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Financial Times

September 30, 2009

## **Iran Accused Of Nuclear Warhead Plan**

By James Blitz in London, Daniel Dombey in Washington and Najmeh Bozorgmehr in Tehran

Britain's intelligence services say that Iran has been secretly designing a nuclear warhead "since late 2004 or early 2005", an assessment that suggests Tehran has embarked on the final steps towards acquiring nuclear weapons capability.

As world powers prepare to confront Iran on Thursday on its nuclear ambitions, the Financial Times has learnt that the UK now judges that Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, ordered the resumption of the country's weapons programme four years ago.

Iran is already under pressure after the revelation last week that it has been building an undeclared site to enrich uranium.

The UK's assessment of Iran's clandestine weapons programme will now add to concerns over Tehran's capability, suggesting it could be making faster-than-expected progress on its nuclear project.

By contrast, US intelligence services remain firm in their conclusion that while Iran may ultimately want a bomb, the country halted weapons design work in 2003 and probably has not restarted that effort as of 2007.

The US published this judgment in a National Intelligence Estimate in 2007 amid claims that the CIA was scarred by its errors over Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programme.

Britain has always privately expressed scepticism about the US assessment on Iran but is only now firmly asserting that the weapons programme restarted in 2004-05.

Iran's chief nuclear official on Tuesday ruled out any discussions in Thursday's talks with world powers over the country's nuclear programme.

The comments by Ali-Akbar Salehi add to the pessimism that the talks in Geneva with the US, Britain, Germany, France, Russia and China will bear any fruit and will further fuel international suspicions about the link between Iran's nuclear and missile plans.

"We will never bargain about our sovereign rights," Mr Salehi said. "If we have the right to enrich uranium ... convert uranium ... have fuel fabrication ... design reactors and manufacture reactors, we will do them and will not freeze them."

He said Iran was committed to the "integrity" of the non-proliferation treaty and would not accept the six big powers' "freeze-for-freeze" proposal, by which Iran should suspend all nuclear-related activities in return for a halt in international punitive measures. "They say the only guarantee you can give us is to stop all kinds of nuclear technologies and activities, but this is absolutely ... nonsense," Mr Salehi said.

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e0915d68-ad58-11de-9caf-00144feabdc0.html?nclink\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e0915d68-ad58-11de-9caf-00144feabdc0.html?nclink_check=1)

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USA Today  
September 30, 2009

## **Iran Says It Put Nuke Facility Where It Can't Be Bombed**

By Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran -- In an unusually frank disclosure, Iran's nuclear chief said Tuesday that the country's new uranium-enrichment site was built for maximum protection from aerial attack: carved into a mountain and near a military compound of the Revolutionary Guards.

Iran's revelation that it covertly built a second uranium-enrichment plant has raised international concerns that other secret nuclear sites might exist as well.

Iranian nuclear chief Ali Akbar Salehi's statement came with a hard-line message ahead of crucial talks this week with the U.S. and other world powers: Iran will not give up its ability to produce nuclear fuel.

The details emerging about the site near the holy city of Qom have heightened concerns that Iran is trying to build a nuclear bomb, despite repeated denials. Salehi, vice president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, spoke at a news conference that touched on military and nuclear issues rarely discussed publicly in Iran. "This site is at the base of a mountain and was selected on purpose in a place that would be protected against aerial attack. That's why the site was chosen adjacent to a military site," Salehi said. "It was intended to safeguard our nuclear facilities and reduce the cost of an active defense system. If we had chosen another site, we would have had to set up another aerial defense system."

He said Iran is willing to have a general discussion about nuclear technology when it meets Thursday in Geneva with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany, but he insisted Iran will not give up its right to uranium enrichment, which produces fuel that can be used for both nuclear energy or nuclear weapons.

The United States and its allies have demanded that Iran come clean on all of its nuclear activities or face harsher international sanctions.

Salehi reiterated that Iran is in talks with the International Atomic Energy Agency to set a timetable soon for an inspection of the Qom site.

