

# Russia, China emphasize Iran's right to pursue nuclear program

## International Desk

Russia and China emphasized Iran's right to pursue its nuclear program and peaceful use of nuclear energy as the United States is trying to exert more pressure on Iran in international bodies over its nuclear activities.

Russia's ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has dismissed Washington's call for Iran to abandon its nuclear program, stressing that Tehran has an "inalienable right" to pursue it.

In a post on X on Friday, Mikhail Ulyanov slammed the US for relying on "wrong assumptions" about nuclear non-proliferation.

"Iran is not obliged to abandon its nuclear program. It is Iran's inalienable right," Ulyanov said.

"Unfortunately, the position of the Republican administration is based on wrong assumptions of non-proliferation norms and the IAEA activities," he added.

Ulyanov was responding to US Ambassador to the United Nations Mike

Waltz, who claimed that Iran had "broken the rules" and was enriching uranium to 60 percent with "no credible civilian purpose."

Iran has maintained a consistent position regarding its peaceful nuclear program since the unprovoked US-Israeli wars of aggression in June 2025 and early 2026.

In both wars, the aggressors targeted Iran's civilian infrastructure, including nuclear facilities, in flagrant violation of international law and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Following the first US-Israeli war of aggression, which began amid indirect talks between Tehran and Washington, the Iranian Parliament unanimously passed legislation in June 2025 requiring the government to suspend all cooperation with the IAEA.

Under the law, IAEA inspectors will not be permitted to enter Iran unless the security of Iranian nuclear facilities and peaceful nuclear activities is guaranteed, subject to the approval of Iran's Supreme National Security

Council (SNSC).

The move was prompted by the IAEA's politically motivated resolution, which paved the way for the aggression against the Islamic Republic, and the UN nuclear watchdog's failure to condemn the illegal attacks.

Iran, as a signatory to the NPT, maintains that its nuclear program is exclusively peaceful and that there has been no diversion of nuclear material following more than two decades of inspections.

Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf and other senior officials have made clear that neither Iran's nuclear rights nor its missile capabilities are on the negotiating table. China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations also called on Thursday for Iran's "legitimate" right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy to be respected.

"Iran's legitimate right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be respected," Sun Lei told a meeting of the UN General Assembly on Russia's and China's veto of a Washington-backed



The reactor building is seen at the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Iran's southern province of Bushehr. ● GETTY IMAGES

draft resolution at the Security Council against Iran.

Sun noted that the current situation surrounding Iran's nuclear program stemmed from the US unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal, of-

ficially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in 2018; its "maximum pressure" campaign against the Islamic Republic; and its launch of military aggressions while negotiations with Tehran were underway.

## Army's spox reaffirms Armed Forces' readiness for any scenario

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Iran's Army spokesman Brigadier General Mohammad Akrami-Nia said on Saturday that the country's Armed Forces are closely monitoring developments in the region and are ready for any scenario.

The enemy had miscalculated by assuming it could destroy the capabilities of Iran's Armed Forces within days and achieve its objectives in the country, but resistance by the military and the Iranian nation's steadfastness upended those calculations, Akrami-Nia said during a meeting with personnel of Army's ground force.

He said the enemy's objectives went beyond Iran's nuclear and missile programs and its support for the resistance front. He said the adversary had pursued broader aims, including overthrowing the Islamic Republic and partitioning Iran.

In a separate interview with Fars News Agency published on Saturday, the Army's spokesman said Iranian Army ground forces denied the United States the opportunity to launch a ground invasion by deploying elite units and brigades along the borders.

"The elite forces and brigades of the [Army] Ground Force, by deploying along the borders, denied the Americans the opportunity to carry out a



Mohammad Akrami-Nia ● IRNA

ground invasion, and today they are still standing at their positions with morale," Akrami-Nia said.

He said the Army's air and air defense operations received extensive media coverage, including the downing of enemy aircraft, but underscored that the efforts of the Army's ground forces also deserved greater attention.

According to Akrami-Nia, the deployment of the ground forces prevented the United States from gaining the opportunity or courage to undertake a ground assault.

The Army spokesman also highlighted the ground forces' role alongside the Air Force, Air Defense Force, and Navy, saying their actions denied the enemy opportunities to act.

