

# TEHRAN TIMES



Interview with Turkish ambassador on election will be published soon

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## Luxembourg 40-member delegation discuss trade in Iran

**TEHRAN TIMES Economic Desk** TEHRAN — A 40-member delegation of businessmen from Luxembourg, headed by Jeannot Erpelding, the director of International Affairs of the Chamber of Com-

merce of Luxembourg, discussed ways to expand banking cooperation with Iran and invest in the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Erpelding signed a memorandum of under-

standing (MOU) with Gholam-Hossein Shafe'i, the chairman of the Iranian Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture, in Tehran on Tuesday, the Fars news agency reported.

During the meeting, Erpelding said that

the visit to Iran aimed to explore new investment opportunities and to boost economic cooperation with Iran, especially through small and medium-sized enterprises.

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## Nuclear deal arrangements not to be everlasting: Araqchi

**TEHRAN TIMES Political Desk** TEHRAN — Iran's deputy foreign minister in legal and international affairs says a prospective nuclear deal with the six major powers will not be in effect forever.

Abbas Araqchi said that if Iran and the group 5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) make a deal, it will be binding within a certain time span.

Araqchi's remarks came as a response to U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Anthony Blinken who told an audience at the American Jewish Committee's annual Global Forum on Monday that the deal will be perpetual.

"The deal will not expire and there will not be a so-called sunset," Blinken stressed, explaining that the monitoring of nuclear access and protocols and Iran's obligations to uphold all of the terms of the Non-Proliferation Treaty would remain in perpetuity.

"But of course Iran's obligations within international treaties such as the NPT are granted and will be continued as long as Iran keeps being member to these treaties," Araqchi said.

He added that remarks such as Blinken's serve domestic use and lack further value.

## INOTEX 2015 hosting companies from 20 countries

**TEHRAN TIMES Economic Desk** TEHRAN — The second edition of the International Innovation and Technology Exhibition of Iran (INOTEX 2015) kicked off on Tuesday at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds.

The four-day event is participated by 60 Iranian and 120 foreign firms, the Tasnim News Agency reported.

Companies from 20 countries are showcasing their latest technological achievements and innovations in the fields of IT and ICT, oil, gas and petrochemical, hi-tech medicine and biomedical engineering, industrial automation and intelligent systems, biotechnology, nanotechnology, renewable energy, aerospace, medical and laboratory equipment, infrastructures, new materials, optics, photonics and laser.

A forum will also be held on the sidelines of the exhibition for two days with the participation of leading experts from Iran and their counterparts from South Korea, France, and Austria.



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## Russia may try to use SCO as counterweight to NATO: Shireen Hunter

### INTERVIEW

By Javad Heiraninia

**TEHRAN** — A professor of political science at Georgetown University says the transformation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization into a "more viable security organization is unlikely" in the near future.

Shireen Tahmaasb Hunter also says a full membership of Iran in the SCO "is unlikely to enhance Iran's security."

The reason for this is that most security challenges that Iran faces "emanate from its Arab neighbors and the shifting dynamics of Middle East politics, plus developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan," Hunter says in an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times.

The SCO group, formed in 2001, includes Russia and China and the central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Iran, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Pakistan and India are observer members.

Following is the full text of the interview:

**■ In the recent SCO meeting in Moscow Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said all SCO members have a consensus that Iran becomes a full member of the organization once a nuclear deal is signed between Iran and the major powers. What is the significance of an Iranian membership in the bloc?**

A: The greatest significance of Iran's full membership in SCO is symbolic. It serves to



ratify Iran's position as a legitimate and important player in central Asian politics. Moreover, in view of Iran's somewhat troubled relations with some of its neighbors and the Western countries, full membership in SCO could help alleviate its international isolation. It also allows it to have a multilateral channel for dealing with both China and Russia, in addition to the existing bilateral links. However, at least at this stage, full membership in SCO is unlikely to enhance Iran's security, because most challenges to Iran's security emanate from its Arab neighbors and the shifting dynamics of Middle East politics, plus developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

**■ Previously Russia was not interested in Tehran's membership in the SCO but now it is supporting membership. Why?**

A: Two factors are behind Moscow's greater willingness to support Iran's full membership in SCO. One is Moscow concern that, after the signing of a nuclear deal Iran's relations with European countries, and later may be even with America, will expand.

