the fundamental principles of equality, impartiality, and non-discrimination to guarantee the effective functioning of the OPCW.

He described the CWC as the most successful disarmament treaty that can

endure only if its provisions are complied with by all states with no exception and without double standards.

"Selective application or politically driven interpretations of the convention's provisions would undermine our shared objectives and erode the collective trust among States Parties", the Iranian foreign minister concluded.

## Grossi says UN watchdog seeks reengagement with Iran Iranian, French FMs to discuss nuclear issue in Paris today

### International Desk

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) wants to fully reengage with Iran to restore inspection activities in the country, Director General Rafael Grossi said on Tuesday.

His remarks came as relations between Iran and the IAEA are at its lowest point due to the agency's measures against Iran in recent months.

Iran on Thursday canceled an agreement it signed with the IAEA in Cairo in September to resume cooperation which had been suspended following strikes by the United States and Israel on Iran's nuclear facilities in June.

Iran said the IAEA effectively provided cover for the strikes by declaring the country in violation of its non-proliferation obligations shortly before the bombardment and then failing to condemn the strikes.

Iran's move to terminate the Cairo deal was in response to a resolution which was adopted by the IAEA



Rafael Grossi  
● REUTERS

Board of Governors on Thursday. The resolution, put forward by the US, France, Britain and Germany, calls on Iran to fully and promptly cooperate with the agency, provide inspectors with detailed information on its stockpile of uranium enriched up to 60% purity, and grant access to its nuclear sites.

Following the resolution, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi described the move as "unlawful and unjustified," saying that the three European countries and the US undermined the IAEA's authority and independence and would disrupt Iran's cooperation with the agency. The Iranian foreign minister is now scheduled to meet with his French counterpart Jean Noel Barrot today

in Paris to discuss Iran's nuclear program and the case of Iranian citizen held in France.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Monday that the country's nuclear program along with the case of Iranian national Mahdieh Esfandiari, as well as regional and international developments would be on agenda.

"This will be an opportunity for us to call on Iran to comply with its obligations towards the IAEA and for a swift resumption of cooperation with the agency," Barrot said.

France alongside Germany and Britain triggered the return of UN sanctions against Iran in October, that had been lifted under a now-defunct 2015 nuclear deal.

Iran's nuclear program has been a source of contention with Western countries for more than two decades. While Iran insists that its nuclear activities are entirely peaceful and aimed at civilian purposes such as energy production and medical research, Western powers have long expressed concern that Tehran could be seeking the capability to develop nuclear weapons.

## Tehran blends de-escalation ...

**What are likely to be the main topics of discussion between the Iranian and French foreign ministers? Will the talks focus solely on IAEA access issues, or also cover broader matters such as Iran's missile program and regional security?**

The agenda will almost certainly extend beyond a single theme. While IAEA-related issues and safeguards cooperation will be central, the wider regional and bilateral context makes a broader conversation almost inevitable.

Several key areas are likely to shape the talks: First, regional security. Iran is a pivotal actor in West Asia, while France plays an active role in developments concerning the Persian Gulf, Lebanon and maritime security.

Second, the future of regional dialogue and Europe's potential role. Paris has often attempted to facilitate discussions among regional actors, and this cannot be done without consistent high-level contact with Tehran.

Third, defense and missile-related perceptions. Although Iran's defensive programs are non-negotiable, diplomatic discussions may address concerns or misunderstandings in order to keep tensions in check.

Fourth, bilateral relations, including economic, cultural and academic cooperation. Both sides understand that disengagement only shuts the door on opportunities that could gradually be revived through sustained dialogue. Overall, the discussions will likely be multi-dimensional and reflective of the real diplomatic needs between Tehran and Paris.

**Can this trip be interpreted as an indirect step toward reopening communication channels between Tehran and Washington?**

This visit should not be viewed as a direct move toward US-Iran dialogue. However, it may help create a more conducive political climate for managing wider tensions. In diplomacy, major shifts do not always begin with formal

talks; sometimes, improving the overall atmosphere and engaging with influential intermediaries can set the stage for more meaningful dialogue later.

France has on several occasions sought to facilitate contacts between Tehran and certain Western capitals, including Washington. Strengthened diplomatic lines with Paris could therefore help reduce misunderstandings and stabilize communication across the broader Iran-West spectrum.

That said, this trip is fundamentally a bilateral and Europe-focused initiative. Iran has repeatedly emphasized that any engagement with any party would occur solely within the framework of national interests and through official, transparent channels.

Thus, while the Paris visit should not be seen as a direct attempt to open a backchannel, it may indirectly support de-escalation, expand diplomatic space, and reduce misperceptions — creating a calmer context in which larger strategic decisions might eventually be considered.

## Israel's 'aggressive' hands must be cut off from region: *Parliament speaker*



Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf addresses the open session of the Parliament on November 25, 2025.  
● ICANA

Iran's Parliament speaker said the Israeli regime's "aggressive hand" must be severed from the region to halt its policy of "borderless crime."

Speaking at the legislature on Tuesday, Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf said the regime has resorted to the approach under its "criminal prime minister [Benjamin Netanyahu]."

"For them, there is no difference between Tehran, Beirut, Doha, Islamabad, Khartoum, and Istanbul," he said, Press TV reported. The comments came following the regime's assassination of Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah's senior commander, Haytham Ali Tabatabai, and four other members of the group in an airstrike against Beirut's southern suburbs.

Qalibaf emphasized that Hezbollah remained "strong and unwavering," moving steadily forward, despite Tel Aviv's attempts to destabilize the region.

The top legislator described the entity as an enemy "devoid of human values" and

not considering itself bound by any rules or agreements.

In such circumstances, only "courage and power" could deter the adversary, he said, underlining that forbidding the regime from continuing its criminal path was essential to the restoration of regional stability.

Qalibaf expressed certainty that the region's resistance movements would face the entity's approach of unabated atrocity with a coordinated and prudent response in due course.

"This situation cannot continue. Patience has its limits," he said, stressing that the resistance "calculates carefully but acts decisively... it does not seek war, but it fights well."

The official also condemned global powers and international organizations for bearing witness to the regime's "brutality," yet "lacking the will to stop it."

His remarks echoed those made by Mohsen Rezaei, a former chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), who underlined during a ceremony on Monday that the regime's targeted killings of resistance commanders were accelerating its own demise.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

