

# *Iran's foreign minister says Tehran and Washington have moved closer to establishing basis of negotiations*

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Muscat, April 13 (RHC)-- Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi says the first round of indirect negotiations between Iran and the United States in Oman brought the two sides closer to establishing "the basis of negotiations" for future discussions.

With Oman's mediation, Araghchi and Steve Witkoff, the U.S. President's Special Envoy for Middle East Affairs, led the first round of indirect talks in Muscat, Oman, on Saturday.

Speaking to IRIB after the talks concluded, Araghchi announced that the next round of discussions is expected to take place on April 19 at the same level. He said that while Oman will continue to act as mediator, the venue for the next session may change.

Araghchi added that the discussions aim to create a structured agenda for the negotiations based on a timeline. "We agreed to hold a second round next Saturday, and in the next session, we will delve into the overall framework that a deal can take to see how far this process can advance," he said.

Araghchi stressed the importance of setting a basis for the talks, saying: "If we can finalize the basis in the next meeting, we can begin real discussions based on that basis."

He hailed the hard work of Omani Foreign Minister Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi during about 2.5 hours of indirect talks between Tehran and Washington, shuttling between the two delegations to convey their messages.

The top Iranian diplomat described the first round of talks as "constructive" and said they were conducted in a "calm and very respectful atmosphere." "No inappropriate language was used. Both sides demonstrated their determination to advance the talks until an agreement is reached that is desirable for both parties and is based on an equal footing," he added.

The foreign minister said neither Iran nor the U.S. wants to "negotiate for the sake of negotiating" and does not favor protracted "attritional talks." Both Tehran and Washington voiced their keenness to achieve an agreement "at the shortest time," he said. "This, however, will not be easy and requires full determination of the two sides."

He noted that Tehran would precisely examine and consult on the issues discussed in Muscat at different levels.

The foreign minister said a short face-to-face meeting between the Iranian and American delegations after the talks was quite normal. "When leaving, the two delegations encountered each other, and we talked for a few minutes. This is a completely accepted issue," he explained.

"We have always observed diplomatic courtesy when dealing with American diplomats, and this time, too, an initial greeting was exchanged, and then we left the place. It was nothing extraordinary," Araghchi said.

In a post on his X account, Araghchi reiterated that his talks with Witkoff were "constructive and promising" and conducted "in an atmosphere of mutual respect and "kindly hosted and mediated" by his Omani counterpart. "I elaborated Iran's viewpoints in a firm yet forward-looking manner," the foreign minister added. He noted that Tehran and Washington decided to continue the process "in a matter of days."



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