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Iran

Digest

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President Pezeshkian visits Iraq

On 11 September, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian, leading a high-ranking delegation including Foreign Minister, Economy Minister and the Governor of the Central Bank among others, made his first official foreign visit to neighbouring Iraq. In a joint press conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al-Sudani in Baghdad, Pezeshkian said implementation of security agreements signed in 2023 are essential to [combat terrorism](#) and curb cross-border smuggling. Iraq has taken steps to move Iranian Kurdish separatist groups in northern Iraqi Kurdistan away from the border with Iran. Emphasising the importance of unity within Iraq, Pezeshkian said "we seek an independent, sovereign, and secure Iraq." Al Sudani, while calling for benefiting from geographical proximity to expand ties, highlighted the participation of Iranian companies in border industrial areas in the provinces of Maysan, Jizan, and Basra. He also expressed gratitude for Iran's participation in the recently signed [gas export agreement](#) between Turkmenistan and Iraq. Pezeshkian also had a meeting with [Ammar al-Hakim](#), head of the National Wisdom Movement and members of the Coordination Framework, an umbrella bloc of Iraqi Shia parties. Pezeshkian also met Nechirvan Barzani, the president of the Kurdistan Region in Erbil. Following the talks, a statement from Barzani's office said "the Kurdistan region will never pose a threat to Iran and neighbouring countries", adding that Erbil "respects the security deal signed between Iraq and Iran". Later, Pezeshkian also visited [Sulaymaniyah](#), stronghold of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, which traditionally has good ties with Iran.

President Pezeshkian meets French President at the UNGA

On 26 September, on the side-lines of the annual meeting of the UN General

Assembly, Iran's President Pezeshkian had a meeting with his French counterpart [Emmanuel Macron](#). Macron was among the European leaders, who had appealed Iran for restraint after assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran. Pezeshkian argued that while Iran exercised restraint to avoid escalation, Israel has escalated its attacks in Lebanon. President Pezeshkian told that his administration seeks to create consensus and unity both inside Iran and across the region, and is determined to have constructive interactions with neighbouring states. He also expressed Iran's readiness for negotiations aimed at resolving international issues, including over Tehran's nuclear program. "Iran has never sought nuclear weapons and will never do so. Of course, we are working to beef up our defense capabilities and deterrence power in a conventional manner," Pezeshkian said. According to statement released by Elysee, Macron "warned the Iranian president against the Islamic republic's continuation of [support for Russia's war](#) of aggression in Ukraine" and also asked for the release of three French nationals imprisoned in Iran.

Foreign Minister Araqchi warns about border change in the South Caucasus

On 5 September, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi stated that "Regional peace, security, and stability are not merely preferences but pillars of our national security. Any threat from North, South, East, or West to the territorial integrity of our neighbours or redrawing of boundaries is unacceptable and a [red line for Iran](#)." Araqchi's remarks came in response to statements by his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, who threw his weight behind Baku during a visit to Azerbaijan in August and condemned Armenia for "sabotaging" attempts to open the Zangezur, which he claimed Yerevan had already agreed to under the 2020 ceasefire

agreement. Lavrov's remarks drew criticism in Iran. [Mohsen Rezaei](#), the former chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and the current secretary of the Expediency Council, said that "the behavior of Russian statesman was not acceptable and in clear contradiction with their declaration of friendship with Iran; these ambiguities should be resolved." [Iran's ambassador to Armenia](#) Mehdi Sobani reaffirmed Iran's stance against extraterritorial claims on Armenian land. He stated that "Iran is not against the unblocking of routes, but this process must occur under the national jurisdiction of the involved nations."

Iran hosts third quadrilateral meeting of Iran, Russia, China and Pakistan on Afghanistan

Upon the invitation of Iran, third quadrilateral meeting of Iran, Russia, China and Pakistan on Afghanistan was held on 27 September on the side-lines of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. During the talks, Araqchi, alongside Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, reviewed the current developments in Afghanistan and issued a [comprehensive statement](#) outlining 19 key points. [Araqchi](#) expressed grave concern over the humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan, warning that terrorist groups, particularly Daesh and al-Qaeda, which are exploiting the situation, pose threats not only to Afghanistan but also to regional stability. He underscored the need for neighbouring countries to cooperate with Afghan authorities to combat terrorism. Araqchi stated that with over six million Afghan refugees in Iran, the country spends more than \$10 billion annually to meet their needs. He urged the international community to

provide sustained support to main host countries like Iran, insisting that humanitarian assistance must be impartial, unconditional, and free from political interference. Criticising Western countries for limiting aid to Afghanistan, Araqchi said "depriving a population of basic needs does not promote human rights or improve the situation for women and girls." [Taliban spokesperson](#) welcomed the joint statement favouring political dialogue and engagement with Taliban.

Secretary of Iran's National Security Council attends BRICS meeting in St. Petersburg

Ali Akbar Ahmadian, the secretary of Iran's National Security Council attended the 14th Meeting of BRICS High-Ranking Officials responsible for security matters in St. Petersburg. Calling for an "[anti-sanctions alliance](#)" within BRICS, Ahmadian stated that "economic security, particularly in areas such as energy, food, finance, maritime activities, and even cultural and psychological dimensions, requires the joint efforts of BRICS and Global South countries." Ahmadian met with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who noted that "friendly relations between the Russian Federation and Iran have gained momentum in recent years." Putin also pointed to the importance of the intergovernmental commission and the priority attached to the [North-South transport corridor](#) project. On 19 September, Putin approved of a proposal forwarded by the country's foreign ministry for signing of a strategic partnership agreement with Iran. The two countries signed a 10-year deal, namely the *Treaty on the Basis of Mutual Relations and Principles of Cooperation* between Iran and Russia, in 2001, which has been extended twice for five years. Negotiations on a new long-term agreement were initiated under the administration of Hassan Rouhani.