

Iran Update



Katherine Wells, Ben Schmida, Andie Parry, and Annika Ganzeveld

Information Cutoff: 2:00 PM ET

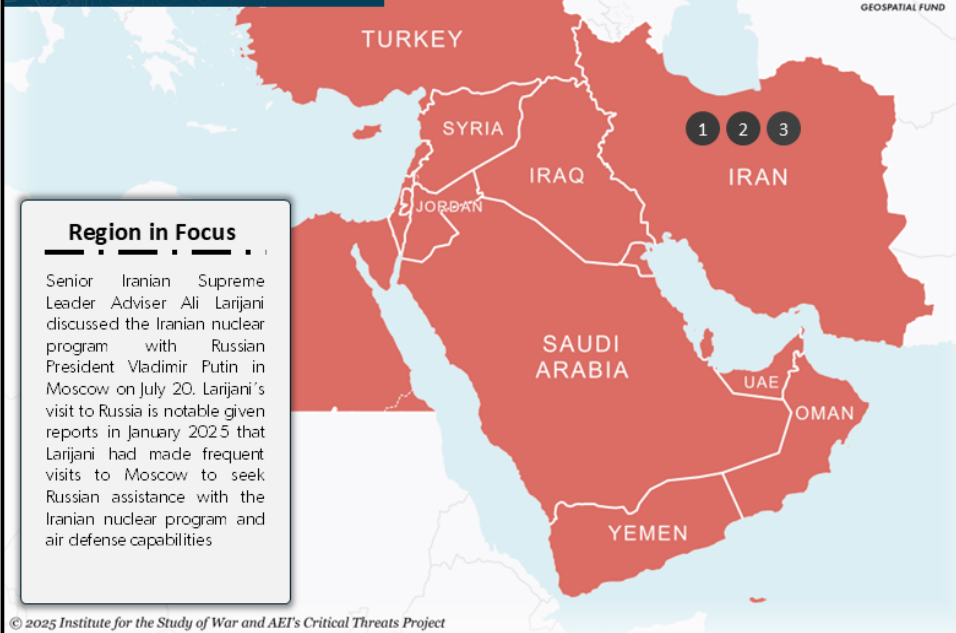
CTP-ISW will publish an abbreviated Iran Update on July 19 and 20 and will resume full coverage on July 21.

Key Takeaways:

- **Iran-E3 Talks:** Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps-affiliated media confirmed that senior E3 (the United Kingdom, Germany, and France) and Iranian diplomats agreed to discuss Iran's nuclear program "next week." The E3 has warned that it may trigger snapback sanctions on Iran if Iran does not deliver unspecified "concrete results" by the end of August.
- **Iranian Air Defenses:** A senior Iranian military commander claimed on July 20 that Iran has replaced air defense systems that Israel destroyed during the Israel-Iran War. CTP-ISW previously assessed that it is very unlikely that Russia has supplied Iran with new S-300 systems, so Iran has likely replaced damaged air defense systems with domestically produced systems.
- **Russo-Iranian Cooperation:** Senior Iranian Supreme Leader Adviser Ali Larijani discussed the Iranian nuclear program with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on July 20. Larijani's visit to Russia is notable given reports in January 2025 that Larijani had made frequent visits to Moscow to seek Russian assistance with the Iranian nuclear program and air defense capabilities

Iran Update

July 20, 2025



Region in Focus

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- 3 MOSCOW, RUSSIA.** Senior Iranian Supreme Leader Adviser Ali Larijani discussed the Iranian nuclear program with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on July 20.

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps-affiliated Tasnim News Agency confirmed that senior E3 (the United Kingdom, Germany, and France) and Iranian diplomats agreed to discuss Iran's nuclear program "next week."^[1] Tasnim reported that the parties have agreed on the "principle of talks" but that the timing and location of the talks are not finalized.^[2] A German diplomatic source confirmed to Agence France-Presse that the E3 are in contact with Iran to schedule talks for the coming week.^[3] Tasnim reported that the talks will take place at the deputy foreign minister level.^[4] The E3 has warned that it may trigger the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) snapback mechanism to reimpose UN Security Council sanctions on Iran if Iran does not deliver unspecified "concrete results" by the end of August.^[5] An Iranian Parliamentary National Security and Foreign Policy Committee member said on July 20 that parliament would respond with

“severe countermeasures” if the E3 triggers the snapback mechanism.[6] The E3 would have to initiate the process to impose snapback sanctions by September 3 to complete the process before the mechanism expires in October 2025.[7]

A senior Iranian military commander claimed on July 20 that Iran has replaced air defense systems that Israel destroyed during the Israel-Iran War. Iranian Artesh Operations Deputy Rear Admiral Mahmoud Mousavi told Iranian Armed Forces General Staff-affiliated media on July 20 that Israel damaged “some” Iranian air defense systems during the war.[8] Israel destroyed Iranian air defense systems and radars throughout the war to establish air superiority over Iran. Previous Israeli airstrikes on Iran in April and October 2024 rendered Iran’s four Russian-made S-300 air defense systems inoperable.[9] Mousavi claimed that the Iranian armed forces replaced the destroyed systems with existing and new systems.[10] CTP-ISW previously assessed that it is very unlikely that Russia has supplied Iran with new S-300 systems, so Iran has likely replaced damaged air defense systems with domestically produced systems.[11] Iran tested its domestically produced Bavar-373 air defense system in March 2025.[12] Khatam ol Anbia Air Defense Headquarters Commander Brigadier General Ali Reza Sabahi Fard announced in March that Iran would soon unveil a new version of the Bavar-373.[13] Iran has yet to publicly unveil the new version, however. CTP-ISW previously assessed that Iran may prioritize developing indigenous air defense systems given that Russia is unlikely to supply Iran with S-300s in the near future.[14] Iran’s domestically produced air defense systems failed to prevent Israel from achieving air superiority during the Israel-Iran War and it is therefore unlikely that the same systems would effectively defend Iran against another conventional conflict with Israel or the United States.

