

Pezeshkian: Iran determined to defend itself against US-Israel aggression

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran is not seeking to expand the ongoing aggression against Iran in the region but will firmly defend its national security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

He made the remarks in separate phone calls with his Azerbaijani and Finnish counterparts on Thursday. Pezeshkian said that Iran's attacks on US military bases in regional countries are a response to the enemy's use of these countries' territories and facilities to carry out attacks on Iran.

President Pezeshkian in

his conversation with Finland's President Alexander Stubb referred to the heavy costs that the US-Israeli aggression has imposed on the Iranian people, saying that the consequences of the "unlawful" war are not limited to Iran or the region but the entire world has forced to pay the price for their actions.

The Iranian president said the aggressors have targeted the international law and the rule of law in the world – the actions that require a decisive response from all governments.

Europe's stance

"While a few European countries have taken a re-



Alexander Stubb



Masoud Pezeshkian



Ilham Aliyev

sponsible stance, many others have adopted a passive and even biased approach toward this aggression and the crimes committed, including the massacre of children and attacks on Iran's infrastructure, which is by no means acceptable," Pezeshkian said.

During his talks with Azer-

baijani President Ilham Aliyev, the Iranian president reiterated Iran's unwavering resolve to defend itself against the ongoing aggression.

Aliyev pointed to the consequences of the war for the region's security and stability, expressing hope for the establishment of

peace and security in the region.

Iran's Foreign Ministry's spokesman Esmail Baqaei also emphasized Iran's right to defend itself in the face of the ongoing "unjust war", saying that Tehran is determined to strongly respond to US-Israeli aggression.

He made the remarks in an interview with Newzroom Afrika.

Referring to the aggression against Iran which began on February 28, Baqaei said, "We've had a similar experience" in June when the US and Israel launched an unprovoked aggression against Iran amid nuclear

negotiations between Tehran and Washington and after 12 days they called for a ceasefire.

After nine months, they once again launched strikes on Iran amid new talks on Iran's nuclear program, he added.

'Vicious cycle of war, talks, ceasefire'

"So we won't tolerate this vicious cycle of war, negotiations, ceasefire and then the repeat of the same pattern. It is catastrophic not only for Iran but for the entire region and the world. You now see its consequences in many countries around the world." Baqaei said.

IRGC shoots down 2nd US F-35 fighter jet in Ramadan War

Iran warns of expanding scope of war if threats against infrastructure persist

International Desk

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced on Friday the downing of the second American F-35 fighter jet in the sky over central Iran.

"The second American F-35 fighter jet was destroyed in the central sky of Iran by the IRGC's new advanced air defense system," the IRGC's Public Relations Department said. "This fighter jet was completely destroyed and crashed. In the past twelve hours, this is the second fighter jet that has been destroyed by the IRGC's air defense. There is no further information about the fate of the pilot because the fighter jet totally destroyed."

Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters spokesperson also warned on Friday that further threats targeting Iran's infrastructure could widen the scope of response to include key assets linked to the United States, Israel, and allied host countries.

The spokesperson warned in a statement that any implementation of repeated US threats against Iran's bridges, power plants, and energy infrastructure would trigger a broader response by Iran's Armed Forces, extending beyond Israeli and American assets to include wider targets linked to host countries in the region.

According to the statement, if such threats are carried out, Iran's Armed Forces would, in addition to targeting all assets linked to the Israeli regime and the United States in the fields of fuel, energy, economic centers, and power plants across the region and the occupied territories, strike broader and more significant assets belonging to them as well as to host countries and allied states with greater intensity.

The spokesperson also stated that countries hosting US military bases in the region must compel American forces to leave their territory if they seek to avoid damage.

War to continue until US, Israel 'regret' aggression

The senior spokesman for Iran's Armed Forces said the country will continue the war as long as it makes the United States and the Israeli regime "regret" their illegal act of aggression.

"Our strategy is not limited to eye-for-an-eye or reciprocal actions. Our strategy is to punish the aggressor so that it fully regrets [its move] and to guarantee the permanent removal of the threat posed to the nation," Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi said.

"The goal is not to announce a ceasefire today and see the re-

sumption of the aggression tomorrow under various pretexts, with people feeling worried and remaining in anxiety."

Shekarchi also noted that the world has realized the invincibility of the Islamic Republic, which stems from its large capacity.

Many countries in the world condemn the imposed war on Iran while many of Washington's allies are not willing to join it as they see the catastrophe caused by the US's presence in the region, he added.

The unprovoked US-Israeli aggression on Iran began on February 28 with airstrikes that assassinated senior Iranian officials and commanders.

