Iran says 'ball is in the US court' on deal to end war

International Desk

Mediators continue pushing for a deal between Iran and the United States to end the eight-month war between the two countries, with Tehran saying that "the ball is in the US court."

Amid fears the conflict could reignite after Tuesday's midterm elections in the US, the mediators have stepped up their efforts to prevent renewed military conflict that has so far hit the global economy.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baqaei said on Monday that the next move in the standoff with the United States is for US President Donald Trump to make.

"The ball is in the US court, because our demands have been stated very clearly and transparently, and Iran's demands are reasonable and logical," Baqaei told journalists in Tehran.

He said that "everything depends" on the US side accepting the Iranian demands.

"Only then can we discuss the subsequent stages."

The Iranian spokesman said ongoing negotiations, which have been brokered by Qatar, Pakistan and other mediators, were centered around the a seven-day proposal that Iran originally presented to the US side in September, which calls for frozen Iranian assets to be released, the US naval blockade to be lifted and an end to fighting on all fronts, in exchange for the phased reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and further negotiations on other topics.

President Trump rejected the initial proposal, but both sides have since exchanged revisions, and Trump has said repeatedly in recent weeks that he just needs to make a decision on whether to launch new attacks on Iran, or to make a deal to end the war.

Baqaei also confirmed comments attributed to Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi on Saturday that the proposal could be shortened.

"The basis of dialogue and talks between Iran and the US via mediators is still Iran's seven-steps proposal, which is now condensed, making it possible to implement it within two days," he said.

Baqaei reiterated that condensing the plan would not change Iran's underlying stance that a return to talks on the country's nuclear program could only happen after it verified that all its conditions were met.



An Iranian woman holds Iran's national flag on a street in Tehran, Iran, on November 1, 2026.
AFP

Highly enriched uranium

Asked whether the possibility of transferring Iran's highly enriched uranium stockpile to another country was raised in the talks, and whether Iran might agree to that, he said no.

An official briefed on the talks said Iran's negotiators had left on Sunday but not because of any problems in the talks, and added that a draft proposal was being circulated without elaborating.

The war, which the US and Israel launched suddenly on February 28, has led to Iran's closure of the key Strait of Hormuz waterway, a US blockade on Iranian ports and repeated bouts of Iranian drone and missile fire US bases in Persian Gulf Arab states.

Tehran, Ashgabat emphasize need to capitalize on capacities to expand cooperation

International Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi held talks with his Turkmen counterpart Rashid Meredov in Ashgabat, focusing on strengthening bilateral cooperation and reviewing regional and international developments.

Araghchi met with Meredov, who also serves as Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan, on Monday, during a one-day visit to the Central Asian country.

The two officials reviewed the latest developments in Tehran-Ashgabat relations and emphasized the need to capitalize on existing capacities to expand cooperation across various political and economic fields.

Meredov highlighted the historical ties between the two neighboring countries, describing them as a solid foundation for further strengthening bilateral relations.

"I am very pleased that, over the past 35 years, since Turkmenistan's independence, we have maintained steadily expanding relations with Iran in all fields, including trade, politics and culture," he said.

The Turkmen foreign minister also expressed appreciation for Iran's support for his country in various international forums.

Araghchi arrived in Ashgabat earlier on Monday at the head of a diplomatic, economic and parliamentary delegation, receiving a welcome from Turkmen officials at the airport.



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (4th R) holds talks with his Turkmen counterpart Rashid Meredov (4th L) in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on September 2, 2026.
IRAN'S FOREIGN MINISTRY

The visit is aimed at advancing consultations on bilateral relations, regional and international developments, and ways to strengthen political and economic cooperation between the two countries.

In October, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian also visited Turkmenistan to attend and address two high-level meetings, including a summit of the leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States as a special guest and a summit on the environment of the Caspian Sea littoral states. He said his visit, at the official invitation of Turkmen President Serdar Berdimuhamedov, will provide an opportunity to further deepen Iran's relations with its neighbors and reduce the impact of a maritime blockade.

