A Deal Before the Next Strike?

กาตาร์เร่งไกล่เกลี่ยสหรัฐฯ–อิหร่าน ขณะช่องแคบฮอร์มุซยังเสี่ยงต่อเรือขนส่ง

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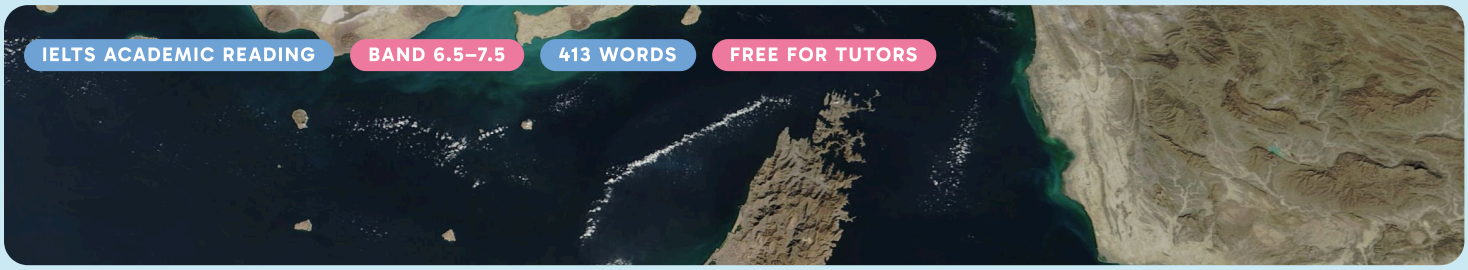


Photo: Strait of Hormuz & Musandam Peninsula, satellite view · NASA GSFC MODIS (public domain) · Wikimedia Commons

A Qatari diplomats have stepped up efforts to end the eight-month war between the United States and Iran. On Friday, a Qatari team held more than 12 hours of talks in Tehran, hoping to restart direct negotiations between the two governments. The discussions were coordinated with Washington, and a diplomatic source described "positive progress." Talks were expected to continue in Doha the following day. Qatar, together with Pakistan, has been trying to **mediate** because the conflict has disrupted shipping and oil supplies far beyond the region.

B According to reports, the latest draft sets out a seven-day timeline of **reciprocal** steps: each side would take small actions in turn, rather than one side giving up everything first. These **confidence-building** measures are designed to reduce mistrust before any formal agreement. Qatar is also reportedly urging Iran to let United Nations inspectors visit its damaged nuclear sites in exchange for some relief from US **sanctions**, although Iran has not yet accepted this idea. Several countries could act as guarantors of a final deal.

C The main obstacle is the order of events. Washington wants Iran to offer nuclear **concessions** as soon as talks restart. Tehran, by contrast, insists that the US must first lift its naval **blockade** of Iranian ports, release frozen funds and allow Iran to sell its oil. President Donald Trump, however, told a radio station that the war would "get **wrapped up** soon," adding that the US needed a **guarantee** that Iran would never build a nuclear weapon.

D Meanwhile, the Strait of Hormuz remains a source of serious concern. This narrow waterway is one of the world's most important shipping choke points, and a large share of global oil exports must **transit** it. The UK Maritime Trade Operations agency recorded just over 30 attacks on vessels in and around the strait in October – roughly double the September figure and the highest monthly total since the early stage of the war. Iran claims that several commercial ships struck sea mines, while the US military insists that the southern shipping lanes are open and that Iran's navy is no longer able to operate.

E For the rest of the world, the stakes are high. Oil prices rose for a fourth consecutive month in October, and countries that import most of their energy, including Thailand, are watching closely. If diplomacy fails, the conflict could **escalate** again; if it succeeds, the shipping lanes may gradually return to normal. The coming days may decide which path is taken.

Source: Reuters, CBS News and Axios reports, 30–31 October 2026 (UKMTO shipping data). Passage rewritten by London Learner for teaching.

KEY VOCABULARY

mediate v. เป็นตัวกลางไกล่เกลี่ย
The teacher mediated between the two students after their argument.

sanctions n. การคว่ำบาตร
The sanctions made it harder for the country to sell its products abroad.

confidence-building adj. ที่สร้างความเชื่อมั่น
Sharing information openly is a simple confidence-building step.

escalate v. ทวีความรุนแรงขึ้น
The argument escalated when neither side would listen.

reciprocal adj. ซึ่งกันและกัน, ตอบแทนกัน
The two schools have a reciprocal exchange program.

blockade n. การปิดล้อมทางเรือ/ท่าเรือ
The blockade stopped cargo ships from reaching the port for weeks.

concession n. การยอมผ่อนปรน, ข้อที่ยินยอม
Both teams made concessions to agree on a new match schedule.

transit v. / n. ผ่าน, การผ่าน
Thousands of ships transit the Panama Canal every year.

wrap up phr. v. ยุติ, ปิดจบ
Let's wrap up the meeting before lunch.

guarantee n. / v. การรับประกัน, รับประกัน
There is no guarantee that the train will arrive on time.

TRUE / FALSE / NOT GIVEN

Do the statements agree with the information in the passage?

1. The talks in Tehran on Friday lasted more than half a day. ____
2. Iran has agreed to let UN inspectors visit its nuclear sites. ____
3. Iran wants the US blockade lifted before it makes nuclear concessions. ____
4. There were fewer attacks on ships in October than in September. ____
5. Thailand has reduced the amount of oil it buys from the Gulf. ____

Answer key: 1 T (A) · 2 F (B) · 3 T (C) · 4 F (D) · 5 NG