

WORLD

Iran, US peace talks advance with progress

Technical negotiations see establishment of groups for nuclear issues and sanctions

By **JAN YUMUL** in Hong Kong and **CUI HAPEI** in Dubai, UAE

Progress appears to be holding in the technical talks between the United States and Iran in Switzerland, with the establishment of four working groups to oversee the implementation of the mechanisms of their interim peace agreement, according to Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi.

Gharibabadi, head of Iran's technical negotiating team, said an agreement was reached on several key measures by the high-level follow-up committee on the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, which met from Sunday into the early hours of Monday.

The Iranian official is among those remaining in Switzerland after four-party talks between Iran, the US, Pakistan, and Qatar to continue negotiations, which are expected to last a week.

According to a report by Iran's Mehr News, four working groups will be formed for sanctions termination, nuclear issues, reconstruction and economic development, and monitoring and implementation.

Future negotiations will then be conducted by a high-level committee.

Oman and Iran will form a team to reach an agreement on "administration of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz" and associated costs and services, they said in a joint statement on Tuesday. The two states will hold talks with coastal countries and other concerned parties, the statement said.

Apart from the communication line to be established among the MoU's member states for the safe passage of commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz, a conflict prevention unit for Lebanon is also to be created, with Pakistani and Qatari participation.

Meanwhile, Gharibabadi confirmed the US would issue a general license for the sale of Iranian oil, petrochemicals, petroleum products, and related services. This will be published by the Office of Foreign Assets Control, which administers and enforces US economic sanctions programs.

In Pakistan, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian arrived in Islamabad on Tuesday for talks with officials who have been mediating the negotiations.

In the US, President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that Iran has "fully and completely agreed" to

allow nuclear inspectors to return to the country.

"Iran has fully and completely agreed to highest level Nuclear inspections long into the future," Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, adding that bilateral negotiations are "going well."

However, at a news conference in Tehran on Tuesday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Iran's delegation in Switzerland did not meet with IAEA chief Rafael Grossi.

Baghaei said there was no clear schedule for the IAEA to examine the Iranian nuclear facilities.

Trump also said on Tuesday that any Iranian funds unfrozen through sanctions relief or released by the US Treasury would go into a Washington-controlled escrow account, which Tehran could tap to purchase US food and medical supplies.

Frozen assets

Baghaei earlier said Iran would spend its released frozen assets as it sees fit following the US government's remarks.

Abdul Wahed Jalal Nori, a lecturer in the Department of Fundamental and Inter-Disciplinary Studies at the International Islamic University Malaysia, told China Daily that the "institutionalization of dialogue suggests both sides are testing a pathway from confrontation to managed coexistence".

Abdul Wahed said the latest agreement addresses symptoms rather than root causes.

"While sanctions relief and safeguards around the Strait of Hormuz reduce immediate tensions, the fundamental disputes over Iran's regional influence, proxy networks, and the regional security architecture remain unresolved," he said.

Abdul Wahed noted that the real test is whether this evolves into a sustainable political framework or becomes another temporary pause before the next cycle of escalation.

"Neither Washington nor Iran wanted a full-scale war; each wanted leverage. What emerged is not trust, but a pragmatic arrangement driven by mutual exhaustion and the recognition that escalation was becoming too costly," he said.

Agencies contributed to this story.

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A man walks past a welcoming billboard featuring Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian (center), Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari (right), and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif along a roadside in Islamabad, Pakistan, on Tuesday. ANJUM NAVEED / AP

Preserving the past



Palestinian archaeologists work to preserve and restore war-damaged artifacts in the Al-Mawasi area of the Gaza Strip. They collect, document and store antiquities salvaged from governmental and nongovernmental institutions and heritage sites from a tent in Al-Mawasi, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are sheltering. ABED RAHIM KHATIB / AP

Kenyans eye tariff-free boom with Chinese market

By **VICTOR RABALLA**

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Kenya is intensifying efforts to expand its presence in China's vast consumer market, with exporters seeking to significantly increase shipments of avocados, coffee, tea and other agricultural products following Beijing's introduction of zero-tariff access for goods from African countries with which it has diplomatic relations.

The East African nation is also looking to leverage the 9th China International Import Expo, or CIIE, set for Nov 5-10 in Shanghai, as a platform to unlock new business opportunities, attract investment and strengthen trade ties with the world's second-largest economy.

Speaking in Nairobi ahead of the expo, Lucy Muchoki, director of programs and partnerships at the Kenya National Chamber of Com-

merce and Industry, or KNCCI, said Kenya is determined to maximize the benefits of the zero-tariff policy that came into effect on May 1.

"China has already granted Kenya and the rest of Africa tariff-free access and we are working very hard to ensure our businesses seize this opportunity," Muchoki, who represented KNCCI President Erick Rutto, said.

"Kenya is among the leading exporters of horticultural products to Europe, and with duty-free access to China, we are looking forward to exporting more to China's 1.4-billion-strong consumer market," she added.

Muchoki stated that Kenya exported 6.7 metric tons of avocados to China in May and is targeting to triple the volumes as demand continues to grow.

"We want Chinese investors to come to Kenya so that we can process and export finished products,

creating employment opportunities for our young people," she said.

Vera Ontumbi, a trade banking specialist at Stanbic Bank Kenya, said the annual Shanghai exhibition has become one of the bank's most important platforms for helping Kenyan exporters access buyers, build partnerships and tap into China's rapidly expanding consumer market.

She also encouraged greater use of renminbi in cross-border transactions, arguing that it would simplify payments, reduce transaction costs and improve efficiency for both Kenyan exporters and Chinese importers.