Iran's Ambassador in Turkmenistan Ali Mojtaba Rouzbehani in an interview with IRNA said Iran and Turkmenistan are seeking to expand rail and road transit, activate a China-Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran route and strengthen regional transport links as part of a broader push to develop independent trade corridors connecting Central Asia with Europe.

Increasing rail and road transit, operationalizing the China-Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran route, developing the Ashgabat Agreement corridor and boosting multimodal transportation are among the priorities on the two countries' agenda, Rouzbehani said.

He described the signing of a trilateral protocol between Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to develop a corridor linking Central Asia to Europe as a significant step towards achieving these objectives.

Outlining various dimensions of bilateral relations, Rouzbehani said Ashgabat's adherence to the principle of "permanent neutrality" and its avoidance of membership in military blocs were key factors in safeguarding stability along Iran's northern borders.

Border and consular coordination over developments in Afghanistan, alongside the expansion of strategic initiatives such as gas and electricity swaps and the connection of Caspian Sea ports, have further strengthened the scope of cooperation between the two countries.

These initiatives have positioned Turkmenistan as a key partner in reinforcing the regional balance and developing independent trade routes amid competition among extra-regional powers.

China says supports Iran in safeguarding its sovereignty, security

International Desk

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Monday that Beijing supports Iran in safeguarding its sovereignty and security amid threats of renewed US strikes on Iran.

Wang made the remarks during a meeting with Deputy Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Bagheri Kani in Beijing.

The Chinese official said all parties in the Middle East conflict should focus on political solutions rather than resorting to arms again, stressing that dialogue and negotiation are the way to resolve the conflicts.

As fighting in the Middle East drags on and its spillover effects spread, dialogue and negotiations offer the way forward, Wang said.

China stands ready to work with all parties to continue efforts to restore regional peace, guided by its initiatives and proposals for easing tensions in the Middle East, he said.

Bagheri Kani, for his part, said his country would firmly safeguard its security, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and resist threats.

Iran is also willing to engage in talks and negotiations with all parties and work actively for regional peace and stability, he said.

He expressed appreciation for China's initiatives and proposals and its consistent commitment to multilateralism, saying Iran looks forward to China playing a greater role in international and regional peace.



Deputy Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Bagheri Kani (L) shakes hands with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi before a meeting in Beijing, China, on November 2, 2026.
XINHUA

Earlier on Monday, Chinese President Xi Jinping told Omani leader Sultan Haitham bin Tariq al-Said that the Middle East and Persian Gulf region should not become a "wrestling ground for major-country rivalry and geopolitical conflicts".

In a China-Oman joint statement that followed, Muscat said it supports the Chinese peace proposals for the Middle East, and looks forward to a "greater role" by Beijing in achieving lasting stability in the region.

China also announced that its special envoy to the Middle East would visit Iran, Oman and Saudi Arabia this month.

This month, China will send its Middle East envoy to Iran, Oman and Saudi Arabia as a part of "shuttle diplomacy visits... aimed at promoting peace talks (and) easing tensions", a ministry spokesperson told a regular news briefing.

Baqaei: Iran will not tolerate use of neighbors' territory for strikes

International Desk

Iran's Foreign Ministry's spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said on Monday that Iran will never remain silent or refrain from a deterrent response if neighboring countries' territory is used to directly violate its national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the security of its citizens.

Speaking during his weekly press conference, Baqaei said some regional countries had not only failed to prevent the US war machine from using their territory, airspace and infrastructure to carry out aggression



Esmaeil Baqaei
IRNA

ity toward any country in the region. We firmly believe that achieving lasting security and stability will be possible only through intra-regional cooperation and collective confidence-building, without foreign interference," he emphasized.

However, he reiterated Iran's "fully reasonable, legitimate, and unwavering" demand and expectation that regional countries should never allow their territory, airspace or facilities to be used as a platform for aggression or conspiracies against their major and historic neighbor.

During the recent acts of aggression by the United States and Israel against Iran, some regional countries allowed the US to use their territories to launch attacks on Iran.

In response, Iran's Armed Forces targeted the US military bases in those countries.



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