The US and the Israeli regime waged their first criminal war against Iran, which lasted 12 days, in June 2025. Their second aggression began on February 28, 2026, and came to a

halt in early April after 40 days.

In both wars, Iran's resistance and successful retaliatory operations forced the aggressors to accept a ceasefire.

Iran has also maintained a tight grip on the Strait of Hormuz since the early days of the second imposed war.

In July, the US conducted waves of deadly air raids on Iran and imposed a naval blockade of the country in violation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Islamic Republic, signed on June 17, to end the war.

In response, the Iranian Armed Forces launched devastating strikes against strategic American targets across West Asia and declared the Strait of Hormuz closed to all traffic. However, fighting between the two countries have died down in recent weeks.

But new reports of the US's dispatch of military aircraft to the region are raising speculation about new conflict.

The Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg News reported on Thursday that the US is sending the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt and three warships carrying about 2,000 Marines to the Middle East. The ships will reinforce the US forces arrayed against Iran with as many as 10,000 sailors and marines.

## Yemen targets Saudi's Aramco in response to airstrikes on Sana'a

### International Desk

Yemen's resistance forces launched attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities on Saturday following major strikes by Saudi military on Yemen's capital.

Flames and smoke were seen rising from a facility belonging to Saudi oil giant Aramco south of the kingdom's capital Riyadh on Saturday, AFP said.

The circumstances remained unclear but in recent weeks Aramco, majority-owned by the Saudi state, has come under attack from Yemen's Ansarullah resistance group targeting the kingdom as part of the war in Yemen where Riyadh is backing forces south of the country.

Aramco remains the flagship company of the Saudi economy and one of the largest firms in the world by market capitalization. Last month, the Ansarullah group said that it launched strikes targeting "sensitive sites" in Riyadh and Aramco facilities in the kingdom's port city of Yanbu.



● REUTERS

In August the group also targeted an airport and a facility belonging to Aramco in Saudi Arabia's southern Najran region.

Loud explosions were also heard in the Yemeni capital of Sana'a on Saturday, as the group reported airstrikes in the area by Saudi forces.

One correspondent heard at least five blasts in different areas, while another saw two warplanes firing missiles on the city.

Al-Masirah TV reported "Saudi aggression" against the capital, without providing details on the targets or casualties.

The channel had also earlier on Saturday reported missile strikes on the tele-

communications network in the northwestern governorate of Saada.

Saudi Arabia bombed the Yemeni capital on Thursday night for the first time since renewed fighting broke out between the two sides in July, Ansarullah said.

After several years of calm, Yemen was plunged back into war in July, pitting Ansarullah, who control most of northwest Yemen including Sana'a, against Yemen's Saudi-backed forces.

The government, based in the city of Aden, controls much of the country's south and east – a region that is larger but less populated.

## Four sabotage groups dismantled in southern Iran

### International Desk

Iran's Intelligence Ministry said it has arrested 31 people belonging to four organized US-Israeli-backed networks linked to efforts to foment unrest and carry out acts of sabotage in Sirjan county, in southern Kerman Province. In a statement on Saturday, the ministry said its intelligence officers in Kerman identified and dismantled the networks following information provided by the public and intelligence monitoring.

The ministry said the suspects were organized into networks using "attractive names" to lure teenagers and young people and had specific duties and plans for actively participating in nationwide calls for unrest.

The statement said the groups also prepared large quantities of Molotov cock-



● AFP

tails and equipment to damage urban surveillance cameras in preparation for street unrest and acts of sabotage.

The ministry further said the groups were involved in extensive acts of violence and destruction during the foreign-backed "coup" in January, including setting fire to a governor's office, damaging banks and government buildings, destroying public and private property and urban surveillance cam-

eras, and attacking a police facility in an attempt to seize weapons.

Peaceful protests began across Iran in late December 2025 over financial grievances, largely linked to the impact of unilateral US sanctions.

After the government intervened and President Masoud Pezeshkian held direct talks with trade guilds, tensions eased and relative calm returned by early January.

However, the situation escalated again on January 8 and 9 amid overt foreign interference, including statements by US President Donald Trump.

According to Iran's Judiciary, the violence on January 8 and 9 was part of a US-Israeli-backed "coup attempt" that resulted in widespread damage across the country and the martyrdom of thousands of civilians and security personnel.

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