

United States is Pakistan's responsibility.

We should not forget that American air bases in the Persian Gulf are located in Qatar. Therefore, Qatar cannot possess a neutral position regarding mediation, but it is natural that the United States would desire Qatar to be present as mediator. However, that would not be acceptable to us.

Iran has not expressed a position in this regard, and there is no necessity for it to express an opinion on this matter either because the subject does not pos-

sess sufficient value for Iran to issue commentary regarding it. When Qatar was active as mediator, conditions were normal and not like the present circumstances.

Similarly, Foreign Minister Araghchi's trip to China took place at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart, and was within the framework of strategic relations between the Islamic Republic and China. Naturally, before the meeting between the United States and China, China wants to hear the latest regional situation and the most recent

regional conditions from the words of Iran's foreign minister, and to go to its own meeting with the United States fully prepared.

Do not forget that the Americans, during this upcoming Thursday trip and in the meeting with Xi Jinping, for the first time, are empty-handed, unlike the past, when they could possess instruments of pressure against China. China will insist upon the positions and rightfulness of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and upon the fact that the United States has transgressed against the

Islamic Republic and violated international law and human rights. They have also declared this explicitly. China, as a friendly country and strategic partner of Iran, can articulate our principled positions before the Americans and insist upon them.

Regarding the future of Iran's negotiations with the US, one cannot speak on the basis of speculation. The events in the Strait of Hormuz during recent days, in reality, were an issue that the Americans created in order to impose pressure upon us and to possess a

trump card against us in negotiations. But their plans did not materialize, and they neither acquired a trump card, nor succeeded in imposing pressure upon Iran; on the contrary, they themselves departed from the Strait of Hormuz in a considerably more disadvantageous position. In reality, the Americans possess nothing that can function as an instrument of pressure against Iran.

The article first appeared in Persian on ILNA.

Iran war hangs over China summit

By Annie Linskey, Alexander Ward & Gavin Bade

Reporters

PERSPECTIVE

As the heads of the world's two superpowers meet in Beijing this week, President Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping will have another nation looming over their summit: Iran.

The long-anticipated meeting has already been delayed once due to the US and Israel's war against Iran, which has led to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Trump is eager to move on from the Middle East war that is sapping his domestic power and straining the global economy.

He will land in Beijing prepared to push China, which relies on Iran for low-cost oil in their transactional relationship, to help broker an agreement that ends the conflict, according to US officials.

Xi also wants the fighting to stop, as Middle East turmoil restricts China's oil supply and shrinks countries' ability to buy Chinese goods. Finding a resolution could raise Xi's stature as a global statesman who swooped in at the precipice of a possible military escalation, analysts and US officials said.

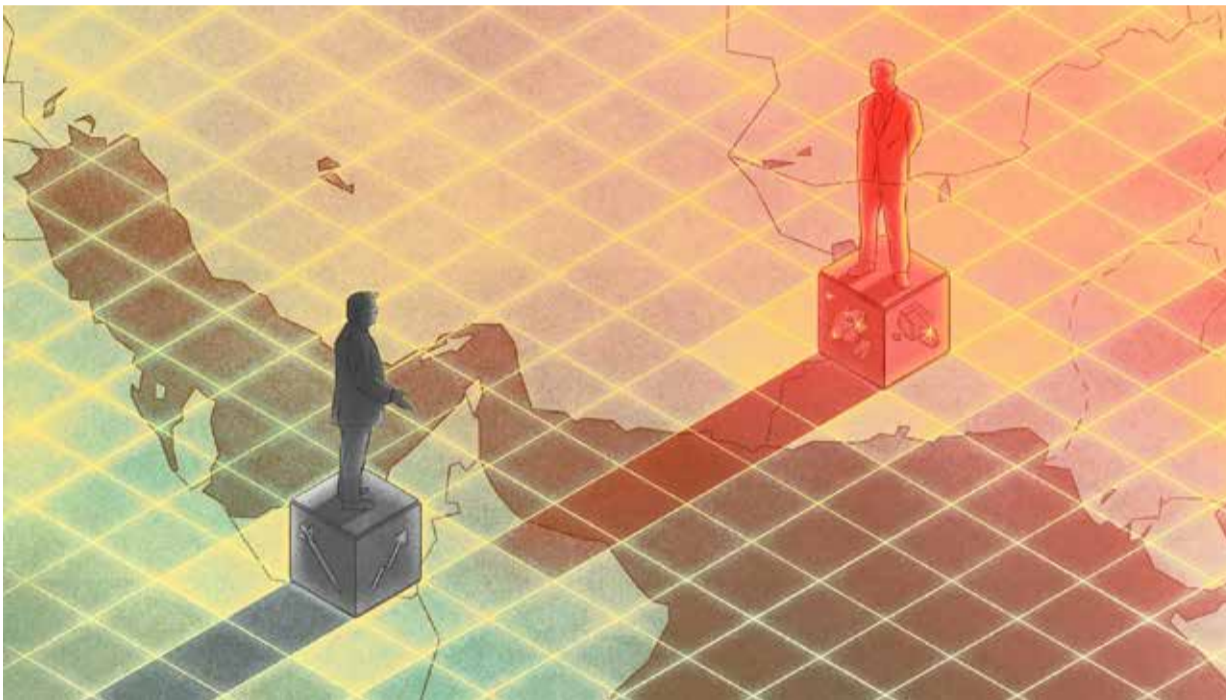
Trump on Friday threatened to resume "Project Freedom," the US-led operation to help ships navigate the strait safely, adding this time that the operation would include "other things".

