

# Araghchi: Islamabad memorandum 'has never been closer'

## International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi announced on Friday that a possible memorandum of understanding (MoU), initially drafted and brokered by Pakistan between Tehran and Washington in Islamabad in April, "has never been closer."

Stressing that the media should refrain from speculating about the contents of the agreement, Araghchi added, "In line with our responsible and transparent approach, all details will be shared with the public in due course."

While various media outlets have published details of a potential 14-point draft that includes lifting the naval blockade on Iran, US President Donald Trump has announced he cancelled military strikes against Iran due to progress in negotiations.

Iran insisted on Friday on its right to enrich uranium and maintain control over the Strait of Hormuz under any deal with the United States, after President Donald Trump said a draft accord was ready. US ally Israel has said that Trump had promised it that any agreement would see Iran stripped of its enriched nuclear material, but Tehran's official IRNA news agency said this was not even on the table. Iran and the United States have engaged in

weeks of indirect negotiations seeking to bring to an end the war sparked by US-Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic on February 28.

A ceasefire took effect in April, but sporadic episodes of violence have occurred, each time sparking new fears of a return to all-out war, despite Trump repeatedly stating a deal was within reach.

After inking an initial memorandum of understanding, IRNA said, Iran and the US would hold 60 days of talks and that, "Iran's right to enrich uranium and the retention of enriched material... will be emphasized with a view to their inclusion in the final agreement."

Beyond this, according to IRNA, Iran would insist on managing traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, the key maritime trade route carrying oil and gas from the Persian Gulf. Tehran has blockaded the international waterway since the outbreak of war with the US and Israel.

## Control on Strait of Hormuz

Iran, which has only allowed a trickle of ships to pass through the strait, has insisted that vessels obtain permission from its armed forces before transiting. "Iran makes no commitment in this text to cede the management of the strait or the restoration of conditions that existed



Abbas Araghchi  
IRNA

prior to the American and Israeli military aggression," IRNA said, confirming that, "The broad outlines of the current text" was being finalized.

Claiming that a draft deal had been "brought to the highest level of Iranian leadership and approved," Trump cancelled on Thursday a threatened wave of bombings against targets in Iran, adding, "Time and place of the signing to be an-

nounced shortly."

Trump said the finer points of the arrangement had been approved by the US and its allies in the region, including Israel.

On Friday, Iran's Mehr news agency, quoting a source close to Iran's negotiating team, published what it said was the text of a draft deal being finalized.

The draft, it said, would end the war on all fronts including Lebanon, see the release of \$24 billion in Iran's frozen assets, and set a 60-day period for negotiations on Tehran's nuclear program.

It also includes the suspension of sanctions on the sale of Iran's oil and petrochemical products, and the complete lifting of the US naval blockade on Iranian ports, in place since April 13.

However, the American president reacted to the reports by the Iranian media reports, claiming that Tehran's stated version of the proposed US-Iran deal is not what was agreed to.

Iran's description of the proposed agreement "bears no relation to the truth," Trump said.

"They better get their act together, and fast!" Trump said in a statement on his Truth Social platform.

## Reparations for war damage

Mehr said the draft says the US and its allies should pay Iran reparations for damage caused by the war and would "present reconstruction plans for Iran amounting to at least \$300 billion".

"Final negotiations will not begin before the release of half of Iran's blocked funds, suspension of Iran's oil sanctions, and lifting of the naval blockade," the report added.

Citing a Western source, Reuters reported that the memorandum between the US and Iran could be signed as soon as Sunday, with Geneva emerging as the likeliest venue.

The aim was to finalize the wording by Saturday so the agreement could be signed by US Vice President JD Vance and Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammed Baqer Qalibaf. No venue had been established but Geneva was emerging as the likeliest.

## President: Iranians united in defending homeland against threats

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said that the nation will defend its independence and territorial integrity despite mounting threats and pressure amid US-Israeli aggression.

Addressing the General Assembly of Iran's Academy of Medical Sciences on Friday in Tehran, Pezeshkian pointed to two rounds of war that were imposed on Iran during one year — the 12-day war in June 2025 and the ongoing US-Israeli aggression, which started on February 28 — and highlighted that the hostile actions are clear attempts to halt Iran's progress.

"Despite all the pressures and threats, the Iranian nation will defend the independence, dignity, and territorial integrity of the country," Pezeshkian stated, Press TV reported. The comments came a day after US President Donald Trump threatened to hit Iran "very



Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (L) addresses General Assembly of Iran's Academy of Medical Sciences on June 12, 2026.  
president.ir

hard" and even occupy Iran's strategic Kharg Island, before backtracking hours later and claiming that a deal between Tehran and Washington was imminent.

