

WORLD

Warnings issued amid fragile truce

Tehran, Washington trade threats over Hormuz as UAE reports attacks

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Tensions flared across the Middle East on Tuesday as Iran and the United States traded threats over the Strait of Hormuz while the United Arab Emirates came under Iranian missile and drone attacks on Monday, testing a four-week ceasefire despite calls for de-escalation.

Iran's parliament speaker, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, said in a social media post on Tuesday that the security of shipping and energy transit had been threatened by breaches of a four-week-old truce by the US and its allies.

He warned that Tehran has barely responded to recent provocations amid the ongoing standoff over the vital choke point. "We know full well that the continuation of the status quo is intolerable for America and we have not even started yet," he said.

The latest escalation came after the UAE reported Iranian attacks on Monday for the first time since the truce was declared on April 8. The close US ally confirmed it was targeted by 12 ballistic missiles, three cruise missiles and four drones launched by Iran.

In a statement, the UAE's Foreign Ministry said: "These attacks constitute a dangerous escalation and unacceptable violation, posing direct threats to the UAE's security, territorial stability and civilian safety."

One strike hit an energy facility in Fujairah, leaving three Indian nationals injured, while a drone attack targeted a tanker operated by ADNOC, the UAE's state-owned oil giant, authorities said.

A senior Iranian military official did not deny the strikes but stressed the Islamic republic had "no preplanned program to attack the oil facilities in question".

"US officials must end the ugly behavior of using force in the diplomatic process and stop military adventurism in this sensitive oil region that affects the economies of all countries in the world," the official told state TV.

Later on Monday, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei accused the UAE of backing and cooperating with the "aggressors" against Iran, saying Tehran hopes "all regional countries have learned the necessary lessons from the developments that occurred during these 50 days".

US President Donald Trump has repeatedly demanded Iran reopen

the Strait of Hormuz — the strategic waterway that once carried one-fifth of global crude supplies before US and Israeli forces launched strikes against Iran on Feb 28. Tehran, however, has vowed not to relinquish control of the choke point, its core geopolitical leverage.

Trump claimed US forces had "shot down" seven small Iranian military boats. A US admiral earlier said six such vessels were destroyed, but Tehran denied any had been sunk. Tehran also claimed a US naval frigate was hit on Monday, a claim denied by the US military.

South Korean authorities confirmed on Monday that the merchant vessel HMM *Namu* suffered an engine room explosion and fire while navigating the strait, with no crew injuries reported.

'No military solution'

Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi emphasized the ongoing clashes prove "there is no military solution to this political crisis", while praising Pakistan's sustained mediation efforts.

"The US should be wary of being dragged back into quagmire by ill-wishers. So should the UAE. Project Freedom is Project Deadlock," he wrote on X, referring to the plan announced by Trump to guide ships from neutral countries out of the Gulf.

Saudi Arabia joined calls on Tuesday for de-escalation and urged diplomatic negotiations to reach a political settlement. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz urged Tehran to return to the negotiating table and stop weaponizing regional energy transit, echoing appeals from French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

Oil prices retreated slightly on Tuesday after surging on Monday. Brent crude, the international standard, fell \$1.14 to \$113.30 per barrel. Before the Iran war began in late February, it was trading near \$70.

The strait is a vital thoroughfare for global supplies of oil, fertilizer and other commodities, and has been virtually closed since the US and Israel began attacks on Iran on Feb 28, causing price spikes around the world.

Turkish Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar told broadcaster TVNet that the world should brace for a prolonged global energy and supply crisis amid the protracted regional conflict.

Secret Service shooting



Law enforcement officers stand watch in a cordoned-off area at the scene of a shooting involving the Secret Service near the National Mall in Washington on Monday. The Secret Service said on Monday that its officers confronted an armed man near the White House who later fired at them before fleeing on foot and being shot by law enforcement. JONATHAN ERNST / REUTERS



European Council President Antonio Costa (left), Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan (center) and Irish Prime Minister Micheal Martin display the commemorative postage stamp for the 8th European Political Community Summit in Yerevan, Armenia, on Monday. CHEN JUNFENG / XINHUA

Armenia hosts summit for EU leaders

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Leaders from across Europe and beyond have convened in Yerevan, Armenia's capital, for high-level talks on global conflicts and energy security on Monday and Tuesday, following the United States' announcement last week of plans to withdraw part of its troops from Germany.

