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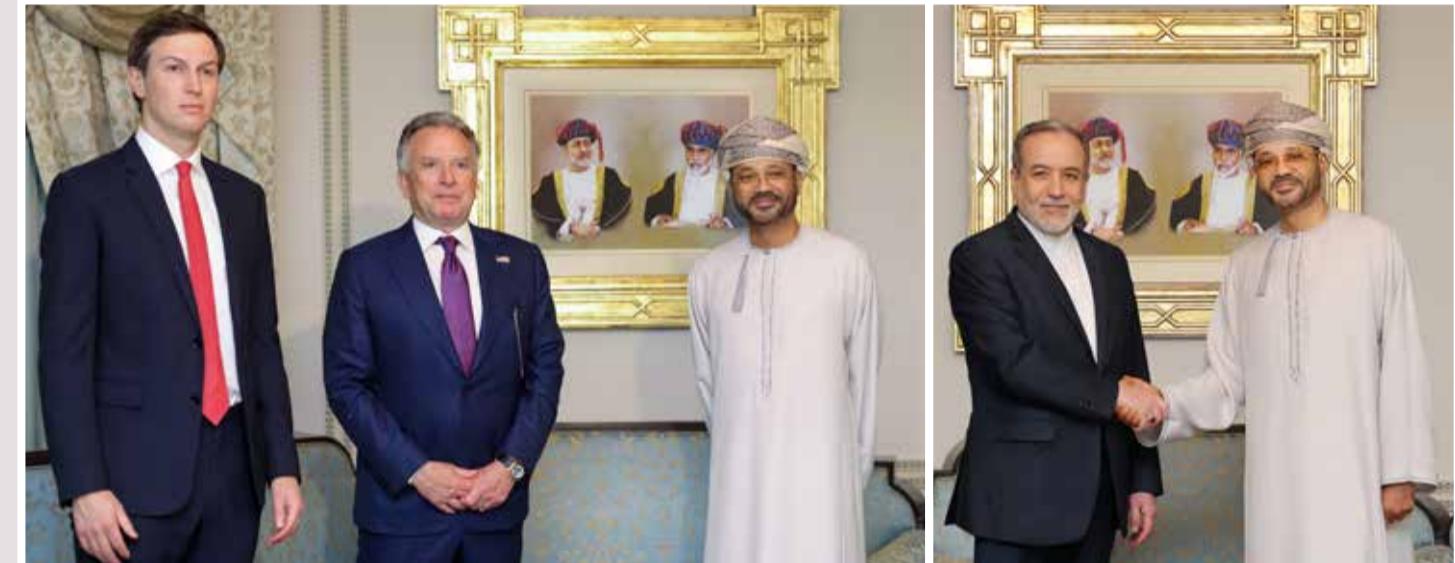
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Iran Daily

Iran, US agree to resume talks despite 'prevailing mistrust'

Araghchi hails Muscat negotiations as 'very good start'



In this combo photo, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (right pic) shakes hands with Omani Foreign Minister Badr bin Hamad al-Busaidi in Muscat, Oman on February 6, 2026, while in a separate image taken the same day, al-Busaidi poses for a photograph with US special envoy Steve Witkoff (c) and American President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner ahead of Iran-US talks.

AFP

Iran-US military confrontation, a lose-lose war

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE



In recent weeks, there has been heightened diplomatic activity by regional countries aimed at keeping the Iran-US diplomatic track alive, to the point that, according to some reports, pressure was exerted on Washington to prevent the cancellation of Friday's talks. At the same time, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has described the situation as being at the "brink of explosion," warning that the current situation is explosive not only for Iran alone, but for the entire Middle East. Meanwhile, Chinese President Xi Jinping has held phone calls with his Russian and American counterparts, during which Iran was one of the topics discussed. Iran Daily examined the objectives behind the actions and statements of each of these countries in an interview with Hassan Beheshtipour. He believes a military confrontation between Iran and the US would be a lose-lose war, from which all the above states would suffer in different ways, and that each actor is therefore seeking to safeguard its own interests.

IRAN DAILY: What is the main objective behind regional countries' pressure to sustain the negotiations, and what security, economic, or geopolitical concerns have driven them to spare no effort to prevent the talks from collapsing?

BEHESHTIPOUR: First of all, it should be emphasized

that much of what is playing out in the media amounts to a publicity game designed to influence the core of the negotiations. Claims circulated by the media that the talks were about to be canceled and then resumed at the request of regional countries constitute a media-driven scenario. However, this does not mean denying the fact that regional countries are attentive to stability and the prevention of a potential war. Based on their own interests, they view war as detrimental to the region and to their national interests. This applies to Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Oman alike. These countries understand that security and stability serve their interests and have a positive impact on their economic growth. They also know that if a war were to break out between Iran and the US, it would quickly turn into a regional war. That is why they are making efforts to prevent the outbreak of such a conflict, one in which everyone would lose. This would not be a war of victory; it would be a lose-lose war.

How do you assess the Russian foreign minister's remarks, and which specific scenarios is Moscow warning against?

Moscow is also concerned about the emergence of a new war in the Middle East, as it sees such a war as harmful to its own interests. This concern is not rooted in sympathy for Iran; rather, Russia's national interests dictate that it do everything possible on the diplomatic front to prevent the outbreak of a war. Lavrov has stated that Iran is "an important partner" for Russia. Naturally, Moscow does not want this important partner to be weakened, nor does it want the existing balance in the Middle East to tip in Israel's

favor. Preserving a balance of power between Iran and Israel in the region serves Russia's interests. It does not want this balance to unravel, as happened in Syria. This is why Lavrov has described the danger in terms of an explosion. Still, the proposal Russia has put forward is that Iran hand over all of its enriched uranium to Russia. In principle, this proposal is not necessarily a bad one, but the key question is what Iran would receive in return. Russia itself is an exporter of enriched uranium to Iran and other countries, meaning this arrangement would guarantee the preservation of its own market. However, what Iran would gain in exchange has not been clearly specified.

How do you view China's role in managing or containing tensions between Tehran and Washington? Is Beijing seeking a more active role in this equation, or is it simply pursuing its own interests?

In this case, it was the American side that reached out to the Chinese side, and it was also the Russian side that contacted President Xi, not the other way around. These initiatives were taken by Washington and Moscow in order to coordinate with China. President Putin, in fact, contacted President Xi to convey the outcome of his important meeting with [secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali] Larijani [last week] and to seek consultations with the Chinese side. President Trump's call with President Xi, on the other hand, was aimed at pressuring China and into reducing its oil purchases from Iran and scale back cooperation, thereby Page 8 > ratcheting up pressure on Tehran. When viewed from this angle, the entire issue takes on a very different meaning.

