

President hopeful Pakistan's efforts will bring lasting regional peace

US presence only stokes insecurity, instability: **Qalibaf**

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Sunday expressed hope that Pakistan's mediation efforts between Tehran and Washington would lead to the reinforcement of lasting peace, stability, and security in the region.

Pezeshkian made the remarks in a meeting with visiting Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi who arrived in Tehran on Saturday for talks with Iranian officials amid diplomatic efforts to put an end to the ongoing regional tensions triggered by a recent war of aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran.

The Iranian president described the military campaign against Iran as a great crime contrary to all humanitarian, legal, and international principles, saying that the main goal of the aggression was to create internal instability and attempt to weaken and overthrow the Islamic Establishment in Iran.

However, he said, they never imag-

ined that the "great and noble" nation of Iran would stand by their country with such unity.

The Iranian president also called on the Islamic countries to strengthen their unity to reduce the possibility of intervention and aggression by trans-regional powers and the Israeli regime in the region.

Earlier on the day, the Pakistani official also held a separate meeting with Iran's top parliamentarian Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf.

Some regional governments claim that the US presence in the region would guarantee their security and stability. However, recent developments have shown that this presence not only does not bring security for them but it will create insecurity in the region, Qalibaf said.

New proposals exchanged

The meeting came as there were reports of exchange of new proposals between Iran and the United States for resumption of peace

talks during the visit by the Pakistani official.

Fars News Agency reported on Sunday that Tehran and Washington have exchanged new proposals through the mediator Pakistan for resumption of peace talks stalled over several key issues.

The news agency said that Washington had presented a five-point list which included a demand for Iran to keep only one nuclear site in operation and transfer its stockpile of highly enriched uranium to the United States.

The US also refused to release "even 25 percent" of Iran's frozen assets abroad or pay any reparations for the damage inflicted on Iran during the aggression which broke out on February 28 against Iran, according to Fars.

The report added that the US had conditioned the cessation of hostilities on all fronts on the start of negotiations.

In its proposal, Iran has called for an end of the war on all fronts including Israel's campaign in Leba-

non, as well as a halt to the US naval blockade on Iranian ports in place since April 13.

It also called for lifting all the sanctions and the release of Iranian assets frozen abroad under long-standing US sanctions.

Fars said the Iranian proposal had emphasized that Tehran would continue to manage the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a vital energy conduit which it has largely kept closed since the start of the US-Israeli aggression against Iran. Iranian media reported that Tehran conveyed its views to the Pakistan after receiving a set of proposals from the American side.

The latest developments surrounding the negotiations between Iran and the US came as efforts are underway to end the ongoing tensions in the region, which have been caused by the weeks-long US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

On April 11-12, Iran and the US held the first round of negotiations brokered by Pakistan, days after Islamabad mediated a cease-



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) shakes hands with Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi during a meeting in Tehran on May 17, 2026.

president.ir

fire to halt the aggression on Iran. However, it failed to produce an agreement due to the US excessive demands.

Efforts to bring back the sides to the negotiating table also failed after Iran refused to take part in the

second round due to the US violation of the ceasefire.

However, the two countries have been exchanging proposals through mediator Pakistan to find a way out of the crisis which has also disrupted global economy.

Armed Forces warn US of harsher response to possible onslaught

International Desk

A senior spokesman for Iran's Armed Forces warned the United States on Sunday that any renewed aggression against Iran will be met with "more crushing and severe response" than the previous one.

Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi made the remarks in response to recent threats by the US President Donald Trump against Iran if no agreement is reached between the two countries.

Shekarchi said on Sunday that repeated threats by "delusional" US president against Iran would only deepen Washington's troubles.

"Repeating any foolishness to compensate for America's disgrace in the third imposed war against Iran will bring no consequence other than receiving more crushing and severe blows for that country," Shekarchi said.

He added that the "desperate" US president should know that if the US launches new aggression against Iran, US army will face "unprecedented, offensive, surprising and tumultuous scenarios," and will sink into a "self-created quagmire" caused by Washington's adventurous policies.

Trump has escalated his war rhetoric against Iran in recent days, threatening renewed strikes against



Abolfazl Shekarchi
IRNA

the country if diplomatic efforts do not reach an agreement.