Speaking at the opening of the biannual European Political Community summit, or EPC, on Monday in Yerevan, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte said Europe has "heard" Washington's frustration over its standoff with Iran and is "stepping up".

The US announced on Friday that it will withdraw some 5,000 troops from Germany, seemingly prompted by Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz saying the US was being "humiliated" by Iran, reported Deutsche Welle.

On Saturday, US President Donald Trump told reporters, "We're going to cut way down. And we're cutting a lot further than 5,000."

Asked whether he would also pull out US troops stationed in Spain and Italy, Trump said "probably".

In response, Rutte said at the summit: "European leaders have gotten the message. They heard the message loud and clear." He added that he recognized there was "disappointment on the US side" over European nations' resistance to joining the US-Israel strikes against Iran.

The EU's top diplomat, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas, called Trump's move a "surprise", but noted there had long been talk of a US troop drawdown.

'Anticipated' decision

German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius also projected a calm response, calling the US' decision "anticipated" and insisting his country is ready to shoulder more of the burden of its defense.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni told reporters that she would not support a US troop withdrawal, such as the kind that has been announced for Germany, but

that "it is a decision that doesn't depend on me".

Some other European leaders have called for strengthening their own defense.

French President Emmanuel Macron weighed in on the troop withdrawal, saying Europe must learn to operate without relying on the US for defense.

"Europeans are taking their destiny into their own hands, increasing their defense and security spending, and building their own common solutions," Macron said.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen echoed this, saying "we have to step up our military capabilities to be able to defend and protect ourselves".

The EPC was established in 2022 following the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and brings together leaders from EU member states and non-EU states, including the United Kingdom, Türkiye, and Western Balkan nations, to coordinate policies on security, energy, and migration. Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney attended this week's summit as a guest.

Shaanxi eyes expanded US trade ties

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A China-US economic and trade matchmaking conference in New York brought Shaanxi businesses together with US-based professionals and organizations on Monday to explore new opportunities for cooperation.

The event, held at the Bank of China USA in Manhattan, was aimed at helping companies that manufacture natural plant-based products, including food, beverages and additives in China, specifically Shaanxi, to forge closer business ties in the US, although some already export to North America.

Fan Weibin, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of Shaanxi Provincial People's Congress, said he was "delighted" to lead the delegation to New York.

"The essence of China-US economic and trade relations lies in mutual benefit and win-win outcomes. The economies of our two nations are deeply intertwined, with shared interests that bind us together. The business communities on both sides have consistently been participants, witnesses and contributors to our cooperation."

The conference in New York came after Shaanxi attended an open house at the Chinese embassy in Washington on Saturday, with the theme "Discover Shaanxi: Where the Silk Road Starts, Wonders Await".

There, products, art and food from Shaanxi were on display. Shaanxi, famous for being the starting point of the ancient Silk Road, is also known for its *biangbiang* noodles, *roujiamo* (a Chinese burger), music and dance from the Tang Dynasty (618-907), and the Terracotta Army exhibitions.

The northwestern Chinese province was lauded by Ambassador Xie Feng as embodying the enduring continuity of Chinese civilization and is widely seen as an essential place for understanding China's long history.

The province is also playing a



Ping Lauren Luo (left), founder of JingWei Fu Tea USA, talks to Jeffery Jones, chairman of the Council for Trade and Investment Promotion based in New Jersey, at an event held at the Bank of China USA New York Branch on Monday. ZHAO HUANXIN / CHINA DAILY

role in strengthening China-US friendship, as Shaanxi and its cities have established 13 sister-city relationships with US counterparts, according to Xie.

Man-Li Kuo Lin, economic development specialist at the US Small Business Administration New York District Office, spoke about several initiatives to help small businesses.

These include ways to increase access to capital, loans and public and private investment opportunities.

Later, there was a signing ceremony and further talks by industry professionals.

Jeffery Jones, chairman of the Council for Trade and Investment Promotion, or CTIP, and a former mayor of Paterson, New Jersey, works for an organization that aims to enhance business opportunities for overseas investors.

