

# Araghchi: Tehran ready for talks but not to accept 'dictation'

**Turkish FM: Israel pushing US to attack Iran**

## International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday that the Islamic Republic is prepared to hold talks with the United States on equal footing but underlined that Tehran will not accept "dictation and imposition." Speaking during a joint press conference with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan in Ankara, Araghchi said Iran is ready to enter negotiations if they are conducted from an equal position, based on mutual interests and mutual respect, however, he said that, "We will by no means accept dictation and imposition."

He said Iran welcomes "any initiative that leads to peace and stability in the region, reduces tensions, and neutralizes the sinister plots of Israel."

Tensions have worsened between Iran and the United States over the past weeks after US President Donald Trump threatened to attack Iran over its response to the recent foreign-backed riots across the country. The US has also dispatched a strike group led by the USS Abraham Lin-

coln to the West Asia waters. In his latest remarks, the US president said he has told Iran it has to do "two things" to avoid military action. "Number one, no nuclear. And number two, stop killing protesters."

"We have a lot of very big, very powerful ships sailing to Iran right now, and it would be great if we didn't have to use them."

Iran has rejected claims of killing protesters during recent riots in the country, saying that foreign-backed terrorists have been behind the killing of more than 3,000 people in Iran. Responding to questions about contacts with Washington, Araghchi said the US government has sought negotiations through various intermediaries. "Iran has no problem with negotiation," he said. "But negotiations cannot take shape under the shadow of threats. They must abandon threats and be ready for fair negotiations."

Asked whether he might meet a US official in the coming hours or days, Araghchi said, "No plan has yet been arranged for a meeting between us and the Americans."



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi speaks during a press conference in Istanbul, Turkey, on January 30, 2026.

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## Ready for war

At the same time, Araghchi issued a stark warning over US threats. "We have said many times, and I repeat once again: Iran, just as it is ready for negotiations, is also ready for war," he said.

"We are even more prepared than before the 12-day war," said the minister, referring to the US-Israeli aggression on Iran in June. The attacks came as Tehran and Washington were holding indirect talks on the nuclear issue mediated by Oman.

He said any future conflict would be different, particularly if the United States were directly involved, and warned it could "expand beyond a bilateral war."

Araghchi also made clear that Iran's defensive capabilities are not up for discussion. "Iran's defensive capability and missiles will never be the subject



of any negotiation," he said.

## Opposition to military action

Fidan reiterated Ankara's opposition to military action against Iran. "We have conveyed our opposition to a military intervention against Iran to our interlocutors at every opportunity," he said.

He said restarting talks between Tehran and Washington over Iran's nu-

clear program was "vital for reducing regional tensions."

The Turkish foreign minister said Israel was pushing the US to attack Iran, and urged Washington to "act with common sense and not allow this to happen."

He added that Iran's internal issues should be resolved peacefully by the Iranian people without foreign interference.

## Pezeshkian: Anti-Iran onslaught to be reciprocated with 'decisive' response



Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan



Masoud Pezeshkian

## International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran will never welcome war, while simultaneously issues a stern warning that any aggression against the country or its people will be met with an "immediate and decisive" response. Pezeshkian made the remark in a phone conversation with President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on Friday amid heightened tensions between Iran and the United States. "Iran has not and will not welcome war in any way, and sees war as benefiting no party. However, regrettably, Western parties have, through their actions, shown that despite their claims, they have no practical commitment to diplomacy and the principles of international law," Pezeshkian said.

He added that Iran's approach is based on interaction and dialogue based on international law, mutual respect, and the avoidance of threats and force to resolve issues. However, the Iranian president

emphasized that any aggression against the country and the nation will be responded "immediately and decisively." Iran rejects threats and coercion and remains committed to dialogue, mutual respect and win-win diplomacy, Pezeshkian said, as Washington continues issuing military threats against Tehran. The phone call comes amid a sharp rise in threatening rhetoric from Washington. US President Donald Trump recently told reporters that "another beautiful armada" of warships was moving toward Iran. In subsequent remarks and online posts, Trump said the deployment was aimed at pressuring Tehran into negotiations, warning that failure to reach a deal would trigger a military strike "far worse" than the US attack on Iranian nuclear facilities in June 2025.