Pezeshkian highlighted national cohesion and solidarity as Iran's most important assets in the current climate.

The president noted that the public has consistently shown its willingness to defend national interests. He pointed to ongo-

ing nightly public rallies, stating that the nation's sustained presence has "thwarted the enemies' plots" and disrupted their calculations.

For more than 100 nights, Iranian citizens have gathered in the streets of major cities, to voice support for the Islamic Republic.

These nationwide demonstrations were sparked by the onset of US-Israeli aggression, the assassination of Leader the Islam-

ic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, and the tragic deaths of thousands of Iranians in US-Israeli strikes, including schoolchildren in the city of Minab.

In response to the aggression, Iran's Armed Forces launched 100 waves of successful retaliatory strikes against sensitive and strategic American and Israeli targets throughout the region and restricted transit through the Strait of Hormuz.

On April 8, forty days into the war, an Islamabad-brokered temporary ceasefire went into effect. However, the first round of Tehran-Washington negotiations failed to reach an agreement, with the latter imposing an inhumane "naval blockade" of Iran.

Since then, both Israel and the US have violated the truce, sparking Iran's retaliatory attacks and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz.

## Iran, UAE hold first 'face-to-face meeting' since war: Report

### International Desk

Senior national security officials from Iran and the United Arab Emirates reportedly held a face-to-face meeting for the first time since the start of the US-Israeli war against Tehran, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

According to Bloomberg, this week's meeting marked a stark turnaround for both sides and comes amid their growing acknowledgment of the importance of calmer bilateral ties, the people said, asking not to be named discussing sensitive matters.

During the recent military aggression, the UAE betrayed its Persian Gulf neighbor Iran and facilitated US-Israeli strikes on the Islamic Republic. Meanwhile, reports said the Emirates conducted a series of "covert" attacks against Iran during the aggression.

Exercising its legitimate right to self-defense against the aggressors, Iran conducted retaliatory strikes on American bases and assets in the region, including those in the UAE.

Iran's reprisal attacks dealt a major blow to the Emirates' reputation as a financial haven for international investors and hit its economy hard.

The UAE's leaders now want to keep

their bold economic ambitions, including investing billions of dollars in increased oil production and in AI data centers, on track. The relationship is important for Tehran too, as the Persian Gulf nation was among the Islamic Republic's biggest trading partners before the war began.

Since the war began in late February, Iran has attacked the UAE the most of any country. Abu Dhabi struck back on multiple occasions and has taken the most aggressive stance among its Arab neighbors toward the Islamic Republic. The UAE appears to be now following the same path as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which have also been hit by Iran but are trying diplomacy to de-escalate tensions. All three Arab states are conscious of the need to coexist with a neighbor across the Persian Gulf with a population of 90 million and significant military power, despite the extensive damage it's suffered from the US and Israeli bombardment.

The only other known contact between the UAE and Iran during the war came in mid-April, shortly after a ceasefire. UAE Vice President Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed spoke with Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf about ways to ease tensions in the region.

## Deputy FM rejects anti-Iran allegation of 'state threat activity'

### International Desk

Deputy foreign minister rejected recent anti-Iran allegations made by a group of 24 countries over what they called Iran's "malign actions" in some countries, describing them "politically motivated" and devoid of legal or factual basis.

Kazem Gharibabadi made the remarks in a post on X on Thursday after a group of 24 countries, led by the United States and including several of its key European allies, called on Iran to halt what they alleged were "lethal

plotting and other malign actions" in Europe, North America and Australia, including activities targeting Iranian dissidents, journalists, and Jewish and Israeli communities and interests. Gharibabadi said the statement was an attempt to exert political pressure on Iran under the guise of international concern.

"The recent joint statement on so-called 'Iranian state threat activity' is a collection of political, unsubstantiated and categorically rejected allegations," Gharibabadi stated.

His remarks came hours after a group of 23 countries, led by the United

States and including several of its key European allies, called on Iran to halt what they alleged were "lethal plotting and other malign actions" in Europe, North America and Australia, including activities targeting Iranian dissidents, journalists, and Jewish and Israeli communities and interests.

"States with a clear record of violating Iran's sovereignty, supporting military aggression, harboring terrorist anti-Iran groups and shielding the Israeli regime from accountability have neither the legal nor moral standing to accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran," Gharibabadi emphasized.

Explaining Iran's view of the statement, he stressed that the allegations are being used as a political tool to obscure wider issues of international conduct.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist

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