



By: TA | AP Brief

# UN nuclear watchdog official to visit Iran in a bid to improve ties



The deputy head of the United Nations' nuclear watchdog will visit Iran in a bid to rekindle soured ties, the Islamic Republic's foreign minister said.

There will be no inspection of Iran's nuclear facilities during the **visit** by the International Atomic Energy Agency scheduled for Monday, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said.

The visit would be the first following Israel and Iran's 12-day war in June, when some of its key nuclear facilities were struck.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on July 3 **ordered** the country to suspend its cooperation with the IAEA, after American and Israeli airstrikes hit its most-important nuclear facilities.

The decision will likely further limit inspectors' **ability** to track Tehran's program that had been enriching uranium to near weapons-grade levels.

"As long as we haven't reached a new framework for cooperation, there will be no cooperation, and the new framework will definitely be based on the law passed by the Parliament," Araghchi said.

## A pressure tactic in negotiating with the West

State media last week quoted Araghchi as saying during a television program that Tehran would only allow for IAEA cooperation through the **approval** of the Supreme National Security Council, the country's highest security body.

Iran has had limited IAEA inspections in the past as a pressure tactic in negotiating with the West, and it is unclear how soon talks between Tehran and Washington for a deal over its nuclear program will resume.

U.S. intelligence agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency had assessed Iran last had an organized nuclear weapons program in 2003, though Tehran had been enriching

uranium up to 60% — a short, technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90%.

The U.S. bombed three major Iranian nuclear sites in Iran in June as Israel **waged** an air war with Iran. Nearly 1,100 people were killed in Iran, **including** many military commanders and nuclear scientists, while 28 were killed in Israel.