



US Special Envoy for Iran Rob Malley meeting with Omani official Sheikh Khalifa Al Harthy on February 15, 2023

US Meeting In Oman Coincides With Report Of Talks To Free Americans In Iran

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US Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley held talks with Omani officials about Iran, as reports emerged of indirect talks to free US prisoners held in Tehran.

Malley tweeted a photo of his meeting with Sheikh Khalifa Al Harthy, Foreign Ministry Undersecretary for Diplomatic Affairs, on Wednesday, saying they discussed deepening their close partnership on a range of issues related to Iran. "I also reiterated our thanks to Oman for their help securing **Baquer Namazi's release**," Malley added.

Namazi was held hostage in Iran for more than six years and was released in October.

Later in the day, US State Department spokesman Ned Price said, "Oman has played a constructive role across the Middle East... in the region in the past. It has been a bridge-builder between countries that do not always see eye-to-eye. Rob (Malley) tweeted this morning that he had a very good set of meetings in Oman. They discussed a number of issues related to Iran."

NBC had reported earlier that \$7 billion of Iran's funds held in South Korea will be released as part of a prisoner deal.

Iran International's correspondent asked Price if the US is willing to give the Iranian people assurances that any released funds are not going to end up in IRGC's hands. Price responded that he is not in a position to confirm or deny any reports.

"We engage with our partners around the world to thank them for upholding the sanctions regime that is in place and will be in place until and unless Iran addresses the challenge that its nuclear program poses to the United States; poses to our allies and partners and poses to the broader region," he added.

Circumventing a direct answer about contacts to resume the talks aimed at reviving the JCPOA, he said that "even when relations are at a low we are able to pursue our interests and to pursue them effectively in the midst of Russia's brutal war against Ukraine despite everything that we're doing to support our Ukrainian partners and everything we impose on Russia as a result of its brutal aggression we've been able to bring home we've been able to bring home Brittney Griner."

He added that bringing Americans home will always be profoundly in our interests and even when relations are at a low or maybe close to that point, we are determined to do everything we can to secure the safety and the well-being of our citizens."

Praising the "instrumental role Oman has played to solve challenges helping to bridge divides," he said that Oman "did play a very useful and important role in the decision on the part of the Iranian regime's release of Baquer Namazi."

"They were very supportive as part of our long-standing persistent efforts to see all of our wrongful detainees... to help effectuate their release from the Iranian custody."

"So, we thank Oman for the role it has played, and we continue to consult closely with Oman on Challenges near and far and Rob's engagement was part of that."

Iran Protests



Police Killing Of Young Man In Iran Raises Tensions