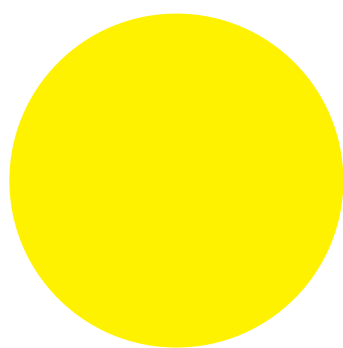


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Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (c) attends a ceremony marking Iran's National Export Day in Tehran, Iran, on October 21, 2026.

Iran FM: We are ready for diplomacy, but will defend ourselves



By Abbas Araghchi
Iranian foreign minister

O P I N I O N

The agendas in my meetings with multiple foreign ministers at the UN General Assembly last month may have differed, but there was one consistent message: Iran seeks a just and honorable deal with the US. To achieve that outcome, the White House must demonstrate seriousness and a genuine will to permanently end its aggression.

While Iran is firmly committed to seeking a dignified peaceful resolution to the conflict, we are also fully prepared to defend ourselves. President Donald Trump entered this war on the basis of fundamentally erroneous assumptions about Iran's fortitude. It appears that he continues to be wrongly told that our armed forces are unprepared to defend the homeland, despite all evidence to the contrary. Instead, our fearless military has learnt valuable lessons from the acts of aggression committed by Israel and America since 2025.

To state the obvious, we have no trust whatsoever in the sincerity of the US administration's professed desire for peace with Iran. The evidence is there for all to see: in June 2025 and February 2026, they bombed us while we were actively engaged in negotiations. And in June of this year, shortly after an agreement was signed by President Masoud Pezeshkian and President Trump, we were attacked for a third time. How can we trust a US president again?

Given that the White House has shown no willingness to reach an understanding on the way forward, while also threatening more violence, there is little reason to expect progress now. The recent escalation across the region, which shows how quickly this conflict can spread and how far its consequences can reach, is evidence of the major risk to international peace and security. In spite of all this, as a career diplomat, I am obliged to do my utmost to give diplomacy a chance, even when hope of success is scant.

At the recent General Assembly, I presented to the US, via mediators, a Seven-Day Plan outlining what needs to be done by both sides to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. Importantly, under this proposal, the US would not be expected to do anything that it has not already agreed to. The outlined steps in the framework agreement are clear, as is the outcome: the Strait would reopen on Day 6, with the resumption of talks for a final deal commencing on Day 7. If the plan is implemented, life in the region will begin to return to normal.

Meanwhile, the White House is refusing to acknowledge the war's mounting costs for ordinary Americans. There is no need to take my word for it, eight months into another US war of choice overseas, even Moody's says the aggression against Iran has cost American consumers an estimated \$265bn this year, or about \$2,000 per household. Surging energy prices make up roughly half of that figure, which does not take into account the much higher toll for the wider world economy. Adding the tab for the many damaged US military bases in the region and massive loss of equipment makes the calamity of this war for US interests exceedingly clear.

The reality is that Iran, simply by virtue of geography, will always have unparalleled leverage over maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. More importantly, despite the hype about alternative routes, the waterway is irreplaceable for both the region and the world economy. The good news is that Iran intends to honor its historic role as a guardian of the strait and those who lawfully traverse it.

There is a way forward, but it can only materialize once the US administration genuinely accepts that it has no military options. That much should already be evident after almost eight months of war, during which none of their publicly stated objectives in attacking Iran have been achieved.

As we again find ourselves at a dangerous juncture, I am duty-bound to warn that any further escalation around the Strait of Hormuz or elsewhere in the region will put civilian lives and the wellbeing of all regional states and the global economy at great risk. This much is the experience of the past, and it will assuredly be the same in the future. If the US again chooses military action over diplomacy, I can say with complete and utter confidence that it will result in an even greater strategic failure. Iran, an ancient and proud civilization, does not bend its knee to any power. That said, Iran is prepared to give diplomacy another chance if we see strong evidence of a sincere desire on the part of the US to achieve a just and honorable solution to permanently end this conflict. President Trump made mistaken assumptions about Iran when entering this war. Repeating that error now will only result in an infinitely more painful outcome.

The article was first published by the Financial Times.



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Iran unlikely to back Russia's Persian Gulf security initiative after 40-day war

By Delaram Ahmadi
Staff writer

INTERVIEW EXCLUSIVE

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has outlined a proposal for Persian Gulf security during a visit to Iran, calling for the participation of littoral states alongside the Arab League, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. This comes as Iran, following the 40-day war, insists that the Strait of Hormuz should

be managed exclusively by Iran and Oman. In an interview with Iran Daily, Javad Heyrannia said Iran had previously put forward a similar proposal to Russia's, but it was not welcomed by the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. In the aftermath of the 40-day war, however, Tehran is no longer inclined to pursue such an approach to ensuring security in these waters.



IRAN DAILY: Given the differences in regional countries' security perspectives and the presence of extra-regional actors, how viable is Russia's proposed initiative, and to what extent does it align with Iran's position?

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es in regional countries' security perspectives and the presence of extra-regional actors, how viable is Russia's proposed initiative, and to what extent does it align with Iran's position?

HEYRANNIA: Russia first put forward a practical initiative for collective security in the Persian Gulf in the late 1990s. It updated its collective security proposal to some extent in 2019 and submitted a further revised version to the United Nations in 2021. The initiative emphasizes that the security of Persian Gulf countries should be ensured with the participation of the countries themselves.

It also calls for a confidence-building process among regional states to develop a shared understanding of threats and pursue ways to address them through bilateral or multilateral diplomacy.

The proposal also envisages a role for observers from outside the region and extra-regional powers. In subsequent stages, this security-building mechanism could pave the way for the establishment of a regional security institution bringing together Persian Gulf countries, including the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and Iran.

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