Iranian Supreme Leader Adviser Ali Larijani discussed the Iranian nuclear program with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on July 20.[15] Iranian media did not provide details about the meeting, but the Kremlin stated that Larijani presented Iran’s views on the “current escalation” in the Middle East and the Iranian nuclear program. Larijani’s visit to Russia is notable given reports in January 2025 that Larijani had made frequent visits to Moscow to seek Russian assistance with the Iranian nuclear program and air defense capabilities.[16] The visit is also notable given Iran’s reported dissatisfaction with Russian support for Iran during the Israel-Iran War. Iranian media reported on July 15 that Iran will likely maintain ties with Russia but must “rethink parts of the relationship and expand cooperation with other partners,” especially in “sensitive military and strategic areas.”[17] Moscow has offered to mediate between Iran and the United States and has reportedly encouraged Iran to accept a nuclear deal with the United States in which Iran would halt domestic uranium enrichment.[18] Russia reportedly offered to provide Iran with 3.67 enriched uranium to support a civil nuclear program, presumably in return for Iran agreeing to stop domestic uranium enrichment.[19] Russia previously accepted 11,000 kilograms of enriched uranium from Iran in exchange for natural uranium in December 2015 as part of the JCPOA.[20] Neither the United States nor Iran has accepted Russia’s offers regarding the Iranian nuclear program.

Syrian transitional government and Suwaydawi forces continued to implement the US-brokered ceasefire in Suwayda Province on July 20 despite sporadic clashes and a Druze faction’s rejection of the deployment of government forces to Suwayda. US Special Envoy to Syria Thomas Barrack announced on July 20 that, as of 17:00 Damascus time (10:00 ET), all parties had ceased hostilities.[21] Barrack added that a prisoner exchange between Druze and Bedouin factions

was imminent. The United States brokered a ceasefire agreement between the Syrian transitional government and Israel on July 18.[22] The agreement reportedly returns control of Suwayda Province to the Syrian transitional government. Government forces continued to deploy to Suwayda Province on July 20 as part of the ceasefire agreement.[23] Prominent Druze Sheikh Hikmat al Hijri condemned government forces' deployment to Suwayda Province on July 20 and demanded their immediate withdrawal, despite government forces' deployment being part of the first phase of the agreement.[24] The Syrian Ministry of Interior (MoI) began implementing the second phase of the three-phase ceasefire on July 19. This phase includes the opening of a humanitarian corridor and a prisoner exchange between Druze and Bedouin factions.[25] Hijri confirmed that a prisoner swap would take place between Druze and Bedouin factions on July 20.[26] A pro-government Syrian journalist reported on July 20 that the prisoner exchange was not carried out, however, and that clashes between Druze and Bedouin fighters have resumed.[27] CTP-ISW cannot verify this claim.

CTP-ISW will provide further analysis about the ceasefire in Syria in its July 21 Iran Update.



[1] <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1404/04/29/3358265>

[2] <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1404/04/29/3358265>

[3] <https://www dot timesofisrael.com/iran-to-hold-nuclear-talks-with-european-powers-within-days-reports/>

[4] <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1404/04/29/3358265>

[5] <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/europeans-warn-iran-un-sanctions-if-no-concrete-progress-nuclear-issue-2025-07-17/> ; <https://www.axios.com/2025/07/15/iran-snapback-sanctions-nuclear-deal>

[6] <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1404/04/29/3358449>

[7] <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/245317.pdf>

[8] <https://defapress dot ir/fa/news/763554>

[9] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/consequences-idf-strikes-iran>

[10] <https://defapress dot ir/fa/news/763554>

[11] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-june-2-2025>

[12] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-march-3-2025> ; <https://www.tasnimnews dot com/fa/news/1403/11/17/3251865>

[13] <https://defapress dot ir/fa/news/729897>

- [14] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-march-3-2025> ; <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-june-10-2025>
- [15] <http://en.kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/77474>
- [16] <https://www.thetimes.com/world/middle-east/article/iran-russia-nuclear-talks-deal-lfzbdh7z7>
- [17] <https://farhikhtegandaily dot com/page/269777>
- [18] <https://www.axios.com/2025/07/12/putin-iran-nuclear-deal-uranium-enrichment>
- [19] <https://www.axios.com/2025/07/12/putin-iran-nuclear-deal-uranium-enrichment>
- [20] <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/28/iran-ships-uranium-russia-nuclear-deal>
- [21] <https://x.com/USAMBTurkiye/status/1946936064360497273>
- [22] <https://x.com/USAMBTurkiye/status/1946333767918080341>
- [23] <https://x.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/1946847222470988268> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-july-19-2025>
- [24] https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02myRiyGp4sear2gRSe9jZQEkuvgxTDwnvXpA3dZVaHZJ4EfqtReCEzAsThHLpRFQcl&id=100089249525829 ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/iran-update-july-19-2025>
- [25] <https://x.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/1946614190103286064> ; <https://x.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/1946843486361428175>
- [26] https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid02myRiyGp4sear2gRSe9jZQEkuvgxTDwnvXpA3dZVaHZJ4EfqtReCEzAsThHLpRFQcl&id=100089249525829 ; <https://x.com/QalaatAlMudiq/status/1946924309068337390>
- [27] https://x.com/omar_alharir/status/1946971189403963775 ; <https://x.com/Nuorgolan/status/1946967557199876296> ; <https://x.com/thiqanewsagency/status/1946961431498207302>