



Iran Nuclear Talks Update: February 23, 2026

Sarah Havdala
Policy Analyst

While the United States and Iran continue to negotiate a potential nuclear deal, JINSA will resume its weekly release of the Iran Nuclear Talks Update. JINSA's resources on the status of the Iran talks is available at <https://jinsa.org/iran-talks/>.

Status: Ongoing

Last Met: February 17, 2026

Next Possible Meeting: February 26, 2026

- U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff, Jared Kushner, and Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi are [expected](#) to meet in Geneva, Switzerland, on February 26 for their third round of indirect nuclear negotiations mediated by Omani Foreign Minister Badr al-Busaidi.
 - » According to the *Jerusalem Post*, International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Grossi will also likely [join](#) the negotiating teams in Switzerland.
 - » Al-Busaidi [wrote](#) on X that these upcoming negotiations are a “positive push to go the extra mile towards finalizing the deal” between the United States and Iran.

U.S. Demands for a Deal

- Since the negotiating teams held their last meeting on February 17, several reports outlining potential U.S. proposals for Iran have emerged.
 - » According to *Axios*, President Donald Trump is [weighing](#) a proposal for a nuclear deal that grants Iran “token” uranium enrichment without a “possible path to a bomb.”
 - » According to a *New York Times* report, under this deal, Iran would have [access](#) to “very limited nuclear enrichment...solely for the purposes of medical research and treatments.”
- On February 22, Israel-based news outlet *Maariv* [reported](#) that Israel’s security cabinet met to discuss a potential plan in which Trump will pursue “a deal based on stages” that would address Iran’s nuclear program first.
 - » According to the same report, an unnamed source also [told](#) Israeli ministers that Iran’s “ballistic missiles and support for armed terror groups will be handled in subsequent stages.”

- As the negotiating teams are expected to meet in Oman, the U.S. military is preparing for kinetic action against Iran with the Trump administration weighing several attack options if they cannot reach a nuclear deal.
 - » On February 22, the *New York Times* [reported](#) that Trump is considering launching initial strikes on Iran to force the regime into abandoning its “ability to make a nuclear weapon.”
 - » The report also [noted](#) that Trump told officials in his administration that if Iran does not “give up its nuclear program” in negotiations or by pressure from initial strikes, the president will weigh an attack on Iran in the next few months “intended to drive the country’s leaders from power.”
 - Supporting this claim, a senior Trump advisor also [stated](#) that military officials have presented the president with an attack option that “takes out the ayatollah and his son and the mullahs.”

Iran's Position

- Even as U.S. pressure mounts, Iranian officials are [demanding](#) that the United States lift sanctions and recognize Iran’s self-proclaimed “right” to enrich uranium in exchange for any Iranian concessions during the next round of negotiations.
 - » On February 22, a senior Iranian official [informed](#) Reuters that Iran “would seriously consider a combination of sending half of its most highly enriched uranium abroad, diluting the rest and taking part in creating a regional enrichment consortium.”
 - The unnamed official also [stated](#) that “within the economic package under negotiation, the United States has also been offered opportunities for serious investment and tangible economic interests in Iran’s oil industry.”
 - » During a February 22 interview on CBS’s “Face the Nation with Margaret Brennan,” Araghchi [stated](#) that Iran is working to provide the U.S. negotiating team with a draft proposal so that the diplomats can “prepare a good text and come to a fast deal.”
 - In that interview, Araghchi [reiterated](#) that enrichment on Iranian soil is “a matter of dignity and pride for Iranians” and that the government is “not going to give it up.”

International Responses

- As the U.S. and Iranian negotiating teams are set to meet in Switzerland, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has expressed his concern over a potential nuclear deal between the two countries.
 - » On February 22, Netanyahu [told](#) a senior U.S. official that he’s “worried” Trump is “still with [Israel]” on whether he will pursue a deal that meets Jerusalem’s demands or will grant Iran leniency on its nuclear program, missile stockpile, and proxy network.