CARTOON

## Iran air pollution





# Top security chief calls for \$10b trade with Pakistan in visit to Islamabad

Palestine hailed as one of central pillars of Muslim unity



Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Larijani (2nd L) is welcomed by Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar (2nd R) upon arrival in Islamabad, Pakistan, November 25, 2025.  
● IRNA

between Tehran and Islamabad. Pointing to the long-standing ties between the two countries, the SNSC chief described the elevation of Iran-Pakistan relations to a strategic level as a necessity and stated, "The economic capacities of the two countries can operate at a level far beyond the current situation and the target of increasing exchanges to 10 billion dollars is deemed achievable." The two sides also exchanged their views on the latest important regional developments and the necessity of collective action by Islamic countries to face common challenges, underlining that the Muslim world needs to design practical measures, broad coordination, and coherent cooperation to manage regional crises; especially to

remove Israel's threats against Islamic countries. Larijani and Ishaq Dar referred to Palestine as one of the central pillars of cooperation in the Islamic world and emphasized the unity, convergence, and focus of Tehran and Islamabad in supporting the Palestinian nation. Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Larijani said, "We discussed bilateral relations, the progress achieved in the economic field, and ways to strengthen this cooperation, alongside regional issues." "We paid attention to regional matters, and during consultations with our Pakistani brothers, they shared their explanations regarding international developments," he added. During his two-day visit, Larijani is also scheduled to hold meetings with Pakistan's Parliament Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and President Asif Ali Zardari. The meetings are aimed at deepening bilateral cooperation and advancing joint agreements — with a strong focus on regional security, border management,

counter-terrorism, trade, and broader issues affecting the Islamic world. Upon his arrival in Islamabad early Tuesday morning, Larijani told reporters, "Pakistan is an important country in the region and has a privileged position in terms of influencing the security situation in the region." Hailing "deep and historical" relations between the countries, he added, "Today, in the changing conditions of the region, cooperation between Iran and Pakistan in various fields can contribute to regional peace and stability." Before departing for Islamabad, Larijani described Pakistan on his X account as "a friendly and brotherly country" and that the Islamic Republic has not forgotten how the Pakistani nation stood by the Iranian nation during the 12-day imposed war of Israeli regime and the United States against Iran in mid-June. Iran and Pakistan, two significant and influential countries, consistently prioritize peace and security in the region, he noted.

## Economy Desk

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Larijani called for an increase of up to 10 billion dollars in trade

exchanges with Pakistan as he travelled to the capital Islamabad on Tuesday to hold talks on various issues with the neighboring country's senior officials. In a meeting with Mohammad

Ishaq Dar, Pakistan's deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, Larijani also called for removing existing obstacles and facilitating the path for economic interactions

# Veep launches comprehensive tax laws system to combat evasions, boost transparency

## Economy Desk

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref unveiled on Tuesday Comprehensive Tax Laws and Regulations System as part of a concerted effort by the incumbent administration to digitalize taxing system and combat tax evasions. In a meeting attended by Economy Minister Ali Madanizadeh and senior officials of Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA), Aref hailed the newly launched system as a significant step towards realizing the country's economic health and sustainability as well as a serious response to the long-standing need of economic actors for transparent and codified access to tax laws. Pointing to the history of law re-

vision across the country over the past two decades and emphasizing the importance of the issue, the VP said, "One of the most important reasons for inflation and contradiction in laws and regulations has been the approval of a new law without amending previous laws." Commending the valuable work done to clarify tax laws in the country, Aref said, "One of the ministries that most people are in contact with is the Ministry of Economy and the INTA." Touching on tax evasion and large-scale tax dodgers as a serious scourge for the Iranian economy, he underlined that funding the country's current expenses through tax revenues must become a sustainable strategy, and the objective will only

be achieved through tax justice and confronting major evasions. Aref, criticizing some strict approaches in tax legislation, said laws in the country should not be drafted to catch people out, but rather should facilitate economic activities. He also praised INTA's new approach in designing a comprehensive system of tax laws and regulations, stating, "This system is an important step towards transparency and combating corruption, and can help reduce administrative bureaucracy, accelerate tax payment processes, and enhance trust between taxpayers and the country's tax authority." According to Aref, the strategy of the incumbent government is based on establishing a fair tax system, ensuring managerial stability, eliminating



Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref (6th L) attends a meeting of senior officials of Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA) and Economy Ministry in the capital Tehran on November 25, 2025.  
● IRNA

legal conflicts, and designing mechanisms that, while reassuring the public, sustain tax revenues for the country's economic development.

# Iran's private sector poised to restore Cuba's inactive industries

## Economy Desk

Samad Hassanzadeh, the head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, expressed on Tuesday the readiness of the country's private sector to help rebuild Cuba's inactive industries. Stressing that the resolution of supply chain issues in Cuba's agricultural sector is one of Iran's areas of activity in the Latin American country, Hassanzadeh said good connections can be formed in the reconstruction of Cuban industries that have been stagnant for several years. "Iran, given its significant capacities in the fields of technical and engineering services, oil and petrochemical industries, and



petrochemical industries, can establish good economic relations with Cuba," he said. "I believe that many Iranian products can find their place in Cuba's markets, given Cuba's needs. With the use of new technologies in Iranian products and the great expertise available in all fields in Iran, there is potential for significant connections, especially in the reconstruction of Cuban industries that have been stagnant for several years, allowing Cuba to properly utilize Iran's capacities

and capabilities." Underlining that sugarcane cultivation is one of the opportunities that the two countries can include in their joint agricultural programs, Hassanzadeh said, "The Iranian private sector is ready to participate in solving Cuba's supply chain problems, given the country's capabilities in the agricultural sector." He also praised Cuba's remarkable progress in the biomedical field and vaccine production as a basis for joint cooperation between the two countries, saying, "Given that Iran also has significant achievements in the health sector, health diplomacy is one of the areas that can help develop relations between the two countries."

# Three key refinery projects underway to raise petrol output: Deputy minister

## Economy Desk

The Oil Ministry is advancing three major projects to boost daily gasoline output by 20 million liters, Deputy Oil Minister Mohammad-Sadegh Azimifar told ILNA on Tuesday. "For increasing gasoline production, three main priority plans are on the table, including the Mehr Persian Gulf refinery, Phase 2 of the Abadan refinery and the Isfahan RFCC refinery project," said Azimifar, who also heads the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Co. He added that completing the three projects by 2029 could help meet the targets set in Iran's Seventh Development Plan (SDP) for expanding production. Iran's ten main refineries, with a total processing capacity of 2.4 million liters of crude per day, currently churn out 107 million liters of gasoline daily, 27 million liters short of demand. The growing shortfall has forced the government to spend billions of dollars annually on gasoline imports



● Mehr News Agency

since 2021, a bill that has reached \$6bn so far this year, according to budget chief Hamid Pourmohammadi. Azimifar said higher output alone could not bridge the supply gap or bring imports down to zero. "Halting imports depends on controlling consumption. If effective measures are taken to manage gasoline usage, imports might be cut to zero," he pointed out. The Mehr Persian Gulf refinery in the port city of Bandar Abbas in southern Iran is scheduled to come onstream in March 2027 with a daily output of 13 million liters of gasoline. At the Phase 2 expansion of the

Abadan refinery in southwestern Khuzestan Province, output is expected to surge from 10 million liters to 14 million liters per day. The RFCC (Residue Fluid Catalytic Cracking) project at the Isfahan refinery in central Iran, aims to convert heavy residues such as fuel oil into higher-value products like gasoline. The project is expected to produce 8 million liters per day of Euro-5 gasoline and push up the refinery's total output to 22 million liters. Together, the three projects will add 25 million liters per day to Iran's gasoline production capacity, bringing total output to 132 million liters per day while the Oil Ministry is required under the SDP to lift output to 129 million liters per day. But the planned increase is unlikely to keep pace with consumption, even if achieved by 2029. Officials estimate gasoline use grows at least 5% annually, which would push daily demand to 163 million liters in four years, 31 million liters above the expected capacity of domestic refineries in 2029.



# UNSC Resolution 2803; prospect of peace in Gaza



By Mohsen Jalilvand  
International  
affairs expert

## OPINION

Resolution 2803 of the United Nations Security Council, rather than constituting the product of an authentic international consensus to terminate the Gaza crisis, represents a reconfiguration of the crisis-management effort by the United States and its allies. This resolution, despite its pacific façade, bears within it a species of political engineering intended to redefine sovereignty in Gaza; an engineering that, both juridically and in the realm of security, will engender protracted and onerous repercussions for Palestine.

