IRANWATCH DAILY | September 22, 2025

Brief Notes

President Pezeshkian Arriving in NYC Tomorrow: President Masoud Pezeshkian is expected to arrive in the U.S. tomorrow for the UN General Assembly in New York City. According to the Office of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, Pezeshkian met with Khamenei today to present a report on the plans and goals of the trip, with Khamenei providing notes and recommendations.

Iran–Iraq War Parade Canceled Over Attack Fears: The IRGC commander of Hamadan Province announced the Islamic Republic's annual parade meant to commemorate the "Holy Defense," or the Iran–Iraq War, has been canceled "due to emerging threats." The commander also said, "It was decided to avoid large gatherings and instead focus on preparations for defending the country."

Hezbollah Leader Calls for 'New Page' With Riyadh: The Islamic Republic has continued its calls for a regional united front against Israel, with most of the regime's allies echoing its messaging. In a televised address on September 19, Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem urged Saudi Arabia to "open a new page" with the group and join in building a common front against Israel. However, local media described it as an orchestrated display, prompted by recent Tehran–Riyadh engagement.

'Holy Defense Week' Marked With Fresh Threats to Israel

As Holy Defense Week started this week, the IRGC issued a statement reflecting on the 12-Day War, saying, "If the enemy commits any new miscalculation or act of aggression, the Islamic Republic of Iran will hold the upper hand and the initiative on the battlefield and will deliver another deadly, lesson-teaching response." Adding that, "any mistake by the enemies, especially the fake and criminal Zionist regime and the arrogant and deceitful American ruling establishment," would be met with a "decisive, crushing, timely and regret-inducing response."

Furthermore, the Armed Forces Chief of Staff Abdolrahim Mousavi vowed to counter "threats," saying, "the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic, relying on strategic surprises, stand ready to confront any threats from the world's bullies and tyrants with a timely, decisive, regret-inducing, and beyond-imagination response."

Additionally, in a separate meeting between Artesh (conventional/"regular" armed forces) Commander-in-Chief Amir Hatami and the IRGC's top commander Mohammad Pakpour, Hatami said, "Let the enemies of the great nation of Islamic Iran know that the slightest aggression will be met by a unified, swift, intelligent, and forceful

response from the Artesh and the IRGC's fighters, and if they err again, they will receive a firm, regret-inducing reply."

Parliament Calls for Nuclear Weapons Development

On September 20, President Masoud Pezeshkian reacted to the UN Security Council vote that failed to prevent the triggering of the snapback mechanism under UNSCR 2231, saying, "We will never yield to greed or overreach, nor bow our heads, because we have the capacity and strength to bring about change." He added, "I have faced situations where some people tried to block our path to progress and growth. But creative minds and ideas, when confronted with any obstacle, either find or create a way through it."

Meanwhile, 71 members of the Majles (Parliament) signed a letter calling for the development of nuclear weapons as a deterrent against Israel. The letter states, "even though the use of nuclear weapons falls under the prohibition of the Supreme Leader's fatwa, their development and possession as a form of deterrence is a separate matter." The legitimacy of the Supreme Leader's supposed fatwa against the use of nuclear weapons is often called into question.

Additionally, Ebrahim Rezaei, spokesperson for the Majles National Security Committee, condemned the UNSC vote, saying, "This move will not make Iran hesitant about preserving and developing its nuclear program; on the contrary, it will make us more determined and resolute in advancing the nuclear industry. The best response at present is to further expand the nuclear sector and discard all JCPOA restrictions." He added, "Given recent actions by Western countries, there is no longer any reason to continue cooperating with the Agency or to remain in the NPT."

In response to the September 19 UNSC vote, Iran experienced market turbulence. Within 24 hours, the Tehran stock index plunged, the rial weakened against the dollar, and gold prices surged as citizens turned to safe assets.

On the Radar

- Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami called his trip to Russia a "turning point" for Tehran–Moscow ties. Referring to the two countries' 20-year strategic pact, he said, "under the two governments' agreement, Russia is to build eight nuclear power plants, four of them in Bushehr." Eslami added, "Visits to the construction sites and contractual talks have already taken place, and with the agreement to be signed this week, the project will automatically move into the operational phase to advance design, engineering, and other follow-up actions."
- The Islamic Republic's Armed Forces condemned Ecuador after President Daniel Noboa designated the IRGC, Hamas, and Hezbollah as terrorist groups on September 19. In a September 20 statement, they called the move "an irrational, desperate, illogical, and illegal decision," made "to serve the global

hegemonic system well." The statement said Washington spreads "evil and insecurity" globally and enables Israel to "commit genocide in Gaza, Palestine, and even other regional countries."

- Today, in a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Shahin Mustafayev, President Masoud Pezeshkian said that attempts by enemies to create division among Muslim countries would not undermine Tehran's ties with Azerbaijan, saying, "Expanding relations and strengthening unity and brotherhood with Islamic countries, including the Republic of Azerbaijan, has been one of our foreign policy priorities." In response, Mustafayev, referring to the 12-Day War, said, "The Republic of Azerbaijan has never allowed, and will never allow, any party to use its airspace or territory to launch aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran."

→ *For inquiries or more information, please contact* ***k.isfahani@nufdiran.org***