

# President stresses power diplomacy while voicing skepticism about US

## International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday that every rational and diplomatic path should be used to reduce regional and international tensions caused by the recent US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

"War benefits no one. While standing firm against threats, we must use every rational and diplomatic path to reduce tensions," Pezeshkian said during a visit to the Justice Ministry.

However, the Iranian president said that vigilance and distrust in interactions with Washington were an "undeniable necessity."

Pezeshkian noted that through "empathy, honesty, and collective participation, we can get past this stage and continue the

country's path toward dignity and progress."

The president noted that passing through the battlefield "does not mean the end of the road. Rather, it marks the beginning of a more important phase: the 'Greater Struggle.'" He described this as a crusade in which all people must play a role through patience, tolerance, cooperation, and active participation in rebuilding the country and solving its problems.

"This phase requires greater mental and social readiness than the war era," he added.

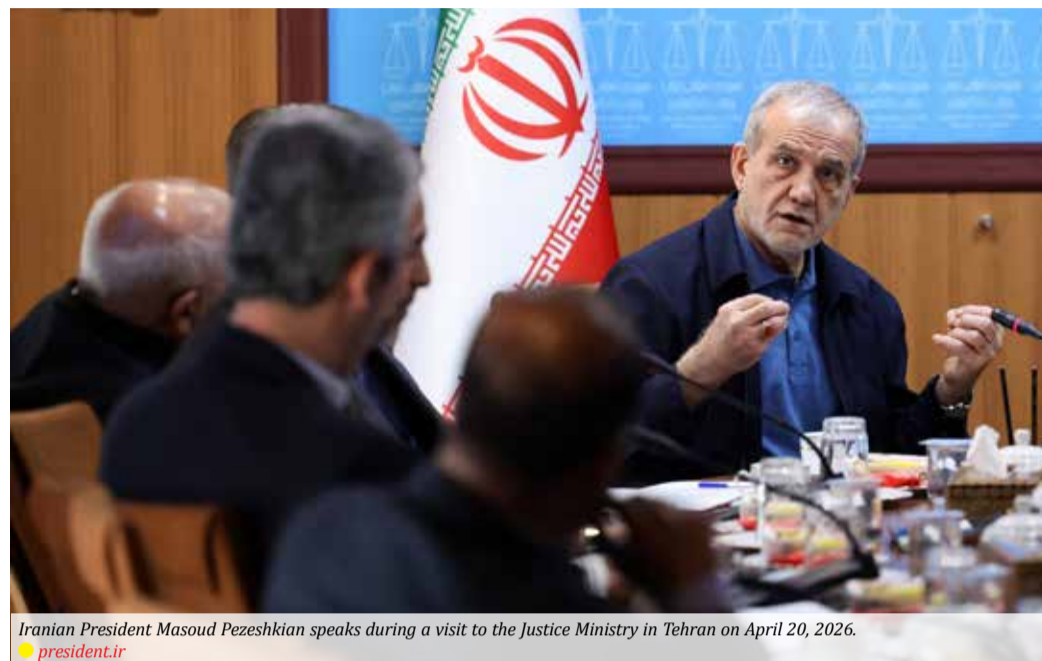
A two-week ceasefire between Iran and the US is set to expire on Wednesday, with US representatives set to reach Islamabad for Iran negotiations on Monday while Tehran has yet to announce whether it will send a

delegation to Pakistan.

Iran and the US reached the ceasefire after nearly 40 days of aggression by the US and Israel against Iran which met with Iran's retaliation.

The Iranian president also said on Monday that strengthening unity among Islamic countries is the most important way to counter conspiracies and prevent foreign powers from taking advantage.

On Sunday, Pezeshkian underlined that Iran is not seeking to expand the war in the region, adding that some powers are trying to drag regional countries in conflicts in order to exploit their resources, while the nations of the region must stand against such approaches through unity and solidarity, and strengthen the path of cooperation and cohesion.



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian speaks during a visit to the Justice Ministry in Tehran on April 20, 2026. [president.ir](http://president.ir)

## Iran reviewing US proposals for possible Islamabad talks

Tehran 'not optimistic' as Washington is 'unrealistic'



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Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baqaei said on Monday that Iranian officials are still reviewing the proposed US plan conveyed to Tehran during the Pakistani army chief's visit, stressing that Tehran has "no plans" for new talks in Pakistan.

His remarks came as the US has said it will send a delegation to Pakistan headed by Vice-President JD Vance for a new round of negotiations with Iran.

Pakistani officials also said they remain cautiously hopeful that they can bring the two sides back to the negotiating

table. Islamabad has been gearing up to host the talks aimed at ending their war. Islamabad's Marriott Hotel asked guests to vacate by Sunday afternoon. The Serena Hotel, just a few kilometers away and the venue for the first round of talks a week earlier, soon issued the same order and stopped taking reservations. Meanwhile, Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi briefed Iranian Ambassador Reza Amiri Moghaddam and US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker on arrangements for the possible talks during separate meetings in the capital. US President Donald Trump announced on Sunday that his representatives were



Pakistan's security forces guard a checkpoint in Islamabad, Pakistan, on April 20, 2026 as hoardings are mounted on lamp posts ahead of possible Iran-US peace talks.