A US naval strike group has been in Middle Eastern waters since Monday, and Trump has warned it is "ready, willing and able" to hit Iran "if necessary."

The Emirati president said his

country is making diplomatic efforts to reduce tensions in the region.

He commended Iran's principled stance on pursuing diplomacy and dialogue to resolve issues and avoiding any war. Since Thursday, the Iranian president has contacted several leaders of the regional countries amid worsening tensions between Tehran and Washington.

Pezeshkian told Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday that the US must cease provocative actions in the region if it is truly seeking genuine negotiations with Iran.

"If the American side is truly seeking genuine negotiations and diplomacy, it must cease such provocative and tension-provoking actions and demonstrate its commitment to the path of dialogue through actions," Pezeshkian said.

"We emphasize the path of interaction and diplomacy. However, we will not allow ourselves to be threatened or attacked during negotiations, as in past experiences," Pezeshkian said of the US-Israeli attacks, which took place in June ahead of a planned sixth round of talks.

The Emir of Qatar and the Pakistani prime minister emphasized their firm opposition to any actions against the security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

## 'Irrational': Iran pillories EU for IRGC designation

## International Desk

Iran strongly condemned the European Union for its "irrational and irresponsible" move to designate the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization, saying it reflects the depth of the bloc's hostility toward the Islamic Republic.

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran said in a statement that the EU's decision has undoubtedly been taken in obedience to the "hegemonic and inhumane policies of the United States and the Israeli regime."

"It (EU's decision) reflects the depth of hostility and resentment of the leaders of the bloc toward the noble nation of Iran, the Armed Forces, the security and independence of the powerful country of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

The statement stressed that the action is in blatant violation of international law, the United Nations Charter.

The EU added the IRGC to its terrorist list in response to the forces' role in the Islamic Republic's response to recent riots in the country, which were triggered by protests over economic problems on December 28.

According to Iranian officials, more than 3,100 people, including security forces and ordinary people, have been killed in the protests.

The 27-nation bloc also adopted visa bans and asset freezes on 21 state entities and Iranian officials – including the interior minister, prosecutor general and regional IRGC commanders.

Iran's Foreign Ministry called the designation of the IRGC "illegal and polit-

ical," emphasizing that the IRGC is a formal, lawful institution that plays a crucial role in Iran's national defense and in combating terrorism.

It also described the EU's move as a "dangerous" and "unjustified" step that undermines multilateralism and the rule of law.

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf also slammed the designation. Qalibaf wrote in a post on the social media platform X that the IRGC is "one of the strongest and most effective anti-terrorism forces in the world."

Reacting to the EU's move, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Larijani in a post on X said that under a resolution passed by Iran's Parliament, the armed forces of countries that have voted in favor of the EU's move are regarded as "terrorist" organization.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

## CARTOON



## Iran to hold war games with China, Russia in Sea of Oman: Report

## International Desk

Iran will reportedly hold a joint naval exercise with China and Russia in the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean in the coming days.

The joint military drill comes amid heightened tensions between Iran and the United States which has threatened Tehran with military action over its response to recent foreign-backed riots in the country. The Associated Press has also reported that Iran broadcast a warn-



ing to maritime traffic on Thursday, announcing plans for live-fire exercises in the Strait of Hormuz next week. The drills could disrupt traffic through the strategic waterway through which 20% of global oil

passes.

The VHF radio notice sent by Tehran warned of "naval shooting" on Sunday and Monday. The message was initially detected by EOS Risk Group and later verified by AP.

Two Pakistani security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity as they weren't authorized to talk to journalists, also confirmed the warning had been sent. In recent years, the three countries have repeatedly held such military drills.