

# Iran shuts Hormuz again over Israel's unabated strikes on Lebanon

## International Desk

Iran said on Saturday it was once again closing the vital Strait of Hormuz shipping lane on Saturday over Israel's relentless attacks in Lebanon, calling them a violation of its deal with the United States to end the war. Iran's military command, the Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, said in a statement that the closure was in response to "the explicit breach of the first clause of the post-war memorandum of understanding by the United States". It said the move was a response to the Israeli regime's continuous and persistent violation of a ceasefire it has agreed to with the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah in southern Lebanon. The statement added that the Israeli attacks had led to "brutal killings and the

displacement of hundreds of thousands of oppressed people" in southern Lebanon, adding that the regime had also failed to withdraw its forces from those territories.

The military command said that the closure was the first step in response to the breach of commitments under the MoU by the US and its allies, warning that Iran would adopt further measures to compel the enemy to fulfill its obligations.

The strait, an important conduit for oil and gas shipments, was shut by Iran for much of the war, sending shockwaves through global energy markets.

Iran agreed to reopen the waterway after Tehran and Washington signed an agreement on Wednesday to end the US-Israeli war of aggression against Iran, which began in late February and was halted by a ceasefire in early April. The 14-article MoU requires Iran to



The photo shows an explosion of what appears to be white phosphorus fired by Israeli forces on a border area inside Lebanon on April 30, 2026.

● REUTERS

reopen the Strait of Hormuz provided that the US and its allies completely end their aggression against Iran and its regional allies, Lebanon in particular.

The Israeli regime not only did not stop the attacks on Lebanon but it has intensified its deadly strikes.

Earlier Saturday, Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon killed at least 16 people, including two children, hours after reports emerged of a ceasefire agreement there. Seven people remained trapped under the rubble after the strikes hit the southern city of Nabatiyeh and nearby villages, Leba-



non's National News Agency said. Israeli attacks on Lebanon began in March after Lebanon's resistance movement Hezbollah launched military operations against the regime in

response to the regime's aggression against Iran. According to Lebanon's Health Ministry, the death toll in the latest war between Israel and Hezbollah has surpassed 4,000.

## Pakistan: US-Iran technical talks due Sunday in Switzerland



Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (L) greets Pakistan's Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi (R) before a meeting in Tehran on June 20, 2026.

● IRNA

US Vice President JD Vance also said Saturday that he expects to travel to Switzerland in the coming days for talks with Iran, saying negotiations were going well.

The developments followed a visit by Pakistan's Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi to Tehran where he met Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi for talks on the progress of negotiations, which has been brokered by Islamabad. On Wednesday, Iran and the US signed the 14-point memorandum of understanding which calls for a permanent end to hostilities across all fronts, including Lebanon, oil export waivers, the removal of the US naval blockade on Iran within 30 days, and the restoration of commercial traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

The two sides also agreed to hold talks on removal of Iran's sanctions and Iran's nuclear program during a 60-day period.

Switzerland, on 21 June," the ministry said in a statement on Saturday, adding that Pakistani and Qatari mediators would participate in the discussions with US and Iranian representatives.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei in a televised interview announced the departure of the Iranian negotiating team to Switzerland on Saturday for discussions on the implementation of the agreement.

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Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said technical talks to implement the US-Iran deal to end the aggression against Iran would be held in Switzerland on Sunday as an Iranian negotiating team left Iran for Switzerland on Saturday.

"As a follow-up to the signing of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, technical-level talks will be held in Burgenstock,

## VP announces phased release of \$25b frozen assets under US memo



## International Desk

An Iranian vice president said on Saturday that an estimated \$25 billion of the country's frozen assets would gradually be released under a recent memorandum of understanding (MoU) reached between Tehran and Washington.

Mohammad Jafar Qaempanah told IRNA that a recent visit by the Iranian negotiating team headed by Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf to Qatar was aimed at finalizing the mechanisms and framework for the release of Iran's assets blocked in foreign banks. He noted that the financial resources will be directed toward expanding critical infrastructure — such as transport, highways, and airports — to improve public welfare.

Under the MoU signed between Iran and the United States on Monday, the two countries agreed that Iran's frozen assets in foreign countries should be released.

The 14-point deal, which includes a commitment from both sides to hold further talks on a final agreement in the next 60 days, was finalized following intensive mediation efforts by Pakistan and support from other regional countries.

The MoU calls for a permanent end to hostilities across all fronts, including Lebanon, the removal of the naval blockade on Iran within 30 days, and the restoration of commercial traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

The deal also includes a US-backed reconstruction and economic development plan for Iran worth at least \$300 billion, oil export waivers and the release of Iran's frozen assets. During the 60-day period, the two countries will negotiate on the removal of sanctions on Iran as well as Iran's nuclear program, especially its enriched uranium stockpile.

Despite arrangements envisaged in the agreement for releasing Iran's assets, American officials have recently hinted at using the resources to compensate for the damage inflicted on some regional countries by the US-Israeli war of aggression against the Islamic Republic.

On Thursday, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent claimed that any damage Iran causes to Washington's Persian Gulf allies would be paid for with funds extracted from Iranian accounts.

Iran's High Council for Human Rights on Saturday strongly condemned the statement, describing the comments as a violation of fundamental principles of international law and human rights.

"Such positions, which are in line with unilateral policies and illegal coercive measures against the Iranian nation, violate the principle of sovereign equality and the immunity of state property," the statement said.

The council emphasized that under international law, no government is permitted to unilaterally confiscate, seize, or transfer the assets of another state.

"This approach undermines the rule of law at the international level," it added.

According to Iran's High Council for Human Rights, Iran reserves the right to pursue the matter through all legal and international mechanisms.

The council also called on the international community, UN bodies, and defenders of the rule of law to take a responsible stance against US unilateral actions.

## Iran raps French FM's remarks as 'height of hypocrisy, duplicity'

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman strongly condemned recent meddling remarks by the French foreign minister concerning the Islamic Republic, describing them as an example of "hypocrisy and duplicity" in France's political culture, as reported by Press TV.

In a French-language post on X on Friday, Esmail Baqaei wrote, "Mr. Minister, it appears that hypocrisy and duplicity have remained among the defining characteristics of the French political culture to this day." He went on to invoke the work of French playwright Molière, referring to the 1664 play Tartuffe or the Hypocrite.

"The same vice that Molière accurately described in the play Tartuffe or the Hypocrite in 1664: 'Hypocrisy has become a fashionable vice.'"

Baqaei reminded how Paris remained silent, while Iranian cities were subjected to attacks, saying



French officials had effectively sided with the attackers during the latest unprovoked American-Israeli aggression targeting the Islamic Republic. "At a time when Iranian cities were being brutally bombarded and innocent Iranians were being savagely massacred in Minab, Tehran, Lamard, Isfahan, and elsewhere, you remained silent and in fact collaborated with the aggressors," the spokesperson wrote, referring to some of the targeted cities, where civilian casualties were rife.

According to the official, the French government would, therefore, selectively resort to so-called "human rights concerns" for political purposes.

"Today, in line with your regime's political interests, your conscience has suddenly and selectively awakened, and you brazenly preach about the human rights! What hypocrisy and duplicity!"

The remarks came after the French top diplomat Jean-Noel Barrot stated that his country would oppose the lifting of United Nations Security Council sanctions against Iran unless negotiations concerning the Islamic Republic met, what he called, Paris' desired expectations regarding the nation's peaceful nuclear energy program.

Barrot also made similar interfering comments regarding the Islamic Republic's defensive missile program and regional influence.

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