

An Iranian Delegation Has Participated in the Key Meetings of the Global Financial Crime Watchdog FATF After a Six-Year Absence and Amid Efforts by the Country to Get Off the Body's Blacklist

IRAN NEWS

A Successful Iranian Intelligence Operation Has Revealed the Whereabouts of Individuals Linked to the Israeli Spy Agency Mossad, Who Would Serve the Israeli Regime's Information War Against the Islamic Republic

VOL. XXIX, No. 8394 TEHRAN Price 50,000 Rials

www.irannewsdaily.com

THURSDAY OCTOBER 23, 2025 ABAN 01, 1404

2 DOMESTIC



Activation of the Snapback Mechanism Has No Legal Basis

> SEE PAGE 2

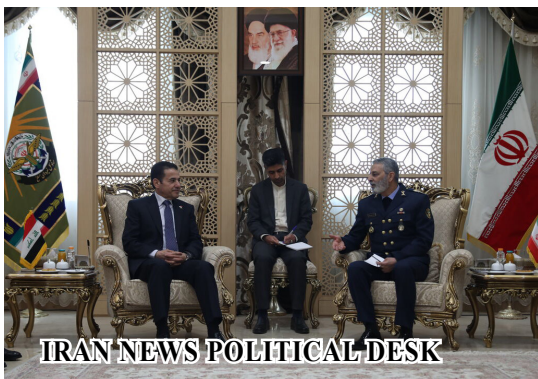
3 INTERNATIONAL

Putin-Trump Summit on Hold After Russia Rejects Ceasefire

> SEE PAGE 3



Iran Calls for Full Implementation of Iran-Iraq Security Agreement



TEHRAN - The Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces has called for the full implementation of the Iran-Iraq security agreement, stressing the need to strengthen military, political, and economic cooperation to enhance regional stability.

According to a statement from Iran's Armed Forces General Staff, a high-ranking Iraqi delegation led by Qasim al-Araji, Iraq's National Security Advisor, met with Major General Seyed Abdolrahim Mousavi in Tehran for talks on bilateral and regional issues.

At the beginning of the meeting, Major General Mousavi emphasized the deep brotherhood between the two nations, saying: "One of the main concerns of the Americans is the unity and solidarity between the peoples of Iran and Iraq — a bond whose benefits and impacts are well understood by the enemies."

Referring to what he described as the "sinister U.S. plans" during the occupation of Iraq, Mousavi added: "If the recent aggressions by the Zionist regime and the United States against the Islamic Republic of Iran had not taken place, the American agenda to dominate Iraq's space might not have become so evident."

The Iranian Armed Forces Chief reiterated the necessity of fully implementing the bilateral security agreement between Tehran and Baghdad.

In response, Qasim al-Araji underscored the deep and unbreakable ties between the two nations, saying: "No one can damage the special and profound relations between Iran and Iraq."

Larijani Thanks Russia for Support for Tehran at UNSC



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran's top security official has expressed gratitude on the part of the Islamic Republic towards Russia for the latter's support at the United Nations Security Council for Tehran's rightful stance in the face of Western states' attempts at re-imposing coercive economic measures on the country.

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Ali Larijani made the remarks in the Iranian capital on Tuesday, meeting with visiting Russian presidential envoy Alexander Lavrentiev.

Larijani, who also serves as a senior adviser to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, commended Russia's consistent cooperation with Iran at the Council.

He was referring, among other things, to the Russian diplomatic mission to the UN's recent categorical rejection of the "snapback" of nuclear-related sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The support saw Russia and China consistently denounce and refuse to recognize restoration of the sanctions that had been triggered by the UK, France, and Germany's recourse to the mechanism in August.

President Vows to Remove Domestic Barriers Hindering Iran's Economic Growth

TEHRAN - President Masoud Pezeshkian reaffirmed his administration's determination to eliminate bureaucratic and structural obstacles that act as "internal sanctions" against Iranian entrepreneurs and producers. Speaking at a ceremony marking National Export Day on October 21, 2025, Pezeshkian stressed that the government, in coordination with the legislative and judiciary branches, is committed to improving the business environment and empowering the private sector to drive national growth.

"We are determined to correct and eliminate any issue that, in practice, acts as an internal sanction and creates obstacles for economic activists," the President declared. "The heads of the legislative and judiciary branches fully support this effort, and the Supreme Leader has repeatedly emphasized the need to facilitate economic activity. If these challenges persist, it is due to our own inefficiency and shortcomings, not a lack of will or guidance."

Pezeshkian emphasized the pivotal role of producers and traders in the strength and stability of societies. Citing the teachings of Imam Ali (AS), he said: "Merchants and manufacturers are the foundation of social resilience, and we must do everything possible to improve their situation and promote business growth."

He noted that his administration has already established regular dialogue with the private sector. Over the past two months, the government has held weekly meetings with members of the Entrepreneurs' Assembly of Iran, bringing together experts from relevant ministries and private-sector representatives to address production bottlenecks. "I personally review the reports from these sessions every month," he said.

Earlier in the day, Pezeshkian also met with members of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and announced that the government is ready to establish a similar framework of cooperation with them. "The 14th administration is determined to remove obstacles to production — whether they relate to laws and regulations, diplomacy, foreign exchange policies, or smuggling," he stated.

The President expressed dissatisfaction with the current volume of Iran's foreign trade, which remains below \$100 billion, and called for bold, long-term goals. "I have never been satisfied with lagging behind other nations in any field," he said. "Why should our trade volume remain under \$100 billion? Why should it not reach \$1 trillion? People and nations achieve what they can



IRAN NEWS ECONOMIC DESK

envision and demand. If we do not set high goals for ourselves, we cannot expect major achievements."

Pezeshkian emphasized that improving the business environment requires genuine cooperation between the government and the private sector. "Frankly, all economic ministers and even the Foreign Minister should have been present here today to hear your concerns directly," he said to business leaders. "Our presence in government positions is only justified if it helps solve your problems."

Reiterating his administration's commitment to removing barriers and facilitating business operations, he added: "It is up to us — government and entrepreneurs together — to decide what kind of future we want. We will dedicate whatever time and energy it takes to build a better tomorrow."

