

Statements by Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, to the gathering of ambassadors, heads of foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations residing in Tehran

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Good morning to all of you. I am very happy to meet you today and thank you for accepting our invitation and coming to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I would like to provide some explanations regarding the recent developments and what we are witnessing, the blatant aggression of the Israeli regime against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

As you have all been following in the news, since Friday morning the Israeli regime began its blatant aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran - completely unprovoked and without any prior justification - attacking multiple targets across Iran in a clear violation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's territorial integrity. Among the key targets attacked were the Natanz nuclear facilities along with several locations in Tehran. These attacks resulted in casualties among many civilians across multiple cities, including families, women, children, and our nuclear scientists, as well as several military commanders who were not engaged in combat operations but were in their homes at the time.

This occurred while we were in the midst of nuclear negotiations with the US, with the sixth round of talks scheduled for today, Sunday, in Muscat.

The Israeli regime recognizes no boundaries in violating international law. You have all witnessed in Gaza how not only innocent Palestinian civilians were killed, but also human rights, humanitarian law, international law, and all global standards were disregarded. This time, the Zionist regime crossed a new red line in international law – attacking a nuclear facility, which constitutes a grave violation and is strictly prohibited under any circumstances. Unfortunately, the UN Security Council has remained indifferent.

Many countries, particularly in the region, condemned the Zionist regime's aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially the attack on nuclear facilities. I thank the honorable ambassadors present whose countries denounced this aggression. However, some European nations, which claim to uphold civilization

and international law, instead of condemning Israel, condemned Iran for being attacked!

In response to these attacks, we acted in self-defense – a universally recognized principle in international relations and a legitimate right of every nation. Our armed forces began their response two nights ago, and last night you saw further dimensions of it. This will continue. Our missile strikes on military and economic targets in occupied Palestine are solely in self-defense and countering aggression.

On the first night, we targeted only military objectives of the Israeli regime. However, when the Zionist regime escalated its aggression yesterday by attacking economic infrastructure - including the Tehran refinery and facilities in Asaluyeh - we responded last night by striking economic targets and refineries within the occupied territories of the Zionist regime.

The attack on Asaluyeh yesterday was a clear and extremely dangerous act of aggression. Expanding the conflict to the Persian Gulf is a major strategic mistake, likely intentional, aimed at widening the war beyond Iran's borders. The Persian Gulf is a highly sensitive and complex region, and any military escalation there could engulf the entire region and even the world.

This is what the Zionist regime has initiated since yesterday, and we hope the international community will act swiftly to stop these crimes and aggressions. The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its strong self-defense, and our armed forces will carry out their duties with full resolve.

Regarding the attack on the Natanz nuclear facility, I have requested the IAEA Director General to convene an emergency meeting. This meeting will take place on Monday, and we hope for a strong condemnation of the Zionist regime for this blatant violation of international law – attacking a nuclear facility – by the Board of Governors.

I urge the ambassadors whose countries are members of the IAEA Board of Governors to relay this message to their capitals.

Our expectation, and that of the international community, is a firm condemnation of the attack on nuclear facilities and even punishment for the regime's actions.

This may be the last red line in international law that the Zionist regime has crossed. If the international community remains indifferent to these red lines, the consequences will undoubtedly affect all other nations.

Another point I wish to highlight is that, in our view, Israel's aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran could not have occurred without US support.

We have solid evidence of US forces and bases in the region assisting the Zionist regime's attacks. We have closely monitored and possess substantial proof of how US forces aided the Zionist regime, but more telling than our evidence are the explicit statements of the US president expressing support. Therefore, we consider the US complicit in these attacks and demand it take responsibility.

In our response to the Zionist regime, we have focused on targets within the occupied territories.

We do not seek to expand the war unless forced to. We never wanted this war and were engaged in diplomacy regarding our nuclear program. But this aggression was imposed on us.

We are defending ourselves; our defense is entirely legitimate and resolute. It is a response to aggression. If the aggression stops, naturally, our reactions will also cease.

Today, we were supposed to hold the sixth round of nuclear talks in Muscat. As I have repeatedly stated, we are confident in the peaceful nature of our nuclear program and have no issue demonstrating this to the world, as we did in the 2015 nuclear agreement.

We are ready for any agreement aimed at ensuring Iran does not pursue nuclear weapons; as this is our own doctrine, rooted in our belief in the prohibition and illegitimacy of nuclear weapons. However, if the goal of an agreement is to deprive Iran of its nuclear rights, naturally, we cannot accept such a deal.

Based on this same rationale, we entered into negotiations with the United States and held five rounds of talks. In the sixth round, we were prepared to present our own proposal for a potential agreement to the American side. During the previous round, the US had presented us with a proposal that contained problematic elements and was unacceptable from our perspective. We had communicated our positions and prepared a counterproposal to present at today's meeting. We firmly believed our proposal could have paved the way for reaching an agreement.

It is abundantly clear that the Israeli regime does not want any nuclear agreement, negotiations, or diplomacy. Attacking Iran amid nuclear talks demonstrates the Israeli regime's opposition to any form of dialogue.

If you recall, in past years, Israel repeatedly resorted to assassinations and sabotage to derail negotiations.

In the spring of 2021, during Vienna talks on reviving the JCPOA, Israel sabotaged the Natanz enrichment facility, damaging its power supply and centrifuges. Their goal was to disrupt negotiations. In response, we announced an increase in enrichment to 60%. Later, all damaged centrifuges were replaced with more advanced ones.

This latest attack was also aimed at destroying diplomacy, and we regret that the US government has aligned itself with this move.

Over the past two days, we have received messages through various channels claiming the US had no involvement in the attack. But we do not believe this claim and have evidence to the contrary.

If the US truly holds this position, it should publicly and explicitly state its stance. Private messages are insufficient. To demonstrate goodwill, the US must condemn the attack on nuclear facilities and clearly distance itself from this conflict.

I hope the international community pays adequate attention and responds appropriately to the crimes and aggressions of the Zionist regime, which has violated all principles of international law. This is the best path to peace in the region and the world.

Thank you for your attention.