[http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20090930/iran30\\_st.art.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/printedition/news/20090930/iran30_st.art.htm)

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Los Angeles Times  
September 30, 2009

## **Israel Mutes Its Rhetoric Against Iran As Talks Loom**

By Richard Boudreaux

Reporting from Jerusalem:

Israel has warned for years that it might carry out military action to prevent Iran from building an atomic bomb. But as the United States and other powers prepare to confront Iran in talks this week, the message from Jerusalem is more restrained.

Israeli leaders say they are willing to wait as President Obama plays out his strategy of negotiating with Iran while threatening stronger sanctions if talks fail. They say last week's disclosure of a previously secret uranium enrichment plant under construction in Iran strengthened the case for harsh international measures.

And though they remain skeptical that anything short of force will derail Iran's nuclear plans, the Israelis are careful to emphasize that attacking its reactors and missile sites is an option the Obama administration, not just Israel, holds in reserve.

"The foundations have been laid for halting Iran by establishing a broad international coalition led by the United States," Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon said this week. "The tools the United States has at its disposal are much stronger, much more serious."

Iran says its nuclear program is for civilian energy production; Israel and many in the West are convinced that it is aimed at developing nuclear weapons.

At Thursday's meeting in Geneva, the United States and the other powers will demand that Iran open the enrichment facility to international inspectors and provide unfettered access to related documents and to scientists involved in the plant's construction, U.S. officials say. Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia are also to take part in the meeting.

Israel has coupled support for the diplomatic effort with appeals to the world-power participants to prepare maximum sanctions. In televised interviews last week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the Iranian government was so unpopular at home that "crippling sanctions," including an embargo on gasoline shipments, could undermine it further.

"The application of this pressure might do the job," Netanyahu said. "The sooner we do it, the sooner we'll find out and the less will be the need to take stronger action."

Netanyahu also telephoned House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) and five other members of the U.S. Congress last week with the same message, Israeli officials said.

Israel, itself an undeclared nuclear power, has voiced alarm over calls by Iran's president for its demise. It closely monitors its archenemy's nuclear and missile development while building up its own strike capabilities and missile defenses.

Israel's leaders undoubtedly knew of the clandestine facility well before its disclosure last week, Israeli analysts said, and had factored it into planning for a possible preemptive strike.

Officials and analysts in Israel acknowledge that an attack on Iran carries huge risks and might fail to deter Tehran from building a bomb. Yet Israel's record of successful preemptive strikes -- on a partially built reactor in Iraq in 1981 and what U.S. officials said was a nearly complete reactor in Syria in 2007 -- has bolstered arguments here for a limited attack on Iran's widely scattered facilities.

Israel's warnings had grown during the last year along with its doubts that Obama was willing to confront Iran. But his decision last week, joined by Britain and France, to use the hidden enrichment plant as leverage against Iran cast the U.S. leader in a new light in Israel.

"American policy on the entire Iranian issue has undergone . . . significant changes since President Obama took office," said Michael B. Oren, Israel's ambassador to the U.S. "At the beginning, it was seen as an Israeli problem. . . . Somewhere around the summer, the U.S. administration began regarding Iran as a world problem and as an American one. These changes make it somewhat easier for us."

Ephraim Halevy, a former head of Israel's foreign intelligence service, said Obama still faces a daunting challenge in confronting Iran. "But now he has everyone behind him," Halevy said. "It's an entirely different situation from what he had a week ago."

In part to bury the notion that Iran threatens no one but Israel, Israeli officials have said little in public about the Iranian plant and issued no formal reaction to the Islamic Republic's test-firing Monday of missiles with sufficient range to strike the Jewish state.

Halevy said there was a good chance that this week's talks would succeed in deterring Iran because its leaders felt cornered.

"Israel should allow this dialogue to take place quietly and seriously, with all options continuing to exist in the background, of course, in case it fails," he said.