He went on to underline that the government would not yield to obstacles or restrictions in this path. "Together, we will create the future that Iran and the Iranian people deserve," Pezeshkian said. "We will not surrender to limitations or inefficiencies. Our determination is to eliminate every factor that acts as a domestic sanction against economic activity."

The President also highlighted the government's efforts to expand foreign relations, especially with neighboring countries, as part of a broader strategy to support exporters and traders. "We are making every effort to improve the environment for your international trade and interactions, particularly with our neighbors," he said.

Pezeshkian called on business associations and trade unions to take a more active role in self-regulation and oversight. "Economic organizations themselves must closely monitor compliance with the law to prevent isolated violations that could harm the entire business climate," he warned. "Let us all strive to achieve the best possible standing for Iran's economy. If we truly believe in this goal, we will find a way — or we will create one."

The President concluded his address with a message of unity and determination, stating that overcoming domestic inefficiencies, rather than external pressures, is key to unlocking Iran's full economic potential. "Our strength lies not in avoiding challenges but in confronting and removing them," he said.

The National Export Day ceremony brought together leading exporters, business representatives, and government officials, marking a renewed commitment by the administration to reform domestic regulations, expand trade, and restore confidence in Iran's economic future.

"Hell" Will Be Unleashed If Iran Attacked



TEHRAN (PressTV) - Iran is prepared to deliver a decisive response to any future aggression, says the commander-in-chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), warning that the country "will unleash hell against the enemy."

Major General Mohammad Pakpour made the remarks in a Tuesday meeting with Iraqi National Security Advisor Qasim al-Araji in Tehran. Pointing to the 12-day aggression against Iran by Israel and the United States in June, the commander warned that the adversaries seek to weaken the unity of regional countries.

"The Zionist regime sought to disrupt Iran's national cohesion through assassinations of commanders and acts of sabotage, but with the wisdom of the Leader and the vigilance of the people, this plot was foiled."

"The enemy thought our missile power would diminish in the early days of the conflict, but we acted with force and precision, destroying our intended targets accurately."

Major General Pakpour expressed appreciation for Iraq's efforts to control anti-Iran groups during the 12-day war and called for the full implementation of bilateral security agreements and the establishment of a field committee to monitor border areas.

"These groups are a threat to the security of both countries and must be contained through joint cooperation," he said.

During the meeting, the Iraqi official praised the steadfastness of the Iranian nation against the Israeli-US aggression.

"In the 12-day Zionist war against Iran, the enemy expected the Iranian people to rise against their own system, but the nation instead demonstrated its unity and loyalty to the principles of the Revolution."

Iran Calls for Joint Action to Revive Islamic World's Water Resources



IRAN NEWS NATIONAL DESK

TEHRAN - Abbas Aliabadi, Iran's Minister of Energy, called for renewed collaboration among Islamic countries to sustainably manage water resources, emphasizing that the time has come to revive the region's historic water heritage through shared policies. Speaking at the fifth Conference of Water Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Aliabadi highlighted the critical importance of water as both a source of life and a symbol of divine order.

"Although water-related issues can lead to competition, the rich history of Islamic civilizations demonstrates that traditional water systems, such as qanats and reservoirs, reflect social cooperation based on faith, justice, and knowledge. It is time to revitalize this civilizational heritage through modern, joint policies," he said.

Aliabadi stressed that fair water management is not only a technical or economic necessity but also a moral and religious duty, urging countries to act collectively to ensure water security for current and future generations. He cited Iran's successful experiences in water self-sufficiency and sustainable development, including designing and implementing drinking water distribution projects, constructing hundreds of dams with environmental considerations, developing local water and wastewater treatment technologies, and modern irrigation systems.

Despite facing severe sanctions, Aliabadi noted, Iran has been able to design and execute major water infrastructure projects domestically and in some neighboring countries. He also highlighted shared regional challenges, including climate change, reduced rainfall, increasing evaporation, pressure on surface and groundwater, and population growth. "We must move toward convergence rather than competition, because sustainable water management as a public resource requires collective action and cooperation among Islamic nations," he said.

Parliaments as the Key to Reforming the Unjust Global Economic Order

TEHRAN - The Chairman of the Economic Committee of Iran's Parliament has called on legislative bodies across the world to take an active role in establishing a fair and sustainable global economic system. Speaking at the 151st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva, Seyyed Shamseddin Hosseini said retaliatory tariffs and the expansion of tax evasion by multinational corporations have disrupted the equitable order of international trade. He emphasized that parliaments must become the "voice of economic justice and global solidarity" to advance fair and sustainable trade.

Hosseini made these remarks during a session of the IPU's Standing Committee on Sustainable Development, which focused on the theme: "Building a Fair and Sustainable Global Economy: The Role of Parliaments in Countering Protectionism, Reducing Tariffs, and Preventing Tax Evasion by Multinational Corporations."

Hosseini stressed that achieving a fair and sustainable global economy has become a strategic necessity for the international community. He pointed out that ongoing protectionist policies, economic sanctions, retaliatory tariffs, and widespread tax evasion by multinational companies undermine the fair order of global trade and weaken governments' capacities to mobilize resources for sustainable development.

The Iranian parliamentary official highlighted the pivotal role of parliaments in correcting current global economic imbalances. He outlined key areas where legislative bodies can make a difference: Strengthening national legislation and oversight to promote fair, transparent, and balanced trade policies; Enhancing healthy competition and ensuring equitable access for all countries to global markets; and Combating tax evasion and promoting international financial transparency through the adoption of global frameworks to curb illicit activities by multinational firms.

Hosseini also emphasized the importance of preventing the illegal transfer of capital and redirecting resources gained from anti-corruption efforts toward essential sectors such as education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability. He called for greater multilateral cooperation and mutual trust through the support of free trade agreements, the exchange of legislative experiences, and the prevention of unilateral economic measures and harmful sanctions that impede nations' development and well-being.

He further advocated for green economic policies, such as environmental taxation and financial incentives for sustainable development projects, noting that these initiatives are critical for building a resilient global economy that serves humanity as a whole.