The adoption of Trump's plan with 13 affirmative votes, in circumstances in which Russia and China abstained, demonstrates that Washington has embarked upon the creation of a new coalition to restore the initiative of peace to the portfolio of its own foreign policy. In truth, the insertion of the name of Donald Trump, the president of the United States and the principal architect of the 20-point document, into the text of the resolution indicates that this plan is not a multilateral instrument but rather a document derived from particularistic interests intended for a particular individual, and this in itself constitutes a fundamental contradiction with the traditional paradigm of United Nations resolutions.

Trump, through such actions, strives to attain the Nobel Peace Prize. From the standpoint of international law, the official reception of the American plan by the Security Council and the conferral of a command role upon Washington for the Board of Peace dramatically diminishes the bargaining capacity of other Arab and regional actors. This matter not only constrains the autonomous diplomatic agency of Egypt and Qatar in mediation, but also situates Turkey, Indonesia, and Saudi Arabia within a framework of a coalition whose ultimate leadership has been entrusted to the United States.

Although the Palestinian Authority has supported this plan, such support derives from the politically vulnerable position of Mahmoud Abbas and his

need for a pathway to reconstruct his lost authority in Gaza. Conversely, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, as the principal actors of resistance, have effectively described this resolution as diminishing the capacity of resistance and establishing an international mandate over Gaza; a discord that can deepen Palestinian political-domestic fissures and set back the process of national unity for years.

Russia's insistence that the aforementioned plan is not congruent with the two-state solution, together with ambiguities concerning the timetable for the transfer of Gaza's administration, constitutes among its serious deficiencies. The absence of a definitive determination regarding the relationship of Gaza with the West Bank and the future of joint sovereignty engenders the risk that the resolution will, in effect, institutionalize the permanent separation of these two regions. This is precisely the apprehension that Moscow and Beijing articulated in the Council session.

### Military, security consequences

The principal pillar of Resolution 2803 is the deployment of an international force and the disarmament of Gaza; a matter that does not lead to the demilitarization of the crisis but rather, above all, to the demilitarization of the resis-

tance. The resolution in question delineates the mission of the international force until the end of 2027 and conditions the training of the Palestinian police and the gradual withdrawal of the army of the Israeli regime upon the complete control of these forces over Gaza's security. In appearance, this signifies a diminution of the presence of the army of the Israeli regime, yet, in reality, it is placed under a monitoring mechanism directed by the United States and the Israeli regime.

The insistence of the Israeli regime that the disarmament of Hamas serves as a prerequisite for implementing the resolution indicates that Tel Aviv's principal aim is to alter the balance of power on the ground prior to any political transformation. The statements of the minister of defense of the Israeli regime, to the effect that Gaza will be disarmed "down to the last tunnel," reveal the regime's attempt to impose its unilateral security design through multilateral mechanisms.

Since this international force is intended to operate under unified command and in coordination with the Israeli regime and Egypt, this point generates serious strategic questions. If operational command should be under the influence of the United States, and if the Israeli regime plays the principal role in deter-

mining security standards, this force will, in practice, become an instrument for the execution of the policies of Washington and Tel Aviv. From this perspective, there exists the danger that security-making in Gaza will be transformed into the establishment of security for the benefit of the Israeli regime.

The American claim that this international force is merely intended to stabilize security and protect civilians does not correspond entirely with the mechanisms included in the text because the structure of operations grants this force the authority to intervene in everyday security decisions in Gaza. This produces a kind of diminution of Palestinian sovereignty during the transitional years and renders the Palestinian police effectively dependent upon the standards of the United States and the Israeli regime.

Although certain states, such as Turkey and Qatar, have supported Trump's plan, their support is primarily political rather than operational. Such support is offered chiefly for the purpose of preserving a mediatory and diplomatic role, and it remains unclear to what extent these states would be willing to participate operationally in the international force. The creation of international operational institutions for the administration of Gaza, if un-



The illustration shows US President Donald Trump (L), Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and a map of Gaza.  
● THE ECONOMIST



A very significant point is that no specific mechanism has been envisaged for the transfer of sovereignty from this Board of Peace to the Palestinian government. If the dual-governance structure — namely the Board of Peace in Gaza and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank — should be implemented without an integration program, it will, gradually, engender a species of political and administrative demarcation that the Israeli regime has pursued for many years.



US Ambassador to the United Nations Michael Waltz (R) shakes hands with his Israeli counterpart, Danny Danon, after the adoption of the UNSC Resolution 2803, at UN headquarters in New York City, US, on November 17, 2025.  
● EDUARDO MUNOZ/REUTERS



dertaken without the authentic participation of the primary actors of resistance, will result solely in a provisional and fragile structure that will collapse with the first security crisis.

### Geopolitical consequences, destiny of Palestine

Another section of the resolution, which refers to the reconstruction of Gaza, the role of the World Bank, and voluntary donations, ostensibly pursues a humanitarian purpose; yet, in reality, it will culminate in a form of conditional reconstruction. Donations will be provided solely through institutions under the supervision of the Board of Peace, and this signifies direct American control over financial resources, infrastructural plans, and even the internal mechanisms of the Palestinian Authority.

The resolution emphasizes that donations must be used only for peaceful purposes. This proposition implies the elimination of any possibility of supporting resistance groups, and this is not something that Hamas or Islamic Jihad can accept. These conditions transform the reconstruction into an instrument for the political containment of the resistance movements and will disturb the internal equilibrium of Palestine.

A very significant point is that the mission of the Board of Peace is defined until 2027, yet no specific mechanism has been envisaged for the transfer of sovereignty from this board to the Palestinian government. This lacuna is precisely the point that Russia has termed dangerously ambiguous and on account of which it has refrained from supporting the resolution. This lacuna can prepare the ground for quasi-permanent international governance over Gaza. The objection of the resistance groups, namely that this resolution detaches Gaza from the West Bank, is a matter of considerable validity. For if the dual-governance structure — namely the Board of Peace in Gaza and the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank — should be implemented without an integration program, it will, gradually, engender a species of political and administrative demarcation that the Israeli regime has pursued for many years.

The acceptance of disarmament as a precondition can place the Israeli regime in a position in which it can slow or suspend any advance in the reconstruction process. This amounts to a de facto veto by the Israeli regime over the future of Gaza and situates regional actors in a state of passivity.

Although Resolution 2803 appears to be a roadmap for peace and reconstruction, it contains, in its depths, strategic deficiencies, juridical ambiguities, and grave geopolitical consequences that can not only fail to advance the peace process but also lay the foundations for a new architecture of crisis. Without rectifying these lacunae and without guaranteeing the authentic role of Palestinians and regional actors, this resolution, rather than terminating the war, will inaugurate a more intricate phase of contention.

The article first appeared in Persian on the Strategic Council on Foreign Relations' website.



# UN embraces colonialism

## Unpacking Security Council's mandate for US colonial administration of Gaza



**By Craig Mokhiber**  
*Former head of the UN's New York OHCHR*

OPINION

More than two years into the genocide in Palestine, the UN Security Council has finally acted. But rather than acting to enforce international law, protect the victims, and hold the perpetrators accountable, it adopted a resolution that openly flouts key provisions of international law, disempowers and further punishes the victims, and rewards and empowers the perpetrators. Most disturbingly, it hands control of Gaza and the survivors of the genocide over to the United States, a co-perpetrator of the genocide, and provides for the participation of the Israeli regime in decision-making. Under the plan, Palestinians themselves are to be granted no such participation in decisions on their own rights, governance, and lives. In adopting this resolution, the Council, in effect, has become a mechanism of US oppression, an instrument for the continued unlawful occupation of Palestine, and a complicit actor in Israel's genocide. Not since the UN partitioned Palestine in 1947 against the will of the indigenous people, setting the stage for 80 years of Nakba, has the UN acted in such a baldly colonial (and legally ultra vires) way, and trampled so recklessly on the rights of a people.