Less optimistic analysts believe Iran is so close to nuclear weapons capability that it would be willing to risk provoking the most punishing sanctions. They say the diplomatic effort could lead by next spring to two outcomes difficult for Israel:

One is a deal allowing Iran to continue enriching uranium at low levels for energy purposes, under an international supervision regime that Israel regards as too weak to stop the development of a weapons program. If Obama and other world leaders applaud such a step, analysts say, Israel's hands would be tied.

The other outcome, a failure by world leaders to agree on sanctions that dissuade Iran, would force Israel to decide between living with a nuclear-armed Iran and attacking it.

U.S. officials have tried to discourage a unilateral Israeli strike, and many analysts doubt that the Israelis would launch one without at least a quiet nod from Washington. The risks for Israel would include blame for any Iranian retaliation against American troops in Iraq as well as deadly strikes on its own people.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said Sunday that if Iran's program were destroyed by force, it would take the country one to three years to get it running again. But Israel's military planners might view a temporary setback as a worthwhile goal, some analysts say.

"If we could foresee a high probability of success, I think we'd take the risk," said Ephraim Inbar, director of the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University near Tel Aviv.

For now, however, Israel's sabers are quiet.

"There's no need to attack anything -- heaven forbid!" Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman declared last week as Israeli leaders were being briefed on plans by the United States and its allies. "These countries have enough power to stop this entire madness."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-israel-iran30-2009sep30.0.341627.story>

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United Press International (UPI.com)  
September 30, 2009

## Israel Get Two German Submarines

Israel has taken delivery of two German-made submarines capable of launching missiles with nuclear warheads.

"We have received two Dolphin-class submarines built from Germany," Israel and Arab media reported quoting an anonymous Israeli military spokesman.

Called U212s, the submarines were upgraded in Germany by Israeli technicians and engineers in order to enable them to carry nuclear warheads.

Initially in 2006, when the sale was confirmed, the German government said the two vessels were not equipped to carry nuclear weapons.

The submarines were ordered in 2005, and delivery was originally scheduled for 2010.

With the latest delivery, Israel now holds five state-of-the-art U212s, designed for a crew of 35 and capable of launching cruise missiles that carry nuclear warheads to a distance of 2,810 miles.

The submarines are the most expensive weapon platforms in Israel's arsenal.

Since the end of the Second World War and the mass murder of Jews under the Nazi regime, Germany has made it its historic obligation to help Israel.

The first two U212s were donated by Berlin to the government of Israel after the 1991 Gulf War.

It split the cost of the third with the Jewish state, offering it at an almost symbolic price, local media reported.

"The German government decided to deliver Israel ... the five vessels and allow its experts to manipulate them in order to provide Tel Aviv with hardware needed to evacuate its entire nuclear weaponry arsenal on an appropriate fleet, while allowing it to be employed in warfare," the Arab monitor reported.

It said the delivery was in violation of German law forbidding the export of military equipment or weapons of non-NATO countries engaged in warfare.

One of the subs delivered by the German government is permanently stationed in the Gulf, and Israeli media have said that the fleet of five vessels could be key in any decision by Israel to launch an attack on Iranian targets from the sea.

An Israeli submarine recently used the Suez Canal for the first time, anchoring in the Red Sea in a journey that would have normally required the Israeli vessel to travel around the coast of Africa.

Escorted in June by Egyptian navy vessels, the move was intended to send a message to Iran.

The delivery of the submarines follows Tehran's missile tests earlier this week.

Israel suspects Iran of trying to develop atomic weapons under the pretext of its civilian nuclear program. Tehran has repeatedly denied the charges, saying it is acting well within its rights.

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New York Times  
September 30, 2009

## **In Dispute With Iran, Path To Iraq Is In Spotlight**

By Scott Shane

WASHINGTON — To many Americans, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell's February 2003 speech to the United Nations on Iraq's unconventional weapons was powerfully persuasive. It was a dazzling performance, featuring satellite images and intercepts of Iraqi communications, delivered by one of the most trusted figures in public life.

