

Securing national interests sole goal of talks with US: *Pezeshkian*

Qalibaf vows 'crushing' response if war resumes



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (R) talks with Pakistan's Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir in Tehran on May 23, 2026.
● president.ir

relations with friendly countries, including Pakistan," but he said the main goal is solely to secure the interests of the Iranian nation through appropriate and suitable solutions. "The United States will not emerge victorious in this conflict, and it will be the countries of the region and the world that suffer serious losses. The Zionist regime is the only party seeking to secure its own interests in the region through war", Pezeshkian told Munir. The Pakistani official, for his part, said that Israel seeks its interests in conflict and discord among Muslims, and it is seriously hostile to anyone who tries to resolve conflicts.

Munir also pointed to the negotiations between Iran and the US, saying that "fortunately, the negotiation process is progressing well", expressing hope that the talks will reach a favorable outcome for Iran and all countries in the region as soon as possible.

Iran-US MoU

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said on Saturday that Tehran was in the final stages of drafting a framework for a deal with the US. "Within a reasonable period of 30 to 60 days, the details of these points will be discussed and a final agreement will ultimately be concluded. We are currently in the process of finalizing these memoranda of understanding," he told state broadcaster IRIB. "Our intention is first to draft a memorandum of understanding, a kind of framework agreement composed of 14 clauses," Baqaei said. He noted "a trend towards rap-

prochement" with Washington but said "it does not necessarily mean that we and the United States will reach an agreement on the important issues." "The issue of the Strait of Hormuz is among the subjects addressed in this 14-point memorandum of understanding but more importantly, ending the piracy carried out by the United States against international navigation," said Baqaei.

He was referring to Iran's closure of the strait following the aggression and a blockade that the US has imposed on Iranian ports.

No nuclear talks

The Iranian official added that the nuclear issue is not part of an initial framework Iran is drafting. "At this stage, we will not discuss the details of the nuclear issue... we have decided to prioritize an urgent issue for all of us: ending the war on all fronts including Lebanon," the Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

He added that the nuclear file will be "subject to separate discussions" at a later stage. The Pakistani official also held a separate meeting with Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf who warned on Saturday of a "crushing" response if Washington resumes hostilities.

'Crushing' response

"Our armed forces have rebuilt themselves during the ceasefire period in such a way that if (US President Donald) Trump commits another act of folly and restarts the war, it will certainly be more crushing and bitter for the United States than on the first day of the war," Qalibaf posted on social media. Qalibaf made the warning after meeting with Pakistan's army chief, a leading figure in international efforts to negotiate an end to the war, which broke out after the US and Israel attacked the Islamic Republic on February 28.

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Saturday that Iran's main goal in negotiations with the United States is merely to secure the nation's interests through "appropriate solutions." President Pezeshkian made the remarks during a meeting with visiting Pakistan's Army Chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, whose

country is mediating negotiations between Tehran and Washington to end a recent US-Israeli aggression against Iran. Referring to Iran's distrust of the US due to repeated breaches of promise, strikes during negotiations, and the assassination of Iranian officials, Pezeshkian said that under such circumstances, Iran has entered the path of negotiations relying on "brotherly

Tehran seeks UNSC action over Arab support for US-Israeli aggression

International Desk

Iran called on the UN Security Council to hold several Arab states accountable for their involvement in the US-Israeli aggression against Iran after American officials acknowledged the countries aided Washington during the war on Iran.

Iran's Ambassador to the United Nations Amir Saeid Iravani in a letter submitted to the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council on Friday said that several Persian Gulf Arab states and Jordan are obligated to provide "full compensation" for both material and moral damages inflicted on Iran.

"Despite the Security Council's failure to hold the states along the southern shores of the Persian Gulf and Jordan accountable for their internationally unlawful acts against Iran, they are under an obligation as responsible states to make full reparation to the Islamic Republic of Iran, including compensation for all material and moral damage caused by their internationally wrongful acts," he said.



Amir Saeid Iravani
● AFP

In the letter, Iravani pointed to recent correspondence sent by Kuwait and Bahrain to the Security Council and their "baseless claims" against Iran, noting that the real issue was the participation of regional states in military operations against Iranian territory. "These letters once again fail to acknowledge the crucial and decisive fact that the United States and the Israeli regime have committed acts of aggression and conducted unprovoked and unlawful attacks against Iran," he said. The Iranian envoy further pointed to recent public statements by senior American officials, including the US president and commanders from US Central Command (CENTCOM), which he

said openly acknowledged that several countries on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf had aided Washington during the war on Iran.

