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WAR IN MIDDLE EAST

TRUMP: NO NEW ATTACK IF QUICK DEAL MADE



REUTERS

Vessels in the Strait of Hormuz are seen from Musandam, Oman, on Friday.

Iran, Oman reportedly close in negotiations to open strait

YASMINE GHANIA AND MENNA ALAAELDIN
Reuters

CAIRO — President Donald Trump said the United States will hold off on a fresh attack on Iran as long as a deal can be reached quickly to halt Iran’s nuclear ambitions and reopen the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump said late on Saturday on social media that Iran and other Middle Eastern countries asked for time to complete a deal that would lead to “the Immediate, Complete and Total” reopening of the vital strait and “an end to Iran’s nuclear threat.”

He did not name the countries in the post, which followed a call with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia, a U.S. ally.

“Based on this request, I have agreed, for the future benefit of the WORLD and, likewise, the survival of a successful and prosperous Iran, to cancel the attack, subject to being able to rapidly make a DEAL,” Trump wrote.

Israel “joins me in this commitment,” he said.

Iran’s official news agency IRNA reported Sunday that negotiations between Tehran

and Oman over the Strait of Hormuz were in their final stages, citing Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei said negotiations were focused on agreeing to a new route through the strait, adding that it had “no link to the Strait of Hormuz being opened or closed. That is a separate discussion.”

Last month Iran publicly rejected an Omani proposal, backed by Gulf states, to manage the strait they share. People familiar with the matter had told Reuters the plan included the collection of voluntary fees for using the strait.

Trump’s apparent de-escalation after days of threats of new attacks from each side was the latest twist in the war the U.S. and Israel launched five months ago. Attacks have spread across the Gulf to the Red Sea and even a Mediterranean facility in Egypt.

Iran has largely closed the Strait of Hormuz, a conduit for 20% of the world’s oil and liquefied natural gas before the war, causing energy prices to rise and stoking broader inflation.

Eli Cohen, Israel’s energy minister and a

member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s security Cabinet, said there was close security and intelligence coordination between Israel and the U.S. on everything happening in the region.

But he added: “With or without an agreement, and regardless of any external commitments, if Iran attempts to renew its nuclear program or advance its ballistic missile industries, we will be there. We will take action, and we will strike.”

Trump and Netanyahu met on Tuesday in Washington, with an Israeli official saying they had explored all possible paths to curb Iran’s nuclear program, including diplomacy, economic pressure and force. Tehran denies seeking a nuclear weapon.

Iran’s acting defense minister, Brigadier General Majid Ebn Al-Reza, said Tehran viewed recent U.S. threats as “psychological and cognitive warfare” but was treating them seriously, adding that Iran would boost preparedness and deterrence rather than be caught off guard or remain passive, Press TV reported.

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MICHAEL M. SANTIAGO, GETTY IMAGES

Connecticut Attorney General William Tong speaks Feb. 14, 2025, at a news conference about the Department of Government Efficiency at Manhattan Federal Courthouse in New York City.

State AGs expand work on consumer protection issues

Shift follows Trump’s dismantling of Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

KEVIN HARDY
Stateline.org

Since President Donald Trump gutted much of the federal government’s consumer protection work, state attorneys general are left to fight high prices and investigate businesses themselves.

Consumer protection work among state AGs ramped up considerably more in the past two years, legal experts say. The change followed Trump’s dismantling of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, an agency Congress created

after the Great Recession. Concerns about the high prices of housing, groceries and fuel made affordability a top political concern for many AGs.

The bureau was an early target of billionaire Elon Musk’s short-lived Department of Government Efficiency. Since then, it dropped dozens of investigations and enforcement cases, moved to slash the agency workforce and made it harder for consumers to submit complaints.

The Trump administration also sought to limit the authority granted to states to enforce financial services protections under the federal legislation that launched the CFPB.

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