Then a long and costly war began, and the country discovered that the assertions that Iraq possessed illicit weapons had been completely unfounded.

Now the United States' confrontation with Iran over its nuclear program is heating up, with the disclosure last week that the Iranian government is building a second uranium enrichment complex it had not previously acknowledged.

The question is inevitable: Is the uproar over the secret plant near Qum another rush to judgment, based on ambiguous evidence, spurred on by a desire to appear tough toward a loathed regime? In other words, is the United States repeating the mistakes of 2002?

Antiwar activists, with a fool-me-once skepticism, watch the dispute over the Qum plant with an alarmed sense of déjà vu. And some specialists on arms control and Iran are asking for more evidence and warning against hasty conclusions.

But while the similarities between 2002, when the faulty intelligence estimates were produced, and 2009 are unmistakable, the differences are profound.

This time, by all accounts, there is no White House-led march toward war. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has said that military action would merely delay Iranian nuclear weapons for one to three years, and there is no evidence that President Obama wants to add a third war to his responsibilities.

This time, too, the dispute over facts is narrower. Iran has admitted the existence of nuclear enrichment facilities, and on Tuesday it acknowledged that it was building the plant underground, next to a military base, for its protection. Still, Iran disputes claims that the plant is part of a weapons program.

American intelligence officials say that they learned a traumatic lesson from the Iraqi weapons debacle, and that assessments of Iran's nuclear program are hedged and not influenced by political or policy considerations.

"We'd let the country down, and we wanted to make sure it would never happen again," said Thomas Fingar, who before the Iraq war led the State Department's intelligence bureau, which dissented from the inaccurate claims about Iraq's nuclear program. Dissent from majority views in intelligence assessments is now encouraged, and assumptions are spelled out, said Mr. Fingar, who is now at Stanford University.

"Now, it's much more of a transparent tussle of ideas," he said.

That tussle produced a surprising conclusion in a 2007 national intelligence assessment on Iran's nuclear program: that Tehran's work on designing a warhead was halted in 2003. Today, the American view is that the design work has still not resumed, a more conservative stance than that of some close allies, who say they believe the work has resumed or never stopped at all, including Germany, Israel and, according to a report Tuesday by The Financial Times, Britain.

In assessing the construction near Qum, the Central Intelligence Agency "formed its conclusions carefully and patiently over time, weighing and testing each piece of information that came in," said Paul Gimigliano, an agency spokesman. "This was a major intelligence success."

Not all are persuaded. Glenn Greenwald, an author and a left-leaning blogger for the online magazine Salon, called the parallels with the charges that Iraq had so-called weapons of mass destruction in 2002 "substantial and disturbing."

"The administration is making inflammatory claims about another country's W.M.D. program and intentions without providing any evidence," he said.

Gary Sick, an expert on Iran at Columbia University, said that ever since 1992, American officials had claimed that Iran was just a few years away from a nuclear bomb. Like Saddam Hussein, the clerical government in Iran is “despised,” he said, leading to worst-case assumptions.

“In 2002, it seemed utterly naïve to believe Saddam didn’t have a program,” Mr. Sick said. Now, the notion that Iran is not racing to build a bomb is similarly excluded from serious discussion, he said.

Mr. Sick, like some in the intelligence community, said he believed that Iran might intend to stop short of building a weapon while creating “breakout capability” — the ability to make a bomb in a matter of months in the future. That chain of events might allow room for later intervention.

Without actually constructing a bomb, Iran could gain the influence of being an almost nuclear power, without facing the repercussions that would ensue if it finished the job.

Greg Thielmann, an intelligence analyst in the State Department before the Iraq war, said he believed that the Iran intelligence assessments were far more balanced, in part because there was not the urgent pressure from the White House to reach a particular conclusion, as there was in 2002. But he said he was bothered by what he said was an exaggerated sense of crisis over the Iranian nuclear issue.

