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Brief Notes

Tehran's Undeclared ICBM Test: The Islamic Republic has reportedly conducted an undeclared missile test at the Imam Khomeini Spaceport. Tehran has not responded to these reports specifically, although a member of the Majles (Parliament), on Monday, claimed that the regime conducted an ICBM test. The move comes as the Islamic Republic repairs missile sites hit by Israel during the 12-Day War and faces the imminent reimposition of UN snapback sanctions.

France Drops ICJ Case Against Islamic Republic Amid Hostage Talks: Today, France withdrew its International Court of Justice case against the Islamic Republic over alleged violations of consular protection for two French citizens detained for more than three years. Paris has long accused Tehran of arbitrarily holding Cécile Kohler and her partner Jacques Paris in conditions tantamount to torture at Evin Prison, while denying them proper consular access. The move comes after a meeting between President Masoud Pezeshkian and President Emanuel Macron on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, and is widely seen as part of a potential hostage deal.

India Says Russia Sanctions Push Customers to Islamic Republic, Venezuela: An Indian delegation visiting Washington this week is seeking meetings with U.S. officials to discuss oil trade. New Delhi argues that its significant reduction in purchases of Russian oil will require increased imports from other sanctioned suppliers, including Tehran and Caracas. The delegation has also warned that restricting all three major producers simultaneously would drive up global oil prices.

Tehran Refuses to Back Down on Nuclear Dispute

Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei yesterday delivered a speech rejecting further negotiations with the U.S. and vowing to continue uranium enrichment.

In an apparent reaction to the speech, U.S. Middle East Envoy Steve Witkoff said that Washington was talking to Tehran and that the U.S. had a "desire" to find a permanent solution to the dispute.

Today, the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Ali Larijani, echoed Khamenei's stance on continuing the nuclear program, saying, "How can we accept that a nation of such greatness and with such deep historical roots should give up a means that serves as its defensive tool, simply because others want to take it away from Iran through pressure?…No rational person would accept this."

On the same day, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told his British counterpart Yvette Cooper, "The decision by the three European countries to activate the so-called snapback mechanism was essentially in line with the United States' inhumane 'maximum pressure' policy, amounting to their participation in a path of bullying and lawlessness…neither sanctions, nor military attacks, nor diplomatic pressure can divert a nation determined to preserve its independence and dignity."

Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) chief Mohammad Eslami also told the participants at the World Atomic Week in Moscow, "Western governments have subjected the Islamic Republic of Iran to sanctions and maximum pressure in the hope of stopping and forcing it to surrender, but they will never achieve this outcome… Iran's [nuclear] program is completely transparent, and it will not discontinue it."

Tehran Scrambles to Stop Snapback in New York

The end of the window to prevent the reinstatement of UNSCR 2231 snapback sanctions is approaching fast (September 28).

President Masoud Pezeshkian met yesterday with the presidents of Finland, France, Norway, Switzerland, and the European Council on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

In these meetings, Pezeshkian's rhetoric centered on portraying the Islamic Republic as a misunderstood and unfairly targeted actor.

He warned that nuclear talks would "become meaningless" if snapback sanctions were reimposed, and argued that European skepticism about the Islamic Republic's nuclear program stemmed from "misunderstandings" and Israel's "baseless propaganda."

He asked, "What crimes and terrorist acts has the Islamic Republic of Iran committed? Did we assassinate any other country's scientists, or are we the main victim of terror?"

Additionally, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi met his French counterpart in New York. According to the Foreign Ministry Telegram channel, the two discussed "creative diplomatic ways to prevent reinstating the UNSC sanctions."

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry Spokesperson, Esmaeil Baghaei, blamed the U.S. in a post on his X account, writing, "falsely accusing Iran of supporting terrorism would not absolve the United States of their direct participation & complicity in Israel's ongoing genocide of Palestinians, systematic terrorism and continuing aggressions against many States."

He added, "The United States claim of offering diplomacy is simply disingenuous and preposterous; you cannot bomb a country amidst ongoing diplomatic negotiations and offer peace."

On the Radar

- The Islamic Republic's infamous Shahed drones, used by Russia in its war against Ukraine, are low-cost, easy-to-produce weapons that can travel more than 1,000 miles. The U.S. and its allies are reportedly working to develop a comparable model to counter this inexpensive and long-range system in the global market.
- The Islamic Republic has continued to deny that it supplies drones to Russia, with a Foreign Ministry official stating today, "The accusations of the Ukrainian president against Iran are repetitive and baseless. Since the beginning of the Ukraine war, the Islamic Republic has consistently emphasized the need to end the conflict and to resort to diplomacy to resolve disputes."
- Reports indicate that an IAEA visit to Iran is expected in the coming days, although it remains unclear whether inspectors will be visiting a damaged site or the Bushehr nuclear facility.
- An anti-Zionist Israeli-American citizen who had previously sought asylum in Iran was arrested this month on suspicion of spying on former IDF chief Herzi Halevi. He allegedly collected information on Israeli public figures and photos of Israeli streets, and was compensated with cryptocurrency by the Islamic Republic. He is expected to be indicted soon in the Tel Aviv District Court.
- At the UN General Assembly, President of Yemen Rashad al-Alimi condemned the Islamic Republic, saying, "Iran has armed Houthis to the teeth. They are no longer a rebel group, but an international terrorist organization with an advanced Iranian arsenal. I call for the formation of an international alliance to liberate Yemen from the grip of the Houthis."
- Ahmadreza Jalali, an Iranian-Swedish political prisoner detained on alleged espionage charges, has been transferred to Evin Prison after two months without contact with his family.

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