"Parliaments must serve as the moral and political compass of the global economy," Hosseini



IRAN NEWS POLITICAL DESK

said. "They should actively participate in drafting a Global Parliamentary Guide for Fair and Sustainable Trade that ensures justice, transparency, and equality among nations."

In another session of the IPU Assembly, Hojatoleslam Morteza Agha-Tehrani, Chairman of the Cultural Committee of Iran's Parliament, addressed a specialized panel on interfaith dialogue titled "Combating Intolerance and Promoting Religious Literacy for More Inclusive and Peaceful Societies."

Agha-Tehrani stated that in today's world, dialogue among religions is not merely a moral choice but a necessity for the survival of humanity and the preservation of lasting peace. "If religions are properly understood," he said, "they become sources of mercy, justice, and human dignity."

He described religious literacy as an enlightened understanding of humanity's divine origin and, referencing the teachings of the Qur'an, emphasized ethics, compassion, and tolerance as the foundations of global peace.

Citing the Islamic Republic of Iran's experience in promoting interfaith coexistence, Agha-Tehrani noted that Zoroastrian, Jewish, and Christian minorities in Iran enjoy full rights and have officially recognized representatives in Parliament. He pointed to Iran's initiatives such as the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly, the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought, and Unity Week as clear demonstrations of the country's commitment to interreligious dialogue.

He also highlighted the status of women and the family in Islam, calling for the global protection of human dignity and urging the international community not to remain silent in the face of violence and genocide.

The 151st IPU Assembly is being held in Geneva, Switzerland, from October 18 to 23, 2025, with parliamentary delegations from around the world in attendance. This year's assembly focuses on upholding humanitarian norms, supporting relief efforts during crises, and promoting inclusive democracy for a sustainable world.

Iran's delegation to the event includes Hamidreza Haji Babaei, Deputy Speaker of the Iranian Parliament and head of the delegation; Seyyed Shamseddin Hosseini, member of the IPU Executive Council and Standing Committee on UN Affairs; Hojatoleslam Morteza Agha-Tehrani, representative of Tehran; Rahim Zare, representative of Abadeh; Rahmatollah Norouzi, representative of Aliabad Katoul; and Elham Azad, representative of Naein and member of the IPU Executive Council.

Through their participation, the Iranian representatives aim to emphasize the role of parliaments as drivers of global reform, justice, and dialogue—both in the economic sphere and in fostering mutual understanding among the world's religions.

IRAN NEWS



Oil Minister Departs Tehran for Doha

TEHRAN (ILNA) – Oil Minister departed Tehran for Doha to attend the 27th Ministerial Meeting of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF).

Mohsen Paknejad left Tehran to participate in the GECF ministerial gathering scheduled for Thursday, October 23, in Doha, Qatar. The 27th GECF Ministerial Meeting will be hosted by Qatar, marking the seventh time the country has hosted the event. The last time Doha held the meeting was in 2016.

The main agenda of the 27th ministerial meeting focuses on coordinating member countries' positions in response to global policies that challenge and restrict the growth of the gas industry and its markets. The ministers will also address key organizational matters, including the election of the next GECF Secretary-General and preparations for the 8th GECF Heads of State Summit to be held in Moscow.

Iran Begins Issuing Work Visas for Afghan Nationals



TEHRAN - The Iranian Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare announced the start of issuing work visas for Afghan nationals beginning in Mehr 1404 (September–October 2025). According to Seyed Malek Hosseini, Deputy Minister for Entrepreneurship Development and Employment, this initiative is being implemented in coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Employers can now submit applications for foreign workers through the Foreign Employment Portal, Hosseini said.

He emphasized that Iranian workers remain the top priority in the domestic labor market. However, if no Iranian jobseeker is available for a given position, a nine-month work visa will be issued for the first year. The visa may later be renewed, depending on the foreign worker's performance and labor market conditions.

Hosseini added that initial agreements with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allow for up to 200,000 work visas to be issued in the first year, based on employer demand. The main goal, he said, is to regulate and monitor the employment of foreign nationals, preventing illegal entries and undocumented labor.

"Foreign workers will only be employed where no Iranian worker is available," he stressed.

Hosseini also announced that the individual self-employment loan ceiling has been raised from 150 million to 200 million tomans, following approval by the Supreme Council of Employment and confirmation by the Central Bank of Iran in October.

The increase, implemented after a three-year hiatus, was made possible through cooperation between the Central Bank, the Ministry of Economy, the Planning and Budget Organization, and the Ministry of Interior.

For selected sectors agreed upon by executive bodies and the Central Bank, the ceiling for individual loans has been raised from 300 million to 350 million tomans, while employer loans—including support for home-based businesses—have increased from 4 billion to 5 billion tomans.

In innovative and knowledge-based industries, individual employment loans now reach up to 900 million tomans.

Although the repayment period for these loans has been shortened from 84 months to 60 months, Hosseini said the higher limits are an important adjustment given inflation and rising business startup costs.

According to the Deputy Minister, Iran's unemployment rate dropped to 7.4 percent in summer 1404 (2025), compared with the same period last year. However, the economic participation rate declined to 40.8 percent, indicating "serious challenges" in the labor market, he noted.

Hosseini pointed out that nearly 2 million Iranians of working age remain unemployed. Wage gaps, high living costs, and mismatches between available skills and regional job market needs are among the major challenges, he said.

Iran Expresses Readiness to Expand Water Cooperation with Saudi Arabia



TEHRAN - The Head of the International Affairs Department of Iran's Ministry of Energy announced that one of the key objectives of the Minister's visit to Saudi Arabia and participation in the 5th Conference of Ministers Responsible for Water of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is to develop joint water cooperation with Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries.

According to the Ministry of Energy, Mohammadvali Alaeiddini, speaking during a meeting with the Saudi Deputy Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture on the sidelines of the OIC conference, emphasized the importance of knowledge exchange among member states.

"Each country has unique strengths in water management, and such meetings create valuable opportunities for mutual understanding and sharing of experiences," Alaeiddini said.

He added that Iran is willing to generously share its expertise in the field of water resources management with all interested countries.