The president on Sunday said a multi-page response that Iran sent to the US proposal to end the war, which didn't include commitments about Tehran's nuclear program, was unacceptable.

Senior US officials insist the crisis in the strait and Tehran's refusal to make nuclear concessions will prove an afterthought once Trump and Xi step into the Great Hall for trade talks. But both men head into the high-stakes summit aligned in seeking their own victories on Iran — with the Chinese particularly eager to ensure that the current Iranian regime remains intact so it can recover.

At a minimum, Trump will have to keep one eye on a major conflict during a vital, multiday engagement halfway around the world. Trump is scheduled to land in Beijing on Wednesday night and leave Friday local time — giving the leaders two days of backslapping and handshaking. The schedule includes bilateral meetings, a tour of the Temple of Heaven, a state dinner Thursday night and tea between the two leaders on Friday before Trump departs, US officials said.

"Trump will have to juggle briefings and updates on two different, multifaceted sets of policy issues at once, all while a bit jet-lagged," said Jacob Stokes, deputy director of the Center for a New American Security think tank's Indo-Pacific program. "Trump arguably faces a tight-wire act of simultaneous diplomacy and negotiation more complicated than any he's yet seen in either of his presidencies." The discussions will focus largely on trade issues, namely the Chinese purchases of American agricultural goods, energy products and aerospace technologies such as Boeing airplanes, a senior US official said. The leaders will also discuss establishing a US-China board



The AI-generated image shows US President Donald Trump (L) and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, squaring off at the Strait of Hormuz.

ISABEL SELIGER/BLOOMBERG

of trade that would consider how the countries can trade goods that aren't related to national security.

The US doesn't anticipate China will propose a major investment package for manufacturing in the US, the official said. Even so, the sides are likely to discuss establishing a US-China Board of Investment through which the two governments could consider investment plans in the future. Such an entity wouldn't interfere with existing US investment-screening entities, such as the Committee on Foreign Investment in the US, the official added.

"President Trump will continue doing what he has done over the past year — rebalancing the relationship with China and prioritizing reciprocity and fairness to restore American economic independence," White House spokeswoman Anna Kelly said in a call with reporters Sunday afternoon.

Trump's tariffs on China and Beijing's riposte of export restrictions on rare earths last year unsettled the world's most important bilateral relationship. Since then, Trump has sought to recalibrate US-China ties, including during

an in-person meeting in South Korea in October. Gone are the first-term days of Trump bashing China as a rogue security threat stripping Americans of their jobs. Now, Trump strikes a more peaceful tone aimed at turning former enemies into friends.

"President Xi will give me a big, fat, hug when I get there in a few weeks," Trump posted on Truth Social in April. All isn't so rosy in the relationship.

China denied visas for some lower-level US officials ahead of Trump's visit, a step Beijing rarely takes. The coming summit is occurring against a backdrop of tightening media access. American journalists have faced increasing difficulties obtaining Chinese visas. Typically, administrations fight to bring who they want as part of a broader American delegation, even if the host country objects. But US officials say those decisions lie solely with China and that the denials won't materially affect the meeting.

Trump is expected to bring up Beijing's financial support for Iran and Russia and potential weapons exports to both countries, as he has during other en-

counters, according to a senior US official. On Friday, the State Department sanctioned four Chinese entities for "providing satellite imagery that enables Iran's military strikes against US forces in the Middle East".

Despite Xi's hopes for resolving the Iran crisis, he and Trump don't see eye to eye on how it should end. China hosted Iran's foreign minister last week. The timing was widely seen as designed to highlight ties between Beijing and Tehran ahead of the US summit.

"Xi will want to make sure the latest American regime change war in the Middle East is seen as a failure — and naturally, Trump wants the opposite," said CNAS's Stokes.

Trump's struggles to bring the war to a close on his terms have driven him to seek Xi's support. But the president, analysts said, should expect little from Beijing on Iran because China's strategy is to appear useful in the conflict while avoiding a costly Middle East entanglement of its own.

"It's hardly an ideal position for a US president visiting China for the first time in a decade," said Aaron David Miller, an American Middle East negotiator during Democratic and Republican administrations. "Trump comes without leverage he might have had now without tariffs and a war that's alienating much of the world, handing Xi more than a few points."

Taiwan and China's claims on the self-governing island didn't come up the last time Trump and Xi met in South Korea, US officials said. This time those aides believe the topic will be addressed, though the US has signaled that Trump isn't eager to bog down negotiations with Taiwan-related talk, according to one adviser in touch with the White House.

Trump's prep for the summit hasn't included any plans for the US to make a shift on its stance toward Taiwan, said senior administration officials.



Fu Cong, China's permanent representative to the UN, votes against a sanctions resolution targeting Iran, at the UNSC in New York, the US, on March 12, 2026.

EDUARDO MUNOZ/REUTERS



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