Iran's Armed Forces gave a strong response to a recent aggression by the US and Israel against Iran by launching missile and drone attacks on the US military bases in the regional countries and the Israel's positions in the occupied territories. The unprovoked US-Israeli war on Iran began on February 28 with air raids that assassinated senior Iranian officials and commanders and targeted civilian infrastructure, residential areas, educational institutes, and historical and cultural sites.

More than 3,700 people were killed in the attacks on Iran.

FM spox: US at it again to justify war with 'grand lie'

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said the US and the Israeli regime are fabricating a new "grand lie" to justify their illegal "war of choice" against the Islamic Republic, specif-

ically as they claim their actions aim to restore stability in global energy markets.

In a post on his X account on Sunday, Baqaei said the reckless warmongering of the US and Israel is the root cause of shattered promising diplomatic processes.

Through an unprovoked military aggression against Iran, he added, Washington and the Tel Aviv regime deliberately injected insecurity into vital energy routes and are now accusing Tehran of destabilization, to put into practice Goebbels' infamous dictum: "Accuse others of what you yourself are doing."

"This is their familiar, cynical playbook: manufacture crisis and war; then escalate further under the noble banner of 'restoring stability' and 'defending peace,'" the Iranian spokesperson emphasized.

The spokesman's post came amid heightened tensions in the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime corridor through which a significant share of the world's energy trade passes.

Iran shut down the Strait of Hormuz to the aggressors and their allies in response to the aggression. Iranian authorities began enforcing much stricter controls following US President Donald Trump's announcement of a blockade targeting Iranian vessels and ports last month.

Speaker named Iran's special envoy for China's affairs



Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf
IRNA

International Desk

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf was appointed as the country's special representative for China's affairs.

According to sources cited by Tasnim news agency, Qalibaf assumed the responsibility on Sunday following a proposal by President Masoud Pezeshkian and subsequent approval by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Mojtaba Khamenei.

"Given the nature of Qalibaf's appointment, this responsibility differs in terms of the level of authority from previous representatives," the sources said. They explained that Iran's current Ambassador to Beijing, Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, had previously served as the

president's representative for China affairs, while the late Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Ali Larijani, had acted as "the Leader's special representative for China affairs."

"However, Mr. Qalibaf has assumed this responsibility as Iran's special representative following the president's proposal and the Leader's approval," the sources added.

Earlier this month, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi paid a visit to China for high-level meetings, amid a shaky ceasefire between Iran and the United States that has largely lost its original purpose due to US interference with international commercial shipping.

Araghchi exchanged views with his Chinese counterpart on key issues, including the recent imposed war against Iran, the situation in the Strait of Hormuz, developments in West Asia, the expansion of trade relations, and the broadening of international cooperation.

Rahmani Fazli, who currently serves as Iran's ambassador to China, said recently that Beijing plays a key role in Tehran's political balancing strategy and has worked to reduce tensions in West Asia following the US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

Iran condemns Israel's assassination of senior Hamas commander



Izz El-Din Al-Haddad

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry in a statement on Saturday condemned Israel assassination of a senior Hamas commander, describing it as yet another

desperate attempt by the regime to crush the unstoppable spirit of Palestinian resistance.

The statement came after the Israeli regime assassinated general commander of al-Qassam Brigades Izz El-Din Al-Haddad, his wife and child on Friday night.

Iran's Foreign Ministry extended deepest condolences to the Hamas leadership, the people of Palestine, and to all Muslims and freedom-seekers around the globe.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemns the terrorist act by the savage Zionist regime in assassinating Izz al-Din Haddad, Commander-in-Chief of the Qassam Brigades, along with his wife and child," the statement said.

The Foreign Ministry made it crystal clear that this criminal act, like all previous assassinations, is an integral part of the Israeli regime's broader colonial scheme aimed at the total erasure of Palestine.

The statement also denounced the United States, the Israeli regime's biggest military, financial, and political sponsor, stating that Washington bears full complicity in every single one of these heinous crimes.

Earlier in the day, the Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, had officially confirmed the commander's assassination in the "cowardly" Israeli airstrike on Gaza City the previous night.

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