

Iran rejects Trump's Hormuz remarks; urges him to stop 'indulging in delusions'

Strait will only be opened, closed under Iranian command: **Deputy FM**

International Desk

Iran called on the US to "accept the reality of defeat and stop indulging in delusions" after President Donald Trump suggested that he would soon declare the Strait of Hormuz as a "territory of the United States."

The crucial waterway that handled one-fifth of the world's oil before the war "cannot be seized with a tweet, nor with an aircraft carrier, nor by issuing an order, nor through an election speech," Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi said in a post on X early Saturday.

"This strait will only be opened and closed under Iran's command, and as long as you do not accept the reality of defeat and stop indulging in delusions, Iran will continue to enforce the blockade," he added.

With oil tanker traffic through the strategic strait at a trickle and peace talks between the US

and Iran at an impasse, there are few signs that the war, launched by the US and Israel on Iran on February 28, is close to being over.

A 60-day negotiating period intended to hammer out a deal to end the conflict, set when Trump and Tehran signed a memorandum of understanding in mid-June, ends on Monday with few direct negotiations having taken place.

Speaking Friday at a police academy in Nassau County, New York, Trump claimed Iran was being "very badly defeated," and once victory was secured, "pretty soon, I'll be declaring the Hormuz Strait a territory of the United States."

An unnamed White House official later clarified that Trump was joking, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Iran declared the Strait of Hormuz closed in response to the unprovoked US-Israeli aggres-

sion that targeted the country from February 28 until April 7. The US and Iran signed a memorandum of understanding in June to end the cycle that had resulted from the aggression.

Tehran subsequently reopened the strait, but was forced to re-impose the closure after Washington began interfering with the legal transit mechanism that Tehran had devised for passage through the chokepoint in line with the understanding.

Earlier in August, Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) conditioned reopening of the waterway to realization of such imperatives as the US's permanently ending aggression against Iran and its regional allies, lifting its illegal naval blockade and all sanctions against the Islamic Republic, returning the country's frozen assets, and paying compensation for the damage resulting from the aggression.



A vessel moves past a barge along the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas in southern Iran on August 10, 2026.

● AFP

Global oil and gas markets have calmed since prices spiked at the start of the war, but prices are still significantly higher than before the conflict, and rose

again early Friday.

Traffic through the Strait of Hormuz remains a trickle of the 130-140 vessels that typically traverse it during peace-

time. Only two vessels passed through the strait on Friday, with no crude oil shipments visible, according to analysis from ship-tracking firm Kpler.

Islamabad MoU calls for 'end to war', not ceasefire: **Araghchi**

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi disputed descriptions of the understanding reached under the Islamabad memorandum between Iran and the United States in June, saying it called for an "end to the war", rather than a ceasefire.

In an interview with news outlet Shahrara News published on Saturday, Araghchi said the US had violated the understanding and that hostilities had resumed. As a result, he said, there was no such thing as a "60-day ceasefire" that would now need to be extended.

He said the 60-day period referred to a window for negotiations aimed at reaching a final agreement, rather than a ceasefire period. The 60-day negotiating period ends on Monday with few direct negotiations having taken place.

The Iranian foreign minister added that Tehran is still undecided about resuming talks with the US amid disagreements about ceasefire violations and the future of the Strait of Hormuz.

Mediators from both Qatar and Pakistan are exchanging messages and are in contact with Iran, "but this does not mean negotiations", he said. Araghchi blamed the US for the return to violence following the signing of the MoU in Pakistan, and said a new path out of the conflict must be defined.



Abbas Araghchi

Shipping in Strait of Hormuz

He said Iran is separately working with Oman on a technical process to establish new routes for shipping in the Strait of Hormuz, but any transit of ships is contingent on a political solution being reached.

"The routes that previously existed are no longer functional, and a new route must be defined. We are currently designing a temporary route that will become the final route in the next stages," the minister said. He added that "whether or not shipping traffic in the Strait of Hormuz resumes ... depends on the fulfillment of other conditions that the United States must adhere to".

