



[Trump Announces That the United States and Iran are Slated to Hold Nuclear Talks on Saturday](#)

In an unexpected development on Monday, President Donald Trump announced that the United States and Iran were slated to begin talks regarding the latter's nuclear program this weekend. While Trump has expressed that these will be "direct talks," Iranian officials have contradicted him and insisted that they are indirect negotiations taking place in Oman. Regardless of the nature of them, adding to the significance of the development is concern over Trump's continued warnings of a potential attack against Iran should the talks fail to be successful, with the American president even doubling down in the preceding days about the threat of using military force and the involvement of Israel in such an action. This has therefore raised unease about the prospect of further escalations in the Middle East which could dangerously drag in and entangle the United States.

As a form of protest to the various American sanctions that have been levied, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has consistently blocked the idea of direct negotiations, and Iranian ministers have instead expressed that the effectiveness and seriousness of negotiations is more important than the form of the talks themselves. According to experts in the field, Iran is likely waiting to see if the United States will be satisfied with the talks focusing on a system of surveillance of its nuclear program. This would be much like the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) agreement – widely known as the Iran nuclear deal – that Trump pulled out of during his first term in office. The other possibility is what is called the Libya model whereby Iran would dismantle its nuclear program altogether. Israel has promoted and lobbied for this, but Iran has repeatedly stated that it will not give up on its civil nuclear program. It is believed that Iran has expanded its stockpile of highly enriched uranium by an estimated 50% following the United States' decision to withdraw from the JCPOA in 2018 under Trump, with the limit that was imposed in the agreement now being exceeded by more than forty times. Thus, Trump's threats of possible military action against Iran are made even more troubling by the fear that an attack might draw a response that could wreak tremendous havoc and devastation across the Middle East.

There has been a great deal of unverifiable speculation that the United States may be moving troops and arms in the region for a possible escalation of conflict involving Iran. However, these have all been conjectured without any clear evidence and primarily by individuals online with seemingly no connections to American military operations. What is known is that back in January of 2024, the U.S. quietly reached a deal to extend its military presence at Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar – the largest United States military installation in the Middle East. It is here that many of the unconfirmed reports are claiming that American troops are being moved to, but it is uncertain why bombers and personnel would be moved here as opposed to Diego Garcia in Mauritius where the military is currently operating its attacks on the Houthis in Yemen. Hence, in addition to being unsubstantiated, the unconfirmed reports do not make full sense militarily speaking.

As issue experts have pointed out, the planned U.S.-Iran talks this weekend could lead to a deal or an escalation of conflict. There seems to be a belief that the possibility for both of these scenarios to unfold has not been as high as it is right now for a while. Some have highlighted how on the one hand, there are indications that Trump is serious about making a deal with Iran – like the letter that he sent to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei last month – but at the same time, the threats of military action against Iran have become more frequent. Getting entangled in a conflict involving Iran would just add another layer of unpredictability to an already tumultuous state of affairs in

the region given the precarious circumstances in Gaza, Yemen, Lebanon, Syria, and elsewhere. It would also certainly exacerbate the array of humanitarian crises in the region, and result in heightened levels of suffering and devastation among civilian populations. All told, the Trump administration came into office for his second term pledging to reduce U.S. military commitments abroad, and therefore getting drawn into an escalated military confrontation with Iran would run completely counter to this purported philosophy.