

Iran, Oman hold first meeting on Hormuz governance

International Desk

Iran said on Monday it had held its first meeting with Oman on managing the Strait of Hormuz since it signed a preliminary deal with the United States to end the aggression against the Islamic Republic.

"During a trip to Muscat, the first meeting of the Joint Hormuz Committee was held," said Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi on X. "While reviewing the current issues related to the strait, we exchanged views on the future management."

Iran and Oman border the strait, through which a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas passed prior to the conflict.

Iran blockaded the waterway to enemies and their allies following the launch of the latest bout of unprovoked American-Israeli aggression against the Islamic Republic. It began exercising far stricter controls

after US President Donald Trump announced the continuation of an illegal naval blockade of Iranian vessels and ports in violation of the terms of a ceasefire announced on April 7.

A Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding (MoU) was recently signed between Tehran and Washington with the aim of ending the cycle arising out of the aggression. The MoU's fifth clause underlines recognition of Iran's sovereignty over the chokepoint.

Following the launch of the aggression, Iran and Oman began talks on the future governance of the waterway in line with the states' sovereign right over it.

Iran on Sunday warned that any attempt by ships to bypass its preferred route through Hormuz would "increase tensions" in the Middle East. The strait comprises Omani and Iranian territorial waters. "Any attempt to adopt new or sepa-

rate arrangements compared to what is underway by the Islamic Republic of Iran, will only lead to more complicated situations and delays in the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, and will increase the tensions," Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said. The published text of the memorandum of understanding says Iran will define the future administration of the strait in dialogue with Oman and the other Persian Gulf States, but "in line" with international law.

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said they were taking measures to control traffic in the strait and that vessels violating those measures would be dealt with more firmly than before.

Mohammad Mokhber, an adviser to Iran's Leader, wrote on X that as long as Iran managed the strait, Washington's "hegemonic dreams in the region will not be realized."



Picture posted by Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi on X on June 29, 2026, shows the first meeting of the Joint Hormuz Committee between Iran and Oman in Muscat.

Tehran says 'no technical meetings' with US in coming days

International Desk

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi on Monday denied reports that Iranian and American technical teams will meet in the coming days in Qatar to discuss the implementation of a recent memorandum of understanding reached between Tehran and Washington to end war on Iran.

"No technical meetings of the working groups are planned for this week," Gharibabadi told reporters, referring to the Iranian week ending on Friday. He added that consultations with Qatar are continuing, including efforts to follow up on the implementation of the opposite side's commitments under the Islamabad memorandum of understanding (MoU).

"The first round of technical talks within the framework of the designated working groups will be held once conditions are met and after



agreement is reached on the date and venue," the Iranian diplomat emphasized.

Citing US officials, American news site Axios reported on Sunday that Tehran and Washington would hold a meeting in Qatar on Tuesday to resolve their dispute over the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

It came after the US and Iran reportedly agreed to "stand down" following an exchange of strikes around the Strait of Hormuz over the past few days.

Traffic in the Strait of Hor-

muz fell during the tit-for-tat strikes, slowing the recovery of a waterway through which 20% of the world's crude oil once flowed.

A US official told the CBS News on Sunday that vessels would be able to move through the Persian Gulf waterway "freely," and that talks on a deal to permanently end the war would continue.

US President Donald Trump also claimed on Monday that a meeting would be held in Qatar's capital at Iran's request.

"IRAN HAS REQUESTED A

MEETING. IT WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW IN DOHA!" he wrote on Truth Social, without giving any details.

White House spokeswoman Karoline Leavitt said Trump's envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner will attend the meeting with Iran in Doha.

"Special Envoy Witkoff and Jared Kushner will be flying to Doha for high-level meetings this week, as we continue to discuss the memorandum of understanding. On the sidelines of those high-level talks, there will be the technical talks," she said in an interview with Fox News.

Qatar, alongside Pakistan, has acted as a mediator in talks between Iran and the United States aimed at ending the war in the Middle East.

The most recent discussions between Tehran and Washington took place in Switzerland on June 21 with the attendance of delegations from all four countries.