Highlighting Iran's diverse water resources, Alaeiddini noted that the country's supply comes from more than 300 dams, underground aquifers, rivers, and shared transboundary sources with neighboring countries such as Turkey, Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan.

Activation of the Snapback Mechanism Has No Legal Basis

TEHRAN - First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref stated that the government has begun structural reforms starting from the Presidential Office in line with the law, emphasizing that the key to the government's success lies in gaining the people's trust. He also stressed that the move by three European countries to activate the so-called "snapback mechanism" has no legal or legitimate basis.

Speaking at the National Statistics and Planning Day ceremony held at the Organization for Planning and Budget, Aref highlighted the importance of utilizing the experience of former officials and experts in national planning.



"The government had a wartime plan and executed it within those 12 days. The organization performed admirably under pressure," he noted.

Aref described accurate statistics as the "heart of a planning system," warning that manipulating data undermines national progress.

"If real economic growth is minus one percent, declaring it as five percent just to satisfy officials or the public will only create instability," he said.

He emphasized that reliable data and transparency are essential for maintaining public trust, noting

that even small statistical distortions can erode credibility since citizens experience economic realities in their daily lives.

Aref praised the Statistical Center of Iran for regaining its rightful position as a key national institution, while stressing the need to protect its independence and integrity.

The Vice President stated that the government is pursuing structural, organizational, and administrative reforms as outlined in the Seventh Development Plan.

"If these reforms are not implemented, most of the national budget will be consumed by routine expenses," he warned.

He confirmed that reform efforts began within the Presidential Office and are being carried out in coordination with the Administrative High Council, despite resistance from some quarters.

"The government has plans both for normal conditions and for special situations. If our enemies attempt new provocations, we are fully prepared, and our armed forces will respond even more decisively," he asserted.

Addressing the European countries' attempt to trigger the JCPOA "snapback" mechanism, Aref declared the move "completely illegal and baseless."

"Iran gave clear notice in 2016 and 2017 that if the other parties failed to fulfill their commitments under the nuclear agreement, Tehran would also suspend its obligations," he said.

He stressed that as of October 17, Iran's nuclear file at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should be treated as a "normal case," since Iran does not possess nuclear weapons.

"Even two veto-wielding members of the UN Security Council and several other countries share this view," he added.

Aref dismissed concerns about renewed sanctions, noting that Iran has already overcome the most difficult stages of sanctions evasion.

"While sanctions have consequences, we can minimize their impact through domestic initiatives," he said.

Moving Beyond Raw Exports Through Regional Value Chains

TEHRAN - The President of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Sammad Hassanzadeh, emphasized the importance of stabilizing Iran's foreign exchange policies as a foundation for export growth, warning that constant policy shifts cause confusion among exporters and the loss of target markets.

Speaking at the National Export Day Conference, Hassanzadeh congratulated the nation's exporters—whom he called "the flagbearers of Iran's economic dignity"—for their perseverance in keeping production and exports alive despite difficult economic conditions.



"Exports showcase Iran's capabilities and serve as a dialogue with the world through work and innovation," he said. "They prove that the Iranian nation stands tall despite pressures and sanctions, with faith in the future—even though the path of export in Iran is not easy."

Hassanzadeh identified sanctions as the foremost challenge for Iran's exporters, noting that they have long increased the cost of trade and limited international engagement. However, he stressed that unstable currency and trade policies are equally damaging.

"We hope that through regular meetings between the Central Bank and the Iran Chamber, coherence can be restored to this area," he said.

He added that the current export landscape is shaped by new geopolitical uncertainties, from sanctions and changing transit routes to emerging regional monetary arrangements, all of which are reshaping Iran's foreign trade environment.

In this context, Hassanzadeh underlined that Iran must move beyond raw material exports toward participation in regional value chains, calling it an economic and strategic necessity.

"Neighboring markets hold tremendous capacity to absorb Iranian goods and technological services, yet logistical and infrastructure constraints remain major bottlenecks," he explained.

He urged Iranian producers and exporters to rely on regional multilateral agreements and to strengthen private-sector economic diplomacy to transition from raw exports to joint production contracts, technology transfer, and export branding.

Based on ICCIMA research, Hassanzadeh identified three key levers for boosting exports over the next 6 to 18 months:

- Streamlining and targeting regulations along key transit routes—such as the East–West Corridor and railway links with Central Asia—to reduce transportation costs and delays.
- Strengthening financial instruments for exporters, including supply chain financing, regional letters of credit, and risk-coverage mechanisms to sustain production and trade flows.
- Upgrading product standards and national brands in neighboring markets, while increasing participation by small and medium-sized

enterprises (SMEs).

He also called for multilateral regional agreements—covering tariffs, customs, transit, and monetary issues—to connect Iran to global value chains and to empower chambers of commerce nationwide as active players in economic diplomacy.

"By reinforcing these three pillars, we can build an integrated chain from production to transit and guide Iran's non-oil exports toward a sustainable, forward-looking future," Hassanzadeh said.

The ICCIMA president stressed that Iran's private sector remains optimistic, backed by the country's young, creative, and resilient workforce.

"Even without full government support, Iranian exporters continue to conquer new markets one by one," he noted.

Quoting the Supreme Leader's repeated emphasis on the role of exports in supporting domestic production, Hassanzadeh said that export-oriented thinking must be embedded throughout Iran's economic structure.

"Export development should not be the responsibility of a single ministry or agency. All institutions—from the Central Bank to the Ministries of Industry, Economy, and Foreign Affairs—must move in the same direction," he said.

He named digitalization of exports, regional cooperation to mitigate sanctions, and reform of customs, banking, and insurance systems as the key enablers of Iran's export development.

"Every shipment leaving Iran's borders is not just a product—it is a message of peace, cooperation, and creativity from our nation. Trade can be a bridge for friendship and stability in a tense world. To make exports the engine of Iran's growth, we must reduce state control and empower the real private sector. The private sector is not a rival of government—it is its development partner," he said.

