

President calls for further regional cooperation to prevent foreign intervention

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Wednesday called for further cooperation among regional countries to prevent intervention by extra-regional actors.

"The countries of the region must expand their relations in such a way that there is no need for intervention by extra-regional actors to decide on matters concerning this region" President Pezeshkian said during a meeting with Russian Energy Minister Sergey Tsivilyov in Tehran.

The Iranian president described the level of relations between Tehran and Moscow as expanding and expressed his satisfaction with the acceleration of bilateral interactions.

President Pezeshkian, who

signed the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Treaty between Iran and Russia last year, underlined that his administration is determined to implement the agreement.

He said that the implementation of the agreement is being pursued in all fields including transportation, energy, oil and gas, agriculture and food products, defense and security cooperation.

The president stressed that he was personally following up on the progress of the agreement on a weekly basis, and has tasked different ministers to pursue the implementation of the agreements.

Back in January 2025, Iran and Russia signed the 20-year Comprehensive Strategic Partnership deal, marking a significant step towards strengthening



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) talks with Russian Energy Minister Sergey Tsivilyov (L) during a meeting in Tehran on February 18, 2026. president.ir

their bilateral ties. The treaty aims to expand economic, diplomatic and military cooperation between Moscow and Tehran and will likely act as a counterbalance to illegal Western sanctions.

It provides the legal framework for long-term development of cooperation in areas ranging from defense, energy, finance, and transportation to industries, agriculture, science, culture, and technology.

Iran and Russia, both under US sanctions, have deepened their relations in various fields in recent years.



Navy chief: Presence of extra-regional fleets in West Asia 'unjustified'

Iran, Russia to hold naval drill in Sea of Oman today

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Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani warned that the presence of extra-regional fleets in West Asia is "unjustified", stressing that the Iranian nation will confront them with a great strength in case of any aggressive move.

Admiral Irani, commander of the Navy of the Iranian Army, told reporters in India on Wednesday that "the Islamic Republic of Iran has been facing threats, ranting and ravaging, propaganda, and the presence of extra-regional fleets in West Asia for 47 years."

"If extra-regional fleets believe they have come with power, they should know that the Iranian people will confront them with even greater power," in case of any act of aggression, Admiral Irani emphasized.

He traveled to India to participate in three events – namely the IONS (Indian Ocean Naval Symposium), the Milan 2026 Naval Exercise, and the International Fleet Review (IFR).

He also stressed that "the faith of the people and missiles of Iran's deterrent weapons are the ones that stand against the enemy."

The United States has significantly increased its naval presence in West Asia, deploying the aircraft carrier



Shahram Irani

USS Abraham Lincoln and multiple accompanying warships, destroyers, and air assets to the wider Middle East as tensions with Iran escalate. US officials said on Friday that the Pentagon was sending an additional aircraft carrier to the region, adding thousands more troops along with fighter aircraft and guided-missile destroyers.

Tehran has viewed the move as a direct threat, with Iranian officials warning of strong retaliation if US forces act against Iranian interests. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Tuesday that weapons that can sink the American carriers are "more dangerous" than the warships.

"The American president [Donald Trump] repeatedly says that their military is the strongest in the world. The strongest military in the world, however, can sometimes be struck so

hard that it cannot even get back on its feet," Ayatollah Khamenei said. "They keep saying, 'We have sent an aircraft carrier toward Iran.' Fine—an aircraft carrier is certainly a dangerous piece of equipment. But more dangerous than the carrier is the weapon capable of sending it to the bottom of the sea," he added.

On Thursday, Iran and Russia will conduct naval maneuvers in the Sea of Oman amid simmering tensions between Tehran and Washington.

"The joint naval exercise of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia will take place tomorrow (Thursday) in the Sea of Oman and in the northern Indian Ocean," ISNA reported, citing drill spokesman, Rear Admiral Hassan Maghsoudloo.

"The aim is to strengthen maritime security and to deepen relations between the navies of the two countries," he said.

The drills come two days after the IRGC conducted a two-day naval drill in the Strait of Hormuz, showcasing 24-hour "intelligence dominance" over the vital shipping route that links the Persian Gulf with the Sea of Oman.

The exercise, titled "Smart Control of the Strait of Hormuz," involved rapid reaction units practicing counter-strikes against potential threats.

Over 80 UN member states condemn Israel's de facto annexation of West Bank

More than 80 United Nations member states condemned Israel's plan to expand control over the occupied West Bank and claim large tracts of Palestinian territory as Israeli "state property". "We strongly condemn unilateral Israeli decisions and measures aimed at expanding Israel's unlawful presence in the West Bank," Palestinian Ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour said on Tuesday, speaking on behalf of the coalition of 85 member states and several international organizations, Al Jazeera reported.

"Such decisions are contrary to Israel's obligations under international law and must be immediately reversed. We underline in this regard our strong opposition to any form of annexation," Mansour said.

"We reiterate our rejection of all measures aimed at altering the demograph-



A Palestinian woman with children walks near members of Israeli police during an Israeli raid in Qalandya, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. REUTERS

composition, character and status of the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem," he said. "Such measures violate international law, undermine the ongoing efforts for peace and stability in the region, run counter to the Comprehensive Plan and

jeopardize the prospect of reaching a peace agreement ending the conflict," he added.

The Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict is a November agreement between Israel and Hamas to end the genocidal war.

Signatories to the joint statement on Tuesday include Australia, Canada, China, France, Pakistan, Russia, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the European Union, the League of Arab States and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Tehran summons German envoy over Berlin's anti-Iranian measures

The Foreign Ministry summoned Germany's ambassador to Tehran over the recent adversarial stances and measures that have been adopted by German authorities versus the Islamic Republic. Axel Dittmann was summoned by Alireza Yousefi, director-general for Western Europe at the ministry, on Tuesday, and formally notified of the Islamic Republic's strong protest, Press TV reported.

The ministry identified the reason behind the summoning as "anti-Iranian actions in Germany and destructive positions taken by German officials against the Islamic Republic in violation of the international law."

During the meeting, Yousefi condemned the stances and activities "particularly the hosting and support of violent and terrorist elements and groups" that are hostile towards Tehran.

He emphasized that such positions and measures contradicted the fundamental principles of the international law and the United Nations Charter, and entailed international responsibility for Berlin.

The German ambassador undertook to convey Tehran's protest to relevant German authorities.

German authorities have been adopting increasingly inimical positions concerning the Islamic Republic simultaneously with underway escalation in the United States' rhetorical and military escalation



IRNA

targeting Tehran.

Dittmann had also been summoned to the ministry in late January after German Chancellor Friedrich Merz claimed that the Iranian government's "days are numbered." His remarks came as Donald Trump had markedly escalated his verbal threats and ordered significant military buildup around Iran following the Islamic Republic's response to a foreign-backed riots last month.

Germany has also played host to gatherings and activism by anti-Iranian groupings and outfits, including monarchists seeking the return of Iran's former Washington-backed tyrannical Pahlavi regime.

Most recently, it hosted the Munich Security Conference, which excluded Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, while providing ample opportunity for those attacking the Islamic Republic.



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