According to the letter, the cooperation included granting access to military bases and facilities, logistical and operational support, intelligence sharing, air defense coordination, and access to airspace used during military operations against Iran.

Iran specifically named Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Jordan as states that facilitated or supported the attacks, stressing that these actions amounted to violations of international law and constituted participation in acts of aggression under UN General Assembly Resolution 3314.

The letter further noted that claims by those governments that their actions fell under the right of self-defense under Article 51 of the UN Charter were legally invalid, asserting that it was Tehran itself, as the "victim of aggression," that possessed the legitimate right to self-defense under international law.

Qatar says supports comprehensive Iran-US deal to break deadlock

International Desk

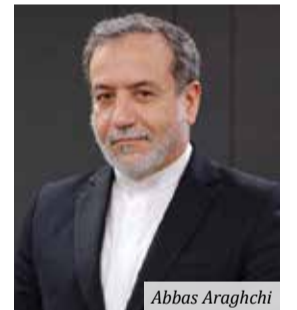
The Qatari foreign minister reaffirmed his country's "unwavering support" for efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive agreement to end the crisis in the region which has been caused by a recent aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani made the remarks in a phone call with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi on Friday night, during which they discussed ongoing efforts to achieve peace and reinforce regional security and stability.

Qatar's top diplomat stressed the need for all parties to engage constructively in order to secure sustainable peace and enduring stability in the region as mediation efforts by Pakistan are underway to narrow the gap between Tehran and Washington in



Mohammed bin Abdulrahman



Abbas Araghchi

a bid to end the US-Israeli war on Iran.

On Saturday, Pakistani and Qatari officials met Iranian officials in Tehran to help the conclusion of a peace deal between Iran and the United States.

Qatar's top diplomat also underlined that freedom of navigation remains a fundamental principle that cannot be compromised, saying that any closure of the Strait of Hormuz or attempts to use it as a means of pressure would further deepen the crisis and threaten the vital interests of countries across the region.

Iran shut down the chokepoint to enemies and their allies following the launch on February 28 of the United States' and the Israeli regime's latest bout of unprovoked aggression targeting the Islamic Republic.

The Islamic Republic began exercising far stricter controls after the US government announced a blockade of Iranian vessels and ports in continuation of the aggression and in violation of the terms of a ceasefire agreement reached between the two countries following peace negotiations in Pakistan.

Islamabad aims to ...

It seems likely that Qatar has also entered into talks from this angle, and it is even possible that Doha has proposed compensation to Iran in order to safeguard its investments. In practice, a significant portion of Qatari investments has been put on hold due to the disruption of shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz—both outbound from and inbound to Qatar—following its complicity in an act of aggression against Iranian territory. As a result, Qatar may even move ahead of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council framework and offer compensation independently; such a step would not be unlikely.

Pakistan's prime minister has also traveled to China, with regional issues reportedly on the agenda. How do you assess China's role at this juncture? Can Beijing shift the balance by exerting pressure on one side?

In reality, Sharif's visit to China ap-

pears to be aimed at leveraging the "China card" to place pressure on Iran to show flexibility in the negotiations. However, it should not be overlooked that Pakistan-China relations have entered a fully strategic phase, and part of this visit is undoubtedly tied to broader developments in bilateral ties, which may have nothing to do with the negotiations. Still, the possibility that Pakistan has asked China to exert pressure on Iran in this context cannot be ruled out.

Given the current diplomatic efforts, how do you foresee the trajectory of these initiatives? Is there a chance of reaching a temporary understanding before resolving the core disputes?

There is no bright prospect of the negotiations reaching a successful outcome through mediation by Qatar and Pakistan alone. Perhaps if major powers such as Russia and China were to step in as guarantors of the process, there might be grounds

for cautious optimism. At present, however, it does not appear that these talks will ultimately lead to a meaningful understanding between Iran and the United States. One side will have to back down from its demands. The conditions set by the United States are highly maximalist, while Iran's demands are realistic and grounded in battlefield realities. It therefore seems that Washington is the side that will need to come to terms with those realities and scale back its position.

As the World Cup approaches, the issue takes on added significance. The tournament could act as a double-edged card: on one hand, it may box in the United States, pushing it to ease tensions in order to manage fuel prices and sustain tourism flows during the event; on the other, much like past World Cups or even Olympic Games that have coincided with conflicts, it could also become a flashpoint for renewed confrontation between Iran and the United States.



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