This development in turn would reduce Russia's attraction as an economic and security partner for Iran, especially that in the past, Russia has treated Iran badly and has used it for its own purposes, including gaining concessions from the West. Now, Russia wants to make sure that it can still keep Iran under its influence by including it in the SCO. The other reason is Russia's problems with the West. So maybe it is trying to turn SCO into a more viable regional security organization and in this way compete with NATO. If so, having Iran which links Central Asia to the Middle East would be a good gain for Russia.

**■ Can SCO establish closer relationship between members which would also include collective security cooperation?**

A: Because of vast difference in the geography of SCO members, its turning into a more effective collective security system will not be easy. Moreover, such organizations require the existence of an identifiable and common enemy which currently does not exist. In addition, SCO's current members have significant disputes among themselves. For example Uzbekistan has tense relations both with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Russia and China, too, are rivals for influence in Central Asia. So, the transformation of SCO into a more viable security organization is unlikely, at least in the near future.

### NEWS

## Egypt summons U.S. ambassador over Muslim Brotherhood

Egypt summoned the U.S. ambassador in Cairo to show displeasure at Muslim Brotherhood figures coming to Washington for a private conference, sources familiar with the matter said on Monday.

One source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said U.S. officials did not intend to meet the group although they had met some Brotherhood figures that came to Washington in January.

The tensions reflect a clash between U.S. diplomats' desire to deal with the whole political spectrum in Egypt and a fear of alienating Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi who, as army chief, toppled a Muslim Brotherhood-led government in 2013.

The sources declined to say precisely when U.S. Ambassador Stephen Beecroft was called in by the Egyptian government, though one said it was in recent days. Egypt sought the meeting to make clear its unhappiness at U.S. dealings with the Brotherhood.

State Department spokesman Jeff Rathke declined to say whether Beecroft was summoned by the Egyptian authorities or whether U.S. officials would meet Brotherhood figures visiting Washington, telling reporters he was aware of media reports of such a visit but that "I don't have any meetings to announce."

He said it continued to be U.S. policy to engage with people from across the political spectrum in Egypt.

The United States has had ambivalent dealings with Sisi, prizing the stability he has brought to Egypt while cautiously criticizing Egypt's human rights record and the authorities' crackdown on the Brotherhood.

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### NEWS

## World must know truth of Saudi war on Yemen: Nasrallah

Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah says the truth of the Saudi war on Yemen should be revealed to the world in a bid to prevent aggressors from imposing their own will on the Yemeni nation.

Nasrallah stated that the entire world should be aware of the heinous atrocities being committed in Yemen, and unite in the face of aggressors; Lebanon's al-Manar television on Monday quoted him as saying in a televised speech to a meeting of clerics held in the Iranian city of Qom in solidarity with the oppressed Yemeni people.

"Yemen needs to tell the truth to the world, the truth of the aggression that is being hidden because of misinformation," the Hezbollah leader added.

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## South Korean ambassador visits Tehran Times

**TEHRAN** — On Tuesday, South Korea's ambassador to Iran paid a visit to the Tehran Times headquarters where he discussed and highlighted some common ground between the two countries.

Song Woong-yeob recounted a legendary tale which was set in the Old Persia and the Korean Peninsula dating back to 700 AD.

As the tale has it, the prince of Persia from the Sassanid Empire, who is sent into exile, falls in love with the Korean princess of Silla dynasty. They get married and the princess bears a son who years later travels to the Old Persia and defeats

the country's invaders and eventually becomes the leader of what is called Iran now.

Ambassador Song said even though no one can confirm the truth behind the story, the tale simply illustrates without having had close relationship between the two countries such stories couldn't have been made up.

The Korean diplomat, who sat for talks with Tehran Times editor-in-chief Hassan Lasjerdi, also expressed hope that cultural cooperation would expand and the two countries would exchange views on various issues.



South Korea's Ambassador Song Woong-yeob on the front left with his staff