Hassanzadeh presented three major proposals to the government, drawn from the perspective of private-sector leaders:

- Fully implement the Law on Continuous Improvement of the Business Environment and involve real private-sector representatives in trade policy decisions.
- Establish a network of experienced Iranian traders in target countries—in collaboration with ICCIMA—to serve as advisers and operational arms of Iran's commercial attachés abroad.
- Ensure stability in currency policies by publishing a clear medium-term roadmap defining preferential exchange rates, currency return regulations, and export tariffs.

"Unstable regulations and constantly changing currency policies have confused exporters and cost us valuable markets," he concluded. "It is time to turn the maze of currency policy into a clear, direct path that capable exporters can follow with confidence."

Iran, FAO Launch Regional Project to Strengthen Climate-Resilient Agriculture



TEHRAN - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has launched a new regional Technical Cooperation Project aimed at enhancing national and regional capacities for climate-resilient agriculture.

According to the FAO office in Tehran, the project — which also includes Afghanistan, Bhutan, and Mongolia — seeks to expand sustainable and drought-resistant production of quinoa, small-grain cereals, and soybeans, all known for their high nutritional value and resilience to dry conditions.

The initiative was officially introduced during a national project inception workshop held on October 19 in Tehran. The event brought together around 40 participants from the public and private sectors, research institutions, civil society organizations, professional associations, farmers, and agribusinesses. Representatives from FAO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, as well as the FAO Representation in Iran, were also in attendance.

During the workshop, participants were divided into three crop-focused groups to discuss the project's background, objectives, expected outcomes, and implementation strategy. They identified priority activities and finalized Iran's national work plan based on local needs and feedback.

Located in arid and semi-arid regions, Iran faces recurring droughts and water scarcity that place significant pressure on its agricultural systems. With the sector consuming nearly 80 percent of the country's total water withdrawals, agriculture remains highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change — including reduced rainfall, rising temperatures, and increased evaporation from soil and water resources.

The FAO regional project provides a platform for participating countries to address water and climate challenges through agricultural innovation, technology transfer, institutional strengthening, and awareness-raising about the nutritional and environmental benefits of drought-tolerant crops.

In Iran, the project aims to promote the cultivation of drought-resistant crops such as quinoa, millet, and soybeans; encourage good agricultural practices; strengthen participatory varietal selection and farmer field schools to boost productivity and sustainability; and enhance national capacities in climate-resilient farming systems and efficient water management.

Iran to Compile National Export Atlas in Cooperation with Private Sector



TEHRAN - In a major step toward redefining Iran's trade strategy, Minister of Industry, Mine, and Trade Seyed Mohammad Atabak announced that the country will prepare a comprehensive "Iran Export Atlas" in collaboration with the private sector. The initiative, he said, aims to shift the nation's export model from a commodity-based to a value-based system.

Speaking during the 29th National Export Day ceremony, Atabak emphasized that exporters are "the engines of moderation and economic development." Reflecting on Iran's historical role in global commerce, he noted that the country, situated along the ancient Silk Road, has long been a vital link in world trade. "Iranian merchants did not merely export goods—they also shared our culture and traditions with other civilizations," he remarked.

The minister highlighted several recent achievements in Iran's export performance, pointing out that 87 percent of Iranian products are now exported to member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) without tariffs—a milestone that could significantly boost Iran's economic growth. He added that trade tariffs with Pakistan are also being reduced and, in some cases, nearly eliminated, paving the way for stronger regional exchanges.

Merz, Macron, Meloni Urge New EU Drive to Cut Red Tape

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) - The leaders of 19 European Union countries have urged the bloc to launch a new drive to “review, reduce and restrain” legislation to make the EU more economically competitive, according to a letter seen by Reuters.

The letter to Antonio Costa, president of the European Council of EU leaders, was signed by leaders including German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, French President Emmanuel Macron and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

“We want to preserve the European Union for what it stands for – freedom, security and prosperity. To do this, we must change its course. Not just a little but substantially,” said the letter, sent ahead of an EU summit in Brussels on Thursday.



Hamas Says It Crushed Gaza Group Accused of Aiding Israel



GAZA CITY (Dispatches) - Palestinian group Hamas said Tuesday its so-called Radea security force had “dealt a severe blow” to an armed group in Gaza it accuses of collaborating with Israel.

In a statement, Hamas said its Radea security force carried out an “operation early Tuesday morning in the southern Gaza Strip, targeting the militia of fugitive Yasser Abu Shabab”.

Hamas added that it arrested “a number of members” of Abu Shabab’s Popular Forces group during the operation and confiscated “military equipment and tools used in their subversive activities”.

The statement added that the operation was carried out “as part of the ongoing deterrence operation against dens of treason”.

Hamas recently established the Radea unit, whose name translates to “deterrence” and whose purpose it says is to “enforce order”.

Clashes broke out early last week in Gaza City’s Shujaiya neighborhood between the Radea force and several armed groups, including that of Yasser Abu Shabab, which Hamas accuses of looting and receiving weapons from Israel.

Abu Shabab’s Popular Forces originally started operating in Gaza’s southern Rafah governorate and was accused of aid looting.

In July, Abu Shabab said his group was able to move freely in zones under Israeli military control and communicated their operations beforehand.

Israeli authorities themselves acknowledged in June that they had armed Palestinian gangs opposed to Hamas, without directly naming the one led by Abu Shabab.

Drone Strikes Hit Sudan’s Khartoum Airport Area



KHARTOUM (Dispatches) - A drone attack struck an area near an international airport in Sudan’s capital on Tuesday, witnesses said, one day before the army-backed government was due to reopen the facility for domestic flights for the first time in over two years.

The airport has been shut since fighting erupted in April 2023 between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), leaving vital infrastructure across the capital heavily damaged.

Witnesses told AFP they heard the sounds of drones in central and southern Khartoum and multiple explosions in the airport area from 4am until 6am local time (0200-0400 GMT).

One eyewitness in the Al-Azhari neighbourhood in southern Khartoum said he “heard the sound of an explosion and then a drone passed overhead”.

A resident in central Khartoum said he was woken “at 4 am to the sound of drones in the sky. Shortly after, we heard loud explosions in the direction of the airport”.

The facility appeared intact during a visit later that day by army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

Speaking from inside the airport, Burhan said the army was “determined to crush this rebellion” — a reference to the RSF led by his former ally Mohamed Hamdan Daglo.