**A resolution from Hell**  
On Monday, November 17, the UN Security Council adopted a US proposal to hand control of Gaza over to a US-led colonial body called "The Board of Peace" while deploying a proxy occupation force, also US-directed, called "The International Stabilization Force". Both will answer, ultimately, to Donald Trump himself. And both will function in consultation with the Israeli regime. In what will long be remembered as a day of shame for the UN, while both Russia and China abstained — they did not use their vetoes — and not a single member of the Security Council had the courage, principle, or respect for international law to vote against what can only be seen as a US colonial outrage, a ratification of genocide, and a flagrant abdication of UN Charter principles. The resolution implicitly rejects a series of recent findings of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), openly denies the Palestinian right to self-determination, and reinforces Israeli regime impunity, even as the genocide continues. Despite the ICJ's finding that the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination on their land, the resolution strips that right away, empowering hostile foreign forces to govern them. Despite the Court's finding that Gaza (as well as the West Bank and East Jerusalem) is illegally occupied and that the occupation must end quickly and completely, the resolution extends the Israeli occupation, endorses the indefinite presence of Israeli regime troops, and superimposes a second, US-led occupation on top of it. And despite the Court's finding that the Palestinians need not negotiate for their rights with their oppressors, and that no agreement or political process can trump those rights, the resolution nulli-

fies those rights and assigns them to the discretion of the US and its Israeli and other partners. Even in the midst of an ongoing genocide perpetrated by an apartheid regime, nowhere in the resolution is there a single mention of the crimes of genocide, apartheid, or colonization, of the thousands of Palestinians still held in Israeli torture and death camps, or of the principles of accountability for perpetrators or redress for victims. Nor is Israel required to meet its legal obligations of compensation and reparations, with that responsibility handed instead to international donors and international financial institutions, in what amounts to a multibillion-dollar bailout of the Israeli regime. In sum, the resolution guarantees the full impunity of the Israeli regime, in addition to advancing its normalization.

**A colonial administration**  
The resolution even welcomes, endorses, and annexes the widely discredited Trump plan (September 29 version), and, while not citing all of its problematic provisions, it calls on all parties to implement it in its entirety. It empowers the Trump-headed Board of Peace to serve as the transitional administration governing all of Gaza, to control all services and aid, to control the movement of people in and out of Gaza, and to control the framework, funding, and reconstruction of Gaza, and it includes the dangerously broadly formulated authorization of "any other tasks that may be required". And it grants up-front authority to the Trump board to establish undefined "operational entities" and "transnational authorities," at its own discretion. The resolution even envisages a quisling body of Palestinian technocrats taking orders from and reporting to Trump's Board of Peace — on their own land. In clear breach of international law, it rejects Palestinian control of their own territory in Gaza until Trump and his collaborators decide that the Palestinian Authority has satisfied the reform requirements set by Trump himself and by the similarly odious "French-Saudi Proposal". And it contains no promise whatsoever of Palestinian independence or sovereignty. Instead, in direct contradiction to the findings of the ICJ, it sets back the cause of Palestinian freedom and self-determination with a vague, hyperqualified, and non-committal line that says that AFTER the Trump-led bodies decide that the Palestinians have met UNDEFINED "reform and development" criteria, "the conditions MAY finally be in place for a credible PATHWAY to Palestinian self-determination and statehood." And any shred of hope for progress left within those conditions is finally dashed with the coup de grace provision stating that any such process toward those ends is to be controlled by the US itself. In other words, the UN Security Council has granted a veto over Palestinian self-determination to the US, the Israeli regime's chief sponsor and co-perpetrator of the genocide. The resolution does not even offer hope that the systematic deprivation of the Palestinian people in Gaza will end. While the ICJ has declared that restrictions on aid must cease, the resolution only "underscores the importance of" humanitarian aid. It does not demand its



unfettered flow and distribution.

**A proxy occupation force**  
The resolution also mandates an armed proxy occupation force, labeled the "International Stabilization Force," to operate under the Trump-headed Board of Peace. This force is to have a command approved by the Trump Board, and will explicitly operate in collaboration with Israel, the perpetrator of the genocide (as well as with Egypt). Its members are to be identified "in cooperation with" the Israeli regime, and it is to work with the regime to control the Palestinian survivors in Gaza. It will be mandated to secure the borders (i.e., to cage the Palestinians), to stabilize the security environment of Gaza (i.e., to suppress any resistance to occupation, apartheid, or genocide), to demilitarize Gaza (but not the Israeli regime), to destroy Gaza's military defense capacities (but not those of Israel), to decommission the weapons of the Palestinian resistance (but not those of the Israeli regime), to train the Palestinian police (in order to control the Palestinian people inside Gaza), and to work for the (nefarious) objectives of the "Comprehensive (Trump) Plan". The force is also mandated to "protect civilians" and assist humanitarian aid, to the extent that it is allowed by the US (or inclined) to do so. But that such a force, which is to collaborate with Israel, would do nothing to stand up to Israeli aggression and attacks on civilians should by now be self-evident. And it is to "monitor the cease-fire," a US-guaranteed cease-fire that has allowed continuous Israeli attacks on Gaza every day since it was declared (killing hundreds and causing massive destruction to civilian infrastructure), but which tolerates no retaliation by the Palestinian resistance. It is safe to assume that any cease-fire monitoring by such a force will be focused principally on the Palestinian side, not on the Israeli regime as the occupying power. In other words, the mission of this

proxy occupation force is to control, contain, and disarm the population victimized by the genocide, not the regime perpetrating it, and to ensure security not for the victims of the genocide but for its perpetrators. In still another stunning breach of international law, the resolution authorizes Israeli regime forces to continue to (unlawfully) occupy Gaza until the US-led Board of Peace and the Israeli regime forces collectively decide otherwise. And, in any event, the resolution provides that the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) can remain in Gaza to occupy a "security perimeter" indefinitely. Finally, both the colonial Board of Peace and its proxy occupation "stabilization force" are given a two-year mandate and the possibility of an extension in consultation with Israel (and Egypt), but not with Palestine.

**Madness of colonizers**  
Needless to say, this resolution has been rejected by Palestinian civil society, almost all Palestinian political and resistance factions, and human rights defenders and international law experts from around the globe. As a matter of international law, the occupation of Palestine is unlawful, the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination, and they have the right to resist foreign occupation, colonial domination, and racist regimes like Israel. Not only does this resolution seek to deny these rights, but it even goes so far as to buttress the illegal Israeli presence, and to authorize its own mechanisms of foreign occupation and colonial domination. What's more, the Security Council derives all its powers from the UN Charter. That Charter, as a treaty, is a part of international law — not above it. As such, the Council is bound by the rules of international law, including and especially the highest, so-called jus cogens and erga omnes rules, like self-determination and the inadmissibility

The United Nations Security Council adopts resolution 2803 during the meeting on November 17, 2025, approving US President Donald Trump's "peace plan" for Gaza. ● LOEY FELIPE/UN

Despite the ICJ's finding that the Palestinian people have a right to self-determination on their land, the resolution strips that right away, empowering hostile foreign forces to govern them. Despite the Court's finding that the Palestinians need not negotiate for their rights with their oppressors, and that no agreement or political process can trump those rights, the resolution nullifies those rights and assigns them to the discretion of the US and its Israeli and other partners.

