

## Iran Says U.S. Diplomatic Channel Over Nuclear Talks Remains Frozen



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Tehran, Dec. 21 – Iran’s Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi has said that he is no longer in contact with U.S. Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff, noting that the communication channel between Tehran and Washington has remained inactive for several months.

In an interview with RT's Worlds Apart program during a recent visit to Moscow, Araghchi commented on the stalled diplomatic engagement, recalling that he had previously held negotiations with Witkoff over Iran's nuclear program. He said the two sides conducted five rounds of talks between April and June, while a sixth round scheduled for June 15 was canceled following Israel's sudden military action against Iran.

Araghchi said Israel carried out large-scale surprise airstrikes on June 13, targeting multiple locations across Iran, including nuclear and military facilities. The attacks resulted in the deaths of senior commanders, nuclear scientists, and civilians. He added that U.S. forces later bombed three Iranian nuclear sites on June 22, including Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan.

Describing the strikes as unprovoked and illegal, Araghchi said the developments marked a deeply negative experience for Iran, particularly as they occurred in the middle of ongoing negotiations. He noted that despite the 12-day conflict with Israel, he continued limited exchanges with Witkoff afterward, though the U.S. approach toward resuming talks was, in his words, "very wrong."

The Iranian foreign minister said Tehran remains open to a fair and balanced negotiated agreement but rejected what he described as imposed demands. Responding to Washington's call for Iran to halt uranium enrichment, Araghchi stressed that under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation

Treaty, member states have the right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology, warning that denying this right would undermine the treaty itself.