Putin-Trump Summit on Hold After Russia Rejects Ceasefire

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - A planned summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin was put on hold on Tuesday, as Moscow’s rejection of an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine cast a cloud over attempts at negotiations.

A senior White House official told Reuters “there are no plans for President Trump to meet with President Putin in the immediate future” after Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had a “productive call” but opted against an in-person meeting.

Trump had announced last week that he and Putin would meet soon in Hungary to try to bring an end to the war in Ukraine. But Putin has been unwilling to consider concessions. Moscow has long demanded that Ukraine agree to cede more territory before any ceasefire.

Trump, asked by reporters about the prospect for a summit, said he did not want to have a “wasted meeting” but suggested there could be more developments and that “we’ll be notifying you over the next two days” about them.

Kirill Dmitriev, Putin’s investment envoy, said in a social media post that “preparations continue” for a summit.

Russia reiterated its long-standing terms for a peace deal in a private communique known as a “non paper” that it sent to the U.S. last weekend, according to two U.S. officials and two people familiar with the situation.

The communique reaffirmed Russia’s demand for full control of the long-contested eastern Donbas region, according to one official, effectively rejecting Trump’s call for a ceasefire to commence with a freeze of the frontlines at their prevailing locations.

Russia controls all of the province of Luhansk and about 75% of neighbouring Donetsk, which together make up the Donbas region.

European leaders called on Washington on Tuesday to hold firm in demanding an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine, with present battle lines to serve as the basis for any future talks.

NATO said Secretary General Mark Rutte travelled to Washington on Tuesday for talks with Trump that two sources familiar with the matter said would take place on Wednesday.

A Western official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Rutte planned to present to Trump the European views on a ceasefire and any subsequent peace negotiations.

Trump, who last week spoke by phone to Putin and met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, had hoped for another high-profile session with the Russian leader after their August summit in Alaska failed to advance negotiations.

But the two sides postponed a preparatory meeting between Rubio and Lavrov that had been expected to take place in Budapest on Thursday.

Lavrov and Rubio spoke by phone on Monday. Lavrov said the place and the timing of the next Trump-Putin summit was less important than the substance of implementing the understandings reached in Alaska.

The Kremlin said there was no clear date and that “serious preparation” for a summit was needed, which may take time.



“Listen, we have an understanding of the presidents, but we cannot postpone what has not been finalised,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. “Neither President Trump nor President Putin gave exact dates.”

Asked if Moscow had an understanding of a possible date for the summit, Peskov said: “No, there is no understanding.”

Neither side has publicly abandoned plans for Trump to meet Putin. Hungary’s foreign minister, Peter Szijarto, was in Washington on Tuesday, where he posted on Facebook: “We have some serious days ahead”.

But two senior European diplomats said the postponement of the Rubio-Lavrov meeting was a sign the Americans would be reluctant to go ahead with a Trump-Putin summit unless Moscow yields its demands.

“I guess the Russians wanted too much and it became evident for the Americans that there will be no deal for Trump in Budapest,” said one.

The Russians “haven’t at all changed their position, and are not agreeing to ‘stop where they are,’” said the second diplomat. “And I assume Lavrov gave the same spiel, and Rubio was like: ‘See you later.’”

Ukraine’s European allies have been concerned that Trump could meet Putin for a second time without getting any serious concessions from the Russian leader.

In a statement on Tuesday, the leaders of European powers including Britain, France, Germany and the EU said they “strongly support President Trump’s position that the fighting should stop immediately, and that the current line of contact should be the starting point of negotiations.”

Trump has often changed his emphasis in public when speaking about Ukraine. But last Friday after his meeting with Zelenskyy at the White House, he explicitly endorsed the position that a ceasefire should start with forces at their present positions.

Reuters and other news organisations reported that Trump’s meeting with Zelenskyy behind closed doors was contentious, with the U.S. president repeatedly using profanity and pushing Zelenskyy to accept some Russian demands.

But Zelenskyy has painted the meeting as a success because it ended with Trump publicly backing a ceasefire at the present lines, Kyiv’s longstanding position.

European leaders are due to meet this week with Zelenskyy as their guest, first at an EU summit and then at a meeting of the “coalition of the willing” countries discussing a security force to guarantee a post-war settlement in Ukraine. Russia rejects such an international security force.

The choice of Budapest as a venue for a Putin-Trump meeting is contentious within the EU, where Hungary’s Prime Minister Viktor Orban is an outlier as one of the few leaders to maintain warm relations with Russia.

North Korea Fires Ballistic Missiles Ahead of Trump's South Korea Summit Visit

SEOUL (Dispatches) - North Korea fired multiple short-range ballistic missiles on Wednesday, its first launch in months, a week before world leaders including US President Donald Trump meet in South Korea for the APEC summit. Seoul’s military said it detected “several projectiles” launched from an area south of Pyongyang.

Seoul’s Joint Chiefs of Staff said it had “detected several projectiles, believed to be short-range ballistic missiles”.

The missiles were fired around 8:10 am Wednesday (2310 GMT Tuesday) from an area south of the capital Pyongyang, Seoul’s military said.

They flew for around 350 kilometres (217 miles), Seoul added.

The launch was the first of its kind since South Korean President Lee Jae-myung took office in June.

Trump has said he hopes to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, possibly this year, following several meetings during the Republican president’s first term.

The North’s state media has indicated that Kim is open to future talks, with caveats that the United States give up its “delusional” demand that Pyongyang relinquish its nuclear arsenal.

North Korea this month showed off what it called its “most powerful” intercontinental ballistic missile at a military parade attended by top officials from Russia and China.

Pyongyang has said that the strike range of the new Hwasong-20 “knows no bounds”.

In September, Kim oversaw a test of a solid-fuel engine used for long-range nuclear missiles.

State media said it was the ninth and final test of the



engine, indicating that a full test-fire of the new ICBM could be conducted in the coming months.

The launch was “a response to Trump and his recent moves,” Park Won-gon, a professor at Seoul’s Ewha Womans University, said.

Kim Jong Un is also “asserting his regime’s presence during an event hosted by Seoul, as he’s done before,” he added.