Protesters gather near the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague, the Netherlands, on January 12, 2024, as the court's proceeding against Israeli occupation is screened outside the court. ● THILO SCHMÜLGEN/REUTERS



of the acquisition of territory by force. Its blatant disregard for the findings of the ICJ on these matters reveals the degree to which many of the terms of this resolution are, in fact, unlawful and ultra vires (beyond the authority of the Council). As such, the ramifications of this rogue action by the UN Security Council will have implications far beyond Palestine. The UN Security Council, if unconstrained by international law, becomes a dangerous instrument of repression and injustice. This is precisely what we have witnessed in this case as the Council ignored international law and effectively turned the survivors of Gaza over to the co-perpetrators of the genocide. And followers of the Council will be well aware that the veto has repeatedly been used in the Council to deny Palestinian rights. In this case, when it could have been used to protect Palestinian rights, the veto was nowhere to be found. In one minute of voting, the Security Council has lost all legitimacy.

**A path forward**  
The US attempt to impose a 19th-Century form of colonialism on the long-suffering Palestinian people of Gaza, like the French-Saudi colonial scheme that came before it, is destined to failure. Such schemes are fundamentally flawed from the outset as they seek to impose outcomes without legality (under international law), without legitimacy (in their exclusion of Palestinian agency), and without any practical hope of success (given their near universal rejection both in Palestine and across the world). The US may be able to threaten and bribe enough states to support it in a UN vote, but securing sufficient troops and other personnel to implement the resolution on the ground, against the will of the indigenous people, may well be another matter. And sustaining support as the plan (inevitably) begins to unravel will be even more difficult. In the meantime, for those committed to justice, human rights, and the rule of law, the task is clear: This plan must be opposed in every capital and at every juncture. Governments must be pressed to end their complicity in Israeli abuses, in US excesses, and in this atrocious colonial scheme. The Israeli regime must be isolated. Efforts toward boycott, divestment, and sanctions must be redoubled. A military, fuel, and technology embargo must be imposed. Israeli perpetrators must face judicial prosecutions in every available tribunal. And the streets must echo with the righteous roar for Palestinian freedom of millions through demonstrations, strikes, civil disobedience, and direct action. And when this colonial house of cards falls, another, more just solution is ready to take its place. If the global majority will rise from its knees before the emperor, and assert its collective power, acting under the UNGA Uniting for Peace mechanism to circumvent the US veto, adopt accountability measures to isolate and punish the Israeli regime, and deploy real protection to Palestine, then the UN may live to fight another day. If not, it will almost certainly wither away and die, a victim of self-inflicted wounds, none deeper than the shameful resolution of November 17, 2025.

The article first appeared on Mondoweiss.



# Iran's Bahmanyar aiming to build on Riyadh success at World Championships



By Sadeq Dehqan  
Staff writer

## INTERVIEW

*Iranian karateka Sara Bahmanyar is riding a wave of success this year. After shining at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh and claiming the women's -50kg gold medal, she now hopes to cap her impressive run with another title at the upcoming WKF World Championships, which kick off in Cairo, Egypt, on Thursday. A world bronze medalist in 2018, Bahmanyar has already added valuable medals to her collection this year, including golds at the Karate 1 Premier League event in Paris in January and the World Games in Chengdu in August. Now, she faces an even bigger challenge: competing against 32 quota-holding karatekas at the World Championships in Egypt – an event where, for her, every single bout will feel like a final. She also has her sights set on success at next year's Asian Games to further complete her resume.*

*In her latest outing in Riyadh, Sara not only won gold but also defeated one of her familiar foes, Uzbekistan's Gulshan Alimardanova – who had beaten her at the Asian Championships – in a thrilling comeback in the final showdown. The following is what Bahmanyar told Iran Daily about her recent victory in Riyadh and her ambitions for the Cairo event.*

**IRAN DAILY:** Ms. Bahmanyar, first tell us about the competition in Riyadh and how you won the ultimate prize.

**SARA BAHMANYAR:** My most important opponent at these Games was the Uzbek karateka I faced in the final. That match meant a lot to me because I had lost to her in our previous encounter at the Asian Championships. Of course, that event was held in her home country, so naturally she had more motivation and the home advantage worked in her favor. I also believe there were some issues with timing and scoring. So this final had a special intensity for me. I was determined both to avenge my previous loss and to secure the top spot on the podium to demonstrate my ability to my rival. Fortunately, that's ex-

actly what happened. Although I fell behind by four points early on, I managed to turn the match around and win the gold medal.

**Given that the Games were limited to Islamic countries, how would you assess the level of competition?**

Some of my usual rivals from Islamic countries weren't present. The reason is that we have the World Championships in Egypt ahead of us, which is a major priority for all competitors. I think some preferred to rest and focus on that event instead. Nevertheless, there were strong athletes in Riyadh, especially my Uzbek rival.

**You mentioned the World Championships in Egypt. This must be a particularly im-**

**portant event for you as well.** Absolutely. The World Championships are just around the corner. This edition is different from previous ones because karatekas had to earn quota spots to participate. That means all competitors qualified either through their world rankings or by winning medals in earlier competitions. Only 32 top athletes will be competing. Not everyone was able to secure a quota, which means the level of competition will be extremely high. The matches will be very intense, and for me, every bout from the first round will feel like a final because all the competitors are strong. There's no opponent you could consider a "warm-up."

**Let's talk about the competi-**

**tors. Who are your strongest rivals, and from which countries?**

My most important rival is the Croatian athlete. The karatekas from Venezuela, Algeria, and of course my Uzbek rival are also very strong. I have another rival from Kazakhstan who earned a quota but is not competing this time. Altogether, the world's top eight athletes in my weight class will be there. I am currently ranked fifth among them. After my strong performances this year, I want to truly showcase my capabilities at these championships.

**What result do you think you can achieve at the World Championships in Egypt?**

As I said, I've achieved very good results this year, and I

think I might be the most decorated athlete in my weight class so far, having won major medals across different tournaments. Two or three months ago, I won gold at the World Games in Chengdu. That event was very important because the top eight in the rankings were all there, and fortunately, I managed to win. Before that, I also won gold at the Karate 1 Premier League event. The gold from the Islamic Solidarity Games has almost completed my collection for this year, and I hope to finish my trophy cabinet for the season by winning gold at the World Championships. Another major goal for me is next year's Asian Games. I want to win gold there to add that title to my sporting resume as well.

**How do you assess the performance of Iran's women's karate team in international competitions this year?**

Fortunately, our female karatekas have achieved excellent results this year. In fact, in every competition they entered, they managed to win top titles. In my opinion, our women actually performed better than the men internationally this year. Both I and Atousa Golshadnejad achieved the best possible results in all our tournaments. Fatemeh Saadati and Mobina Heidari also earned strong results in their events. Overall, our female karatekas have collected gold, silver, and bronze medals across multiple competitions. It's safe to say that our women are now one of the powerhouses of Asia – and even the world – in karate.



