

May 2016

## Politics:

Iran was [angered](#) by the US Supreme Court's ruling that \$2 billion in frozen Iranian assets will not be returned. The funds will be used to partially repay Iran's \$2.65 billion bill from a 2007 court case that awarded damages to families of the victims of Iran-linked terrorist attacks, such as the 1983 US Marine Barracks bombings in Beirut.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif [wrote](#) to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to condemn the US Supreme Court's decision to withhold frozen Iranian assets. Ban Ki-moon's spokesperson [offered](#) UN assistance in mediating the dispute.

A group of Iranian MPs [urged](#) President Hassan Rouhani to avoid implementing the nuclear agreement until the US releases Iran's frozen assets in full.

Ali Akbar Velayati [said](#) that Iran will consider Bashar al-Assad to be Syria's president "until the Syrian people change him."

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) [announced](#) that 13 military advisers were killed and 21 others injured in Syria.

Iran [summoned](#) the Kuwaiti envoy to Iran to protest Kuwait's decision to host a meeting of an anti-Iran group in the country's capital.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Hossein Jaber-Ansari [accused](#) Saudi Arabia of failing to fulfil its responsibilities towards the Hajj. He [said](#) that Saudi Arabia would be held solely responsible if Iranians cannot attend the annual pilgrimage this year.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei [told](#) Iranian workers that the US supports Iran's international trade only on paper, because it simultaneously spreads Iranophobia and causes the country other problems.

The Iranian foreign ministry [published](#) a statement welcoming increased international opposition against Israel on the anniversary of the state's establishment.

Alaeddin Boroujerdi, the Chairman of Iran's National Security and Foreign Policy Parliamentary Committee, [mentioned](#) that Iran can sue the US in more than 190 cases in the country's courts.

The Iranian Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Morteza Sarmadi [attended](#) the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in China on April 29. During the conference, he said that extremism had caused the region trouble.

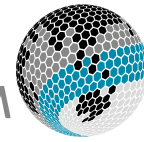
Ayatollah Ali Khamenei [said](#) that Iran has a genuine right to exercise its military power in the Persian Gulf, unlike the US.

The second round of Iran's parliamentary elections was [held](#) on April 29 to determine the remaining 68 parliamentary seats. Although no group received an outright majority, the results were seen as a victory for the country's moderates.

## International Relations:

Iran's deputy Foreign Minister for Arab-African affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian [met](#) with Christian Masset from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran on May 3. They discussed regional issues.





Mohammad Javad Zarif met with both the [High Representative](#) of the European Union, Federica Mogherini, and the [United Nations](#) Envoy to Syria, Staffan de Mistura, on the sidelines of the Syrian peace talks.

Hassan Rouhani [met](#) the head of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad movement, Ramadan Abdullah Shalah, in Tehran on May 5. President Rouhani expressed Iran's ongoing commitment to supporting the Palestinian nation.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior adviser to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, [met](#) with the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus on May 7.

The Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi [arrived](#) in Iran for a two-day visit on May 22 to discuss regional and international issues.

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian [travelled](#) to Russia. During his trip he held talks with Russian officials over recent developments in Middle East.

The Iranian foreign ministry [expressed](#) its firm opposition against US "meddling" in Persian Gulf security, condemning the country for using interfering language in one of the US draft resolutions.

Ali Akbar Velayati [attended](#) a meeting with Hizbullah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut on May 5. Velayati reiterated Iran's commitment to Hezbollah.

Hassan Rouhani [met](#) with the Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman in Tehran on May 3. In their meeting, President Rouhani stressed that all Muslim countries should unite against terrorism.

Hassan Rouhani [held talks](#) with his South Korean counterpart, Park Geun-hye, in Tehran on May 2.

Christine Defraigne, the President of the Belgian Senate, [met](#) with Hassan Rouhani in Tehran on April 30.

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) [released](#) a statement condemning the US court order to freeze Iranian assets.

Iran's Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi held [discussions](#) with the former-President of Iraq, Jalal Talabani, on May 14.

Iran [attended](#) Syria peace talks held on May 17 in Vienna. On the sidelines of the summit, Mohammad Javad Zarif met with his Australian, American, Omani, British and Russian counterparts.

## Economy:

A senior International Monetary Fund (IMF) official [said](#) that the IMF is willing to assist Iran improve its banking standards.

Iranian MPs [passed](#) a bill obliging the government to ask for compensation following the US's refusal to release Iran's frozen assets.

Elman Rustamov, the chairman of Azerbaijan's Central Bank (CBA), [met](#) with the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran, Valiollah Seif, in Tehran. They discussed establishing a joint bank.

Iran [announced](#) that it plans to triple its trade volume with South Korea. The two countries signed 19 documents in Tehran on May 2 in relation to energy, transport, fishing, technology and education. South Korea also [opened](#) its first bank in Iran, the Woori Bank.

Iran's Power and Water Equipment and Services Export Company (SUNIR) and Eurasia Invest Group [signed](#) a deal in Tehran on the construction of a wind power plant in Kazakhstan.

Iran and Singapore [signed](#) an agreement worth \$450 million to develop offshore facilities and other maritime ventures in Iran.

Iran took steps towards [signing](#) a free trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union.

Russia [announced](#) that it will consider the purchase of 40 tons of heavy water from Iran.

