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Brief Notes

Pezeshkian Signals No UNGA Meeting With United States, Trump: Islamic Republic President Masoud Pezeshkian, in comments made from Tehran's Mehrabad Airport prior to his departure for New York City today, said no talks were possible with a "bully seeking to coerce," likely referring to the U.S. Pezeshkian continued, "We cannot talk to someone who wants to force, bully, destroy, and make mischief."

MP Says Russian MiG-29 Fighters Received by Tehran: Member of the Majles (Parliament) National Security Committee Abolfazl Zohrevand said today that the Islamic Republic has received MiG-29 fighter jets from Russia as a "short-term solution" to bolster the regime's air force. Zohrevand added that, as a long-term strategy to modernize the Islamic Republic's military capabilities, Sukhoi-35 jets, S-400 air defense systems, and Chinese HQ-9 missile systems are to be acquired in the coming years.

Unnamed Iranian Prisoner Extradited From Belgium: Islamic Republic Deputy Minister of Justice for Human Rights and International Affairs Askar Jalalian said today that, based on an extradition agreement signed between Brussels and Tehran, an Iranian national imprisoned in Belgium was transferred to Iran on September 18 to serve the remainder of their prison term. Although the prisoner was not named, alarm was raised last month, following a meeting between Jalalian and the Belgian ambassador to Tehran, over reports that Belgium was planning to extradite alleged terrorists who helped plan a 2021 bomb plot.

Supreme Leader Says No to Talks With the U.S.

In a pre-recorded speech broadcast today to mark the anniversary of the Iran–Iraq War and the new academic year, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei rejected negotiations with Washington, saying, "Negotiations with America will not advance our national interests, offer any benefits, or shield us from harm," but would rather inflict "irreparable damage" on the Islamic Republic.

Khamenei also claimed that the regime is not enriching uranium in order to develop nuclear weapons, saying, "Countries that want to manufacture nuclear weapons enrich uranium up to 90 percent. Since we do not need or wish to produce nuclear weapons, we have not gone that far. We have taken it up to 60 percent, which is a very good figure." As such, Khamenei was adamant that the Islamic Republic will continue its enrichment of uranium.

Responding to U.S. President Donald Trump's call for the regime to halt enrichment, Khamenei said: "The zealous Iranian nation will definitely slap the face of anyone who makes such comments."

Khamenei accused the U.S. of refusing to make any meaningful concessions, saying, "This is not negotiation. It is dictation. It is imposition. The outcome of the talks must be exactly what the other side demands…Their aim is to negotiate only to reach a conclusion that halts uranium enrichment and dismantles the Islamic Republic's nuclear program."

Araghchi, Larijani Set the Stage as Pezeshkian Travels to NYC

With President Pezeshkian traveling to New York today to deliver his September 24 address to the UN General Assembly, Foreign Minister Araghchi has used the last two days in NYC to set the stage for the regime's arguments against snapback sanctions, which are to be triggered on September 28. In Tehran, Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Larijani has also used the day to publicize arguments against snapback, while simultaneously feigning openness to negotiations in an attempt to buy time.

Larijani began today by meeting with business representatives and delivering a speech at the Iran Chamber of Commerce in Tehran. Larijani later posted an excerpt of his speech to X: "It is a lie that Iran is not negotiating. We were negotiating when you attacked us militarily. If a wise and fair offer is presented that protects Iran's interests, we will accept it." During Larijani's speech to business representatives, he said that "no dignified human being would accept" U.S. insistence on Tehran capping the range of its missiles to 500km (~311 miles), calling the proposal "unacceptable."

Larijani also claimed that France was not honoring a promise it allegedly made to the Islamic Republic stating that if Tehran made a deal with the IAEA, then France would withdraw snapback. He went on to say that Tehran fulfilled its end of this deal through its September 9 meeting and subsequent arrangement with IAEA representatives in Cairo, but France has not withdrawn its call for snapback sanctions.

In New York yesterday, Araghchi met IAEA chief Rafael Grossi, touting Tehran's "good will" and blaming stalled talks on others' "excessive demands" and "misuse" of the UN Security Council. The meeting follows the September 20 regime threat to suspend IAEA cooperation despite a new framework agreed upon in Cairo on September 9. Regime-affiliated outlets highlighted Grossi's warning that cooperation with the Agency "must be permanent," while Araghchi threatened that if the E3's "destructive action" proceeds, Tehran will "seek new conditions."

Today, Araghchi met with his E3 counterparts and the EU's foreign policy chief, Kaja Kallas, on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. During the meeting, Araghchi called on the E3 to take "reciprocal and responsible" steps following Tehran's agreement to a cooperation framework with the IAEA on September 9 in Cairo. The Islamic Republic Foreign Ministry's readout of the meeting said: "In light of the unjustified and illegal move to initiate the process of reinstating previously lifted UN Security Council sanctions, several ideas and proposals were put

forward to continue diplomatic efforts, and it was agreed that consultations with all involved parties would continue."

On the Radar

- Spokesperson for the Foreign Ministry Esmaeil Baghaei marked the beginning of the academic year in Iran by posting a commemoration to Iranian children killed during the 12-Day War: "This year's first of Mehr (September 23) begins with the memory of the 34 students martyred in the Zionist regime's attack on our homeland…"
- A former Somali intelligence agency chief, Fahad Yasin Haji Dahir, posted a condemnation of Somalia's vote to support the implementation of snapback sanctions against the Islamic Republic in Iran, saying: "The decision for Somalia to support the sanctioning of a Muslim country does not represent the feelings or interests of the Somali people. It is a national shame, it is short-sightedness, and it is a black mark on Somalia's foreign policy history."

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