Pezeshkian says \$6b of frozen assets in Qatar set to be unblocked

International Desk

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Monday that \$6 billion of the country's frozen assets held in Qatar will be released and returned to Iran under the recently-signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Iran and the United States.

"Based on the plans made, \$6 billion out of a total of \$12 billion of Iran's funds in Qatar will be released and returned to the country," Pezeshkian said during a meeting with Grand Ayatollah Shobeiri Zanjani.

He added that "necessary follow-ups are being carried out" for the return of the remaining funds. Pezeshkian described the Iran-US MoU as "a great victory for the Iranian people," adding that oil and petrochemical sanctions have been lifted as per the understanding.

"The US has ultimately forced the Zionist regime (Israel) to accept the understanding, although the Zionist regime and some monarchist currents remain opposed to its implementation," the Iranian president noted.

On June 18, Iran and the US signed the 14-point Pakistan-brokered MoU, which calls for a permanent end to hostilities across all fronts, including Lebanon, as well as the

removal of the naval blockade on Iran within 30 days, and the restoration of commercial traffic through the Strait of Hormuz.

Under the MoU, the two sides have entered a 60-day negotiation period, with the goal of reaching a comprehensive final agreement.

US President Donald Trump and American officials have claimed that the initial financial relief under the Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding would be used to purchase corn, wheat and soybeans from American farmers.

Trump insisted that no cash would reach Tehran directly, promising the funds would instead go to US growers to alleviate what he claimed as Iran's "hunger problem."

However, Iran's lead negotiator on Thursday dismissed US claims. "America falsely claims our unfrozen assets will buy their agriculture," Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf wrote on social media platform X. Mohammad Jafar Qaempanah, an Iranian vice president, recently said that an estimated \$25 billion of the country's frozen assets would gradually be released.

He noted that the financial resources will be directed toward expanding critical infrastructure — such as transport, highways, and airports — to improve public welfare.

Germany must offer...

According to numerous documented sources, 86 German companies, operating under export licenses issued by the German government, supplied approximately 1,027 tons of various chemical substances—representing nearly 52% of Iraq's imported chemical materials used in its chemical weapons program—to Saddam Hussein's regime. For example, the German magazine Stern reported in February 1987 on Iraq's chemical weapons program and described a massive chemical production facility located around 120 kilometers north of Baghdad. The complex covered nearly 25 square kilometers, was surrounded by multiple security barriers, and protected by surface-to-air missile systems. At this facility, Iraq manufactured mustard gas, tabun, and sarin for use in the war against Iran. Significantly, Stern reported that the plant's raw materials and equipment, valued at about one billion Deutsche Marks, had been supplied by German companies, particularly a company known as Pilot Plant. The report further stated that, throughout the Iran-

Iraq War, a Hamburg-based company continued exporting machinery to Baghdad for the production of mustard gas.

In light of the doctrine of responsibility reflected in the International Law Commission's 2001 and 2011 Draft Articles, Germany bears international responsibility proportionate to its contribution to Iraq's internationally wrongful acts. Although legal accountability should be pursued through the appropriate mechanisms of international law, there also exists a profound moral obligation that has yet to be fulfilled: an official apology.

To date, the German government has not offered a formal and adequate apology to the Iranian people for its indirect role in enabling Iraq's chemical weapons program. Such an apology represents one of the most fundamental requirements of human rights and historical justice.

Germany has consistently emphasized human rights as a cornerstone of its foreign policy and has demonstrated its willingness to confront historical injus-

ties by commemorating events such as the Holocaust and acknowledging its historical responsibilities. Accordingly, it is reasonable to expect that Germany should likewise officially commemorate June 28 by issuing a formal apology to the Iranian people and holding a symbolic ceremony in memory of the victims of the Sardasht chemical attack and the thousands of other Iranian victims of chemical warfare.

Such an apology cannot erase the suffering, trauma, or lasting memories of the victims and their families. Nevertheless, it would constitute an important act of moral accountability and would reinforce international norms emphasizing states' responsibilities regarding human rights violations. It would also serve as a meaningful reminder that complicity in crimes against humanity carries enduring legal and ethical consequences.

It is our hope that such tragedies will never be repeated and that humanity may move toward a future founded upon peace, justice, accountability, and respect for human dignity.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

CARTOON