Iran's Sara Bahmanyar (R) is seen in action against Uzbekistan's Gulshan Alimardanova in the women's kumite -50kg final at the Islamic Solidarity Games in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on November 11, 2025.

● ISG



● IRNA

## Iranian athletes conclude Deaflympics with 37 Medals

### Sports Desk

Iran's sports delegation concluded its participation in the 25th Summer Deaflympics, securing a total of 37 medals. On Tuesday, November 25, during the 11th day of competition in Tokyo, Iran's men's and women's national kumite teams won bronze and gold medals, respectively. With these final events and medal wins, Iran's athletes closed their campaign at this edition of the Deaflympics.

In the men's team kumite classification match, Iran faced Algeria and secured a 16-13 victory, earning the bronze medal. The team consisted of Hossein Farahani, Alireza Kishani, Milad Sadeghzadeh, Kamran Rezaeinejad, and Ebrahim Pourkashani. After a bye in the first round, Iran faced Ukraine in the second round, losing the match 3-0, which led them to compete in the bronze medal match. In the women's team kumite event, Iran faced Ukraine in the

final match. The Iranian team emerged victorious with a 9-8 win, securing the gold medal. The team consisted of Nahal Zakizadeh, Zeynab Hassanpour, Sara Adriya, and Bitia Javaheri. This gold medal is Iran's eighth at the 2025 Deaflympics. The 25th Deaflympics officially began on November 15 in Tokyo with the opening ceremony, featuring 3,081 athletes — 2,014 men and 1,067 women — from 81 countries. Iran participated with a 160-member

delegation across 12 sports under the banner "Lovers of Iran." Iran's first medal at the 2025 Deaflympics came on the opening day of official competition, when Ali Salahshoor won bronze in judo. The women's kumite team was Iran's last medalist in Tokyo. Overall, Iran's medal-winning sports at the Deaflympics included karate (12 medals), taekwondo (8), Greco-Roman wrestling (6), freestyle wrestling (5), judo (4), and shooting (2).

## Iran women's futsal team set to face Panama in World Cup group stage

### Sports Desk

Iran's women's national futsal team is gearing up to face Panama in their second match of the group stage of the Women's Futsal World Cup, scheduled for midday today (Wednesday). While Iran's team is newly established and does not yet have a long history, their other group opponent, Italy — currently ranked seventh in the world — could be a formidable challenge later in the tournament.

In their opening match, Iran's women's futsal squad impressed with a strong performance against Brazil. It was a challenging encounter for the Selecao, facing a team that was once champion of Asia, according to IRNA.

Iran's second opponent, Panama is a newly formed team. Following FIFA's announcement of the inaugural Women's Futsal World Cup in the Philip-

pinas, Panama registered for the 2025 CONCACAF qualifiers. In April 2025, Panama played its first international matches in the qualifiers, defeating Cuba, Guatemala, Las Canaleras, Mexico, and Costa Rica to reach the final. They ultimately finished as runners-up after losing to Canada, earning a place in the World Cup. Although Panama is a young team, the Iranian players are aware that in a World Cup, no opponent should be underestimated. Iran's third and final group stage opponent is Italy, whom they will face on November 29. Italy secured its place in the World Cup by defeating Lithuania, Croatia, and Serbia in the qualifiers. The team could present a strong challenge for Iran. However, considering Iran's solid performance in the opening match and the team's established futsal pedigree, the Iranian squad is confident in its ability to advance past this opponent.

## Tractor triumphs over Nasaf Qarshi despite poor pitch conditions

### Sports Desk

Tractor of Iran delivered a disciplined and well-organized performance to defeat Uzbekistan's Nasaf Qarshi, on a night when even the poor pitch conditions failed to favor the home side. The victory lifted the Iranian team to 11 points, strengthening their hopes of advancing to the knockout stage of the AFC Elite League. In Matchday 5 of the group stage, Tractor traveled to Qarshi for a crucial encounter for both sides. The Tabriz-based team ultimately secured a vital 1-0 win, returning home with three precious points, varzesh3.

com wrote. Rezi Lushkja, Tractor's Albanian winger, scored the only goal of the match in the 17th minute. His decisive performance earned him the AFC Man of the Match award. The win not only added a valuable three points to Tractor's tally but also moved the team into second place with 11 points, significantly boosting their qualification chances. Despite playing on Qarshi Stadium's damaged and uneven surface, Dragan Skocic's men showed clear determination to leave with a positive result. The Croatian head coach once again deployed his preferred 4-3-3



● tarafdari.com

formation and, in the absence of Mehdi Torabi, relied on foreign players Lushkja

and Drozddek to maintain the team's attacking structure.

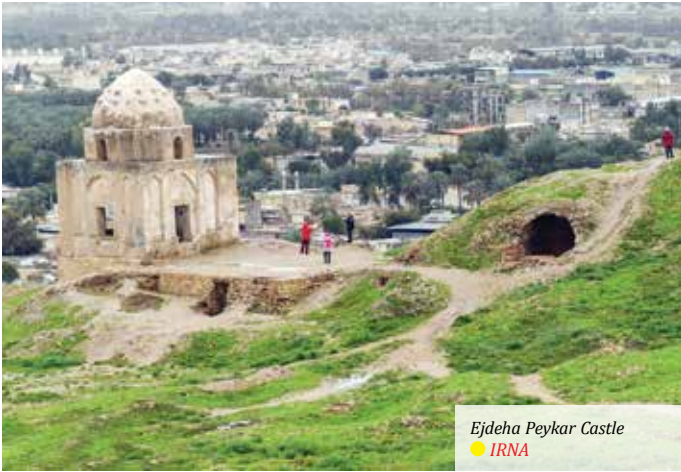


# Lar protecting own unique urban identity



mains the city’s defining identity, according to Mehr News Agency. Approximately 105 hectares of Lar’s old town are listed as national heritage and are managed by the Lar Cultural Heritage Site. In 2023, the site’s director noted that more than 45 percent of the district’s valuable buildings are in urgent need of restoration. The district faces several key challenges, including structural deterioration, unregulated changes in the use of historic houses and shops, limited restoration budgets, fragmented ownership, and the absence of an updated urban plan for the historic fabric.

Mohammad Hossein Bagheri, a senior restoration expert, has highlighted that Lar’s historic district represents one of the last complete examples of Safavid-era



Ejdeha Peykar Castle  
● IRNA

tives have been implemented to preserve and revitalize Lar’s historic core. Emergency restoration of Qeysariyeh Bazaar has been carried out in partnership with Lar Municipality. The historic Mo’tamed-ol-Saltaneh House has been restored and converted into a cultural center. Studies have been conducted to create a heritage tourism route through Old Lar, and the façades of the bazaar have been renovated to strengthen the district’s historical identity. For 2025, the municipal budget has independently allocated funds for a comprehensive urban regeneration plan, prioritizing the integration of the old district with the city’s tourism and economic structure.

Alongside historic districts in Bandar Abbas, Evaz, and Jahrom, Lar’s historic fabric forms a crucial part of southern Iran’s urban network. In the book entitled “History of Urban Planning in Southern Iran” by Naser Takmil

Homayoun, Lar’s bazaar is described as “one of the most cohesive southern Iranian market structures with a radial pattern.” Lar’s historic district also holds substantial potential for cultural tourism. According to the 2023 UNWTO report on urban tourism in the Middle East, cities with “intact historic cores” experience cultural tourism growth three to five times faster than other cities. With its Qeysariyeh Bazaar and distinctive urban design, Lar has been identified as a “promising destination.” With its architectural, historical, and tourism potential, Lar’s historic district requires a coordinated plan built on accurate data, adequate funding, and integrated management. If ongoing restoration and revitalization efforts continue, this district could become one of southern Iran’s leading cultural tourism hubs, attracting visitors and scholars alike.

