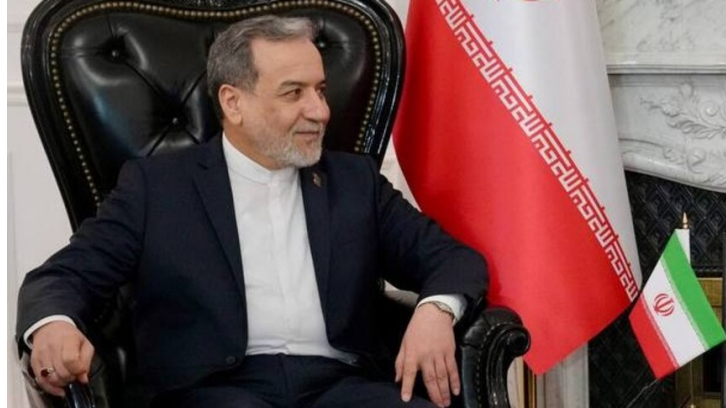


## Iran Says Talks with US Aim Defend Rights Not Surrender



Published on May 10, 2026

Document Date: Tue, Jun 09 2026 07:59:01 pm

Category: ,English,International - ,Snippets

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rki.news|Source: Anadolu

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Sunday that talks with the United States are aimed at defending Iran's rights and interests, not signaling surrender or compromise on national principles. In a statement carried by the state-run IRNA news agency, he stressed that dialogue and negotiations should not be viewed as weakness or retreat, but as a means to secure the legitimate rights of the Iranian people and protect national sovereignty. He reiterated that Iran

remains firmly committed to safeguarding its independence and will continue resisting external pressure. “Iran will never bow before the enemy,” he said during a meeting of a task force overseeing reconstruction efforts following damage caused by the recent US-Israeli conflict.

Regional tensions have remained high since strikes were launched against Iran on February 28 by the United States and Israel, prompting Iranian retaliatory actions targeting Israeli positions and allied interests in the Gulf region. The escalation also caused disruptions in regional maritime security, including concerns over the Strait of Hormuz.

A ceasefire was brokered on April 8 through mediation efforts involving Pakistan, but follow-up talks in Islamabad failed to produce a lasting agreement. The truce was later extended by US President Donald Trump without a fixed deadline, keeping diplomatic channels open for a potential long-term settlement.