



# Gulf allies convince Trump ‘to give Iran a chance’

Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Oman convince US leader to avoid military action, for now

● US receives assurances executions will halt

● Iran protests diminish after severe crackdown

AFP | Paris

Gulf allies have convinced Donald Trump to “give Iran a chance”, a Saudi official said yesterday, after the US leader repeatedly threatened strikes on the Islamic republic over a crackdown on protests that activists say has left thousands dead.

Iran was shaken over the last week by some of the biggest anti-government protests in the history of the Islamic republic, although the demonstrations appear to have diminished over the last few days in the face of repression and an almost week-long internet blackout.

The Norway-based Iran Human Rights (IHR) NGO said on Wednesday that Iranian security forces had killed at least 3,428 protesters, warning that the final toll would be far higher.

Iranian authorities have lashed out at “rioters” who they claimed were backed by Israel and the US, vowing fast-track justice that activists fear will translate into a spree of executions.

Trump has not ruled out new military action against the Islamic republic under supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, after Washington backed Israel in its June 12-day war against Iran.



Iranians attend the funerals of security forces personnel killed in recent protests in Tehran

But with the belligerent rhetoric on all sides appearing to tone down for now, a senior Saudi official said yesterday that Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Oman led efforts to talk Trump out of an attack on Iran, fearing “grave blowbacks in the region”.

The Gulf trio “led a long, frantic, diplomatic last-minute effort to convince President Trump to give Iran a chance to show good intention”, the official said on condition of anonymity.

Some personnel were moved out of a major US military base in Qatar on Wednesday, and staff at US missions in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were warned to exercise caution as fears mounted of a US attack.

In telephone talks yesterday, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told Saudi Arabian counterpart Faisal bin Farhan of the importance of “global condemnation of foreign interference in the internal affairs of regional countries” and vowed Iran would defend itself “against any foreign threat”, according to a statement on his Telegram account.

On Wednesday, Saudi Arabia informed Iran it would not allow its airspace or territory to be used to attack the country, two sources close to the kingdom’s government said.

The developments came hours ahead of a UN Security Council meeting on Iran later yesterday,

which was requested by the US.

## ‘Good news’

Up until Wednesday, the United States was threatening military action against Iran should it carry out the death penalty against people arrested over the protests.

In an announcement at the White House, Trump said he had now received assurances from “very important sources on the other side” that executions would not go ahead.

“They’ve said the killing has stopped and the executions won’t take place -- there were supposed to be a lot of executions today and that the executions won’t take place -- and we’re going to



Despite the diplomatic cooling, a human rights NGO reports that at least 3,428 protesters have already been killed by Iranian security forces during the country’s historic and violent anti-government demonstrations

find out,” Trump said.

Attention had focused on protester Erfan Soltani, 26, in prison in Karaj outside Tehran since his arrest, and rights groups said was due to be executed on Wednesday.

Yesterday, the Iranian judiciary said Soltani has “not been sentenced to death” and was facing charges of propaganda against Iran’s Islamic system and acting against national security.

If he is convicted, “the punishment, according to the law, will be imprisonment, as the death penalty does not exist for such charges”.

In an interview with US network Fox News, Araghchi said there would be “no hanging today or tomorrow”.

Commenting on Truth Social, Trump said: “This is good news. Hopefully, it will continue!”

## Russia expels UK diplomat accused of being spy



A woman walks outside the British embassy building in Moscow

AFP | Moscow

Russia said yesterday it was expelling a British diplomat, calling him an undercover spy in an accusation blasted by London as “malicious” and “baseless.”

The Kremlin has long singled out Britain as one of the most hostile Western states -- with relations virtually frozen even before Moscow’s full-scale of-

fensive on Ukraine.

The two countries have expelled each others’ embassy staff several times in recent years.

Moscow-London ties have been plagued by spy allegations for decades and were already at their lowest point before Russia’s 2022 Ukraine attack.

Since then, Britain became one of Kyiv’s strongest backers.

## Fatal back-to-back crane failures tied to same Thai firm: minister

AFP | Bangkok

The collapse of a highway construction crane killed two people near Bangkok yesterday, with a Thai minister saying the building firm was also involved in a crane failure the day before that left 32 dead.

Car dashcam footage verified by AFP showed the moment the massive crane fell yesterday, unleashing clouds of dust as well rubble across the area as several vehicles pulled over or reversed to avoid falling debris.

Transport Minister Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn linked Italian-Thai Development to the country’s second deadly crane collapse in two days, according to local media.

The company was contracted to build a section of a China-backed high-speed rail project where a massive crane fell on Wednesday, in Nakhon Ratchasima province, derailling



A recovery worker takes pictures at the site of a construction crane collapse

a passenger train below and killing 32 of nearly 200 people on board.

“Yes, it is Italian-Thai. I still do not understand what happened,” Phiphat told local media yesterday.

“We have to find out the facts,

whether it was an accident or something else,” he said, adding that two people were killed.

The company -- one of Thailand’s biggest construction firms -- has seen several deadly accidents at its sites in recent years.



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01



We cannot be bystanders to injustice, indifference, or impunity. And we have the power to chart a different course. The @UN Charter gives us our compass. Our pursuit for peace with justice gives us our purpose. And our common humanity gives us the imperative to act.

@antoniogeturres

02



In Kyiv today to discuss IMF support for Ukraine and to witness firsthand the resilience of a people who have endured four years of an unjust war. Your courage inspires the world.

@KGeorgieva

03



Just landed in Beijing. The relationship between Canada and China has created opportunities and prosperity on both sides of the Pacific. We’re ready to build a new partnership — one that builds on the best of our past, and responds to the challenges of today.

@MarkJCarney

04



In Adre, at the Chadian border, I met Sudanese refugees who just fled the horrors of war at home. UNHCR is playing a crucial role here, ensuring people find safety and protection, shelter and other vital assistance. But it is far from enough, given the scale of this calamity.

@BarhamSalih

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