



By: TA | AP Insight

Are the US and Iran finally close to a peace deal?



President Donald Trump said Saturday that a deal with Iran, including opening the Strait of Hormuz, has been “largely negotiated” after calls with Israel and other allies in the region.

“Final aspects and details of the Deal are currently being discussed, and will be announced shortly,” Trump said on social media, with no details on timing.

He said he had spoken with leaders from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and Bahrain, and separately with Israel.

He described it as a “Memorandum of Understanding pertaining to PEACE” that still must be finalized by the United States, Iran and the other countries that participated in Saturday’s talks.

There was no mention of Iran’s nuclear program and highly enriched uranium, which Iran has sought to discuss later.

There had been growing optimism among officials

The United States and Iran were closing in on a deal to end the war, a regional official with direct knowledge of the Pakistan-led mediation efforts said earlier Saturday, after the U.S. weighed a new round of **attacks** on the Islamic Republic.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss closed-door deliberations, cautioned that “last-minute disputes” could blow up the efforts.

This is not the first time in recent weeks that a deal has been described as close.

He said the potential deal would include an official declaration of the war’s end, with two-month negotiations on Iran’s nuclear program.

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Iran, meanwhile, had signaled “narrowing differences” in **negotiations with the U.S.** after Pakistan’s army chief held more talks in Tehran, and U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio told journalists in India that “there’s been some progress made” and “there may be news later today.”

Both Iran and the U.S. emphasized their key positions and have warned of the risks of resuming attacks and disrupting their ceasefire.

Rubio repeated the U.S. stance that Iran can never have a nuclear weapon and must turn over its highly enriched uranium, and the Strait of Hormuz must be open.

Iran describes it as a ‘framework agreement’ for more talks

Iran state TV earlier quoted Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei as describing the draft as a “framework agreement” and adding: “We want this to include the main issues required for ending the imposed war and other issues of essential importance to us. Then, over a reasonable time span, between 30 to 60 days, details are discussed and ultimately a final agreement is reached.”

He said the Strait of Hormuz is among the topics discussed.

“Over the past week, the trend has been toward narrowing differences,” Baghaei told Iran’s official IRNA news agency, adding that nuclear issues are not part of current negotiations.

“Our focus at this stage is on ending the war on all fronts, including Lebanon,” Baghaei said, adding that lifting sanctions on Tehran “has explicitly been included in the text and remains our fixed position.”

The Iranian-backed Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV reported that the Lebanese militant group's leader, Naim Kassim, received a letter from Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi saying Tehran will not abandon its allies.

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There is a fragile, **U.S.-brokered ceasefire** in the Israel-Hezbollah war in Lebanon, a conflict that began two days after the Iran war started.

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Iran's parliament speaker, Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf, the lead negotiator in historic face-to-face **talks with the U.S.** last month in Islamabad, said Iran has rebuilt its military assets and if Trump resumes attacks, the result would be "more crushing and more bitter" than at the start of the war.

State TV said he spoke after meeting with Pakistan's army chief Asim Munir, who also met with Araghchi, President Masoud Pezeshkian and other senior officials. Qatar sent a senior official to Tehran to support Pakistan's efforts.

Trump had said 'serious negotiations' were underway

Trump earlier said he was holding off on a **military strike** against Iran because "serious negotiations" were underway, and at the request of allies in the Middle East. Trump has repeatedly set deadlines for Tehran and then backed off.



The U.S. Central Command on Saturday said U.S. forces had turned away more than 100 commercial vessels and disabled four since the blockade began April 13

The U.S. and Israel sparked the war with attacks on Feb. 28, cutting short nuclear talks with Iran.

Tehran retaliated by effectively closing the Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway for the region's oil, natural gas and fertilizer, causing global economic pain.

The U.S. then **blockaded Iranian ports**. The U.S. Central Command on Saturday said U.S. forces had turned away more than 100 commercial vessels and disabled four since the blockade began April 13.