The US and the Israeli regime launched their illegal war of aggression against Iran on February 28 by assassinating Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, along with senior military commanders.

However, forty days later on April 8, the enemies were forced to accept a ceasefire amid Iran's resistance,

successful retaliatory operations, and powerful grip on the Strait of Hormuz.

Tehran and Washington signed the Islamabad MoU on June 17, but the US effectively violated the agreement by striking Iran.

In response, the Iranian Armed Forces have conducted devastating attacks against strategic American targets across West Asia. Iran has also closed the Strait of Hormuz in response to the aggression.

US shifting to economic pressure

Following six months of fighting that has failed to fulfil Washington and Israel's aim of opening the Strait of Hormuz, the US now appears to be signaling a move towards the use of economic pressure to achieve its goals.

On Thursday, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the US will soon apply new economic measures to pressure Iran.

"It will be a combination of economic isolation the world has never seen before, and the continued blockade in the Strait of Hormuz that will keep anything from going in or out of the Iranian ports," he said in an interview on Newsmax.

This strategy is not new: Iran has faced a web of ever-tightening economic sanctions from the US and others since the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

President congratulates India on 80th Independence Day



Narendra Modi

Masoud Pezeshkian

International Desk

President Masoud Pezeshkian congratulates Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government and people of India on the 80th anniversary of the country's independence, describing the occasion as an opportunity to deepen and expand longstanding bilateral relations. Pezeshkian said in a Saturday message to Modi that the deep historical, cultural, civilizational, and popular ties between the two nations are a valuable asset for creating brighter prospects in bilateral relations based on common interests. The Iranian president emphasized Iran's determination to further strengthen comprehensive relations with India, adding that Iran is prepared, through mutual trust and respect and by utilizing the two countries' extensive existing capacities, to take more effective steps

toward consolidating bilateral relations and securing the common interests of the two nations.

In his message, Pezeshkian also prayed for India's growing dignity, progress, prosperity and happiness, and for further strength and flourishing of the longstanding relations between the two countries.

Independence Day is celebrated annually on 15 August as a public holiday in India commemorating the nation's independence from the United Kingdom on 15 August 1947. On this day the Indian Independence Act 1947 came into effect, transferring legislative sovereignty to the Indian Constituent Assembly.

India marked its 80th Independence Day at Delhi's historic Red Fort, featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi hoisting the national flag, as well as a military parade.

Intelligence Ministry demands answers from France over diplomats' activities

Iran's Intelligence Ministry warned France against interfering in the country's internal affairs, saying Paris must answer for the illegal activities of its diplomats.

In a statement on Saturday, the ministry said its forces had discovered the presence of two French diplomats at a secret meeting place while carrying out a judicial order to arrest two suspects in a major case involving foreign infiltration and interference, Press TV reported.

In July 2026, two French diplomats were briefly detained in Tehran after they were found at a meeting linked to a security investigation.

France accused Iranian security forces of mistreating the diplomats, while Tehran

rejected the allegations and said they had been questioned over "unconventional" conduct.

The ministry said the two diplomats had "extensive records of violations and conduct contrary to domestic laws and diplomatic obligations."

After their identities were verified, the matter was reported to the Foreign Ministry, and the diplomats were handed over to Iran's ambassador to France in the presence of diplomatic police, it said.

The ministry further said France subsequently launched a media campaign aimed at deflecting attention from the violations, saying an initial examination of documents found at the site revealed a project involv-

ing foreign infiltration and interference.

"Initial investigations indicate the planning and design of an extensive project with objectives such as infiltration, foreign interference and paving the way for France to take action against the country's independence, through identifying, establishing covert contacts inside and outside the country, and creating networks, along with principles of secrecy, with some individuals of interest to foreigners," the statement said.

The ministry also said that contracts uncovered as part of the project bore the signature of a former French ambassador to Iran, and said the French government must explain its actions.



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