“Some people are saying time’s running out and we have to act by the end of the year,” said Mr. Thielmann, now a senior fellow at the Arms Control Association. “I’ve been arguing that we have years, not months. The facts argue for a calmer approach.”

David Albright, a former nuclear arms inspector who is now the president of the Institute for Science and International Security, said Iran’s “well-documented history of undeclared nuclear programs” lent credibility to American suspicions.

Still, Mr. Albright said, the government must provide more information to back up its charges. On the Qum plant, for example, he asked, do intelligence agencies have evidence that it was intended to produce weapons-grade uranium, or merely that it could accommodate the equipment for such a purpose?

“They have to show their hand,” he said of American intelligence agencies. “Or we don’t have to believe them.”

In many dissections of the blunders before the Iraq war, the news media, including The New York Times, came in for a share of the criticism, for repeating Bush administration claims about Iraq without sufficient scrutiny or skepticism.

Mr. Greenwald, the Salon blogger, said he found in the coverage about the Qum plant little improvement in the performance of the press. “There is virtually no questioning of whether this facility could be used for civilian purposes, or whether Iran’s reporting it more than a year before operability demonstrates its good faith,” he said.

Greg Mitchell, whose 2008 book “So Wrong for So Long” analyzed the media’s failures on Iraq, said he would give the Iran coverage better marks. “I don’t see the same level of blindly accepting what the hawks are saying,” said Mr. Mitchell, editor of the trade publication Editor & Publisher. “I think the press has learned some lessons.”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/30/world/middleeast/30intel.html>

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London Daily Telegraph  
30 September 2009

## **British Intelligence Believes Iran has Resumed Work on Nuclear Warhead**

By Our Foreign Staff

The Financial Times and New York Times have separately reported that Western and Israeli intelligence agencies are in the throes of a dispute over the exact nature of Iran’s work to build a functioning atom bomb.

Following the discovery of a secret plant outside the holy city of Qom, US intelligence hopes that it has made a breakthrough in finding out how much covert work Iran is undertaking.

The New York Times quoted a US official claiming Qom “was the big one” but he added Iran was a big country.



British officials told the Financial Times that Iran resumed work on a nuclear warhead design in "late 2004 or early 2005." The US assessment is that work stopped after an order was handed down by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in 2003 and there is no conclusive evidence that it has restarted.

One former US official acknowledged there were deep differences between international intelligence agencies. "It's often the tradecraft that gets us bollixed up," said Rolf Mowatt-Larsen. "It comes down to interpreting the same data in different ways."

The shadow of faulty assessments used to pave the way to the Iraq war hangs over intelligence agencies attempts to reach conclusions about Iran.

"We'd let the country down, and we wanted to make sure it would never happen again," said Thomas Fingar, who led the State Department's intelligence bureau, which disputed the weapons of mass destruction assessment before the Iraq war. "Now, it's much more of a transparent tussle of ideas."

While the American view is that the design work has still not resumed but Germany, Israel and Britain are more hawkish.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/6245819/British-intelligence-believes-Iran-has-resumed-work-on-nuclear-warhead.html>

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New York Times

October 1, 2009

## **Possibility Of A Nuclear-Armed Iran Alarms Arabs**

By Michael Slackman

CAIRO — As the West raises the pressure on Iran over its nuclear program, Arab governments, especially the small, oil-rich nations in the Persian Gulf, are growing increasingly anxious. But they are concerned not only with the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran but also with the more immediate threat that Iran will destabilize the region if the West presses too hard, according to diplomats, regional analysts and former government officials.

On Thursday, Iran will meet with six world powers to discuss a variety of issues in what will be the first direct talks between Washington and Tehran since the 1979 Iranian revolution. Iran would appear to enter the discussions weakened by a bitter political dispute at home and by the recent revelation of a second, secret, nuclear enrichment plant being built near Qum.

But instead of showing contrition, Iran test-fired missiles — an example of the kind of behavior that has caused apprehension among some of its Arab neighbors. The cause and effect of conflict between Iran and the West is never experienced in Washington or London but instead plays out here, in the Middle East, where Iran has committed allies like Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza.

