

# FM: US military presence uncorks chaos; regional convergence advised



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) meets Oman's Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said in Muscat on April 26, 2026.  
● IRNA

## International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said the experience of the war against Iran showed that the US military presence in

regional countries has served only to generate insecurity and division, urging regional states to pursue indigenous collective security arrangements free from American interference.

Araghchi made the remarks on Sunday in Muscat during talks with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said. He praised Oman's "responsible approach" in supporting diplo-

matic efforts and its prudent stance during the US-Israeli war against Iran, while reaffirming Tehran's determination to preserve friendly ties with Oman and other southern Persian Gulf states.

Iran had targeted US bases and interests in regional countries in response to American attacks, but has consistently said those strikes were legitimate responses to hostile actions launched from the territory of those states.

The Omani Sultan reaffirmed Muscat's commitment to regional peace and stability, including through advancing diplomacy, and voiced hope for a definitive end to the war and the restoration of regional security. He also expressed Oman's readiness to assist in that process.

With Omani Foreign Minis-

ter Sayyid Badr Albusaidi also present, the talks addressed maritime safety in the Strait of Hormuz, security in the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman, economic cooperation among regional states, and developments related to Pakistan-mediated negotiations aimed at ending the war. Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei took to X afterwards, saying Iran places high importance on its relations with Persian Gulf countries and remains committed to strengthening mutual trust and constructive cooperation.

"The relationship between Iran and Oman is clear proof of Iran's seriousness in pursuing ties based on mutual respect with its southern neighbors," he wrote.

The visit marked the Iranian foreign minister's first trip to the region since the recent US-Israeli military assault on Iran in late February, which reverberated across the region.

Oman had previously mediated Iran-US talks before the United States and Israel attacked. Fol-

lowing the ceasefire, Islamabad assumed the mediation role and hosted one round of talks, while a second round has yet to be held as Iran has made lifting the US naval blockade a precondition for resuming negotiations. Araghchi had traveled to Islamabad a day earlier, where he presented Iranian proposals to mediators and described the visit as highly productive. He said he had outlined Tehran's position on a practical and implementable framework for a permanent end to the war, adding progress in diplomacy depends on serious political will from the United States.

After Oman, Araghchi returned to Pakistan and met Field Marshal Asim Munir, the country's army chief. According to reports, he is expected to travel onward to Moscow after a brief stop.

In parallel, Araghchi held phone calls with his counterparts from Turkey, Egypt, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and France to discuss the latest diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the war.

## President rules out return to talks under US pressure, blockade

### Pakistani PM urges adherence to diplomacy, political solution



President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) holds a phone conversation with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the latest status of the Iran-US war on April 26, 2026.  
● president.ir

## International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said Tehran will not enter "imposed negotiations" under pressure, threat and blockade, urging the United States to first remove operational obstacles — including the naval blockade — if it seeks to create conditions for resolving disputes. In a phone call with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday, Pezeshkian said halting hostile measures and providing assurances against renewed bad faith, breaches of commitments and aggressive actions during negotiations were necessary conditions for rebuilding even minimal trust and opening the way for resolving outstanding issues, president.ir reported.

Iran and the United States held one round of talks in Islamabad after the ceasefire took hold, but Tehran

has so far declined to enter a second round, citing the continued US naval blockade.

Pezeshkian said Washington's hostile actions, including the blockade, were inconsistent with its stated claims of seeking a political settlement, arguing that the contradiction had deepened mistrust among both the Iranian public and officials and posed a serious obstacle to confidence-building and diplomacy.

If there is genuine political will to resolve the dispute, he said, an expanded military presence and continued hostile measures would only add to the complexity of the situation and disrupt the atmosphere for dialogue.

"Iran believes negotiations can yield tangible results only if the other side replaces policies of threat, pressure and imposition with an approach based on confidence-build-

ing and mutual respect," Pezeshkian said, adding that Tehran is only seeking to secure the legitimate rights of its people within established principles of international law and global regulations, and has made no demands beyond that framework.

He said Iran remains open to any rational and fair path grounded in mutual respect, and called on Pakistan and other Islamic countries to use their political leverage to steer the United States toward a responsible framework for dialogue free of pressure, threats and imbalanced demands.

Sharif, for his part, said a political solution must be reached that preserves Iran's dignity while ensuring a path toward development, stability and prosperity for the Islamic Republic and the wider region.

"The current moment is highly time-sensitive, and this opportunity should be used to prevent a return to tensions," he said.

## 'Beyond expectations': IRGC warns of payback scale in case of fresh attack

### International Desk

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) warned on Saturday that any new act of aggression by the United States or Israel against Iran would trigger a response "beyond the expectations" of its adversaries and at a level of strategic deterrence.

The statement came as Western media reported the United States may seek to land forces on some Iranian islands to pressure Tehran into easing restrictions on passage through the Strait of Hormuz.

The IRGC said it was fully prepared to confront a range of enemy actions, including ground operations, adding that prisoner-of-war camps had even been prepared to hold potential soldiers.

Iran has restricted transit through the Strait of Hormuz — the chokepoint through which roughly a fifth of global oil demand passes — since the early days of the US-Israeli assault that began in late February and ended in a ceasefire on April 8. In its statement, the IRGC described control over the strait as part of Iran's definitive strategy against what it called the "global arrogance" camp during the war and beyond, but stressed that Tehran would continue facilitating passage for commercial vessels from all countries



except those linked to the United States, Israel and their affiliates.

Separately, Brigadier General Mohammad Jafar Asadi, deputy inspector of Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, said the enemy was seeking to impose what he called coercive dictates on the Strait of Hormuz, but said such efforts would fail. "The Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz are tied to Iran and the neighboring states, and the Americans have no right to dictate terms or even pronounce on this region," Asadi said.

He also warned that Iran's armed forces have contingency plans in place to confront any renewed attack, adding that the US military and the Israeli regime would face a heavier blow in the event of further aggression.

## Islamic Republic's security ...

By positioning itself as the "adherent to the agreement," Tehran gains diplomatic leverage, making it harder for international coalitions to re-initiate sanctions or military pressure. This "diplomatic shielding" is an integral part of its security architecture.

### Transition to 'resistance economy'

Security in a ceasefire is inextricably linked to economic resilience. The Islamic Republic strategy dictates that a ceasefire must be used to bypass sanctions and diversify trade routes. From a security perspective, this is "economic hardening."

By integrating its economy more deep-

ly with Eurasian powers and regional neighbors during the lull, Iran seeks to make its economy "un-sanctionable." The logic is simple: the more the region's economic stability depends on Iran, the more the regional security environment favors Tehran. A ceasefire, therefore, is a period to build "economic deterrence," where the cost of returning to war includes the disruption of vital regional energy and trade corridors.

### Leadership transition & institution

Given the recent shifts in the highest levels of the Iranian leadership, a ceasefire allows the new leadership to consolidate its grip on the command-and-control structures, ensuring that the transition

does not create a "window of vulnerability" that enemies could exploit.

Ultimately, the Islamic Republic of Iran does not see a ceasefire as a move toward the "end of history" or a permanent settlement. Instead, it is a force multiplier. It is a period of "dynamic restraint" where the state builds the capacity for a more potent response in the future.

The strategy is to win the "peace" by ensuring that the adversary remains in a state of constant calculation and hesitation. For Tehran, security in a ceasefire is the art of being more prepared for war on the day the ceasefire ends than on the day it began. In this paradigm, the ceasefire is not the end of the struggle, but the refinement of it.

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