AFP

heading to Pakistan for the second round of negotiations, as the ceasefire, due to expire on Wednesday, edges towards its deadline.

"We're offering a very fair and reasonable DEAL, and I hope they take it because, if they don't, the United States is going to knock out every single Power Plant, and every single Bridge, in Iran," Trump wrote.

Before Trump's post on Sunday, Iran's Supreme National Security Council said "new proposals" from the US had been put forward during a visit to Iran by Pakistan's army chief and were being reviewed.

## Next round of talks

However, the Foreign Ministry's spokesman accused Washington of violating the ceasefire, saying that no decision had been made yet regarding the next round. Baqaei added that Iran could not forget the costly experience of Washington's previous breaches of its promises. "So, we remain vigilant against the enemy's schemes, and this is the duty of the negotiating team and all Iranian institutions," the spokesman asserted.

In light of the absence of all trust be-

tween the two sides, Iran is "not optimistic" about the talks, rather adopting a "realistic" attitude towards the matter, the official noted.

He again urged vigilance in the face of the enemy's schemes, and said Iran had to exercise even more caution under the current circumstances than it would during wartime.

Baqaei, meanwhile, underlined that the US has repeatedly tested Iran before by reneging on its pledges and facing decisive backlash from the Islamic Republic, saying Washington would face the same experience upon repeating its past mistakes.

"The US insists on repeating its mistakes, and it will receive a response similar to the past."

## Violation of ceasefire

Baqaei added that Washington had "violated the ceasefire from the beginning of its implementation," citing the US naval blockade of the Strait of Hormuz since April 13, and the overnight capture of an Iranian container ship by the US military as breaches of the truce as well as international law.

He underlined that the US is not serious about negotiations with Iran. Baqaei also cited contradictions between Washington's words and actions as a case in point regarding the latter's indecisive attitude towards the issue of the talks.

"[Their] words and actions are not consis-

tent, and Iran will make the appropriate decision with careful consideration of its interests and national priorities," he stated.

The Iranian official additionally pointed out continuation of the Israeli regime's violations against Lebanon, despite the Islamic Republic's insistence on cessation of aggression on all fronts as an indivisible part of any ceasefire.

Referring to the Israeli regime's rehashing its claim of acting in "self-defense" to try to justify its violations, Baqaei said, "This is another example where the other side shifts the blame and conceals its own shortcomings."

## 'Unreasonable positions'

The spokesman said the US continues to insist on its "unreasonable and unrealistic positions."

Baqaei, however, reiterated Iran's positions, saying transfer of enriched uranium outside Iran has never been an option for the country, dismissing American officials' remarks in this regard as mere claims and ideas pursued by Washington.

Iran, he added, would not put its defense capabilities, including missile power, up for negotiation either.

The first round of talks in Islamabad failed to produce an agreement, with Iranian officials blaming the US side for putting forward excessive demands and shifting its position at the negotiating table.

## Armed Forces vow to retaliate US act of 'piracy' in Sea of Oman

China voices concern over US seizure of Iranian cargo ship

## International Desk

Iran's military vowed to decisively retaliate the latest act of "piracy" by the US military forces against an Iranian commercial vessel in the Sea of Oman. Lieutenant-Colonel Ebrahim Zolfaghari, spokesperson for the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, stated that after the blatant aggression by US terrorist commandos against an Iranian commercial ship in the waters of the Sea of Oman, the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran were ready to deal decisively with the American aggressor forces.

However, he said due to the presence of several family members of the ship's crew — whose lives and safety were at constant risk — they faced certain limitations.

"Given the current situation, once the safety of the families and crew of the vessel targeted by American aggression is ensured, the

powerful Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran will take the necessary action against the terrorist US army," Zolfaghari said.

His remarks came after the United States carried out a flagrant act of aggression on an Iranian merchant vessel in the waters of the Sea of Oman, deploying its terrorist marines onto the ship's deck and disabling its navigation systems.

In immediate response, Iranian forces struck back, targeting several American military vessels in the area with drone attacks. On Friday, Iran had declared the Strait was open to commercial shipping, weeks after it was shut down to vessels associated with the US, Israel and their allies following the launch of an unprovoked war of aggression against the Islamic Republic on February 28.

However, the IRGC Navy said in a statement

on Saturday that Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz after the United States chose to retain its blockade of Iranian ports in violation of the conditions of a two-week ceasefire declared by US President Donald Trump.

China expressed concern over the "forced interception" by the US of the Iranian cargo ship, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson said on Monday, urging relevant parties to abide by the ceasefire agreement in a responsible manner.

"The situation in the Strait of Hormuz is sensitive and complicated," said spokesman Guo Jiakun during a regular press briefing. Parties involved should avoid further escalation and "create the necessary conditions for normal transit through the strait to resume," he added.

Beijing on Monday also urged relevant parties to "continue to maintain the momentum of the ceasefire and negotiations."



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