"The future of China-Africa trade and investment is very promising and we want to ensure our clients are well positioned to capture these opportunities," Ontumbi said.

Hua Wei, president of the National Exhibition and Convention Center in Shanghai, who led

the Chinese delegation described the expo as the world's only national-level exhibition dedicated to imports, offering Kenyan producers a unique opportunity to access Chinese consumers.

He noted that Kenya will participate through both the country pavilion and the trade-in-services section, enabling it to showcase its products, tourism attractions and investment opportunities.

Zhou Zhencheng, minister counselor at the Chinese embassy in Kenya, said the expo has evolved into a powerful platform for expanding market access, strengthening global cooperation and supporting China's drive to increase imports and promote more balanced trade.

"China's continued high-level opening-up will create new opportunities for countries around the world and contribute to a more open global economy," Zhou said.

Briefly

DPRK Top leader vows to beef up defense

The top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea vowed to beef up national defense capabilities at a key meeting of the Workers' Party of Korea, state media reported on Tuesday. Kim Jong-un, general secretary of the WPK, made the remarks at the 2nd Plenary Meeting of the 9th Central Committee of the WPK held from Saturday to Monday, according to the official Korean Central News Agency. He said the United States and the Republic of Korea are "getting ever more undisguised in their moves toward the reinforcement and modernization of armed forces in the region", including support for the ROK's pursuit of nuclear-powered submarine capability and that they held "a military confab of the 'Nuclear Consultative Group'", aggravating the situation on the Korean Peninsula, said the report.

LITHUANIA Prime Minister Inga Ruginiene resigns

Lithuanian Prime Minister Inga Ruginiene announced her resignation on Tuesday, triggering the formation of a new government following changes within the ruling coalition. Following the resignation, President Gitanas Nauseda has 15 days to nominate a candidate for prime minister, who must then secure the approval of the Seimas, the parliament. The new coalition will be the third governing alliance formed by the Social Democrats since the parliamentary elections in 2024.

GUATEMALA President rules out US military operations

Guatemalan President Bernardo Arevalo ruled out US military operations against organized crime in his country, telling Agence France-Presse on Monday that his country's constitution "does not allow the operation,

the conduct of joint military operations" with foreign armed forces. US "conducting military operations, carrying weapons ... the law does not allow it", the president said in an exclusive interview with AFP. US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth told CBS News a week ago that targeted strikes could be deployed in Guatemala and Ecuador to target criminal gangs and drug trafficking. Guatemala is, however, part of an anti-drug-trafficking alliance promoted by President Donald Trump. Arevalo noted that the agreement provides for "training, support at the level of tactical operations for the planning of raids, and intelligence sharing".

UNITED STATES Database for checking citizenship blocked

A federal judge on Monday struck down a White House database containing citizens' private information, ruling it unlawful. "The federal government has knowingly trampled on the privacy rights of American citi-

zens in a manner that threatens the sacred right to vote. This Court cannot stand idly by while that happens," Judge Sparkle Sooknanan from the US District Court for the District of Columbia wrote in a ruling. Federal agencies were scrambling to comply with an executive order aimed at reshaping federal elections, so they "haphazardly combined and repurposed" the private information of US people, Sooknanan said.

QATAR 13 dead after blast at gas facility

Thirteen people were killed and dozens injured in an explosion at a gas processing facility inside Qatar's massive Ras Laffan Industrial City, Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi, Qatar's energy minister said on Monday, in one of the deadliest gas industry accidents in more than two decades. Liquefied natural gas facilities were not impacted by the explosion on Sunday.

AGENCIES—XINHUA

Extreme heat, storms cause chaos in Europe

By **JULIAN SHEA** in London
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Two children aged two and four are among 18 people who have died so far in a heat wave across France, as large parts of Europe struggle to deal with record-breaking summer temperatures.

Helene Mourges, the prosecutor of the southeastern French town of Carpentras, where the children were reportedly found in a family car, told reporters, "the causes of death are yet to be determined, but the heat is the leading line of inquiry".

Three elderly people in the Bordeaux region died over the weekend

from health issues related to the extreme heat. In addition, the BBC reported that 20 people had died by drowning from the start of the weekend to Tuesday morning, as they became increasingly desperate for ways to escape the extreme conditions, as the heat wave known as an Omega block, because of its similarity in shape to the Greek letter, continues to draw up warm air from the Sahara desert with no wind to provide any respite.

The World Meteorological Organization's European State of the Climate 2025 report, published in April this year, showed that at least 95 percent of Europe experienced above-av-

erage annual temperatures in 2025, with the annual sea surface temperature for Europe being the highest ever recorded, and that as a whole, Europe is warming at more than double the global rate, a stark message that is being reinforced by current weather conditions.

In the northern Spanish city of San Sebastian, traditionally one of the country's cooler regions, Reuters reported that on Tuesday the temperature was set to reach 40 degrees Celsius, more than twice the city's historical average for the date.

"We are seeing temperatures between five and 10 degrees above normal for this time of year, and in

some northern areas even more than 10 degrees above average," said Ruben del Campo, spokesman for Spain's State Meteorological Agency.

Heat wave red alerts were issued in 12 cities across Italy, with reports of faltering power supplies in the northern city of Turin, because of strain on the grid, and similar warnings were issued in Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg.

In the United Kingdom, temperatures are on course to exceed those recorded in the summer of 1976, the benchmark against which all extreme temperatures are popularly measured. Tuesday was predicted to be the hottest day on record in London, and storms and torrential rain overnight saw firefighters in the capital take 400 calls after midnight.



People seek shade as hot weather continues in London on Monday. RASID NECATI ASLIM VIA GETTY IMAGES