

MEMMO

April 12, 2012

Talks Must Quickly Lead to Iranian Enrichment Suspension

The new round of talks between Iran and the international community must rapidly produce meaningful steps by Tehran to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions. The White House is demanding that Iran suspend its uranium enrichment and make a verifiable decision to end its pursuit of a nuclear weapon. The international community must step up sanctions implementation until Iran meets its international obligations. Iran cannot be allowed to use talks to surreptitiously continue its pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability.

Iran cannot be allowed to use talks to avoid its international obligations to suspend its nuclear program and cooperate with the IAEA.

- The Security Council has demanded six times—under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter—that Iran suspend its enrichment of uranium. Chapter VII resolutions are the highest form of international law and make mandatory the Council's demands.
- Leading up to the talks, the White House called on Iran to comply with its Security Council obligations, demanding Tehran's immediate "cessation of uranium enrichment and the verifiable decision by the regime in Tehran to forego pursuit of a nuclear weapon."
- Rather than comply with the Council's demands, Iran continues to ratchet up its enrichment activity and to ignore IAEA requests for information and access to suspect nuclear sites.
- The United States and the international community should not reward Iran by lifting or suspending sanctions for Tehran merely coming to the negotiating table.
- At a minimum, any deal to ease sanctions should be contingent on Iran suspending all enrichment activity, shipping out all uranium enriched beyond low levels and cooperating with inspectors.
- Iran should not be allowed to resume enrichment until it has conclusively demonstrated that its nuclear activities are for peaceful purposes and established real cooperation with inspectors.



The International Atomic Energy Agency's latest report says Iran continues to press ahead with its enrichment of uranium in defiance of the U.N. Security Council.

Iran has a long history of using talks to forestall sanctions while advancing its nuclear ambitions.

- While negotiations with Iran should be explored, Washington must not forget Iran's long history of exploiting negotiations to buy time to advance its nuclear program.
- Iran refused to discuss its nuclear program during talks in January 2011 with the P5+1. Instead, Iran insisted all economic sanctions be ended and its right to a uranium enrichment program be formally recognized *prior to negotiations*.

- In late 2009, Iran rejected the international community's offer to reprocess a portion of its low enriched uranium (LEU) outside the country for use in its Tehran Research Reactor.
- In May 2006, the P5+1 offered Iran a major package of economic and security incentives and the United States agreed to join multilateral talks if Iran suspended enrichment. After taking three months to consider the package, Iran rejected the offer and accelerated its nuclear activities.
- Although Iran entered into an agreement in 2003 with France, Germany and Great Britain to suspend its enrichment activity, the regime continued to advance its nuclear program. Former lead Iranian negotiator Hassan Rowhani proudly claimed in a March 2006 speech that while "negotiating with the Europeans in Tehran, we were installing equipment at the Isfahan site."

The United States must make clear that it will act to prevent Iran from being in the position to build a nuclear weapon at a time of its choosing.

- In any negotiations, the United States must make clear that it will prevent Iran from developing or acquiring nuclear weapons and Iran will not be allowed to acquire the capability to quickly produce a nuclear weapon at a time of its choosing.
- The United States also must continue to reject any policy that seeks to contain a nuclear Iran. President Obama has rejected this approach, citing the dangers allowing a nuclear Iran would pose to U.S. security. "Iran's leaders should understand that I do not have a policy of containment; I have a policy to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon," the president said.
- At the same time, Washington must speak with one voice to persuade Iran that the United States will take all steps—including military action if needed—to prevent Iran from going nuclear.
- As President Obama said, "[W]hen it comes to preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, I will take no options off the table. ... That includes all elements of American power, a political effort... a diplomatic effort... an economic effort... and yes, a military effort..."

Enforcement of crippling economic sanctions must be accelerated in order to prevent Tehran from achieving a nuclear weapons capability.

- The time needed to prevent Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability is quickly expiring. The United States and its international partners have imposed crippling sanctions on Iran and must now stringently step up enforcement of these measures to prevent such a scenario.
- On a daily basis, Iran is feeling the harsh impact of sanctions enacted by the United States and its allies. As a result of intensifying economic pressure, Iran faces a drop in oil exports, skyrocketing inflation, rising unemployment and significant damage to the value of its currency.
- The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT), a major financial-services network, blocked 30 Iranian banks from receiving its services. SWIFT's decision—a result of U.S. pressure—virtually eliminates Iran's access to the international financial system.
- While these efforts have had an impact, the administration has yet to sanction any bank for conducting significant financial transactions with designated Iranian banks, failed to sanction several major Chinese companies for investing in Iran's energy sector or for providing Iran refined petroleum. No ships or shipping firms have been sanctioned for utilizing sanctioned ports under the control of Iran's Revolutionary Guard.
- The president must enforce recently passed legislation regarding the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), and sanction any foreign financial institution conducting significant transactions with the CBI. The United States must also continue to press buyers of Iranian oil to look elsewhere for supplies.