Trump is expected to arrive in South Korea on October 29 for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum.

North Korea has for years staged test flights of long-range missiles it claims are able to reach the continental United States.

The US demand that Kim give up his banned weapons has long been a sticking point between the two countries.

But Pyongyang has recently indicated a fresh openness to talks with the United States.

Kim met Trump three times for high-profile summits during the US leader’s first term, before talks collapsed in Hanoi in 2019 over what concessions Pyongyang was prepared to make on its atomic weapons.

In September, Kim said he had “fond memories” of those talks with Trump and was open to another meeting.

“If the United States discards its delusional obsession with denuclearisation and, based on recognising reality, truly wishes for peaceful coexistence with us, then there is no reason we cannot meet it,” state media quoted him as saying.

Pyongyang is under successive rafts of UN sanctions over its nuclear and missile programs.

North Korea has repeatedly stated that it has no intention of giving up its arsenal.

And it has worked to strengthen ties with old partners China and Russia.

Peru Declares 30 Days State of Emergency in Lima

LIMA (Dispatches) - Peruvian President Jose Jeri declared a 30-day state of emergency in Lima and nearby Callao from midnight Tuesday to tackle rising crime, authorising army deployment alongside police. The move follows protests last week that left one dead and over 100 injured. Jeri gave no further details on enforcement measures.

“The state of emergency approved by the Council of Ministers will take effect at midnight on Wednesday and will last for 30 days in Metropolitan Lima and Callao,” Jeri said in an address to the nation broadcast by state television.

Under the state of emergency, the government can send the army to patrol the streets and restrict freedom of assembly and other rights.

This is the first major action by the interim president since he took office nearly two weeks ago to address the spiraling crime crisis.

The South American country has been rocked by protests for weeks, and lawmakers voted earlier this month to impeach president Dina Boluarte, whom critics blamed for a surge in crime and accused of corruption.

“Crime has increased disproportionately in recent years, causing immense pain to thousands of families and further hindering the country’s progress. But that’s over.



Today, we begin to change the narrative of insecurity in Peru,” Jeri said in his address. “We are moving from the defensive to the offensive in the fight against crime, a fight that will allow us to regain peace, tranquility, and the trust of millions of Peruvians,” he added.

Lima had already been partially placed under a state of emergency between March and July, following the murder of a famous musician, which was attributed to organised crime.

The youth-led demonstrations have brought thousands of Peruvians, frustrated by the authorities’ failure to address the worsening crime crisis, onto the streets in Lima and several other cities.

Over the past month, more than 200 people have been injured in the protests, including police officers, protesters, and journalists and one man was shot dead by police.

The security crisis in Peru, which has hit the transportation sector especially hard - with at least 47 bus drivers killed this year in what are believed to be extortion-related attacks - triggered Boluarte’s dismissal on October 10.



PSG Hit Seven, Barcelona and Arsenal Run Riot

PARIS (Dispatches) - Paris Saint-Germain scored seven and both Barcelona and PSV Eindhoven hit six in big victories while Arsenal crushed Atletico Madrid 4-0 on a prolific night of Champions League action.

Erling Haaland was among the scorers in Manchester City's 2-0 win at Villarreal as a total of 43 goals rained down across nine games.

However, it was champions PSG who stole the show with their 7-2 win at Bayer Leverkusen in Germany.

Desire Doue scored twice in between goals by Willian Pachao and Khvicha Kvaratskhelia for PSG in a first half which saw Alejandro Grimaldo miss a penalty and Aleix Garcia net from the spot for Leverkusen.

Both sides had a man sent off in the opening period, with Robert Andrich seeing red for Leverkusen and Illia Zabarnyi walking for the visitors.

Nuno Mendes got the French side's fifth goal shortly after the break and Garcia pulled it back to 5-2.

Ousmane Dembele, on his return from injury and first appearance since winning the Ballon d'Or, got PSG's sixth and Vitorino completed the scoring at the death.

"I am not yet at 100 per cent. I wanted to play at the weekend and the coach told me to wait a bit, but I felt great," Dembele told broadcaster Canal Plus.

It is the first time PSG have scored seven goals away from home in a Champions League game, and they are top of the standings after three outings in the league phase, with a maximum nine points and the best goal difference.

Inter Milan and Arsenal are the other teams with a 100 percent record after three outings, with the Italians easing to a 4-0 victory at Union Saint-Gilloise in Brussels.

Denzel Dumfries and Lautaro Martinez both netted late in the first half before Hakan Calhanoglu added a penalty soon after the restart and Pio Esposito completed the scoring.

Meanwhile Premier League leaders Arsenal hammered Atletico at the Emirates Stadium, as Mikel Arteta's side made it three straight wins all with clean sheets in Europe this season.

All the goals came in the second half, with Gabriel putting them ahead and Gabriel Martinelli getting the second before Viktor Gyokeres struck twice to end a run of seven club appearances without finding the net.

"Hopefully it's the start of some beautiful sequence now," said Arteta of the Sweden striker.

Haaland put City ahead against Villarreal in Spain and Bernardo Silva got their second goal before half-time as Pep Guardiola's team moved on to seven points from three outings.

Norway superstar Haaland kept up his remarkable record in front of goal this season and he has now found the net 15 times in 11 appearances for City in all competitions.

"I see that things are looking good, we are playing a little bit better day after day and that's a good sign," Guardiola told broadcaster Movistar.

Felix Nmecha hit a brace as Borussia Dortmund won 4-2 away to FC Copenhagen, with Ramy Bensebaini converting a penalty and Fabio Silva also scoring.

Waldemar Anton's own goal had brought the Danes back level at one point in the first half, while Viktor Dadason got their other goal late on. They are yet to win in the league phase.

Beaten at home by PSG last time out, Barcelona bounced back to thump Olympiacos 6-1 at Montjuic as Fermin Lopez starred with a hat-trick.

Lamine Yamal got his name on the scoresheet with a penalty and Marcus Rashford scored twice, with Ayoub El Kaabi's spot-kick scant consolation for the Greeks.

Newcastle United got their second straight win in the competition by easing to a 3-0 victory against Benfica at St James' Park.