## Iranica Desk

The historical fabric of Lar in Fars Province, one of the most remarkable examples of Iranian-Islamic urban design, has recently attracted the attention of cultural heritage experts and

urban planners. Despite its national registration, the district still requires updated programs for protection, restoration, and revitalization. Following the devastating 1970 earthquake that nearly destroyed the city, Lar became one

of Iran’s most notable examples of urban reconstruction. While the new section of the city, “New Lar,” developed, the old district — with its Qeysariyeh Square, traditional bazaars, the Grand Mosque, Ejdeha Peykar Castle, and historic windcatchers — re-

urban planning in southern Iran. However, the rate of deterioration is faster than the provincial average, and without immediate intervention, parts of the district could be lost. Over the past year, several initia-

Grand Mosque of Lar  
nakhilarestan.ir

# Enduring tradition of Givēh making in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari

## Iranica Desk

Givēh is a traditional type of footwear among the people of Iran, particularly in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province. Unlike ordinary shoes, it has no distinct left or right side — what locals describe as “not made in pairs.” Remarkably, Givēh never truly wears out and can be easily repaired. The absence of a left or right in Givēh symbolizes uniformity, integrity, honesty, and purity among the people of Iran and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, reflecting a cultural heritage where deceit, duplicity, and hypocrisy have no place, chtn.ir wrote. Step by step, Givēh has walked alongside humans — from the early days when footwear held immense practical importance, to the present day when it is regarded as a valuable and prestigious item. It is said that the foot is the “second heart” of a human being, and perhaps for this reason, people have always sought to invest in their “second heart” by choosing the best and most comfortable footwear. The art of Givēh making is one of the cherished handicrafts of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, with a long-standing tradition in cities such as Shahr-e



Kord, Borujen, and Farskhur. Yet today, fewer people practice weaving or wearing Givēh. This decline persists even as mass-produced products have lost some popularity; according to enthusiasts of traditional arts, public interest in handcrafted items — particularly Givēh — has waned, and younger generations show little inclination to continue this cultural practice. In both modern and traditional markets, not a single Givēh is displayed in shoe store windows. Shopkeepers rarely hang a pair for display, leaving younger generations unaware of this cultural treasure. Economic fluctuations, market instability, rising costs of raw materials, reduced purchasing power, and low demand for handicrafts have all contributed to the decline of many traditional crafts, including Givēh-making. One artisan active in the field in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province stressed that officials at the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization should take urgent measures to revive this traditional craft in Shahr-e Kord. Mahmoud Rafieian Dehkordi emphasized that today’s youth are

largely uninterested in Givēh-making, opting instead for mass-produced industrial footwear. He added that only a small number of elderly men and women continue the craft, weaving both the soles and the uppers of Givēh by hand. The artisan also explained that Givēh comes in various types: some with rubber soles for use in winter or for agricultural work, and more decorative versions worn at gatherings, during leisure, or for long walks. He recounted, “I have been making Givēh continuously since I was seven years old, and now, at seventy-one, I continue the profession of my father and ancestors. I have faced many physical hardships along the way, yet I am grateful to God that I have been able to preserve this tradition and prevent it from fading into oblivion.” He estimated that producing a single pair of Givēh takes two days and added that officials at the Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Department of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts could help preserve and revive the craft by organizing training courses. Such initiatives would ensure that the art of Givēh-making is passed on to future generations and continues to thrive.



● chtn.ir

# Davoudi house showcases Qajar architecture, tradition

## Iranica Desk

On Towhid Street in Mashhad, the capital city of Khorasan Razavi Province, where the narrow alleys still retain the spirit of traditional neighborhoods, a historic house quietly stands: the Davoudi House. Dating back to the late Qajar period, this 120-year-old structure is listed among Iran’s national heritage sites. The house not only recalls the city’s past life and architecture but also offers visitors a vivid glimpse of Iranian artistry from a century ago. The property spans 417 square meters with a total built area of 526 square meters. Entrance to the house is through a short, narrow corridor leading to the central courtyard. The courtyard, featuring an egg-shaped pool and shaded trees, exudes a serene atmosphere. Three sides of the courtyard are lined with the house’s main buildings, while the fourth side contains the kitchen, now used as a storage space, chtn.ir wrote.



● chtn.ir

On the western side of the courtyard, a small pool room — currently functioning as a modest kitchen — adds to the charm of the space. The house’s façade is adorned with intricate brickwork, wooden windows, and tiled niches, each reflecting Qajar-era style and the meticulous attention to detail characteristic of traditional Iranian architecture. Inside,

ceilings are decorated with traditional woodwork, and the harmonious color schemes create a warm, inviting atmosphere. The thick walls of the house were designed not only to withstand weather changes but also to showcase the skill of Iranian architects in integrating interior space with the central courtyard. The Davoudi House also features a tall windcatcher, which historically played a key role in ventilation, channeling fresh air into the pool room and cooling the interior — a feature rarely seen in modern Mashhad. Although interior access is limited, the exterior façade and central courtyard provide an unforgettable experience for visitors. The silence and tranquility of the courtyard, contrasting with the bustling Towhid Street, offer a moment to experience Mashhad’s historic atmosphere and step away from modern life. The owner, Ebrahim Davoudi, has long been working to restore and preserve this valuable heritage site, aiming to ensure its sustainable

use in the future. As such, the Davoudi House is not only a testament to past architecture and artistry but also a story of dedication, time, and responsibility in preserving cultural heritage. For lovers of history and Iranian architecture, the Davoudi House offers a rare opportunity to witness and document a piece of Mashhad’s enduring legacy in the heart of the city.



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# Iran chokes on smog as schools, offices shut in major cities



A general view of the Iranian capital behind a blanket of smog as winter's heavy pollution hits a new high, in Tehran on November 25, 2025.  
● REZA MOATTARIAN/IRAN DAILY

## Social Desk

Tehran and several major Iranian cities are choking under hazardous air pollution, prompting authorities to suspend schools, universities, and government offices in multiple provinces. Exhaust fumes from vehicles remain the principal driver of the country's worsening air quality, releasing high levels of

nitrogen oxides (NOx), carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) into the atmosphere. In addition, industrial emissions, including those from power plants, factories, and construction activities, emit sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and fine particulates, further compounding pollution levels. Domestic heating, particularly the burning

of low-quality fuels during colder months, adds to the accumulation of airborne pollutants, creating smoggy conditions that exacerbate respiratory and cardiovascular health risks across the population. Major cities, including Tehran, Karaj, Qazvin, Hamedan, Tabriz, Ahvaz, Isfahan, and Urmia, remain "unhealthy for all," according to the national air quality monitoring authority. Abbas Shahsavani, deputy director at the Air Quality and Climate Change Research Center of Shahid Beheshti University, reported that the number of days classified as "unhealthy for all groups" has tripled compared with last year.

