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## Trump: Iran eyes talks as protest deaths rise

**BY JON GAMBRELL AND JULIA NIKHINSON**  
*Associated Press*  
DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — President Donald Trump said Iran wants to negotiate with Washington after his threat to strike the Islamic Republic over its crackdown on protesters, a move coming as activists said Monday that the death toll in nationwide demonstrations rose to about 600.  
Iran had no direct reaction to Trump's comments, which came after the foreign minister of Oman — long an interlocutor between Washington and Tehran — traveled to Iran this weekend. It also remains unclear just what Iran could promise, particularly as Trump has set strict demands over its nuclear program and its ballistic missile arsenal, which Tehran insists is crucial for its national defense.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, speaking to foreign diplomats in Tehran, insisted "the situation has come under total control" in remarks that blamed Israel and the U.S. for the violence, without offering evidence.  
"That's why the demonstrations turned violent and bloody to give an excuse to the American president to intervene," Araghchi said, in comments carried by Al Jazeera. The Qatar-funded network has been allowed to report live from inside Iran, despite the internet being shut off.  
However, Araghchi said Iran was "open to diplomacy." Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said that a channel to the U.S. remained open, but talks needed to be "based on the acceptance of mutual interests and concerns, not a negotiation

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MESHAQ HYLTON/U.S. Marine Corps

**Marine Cpl. Melvin Melchor hikes to a security point during Exercise Freezing Winds 24 in Pahkajarvi, Finland, in 2024. Adversaries are expanding their presence in the Arctic, driving NATO allies to compete with Russia and China, a top U.S. general says.**

# Point of contention

## US general: NATO foes' Arctic incursions 'not for peaceful purposes'

**BY JOHN VANDIVER**  
*Stars and Stripes*  
STUTTGART, Germany — The Arctic is rapidly becoming a front line for NATO competition with Russia and China, as adversaries expand their presence in the High North and probe alliance defenses, the top American general in Europe said over the weekend.  
Russian and Chinese naval vessels are conducting more frequent joint patrols in Arctic waters, and Chinese icebreakers and research



RUSSIAN DEFENSE MINISTRY PRESS SERVICE/AP

**Russian navy missile cruiser Marshal Ustinov sails off for an exercise in the Arctic.**

ships have expanded their operations in the region for military advantage, U.S. European Command's Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich said Sunday at a security conference in Sweden.  
"It's not for peaceful purposes," said Grynkeiwich, who also serves as NATO's supreme allied commander in Europe. "They're not studying the seals and the polar bears. They're out there doing

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