Jones said it was crucial for events like the conference to take place to bring US and Chinese professionals together.

Jones told China Daily: "If, economically, we need families working, we need businesses growing, we need new technologies to move the world forward. And if we don't have these kinds of events, none of that happens."

Jones added: "At CTIP, we

believe that everything is about local to global. And so, depending on what part of the world you're in, you're local, and where you want to go is global. And we just keep moving that around. We understand. Change happens if we decide to change first."

Daniel Mabey, Asia region president and director of strategic markets for the United Natural Products Alliance, said his company is streamlining operations to help overseas clients access the US market and its manufacturers.

Mabey told China Daily: "To have this type of matchmaking conference is important because the industry has to have dialogue to kind of converge on compliance and standards and trade, because a lot of the supply chain in the dietary supplement industry is not transparent."

Several of the companies from Shaanxi at the US conference expressed their deep desire to expand overseas.

David Zhang, chairman of Chongqing Joywin Natural Products, told China Daily: "Events like this bring all these professional US and Chinese together, that makes a stronger bond. We need to get to know each other and communicate. That way we can help each other grow."

Briefly

CHINA
Iranian foreign minister to pay visit, hold talks

Beijing announced on Tuesday that Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi will visit China on Wednesday upon invitation. Foreign Minister Wang Yi will hold talks with him, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said. Since the United States and Israel launched military strikes against Iran on Feb 28, Wang and Araghchi have held three phone conversations.

SUDAN
Envoy recalled as tensions flare up

Sudan has recalled its ambassador to Ethiopia after accusing Addis Ababa of a series of drone attacks that hit its international airport on Monday. Sudan's Foreign Minister Mohi El-Din Salem said in a statement on Tuesday that the ambassador would be recalled for consultations and that his country is "ready to enter into an open confrontation with Ethiopia". "The drones that attacked Sudanese facilities yesterday (Monday) were launched from Ethiopia's Bahir Dar Airport," he said. Sudan has the legal right to respond to the "aggression" in the manner it deems appropriate, he added. The statement came after drone attacks targeted Khartoum International Airport and military sites in the capital on Monday, triggering explosions and sending plumes of smoke from various locations.

RUSSIA
May 8-9 Victory Day ceasefire declared

Russia's Defense Ministry on Monday announced a ceasefire on May 8-9 in honor of Victory Day, expressing hope that the Ukrainian side will follow suit. The truce was declared in accordance with a decision by Russian President Vladimir Putin, the ministry said, adding that Russian forces would take all necessary measures to ensure security during the commemorative events. The ministry also warned that any attempts to disrupt the celebrations marking the 81st anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War would trigger a "massive missile strike" on central Kyiv. It said Russia had previously refrained from such actions for humanitarian reasons, despite having the capability, and warned civilians in Kyiv and foreign diplomatic staff members to leave the city in a timely manner. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced on Monday that Ukraine will implement a ceasefire with Russia starting from Wednesday. Ukraine will act reciprocally starting from that moment, Zelensky said.

UNITED STATES
Strike on suspected vessel conducted

The US Southern Command said that its Joint Task Force Southern Spear on Monday conducted a "lethal kinetic strike" on a vessel operated by "Designated Terrorist Organizations". Intelligence confirmed the vessel was transiting along known narco-trafficking routes in the Caribbean and was engaged in narco-trafficking operations, the command said on X. Two male "narco-terrorists" were killed during this action, it added. A video accompanying the post shows a vessel being hit through night vision.

THAILAND
Maritime agreement with Cambodia scrapped

Thailand's cabinet on Tuesday approved the cancellation of a 2001 maritime agreement with Cambodia, pivoting future negotiations over overlapping territorial claims to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS. The decision aligns with a proposal by Thai Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sihasak Phuangketkeow, who cited the need to update the negotiating framework to reflect current realities and adhere to universally recognized international law, said Ratchada Thanadirek, spokesperson for the prime minister's office. Ratchada emphasized that revoking the 2001 memorandum of understanding represents a "realignment" of the cooperative framework rather than a suspension of bilateral relations or dialogue. Thailand will continue talks with Cambodia using UNCLOS mechanisms, she said in a statement.