The Iranian Armed Forces have responded by launching daily missile and drone operations targeting locations in the Israeli-occupied territories as well as US military bases and assets across the region.

They have also blocked the Strait of Hormuz to oil and gas tankers affiliated with the adversaries and those cooperating with them in an attempt to maintain security at the strategic waterway.

The US has sought to form a coalition to open the strait, asking NATO countries to contribute naval and air assets. However, most of Washington's allies have declined to commit forces.

Araghchi cautions UNSC against Hormuz Strait resolution

Deputy FM: Iran, Oman to formulate protocol for navigation in Hormuz

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned against any United Nations Security Council resolution on the Strait of Hormuz, raising the alarm that such moves would further complicate the situation rather than resolve tensions.

In a telephone conversation on Thursday, Araghchi and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov discussed the latest regional and international developments in light of the continued US and Israeli aggression against Iran.

Araghchi stressed Iran's inherent right to legitimate self-defense to protect its sovereignty, national security, and territorial integrity, strongly condemning the aggressive attacks on the country's infrastructure, including universities, bridges, and scientific centers.

Referring to the insecurity in the Strait of Hormuz, he said it had been imposed as a result of US and Israeli military aggression against Iran. Araghchi noted that, at

present, vessels belonging to countries not involved in the aggression are allowed to transit the strait in coordination with Iran's Armed Forces.

ued military aggression against Iran and briefed his Iranian counterpart on Moscow's ongoing contacts and consultations with regional coun-



Abbas Araghchi

The Iranian foreign minister also denounced efforts by the United States and some other countries at the UN Security Council to exert pressure on Iran, warning that any provocative action by aggressors and their supporters, including moves related to the Strait of Hormuz, would only complicate the situation.

He added that issuing a Security Council resolution on the Hormuz Strait would not solve any problems and would instead become part of the problem. Lavrov, for his part, reaffirmed Russia's position condemning the contin-

tries aimed at reducing tensions.

He emphasized the need for all parties to return to diplomacy and a political resolution of the crisis, noting that Russia has put forward initiatives and proposals to help de-escalate tensions and manage the situation in the region.

Meanwhile, Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's deputy foreign minister, said Tehran and Oman are working toward establishing a joint protocol to ensure safe maritime passage through the Strait of Hormuz in the post-war period.

In an interview with Sputnik, Gharibabadi said that the Strait of Hormuz had previously remained open with normal maritime traffic, but recent armed attacks and US-Israeli acts of aggression have disrupted safe passage and created significant challenges.

Gharibabadi said that under normal conditions, all vessels passing through the strait would be expected to coordinate in advance with Iranian and Omani authorities and obtain the necessary permits to ensure safety and security. He added that environmental considerations, as well as maritime safety, are also key factors in this framework.

He explained that Iran and Oman would assume greater responsibility for guaranteeing safe passage and are currently working on a draft protocol to regulate navigation in the strait during peacetime. According to him, the protocol is intended not as a restriction, but as a mechanism to facilitate safe transit and provide better services to vessels.

War exposes fragility ...

High unemployment remains a central challenge across much of the region, especially among youth. This has fueled frustration and, at times, unrest, highlighting the urgent need for workable solutions.

The region has also been rocked by multiple conflicts, including the Syrian civil war, the war in Yemen and ongoing tensions among regional powers. These conflicts have not only triggered humanitarian crises but also reshaped political and social structures.

With the United States and Israel launching a military offensive on Iran in February 2026, the future of regional security has grown increasingly uncertain. Iran quickly moved to close the Strait of Hormuz and struck US bases in Arab countries. Tensions spiraled, sending oil prices soaring. The United States, which has maintained a military presence in the Persian Gulf under security agreements since the Second Persian Gulf War, lost several bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates during the conflict.

The developments laid bare the fragility of relying on external powers to provide security. According to British professor Barry Buzan's viewpoint, security today is multidimensional, spanning political, social, economic, cultural and environmental aspects. The Middle East faces challenges across all five. Politically, most of the regional countries have yet to complete the process of nation-state building, with tribal dynamics still shaping governance. Economically, heavy reliance on oil leaves these countries exposed.

Culturally, the influence of imported Western norms has created problems for them. Environmentally, water scarcity and dust storms pose growing threats to them. Taken together, developments over the past decade show a region grappling with both risks and opportunities. Political, economic and social shifts will continue to shape the Middle East's trajectory. Yet with the right policies and strategies, it remains possible to navigate these challenges and make the most of the opportunities ahead.

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