

Araghchi extols General Soleimani as 'architect of Axis of Resistance'

IRNA chief: Slain commander never engaged with battlefield-diplomacy duality

National Desk

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi praised on Monday Iran's late anti-terror commander martyr Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani as the "architect of the Axis of Resistance" in the region.

Araghchi made the remark in a speech at the "International Conference of Martyr Hajj Qassem Soleimani; Diplomacy and Resistance", held on the occasion of the 5th martyrdom anniversary of the top commander, who was assassinated by the US in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad in January 2020. "Hajj Qassem was the architect of the 'Axis of Resistance' in the region. The legacy of the architecture has gone far beyond the current policies as well as practical approaches in the foreign policy," he said.

Underlining that Iran's foreign policy has been formed based on the "Diplomacy of Axis of Resistance," Araghchi said the foreign diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been founded based on the Resistance and will move on this path with utmost power.

The top Iranian diplomat stressed that effective and successful diplomacy requires a balanced combination of cour-

age and prudence.

"Without the tools of diplomacy, neither do relations take shape in an orderly manner nor do efforts to enhance power in its various dimensions bear fruit," he said, adding that negotiation is the art of diplomacy and that strengthening diplomacy helps reduce costs, institutionalize achievements, and secure victory in both peace and war. "However, diplomacy alone leads nowhere."

Emphasizing that Iran will continue its moral, political, and legal support for the discourse of resistance, Araghchi said many envisage the future of the region to be under Israel's "unquestionable domination" but the realities of the region and the world show that "resistance has become an undeniable geopolitical reality and one of the main influential players in shaping the future order" of the West Asia region.

Pointing to the unprecedented and outstanding role of Martyr Soleimani in operationalization of the resistance discourse, he said that the top commander was the concrete embodiment of the resistance who defined the discourse of the resistance within the framework of theoretical concepts and transformed it into a tangible and influ-



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi addresses an international conference on the occasion of the 5th martyrdom anniversary of top anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani in Tehran on December 29, 2025.

● IRNA

ential power.

Speaking on the sidelines of the international conference, Managing Director of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), Hossein Jaber Ansari, said Martyr Soleimani never engaged with the dichotomy of the "battlefield and diplomacy."

Referring to the fact that diplomacy and the battlefield find meaning together and that the duality must fundamentally be broken, Jaber Ansari said, "The formation of a dichotomy called the field and diplomacy is not a game based on the interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Iranian nation."

Martyr Soleimani's experience during nearly a quarter-century of his direct and clear influence in the arena of Iran's foreign affairs was precisely in that direction, he added.

"Martyr Soleimani never entered into



such conflicts and dualities and always tried to ensure that the battlefield and diplomacy, together and in a meaningful way, served to enhance Iran's power, which is the power of Islam."

General Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units

(PMU), and their companions were assassinated in a US drone strike authorized by then-US President Donald Trump near Baghdad's International Airport on January 3, 2020.

Both commanders were highly revered across West Asia because of their key role in fighting the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in the region, particularly in Iraq and Syria.

FM spox: Talks 'unrealistic' without US adherence to principles of dialogue



International Desk

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman praised on Monday Iraq's efforts to host and facilitate nuclear-related talks between Tehran and Washington, stressing, however, that

the start of any negotiation process is "unrealistic" as long as the respected parties do not adhere to the basic principles of dialogue and their commitment is a prerequisite for meaningful talks.

"It is commendable that our friends

in Iraq are concerned about regional peace and stability. We welcome the 'good offices' of regional countries to reduce tensions," Esmail Baqaei said at his weekly press conference.

However, he emphasized that the commencement of a negotiation process requires all parties to adhere to the "etiquette of negotiations," and until that is achieved, speaking of a negotiation process is "unrealistic."

The spokesperson underlined that diplomacy remains a core tool for defending Iran's national interests and will be used whenever it proves beneficial.

Baqaei also stated that the official communication channel through the interest sections in Switzerland and Washington remains active. There is currently no need for new contacts,

he said, emphasizing that ongoing discussions are strictly limited to nuclear issues, and preconditions or unrelated topics will not be entertained.

Iran and the US were in the middle of nuclear negotiations in June when Israel launched the surprise attack on Iran, a few days before the sixth round of talks between Tehran and Washington.

More than a week later, the US also entered the war by bombing three Iranian nuclear sites in a grave violation of the United Nations Charter, international law, and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

On June 24, Iran, through its successful retaliatory operations against both the Israeli regime and the US, managed to impose a halt to the illegal assault.

Iran's diplomats in Venezuela retain duties

Responding to reports about Iran's diplomatic presence in Venezuela, Baqaei confirmed that the ambassador and staff remain fully operational. He added that previous reports about the exit of an Iranian company pertain to over a year ago, and no project has been left incomplete.

"Our embassy is very active. Claims about the withdrawal of Iran's embassy or its staff are merely part of a psychological war that we ourselves have faced in recent months," the spokesman said.

Baqaei also criticized US actions in the Caribbean as violations of international law, as Venezuelan authorities accused Washington of attempting to exploit the country's oil resources.

Grossi highlights Russia's pivotal role in resolving Iran nuclear standoff



International Desk

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi announced that "dialogue continues" with Iran over the country's peaceful nuclear program and Russia plays a "very important" role in resolving the situation surrounding the high-profile issue.

Grossi told Russia's RIA No-

vosti news agency on Monday that the IAEA recorded "good" progress in resuming inspections following the June strikes by the US and Israel on Iranian nuclear facilities.

"We have managed to restore and resume inspection activities, but they are very limited. We are only allowed to access sites that were not hit. This is good in the sense that these sites are on the



Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, attends the IAEA's Board of Governors meeting at the agency's headquarters in Vienna, Austria, on September 9, 2024.

● AFP

agreed-upon list of those subject to inspection. This is important for us," Grossi said.

"We have begun a dialogue with Iran. I am in very regular contact with the [Iranian] Foreign Minister and other officials, but the level of cooperation remains limited. That is the current situation," he added.

Asked whether the IAEA-Iran negotiations are in place, Grossi confirmed that, "The dialogue continues." Pointing to the role Moscow could Russia play in helping resolve the situation surrounding the Irani-

an nuclear program, Grossi said, "Very important. I've had the honor of discussing this issue with President Putin, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Likhachev, and representatives of the Ministry of Defense. My message here has always been consistent. Russia is the depository of the NPT and, for over 50 years, has played a key role in these matters, along with the United States. And Russia has played an indispensable role in everything concerning Iran."

Stressing that Russia has always been a "very strong supporter" of the non-proliferation regime, the IAEA chief said, "We cannot afford to lose Russia as a pillar of nonproliferation. That would be a crushing blow to the entire nonproliferation regime. I truly believe that Russia has an irreplaceable role, but how and when to play it is up to Russia itself"

New Iraqi parliament holds first session, elects speaker

Iraq's parliament elected Sunni Muslim lawmaker Haibat al-Halbousi as speaker at its opening session on Monday following November's national election, launching a process to form a new government that often takes months. A parliamentary statement said Halbousi secured 208 out of a total of 283 votes, Reuters reported. The speaker plays a key role in maintaining legislative order, mediating disputes and build-

ing consensus in Iraq's sectarian-oriented and often fragmented political system. Under the Iraqi constitution, parliament must elect a speaker and two deputies at its opening session, then choose a new president within 30 days. The president will in turn task the largest parliamentary bloc with forming a government. Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani's bloc won the most seats in the election.

By Hossein Feyzi
Cartoonist

CARTOON