Anthony Gordon got the opener and Harvey Barnes emerged from the bench to score twice in the second half, leaving Jose Mourinho's Benfica as the only team to have no points having played three games.

PSV claimed a stunning 6-2 home win against Italian champions Napoli, despite Scott McTominay giving the visitors the lead in the first half.

An Alessandro Buongiorno own goal restored parity and Ismael Saibari put PSV ahead before Dennis Man scored twice and both Ricardo Pepi and Couhaib Driouech also found the net.

Sinner Skipping Davis Cup Finals to Focus on Australian Open Preparations



LONDON (Dispatches) - Italy's Jannik Sinner said it was a difficult decision to miss this year's Davis Cup Finals on home soil but the world number two felt that he had to prioritise preparations for his Australian Open title defence.

The 24-year-old, who won at Melbourne Park and Wimbledon this year, was instrumental in Italy's successful Davis Cup defence in 2024 in Spain but said on Monday he was sitting out the Final 8 set to take place in Bologna from November 18-23.

He will be in Turin a week before the Davis Cup to defend his ATP Finals title, where world number one Carlos Alcaraz has also secured his place in the season-ending championship.

"It wasn't an easy decision, but after Turin, the goal is to get off on the right foot in Australia," Sinner told Sky Sport Italy. "It may not seem like it, but a week of preparation during that period can make all the difference."

"We won the Davis Cup in 2023 and 2024, and this time we decided this with my team."

Next year's Australian Open, the opening Grand Slam of the season, runs from January 12-26.

Sinner beat Alcaraz to win the lucrative Six Kings Slam exhibition event in Riyadh on Saturday and will next be in action at the Vienna Open, which he won in 2023.

"We are working hard on my serve. I am fortunate to be able to work continuously with the best team possible," he said. "I now have some very important tournaments coming up, in Vienna, Paris and Turin."

Stubbs Leads South Africa Fightback But Pakistan Still on Top



RAWALPINDI (Dispatches) - South Africa batsman Tristan Stubbs scored an unbeaten 68 to steer his side to 185-4 at stumps on the second day of the second test against Pakistan on Tuesday, but two late wickets saw the hosts keep a firm grip on the contest.

The usually swashbuckling Stubbs produced a circumspect innings, featuring in a 113-run partnership with Tony de Zorzi as South Africa looked to haul in Pakistan's first innings score of 333.

South Africa still trail by 148 runs with Stubbs and Kyle Verreynne (10 not out) to resume at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

The 25-year-old Stubbs had been promoted back to No. 3 in South Africa's batting lineup after a poor run in the middle order and looked to take the chance to reaffirm his place in the team after speculation he might be dropped after last week's first test defeat in Lahore.

He showed a patient approach, reaching his 50 in 149 balls with a six over the bowler's head being one of the few extravagant strokes in his innings.

De Zorzi was the only player to score a century in the first test, which Pakistan won by 93 runs, and confirmed a return to form by scoring 55 off 93 balls before losing his wicket in the last half hour before close.

He was trapped by debutant spinner Asif Aridi, taking his first test wicket at the age of 38.

Asif, who turns 39 in December, quickly followed it up with the wicket of Dewald Brevis, departing without scoring after a sharp delivery saw him edge to Salman Ali Agha at slip.

Pakistan were dismissed shortly before lunch as South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj posted figures of 7-102 on his return to the side, taking all five Pakistan wickets on Tuesday.

The hosts resumed on 259-5 with Saud Shakeel and Salman extending their sixth wicket partnership to 70 runs before Salman was trapped leg before for 45.

The last four Pakistan wickets fell for 17 runs with Saud (66) caught at slip by captain Aiden Markram as South Africa's catching showed a marked improvement from Monday when they dropped several good chances.

Thunder Open Title Defense by Winning 2-OT Thriller vs. Rockets

NEW YORK (Dispatches) - Shai Gilgeous-Alexander scored 35 points, including two from the free-throw line with 2.3 seconds remaining in double overtime, lifting the Oklahoma City Thunder to a 125-124 home win over the Houston Rockets on Tuesday in the season opener.

Before the game, Oklahoma City's championship banner was raised into the rafters and the players were presented with their championship rings for last year's title run.

Then the Thunder and Rockets locked into a wild back-and-forth game, largely featuring Gilgeous-Alexander and Chet Holmgren coming up with big plays for Oklahoma City as Alperen Sengun and Kevin Durant did the same for Houston.



In the end, it was Gilgeous-Alexander coming up with the final big moment.

After Sengun put the Rockets ahead by one with a driving finger roll off a feed from Durant with 11 seconds left, Gilgeous-Alexander drove to the basket and drew a foul on Durant.

The foul was Durant's sixth, ending his Rockets debut.

Gilgeous-Alexander, who had missed four of his 12 earlier free throws, hit both of his foul shots to put Oklahoma City ahead. Jabari Smith Jr.'s turnaround shot at the buzzer missed the mark to give the Thunder the win.

Holmgren, who fouled out in the first overtime, finished with 28 points and seven rebounds.

Djokovic to Miss Paris Masters, Eyes Return Next Year

PARIS (Dispatches) - Novak Djokovic announced he would miss the upcoming Paris Masters, but added he hoped to compete at the tournament next year.

Djokovic has not played an official match since going down to then-world number 204 Valentin Vacherot in the semi-finals of the Shanghai Masters earlier in October.

The 38-year-old struggled physically throughout that match, throwing up court-side and receiving medical treatment multiple times.

"Dear Paris, unfortunately I'll not compete at this year's (tournament)," the 24-time Grand Slam winner said on social media.

"I have amazing memories and great success over the



years, especially being able to conquer the title 7 times.

"Hope to see you next year."

Last week, Djokovic was forced to abandon his third place match against American Taylor Fritz at the Six Kings Slam in Saudi Arabia.

The Serbian skipped the Paris Masters last season as he has drastically reduced the number of tournaments in which he competes as he continues his quest for a record-breaking 25th major title.

World number 10 Holger Rune will also miss this year's Paris Masters, which runs from October 27 to November 2, after announcing he underwent an operation on his Achilles tendon.