## 54,000 annual deaths

"About 54,000 deaths in Iran are attributed annually to air pollution," Shahsavani said. "It now ranks among the top five causes of mortality in the country." Analysis of causes shows 6,152 deaths stem from energy production, 2,996 from industrial emissions, 2,033 from agricultural activities, 4,334 from other man-made sources, and 802 from household pollution. Air pollution contributes to 28% of stroke deaths, 30% of deaths from ischaemic heart disease, 45% from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, 24% from lung

cancer, 20% of diabetes-related deaths, and 23% of lower respiratory infection fatalities.

## Air pollution closure

The health alert triggered widespread closures. East Azarbaijan suspended all schools, universities, and government offices in cities including Tabriz, Azarshahr, Bonab, Marand, and others, while essential services such as banks and hospitals continue to operate. Isfahan implemented online schooling across the county, with car traffic restrictions under a local "odd-even" plan. In Tehran, all kindergartens, preschools, and special education schools closed, while older students attend online classes; many public and private offices shifted to remote work. Other provinces including Alborz, Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, South Khorasan, Yazd, Lorestan, Qazvin, Kerman, and Markazi also moved schools online. The National Medical Emergency Organization warned that vulnerable populations, including children under five, seniors over 55, pregnant women, and those with cardiovascular or respiratory conditions, should remain indoors and follow preventive measures. N95 masks are recommended for un-

avoidable outdoor activity. Residents are advised to keep windows closed, use air purifiers where possible, and avoid processed foods while increasing hydration and antioxidant intake.

Hassan Hassanzadeh, head of East Azarbaijan's Department of Environment, said the current pollution surge in Tabriz owes less to Lake Urmia's drought than to combined industrial emissions, vehicle traffic, and domestic fuel use under stable atmospheric conditions.

He emphasized the importance of citizen cooperation, noting that voluntary reductions in private vehicle use and temporary industrial shutdowns have already helped curb emissions.

According to Swiss monitoring company IQAir, Tehran now ranks as the world's fifth-most polluted city, following Delhi, Bishkek, and other regional capitals.

"Vehicle emissions and industrial pollutants dominate the mix," the report noted, while cross-border dust from China also contributes. Seoul ranks tenth globally with an index of 157.

Iran's air pollution crisis shows a broader global trend with the World Health Organization attributing 7.9 million deaths worldwide each year to polluted air, making it the second leading cause of preventable mortality.

## Kiarostami classic opens Fajr International Film Festival in Shiraz



## Arts & Culture Desk

Fajr International Film Festival opens in the southern city of Shiraz on 26 November with a newly restored print of Abbas Kiarostami's 1994 drama "Through the Olive Trees". Festival officials said they programmed several restored Iranian titles this year but chose "Through the Olive Trees" to launch the 43rd edition, calling the film a "seminal" work in Kiarostami's career.

The picture, which earned the Silver Hugo in Chicago, was written, produced and directed by the late auteur, whose restrained visual grammar shaped a generation of Iranian filmmakers. The story follows Hossein, a young man in the quake-stricken village of Koker, as he tries to woo Tahereh after surviving a devastating tremor that levels the community. The narrative circles around loss, persistence and what Kiarostami once described as "the quiet labor of hope".

## Iranian jury lineup announced

The festival named its Iranian jurors on Tuesday, before curtains rise on the 43rd edition in Shiraz. Organizers tapped five Iranian filmmakers to serve across the main strands, International Competition, Eastern Vista, New Perspective, and

Broken Olive Branch, alongside foreign jurors to be announced later. Veteran cinematographer Mahmoud Kalari joins composer Christophe Rezaï on the International Competition jury, pairing Kalari's decades of visual craft with Rezaï's score-driven sensibility. Actor Hoda Zeinolabedin takes the Eastern Vista slot, which typically showcases films from Asia and the broader East. Writer-director Mehdi Karampour judges the New Perspective section, which screens first and second features. Director Farzad Mo'tamen takes the helm of the Broken Olive Branch jury, a segment often devoted to works probing conflict and reconciliation. The festival, run by secretary Rouhollah Hosseini, runs from November 26 to December 3 across venues in Shiraz.

## Iranian short film 'The Room' to compete at Spain's One Shot festival

## Arts & Culture Desk

Elham Mohammadzadeh's Iranian short film "The Room" was selected for the main competition at the 15th One Shot Terrassa City of Film Festival in Spain, marking its global debut. The one-shot short, co-produced by Mohammadzadeh and Iranian Youth cinema Society (IYCS), in Kashan, will screen in Terrassa, near Barcelona, from November 27 to 29, ILNA reported. In earlier local competitions, The Room won the Best Film award at the 4th Gambron 105 Second Festival and received the statuette, citation and cash prize at the second National "25" Festival. The film portrays a tense domestic moment: A mother is combing her young daughter's hair when the sudden rumble of an explosion shatters the calm. Actors Yasaman Nasiri, Nazgol Khosravani and Mersana



Afrash appear on screen. The festival is known for its strict "no cuts" rule, films must be shot in a single sequence without editing, celebrating the raw immediacy of long-take cinema.

## Iran faces rapid aging as population of seniors surpasses 14%

## Social Desk

Iran has officially entered a period of accelerated population aging, with more than 14% of its citizens now over 60, the head of the State Welfare Organization of Iran, Javad Hosseini, told a conference on senior-friendly urban environments in Tehran on Tuesday. The milestone surpasses earlier government statistics that pegged the elderly share at 12%. "This is not a distant issue. Iran is moving fast," Hosseini said, stressing that the pace of aging outstrips many countries in the region. By 2051, he projected, nearly 30% of Iranians will be seniors, positioning the country among the world's fastest-aging nations. Hosseini warned of a persistent "cognitive

gap" among policymakers, arguing that official recognition of aging lags behind its social reality. "We must first identify and overcome this gap to integrate elderly needs into planning," he said, highlighting the need for timely policy responses to demographic shifts. The Welfare Organization is pursuing a national survey to provide a comprehensive picture of Iran's aging population. Currently, 16 cohort studies are under way across the country, the largest in Meybod, Yazd province. Officials are working with the Statistical Centre of Iran to unify these datasets into a central system that will inform future urban and social planning. In practical terms, the government has approved 16 senior-friendly urban spaces

nationwide, designed to promote mobility, social engagement, and safety. Hosseini noted that these spaces represent only the start of a long-term strategy requiring sustained administrative support. He announced that three monitoring sessions per year will assess these environments, with two governors and two mayors reporting annually to the first vice president. Hosseini also stressed that aging presents a societal and economic opportunity rather than a crisis. With retirement averaging 52 years and life expectancy at 76, roughly a third of Iranians' lives will be spent as seniors. "This is the silver economy," he said. "Seniors hold valuable skills, require minimal formal employment infrastructure,

and can contribute significantly to family, community, and service sectors." Initiatives targeting intergenerational interaction are underway. Plans include senior kindergartens, community theatres, cultural and sports activities, and pilot "senior schools" in partnership with the Ministry of Education, converting up to 120,000 schools into spaces for elderly engagement. In Hamedan, a dedicated senior restaurant has been opened to provide nutritious meals and social interaction, serving as a model for future senior-oriented venues. Hosseini framed the agenda as both a societal necessity and a moral imperative. "Taking care of seniors is not just a duty; it strengthens community cohesion and intergenerational bonds," he said. The government has already defined roles



for 27 state agencies, ensuring responsibilities related to aging are implemented across ministries and local authorities. He added that integrating seniors into urban and social life, monitoring demographic trends, and leveraging the silver economy are central to maintaining Iran's social health. "Providing warm, inclusive spaces for seniors is more important than medicine alone," he said.