"If the West puts pressure on Iran, regardless of the means of this pressure, additional pressure, increased pressure, do you think the Iranians will retaliate or stand idly by and wait for their fate to fall on their head?" said Ambassador Hossam Zaki, spokesman for Egypt's Foreign Ministry. "The most likely answer is they will retaliate. Where do you think they will retaliate?"

Among Iran's Persian Gulf neighbors there is growing resignation that Iran cannot be stopped from developing nuclear arms, though Iran says its nuclear program is for peaceful uses. Some analysts have predicted that a regional arms race will begin and that vulnerable states, like Bahrain, may be encouraged to invite nuclear powers to place weapons on their territories as a deterrent. The United States already has a Navy base in Manama, Bahrain's capital.

"I think the gulf states are well advised now to develop strategies on the assumption that Iran is about to become a nuclear power," said Abdul Khaleq Abdullah, a political science professor at United Arab Emirates University. "It's a whole new ballgame. Iran is forcing everyone in the region now into an arms race."

This realization, in turn, is raising new anxieties and shaking old assumptions.

Writing in the pan-Arab newspaper Al Quds Al Arabi, for instance, the editor, Abdel-Beri Atwan, said that with recent developments "the Arab regimes, and the gulf ones in particular, will find themselves part of a new alliance against Iran alongside Israel."



The head of a prominent research center in Dubai said that it might even be better if the West — or Israel — staged a military strike on Iran, rather than letting it emerge as a nuclear power. That kind of talk from Arabs was nearly unheard of before the revelation of the second enrichment plant, and while still rare, it reflects growing alarm.

“Israel can start the attack but they can’t sustain it; the United States can start it and sustain it,” said Abdulaziz Sager, a Saudi businessman and former diplomat who is chairman of the Gulf Research Center in the United Arab Emirates. “The region can live with a limited retaliation from Iran better than living with a permanent nuclear deterrent. I favor getting the job done now instead of living the rest of my life with a nuclear hegemony in the region that Iran would like to impose.”

The Middle East is a region defined by many competing interests, among regional capitals, foreign governments and religious sects, and between people and their leaders. An action by one, in this case Iran, inevitably leads to a chain reaction of consequences. It is too early to say how the latest revelation will play out.

Some regional analysts have said that fear of a nuclear Iran could yield positive results, possibly inspiring officials in Saudi Arabia and Egypt to work harder at reconciling with leaders in Syria, which has grown closer to Iran in recent years as its ties have frayed with Arab states.

The report in *Al Quds Al Arabi* by Mr. Atwan said gulf states were taking measures to try to persuade Russia and China to stop supporting Iran. The report said that Saudi Arabia had offered to purchase billions of dollars of weapons from Russia if it agreed not to sell Iran sophisticated missiles. And it said gulf states might join together to offer China one million visas for its citizens to work in the region.

The latest conflict over Iran’s nuclear program has also allayed some longstanding fears. Arab capitals aligned with the West are now less worried, for example, that President Obama will strike a deal with Tehran that might undermine Arab interests, analysts, diplomats and regional experts said.

“It was a concern that, well, maybe the West was going to try to appease Iran on a number of regional issues in return for something,” Mr. Zaki said.

But that is a relatively small consolation, given concerns that Iran might develop nuclear weapons or, if pushed, activate its allies, Hezbollah or Hamas, political analysts here said. Arab capitals already have accused Iran of fueling the recent fighting between Shiite rebels and the government in Yemen, and of inciting conflict between Shiite and Sunni Muslims in places like Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait — charges Iran has flatly denied. Egypt has accused Iran of using its ties with Hamas to undermine Palestinian reconciliation and negotiations with Israel, as well.

“There is no doubt, given the recent events, that the degree of threat and amount of fear has increased,” said Anwar Majid Eshki, director of the Middle East Center for Strategic and Legal Studies in Jidda, Saudi Arabia.

But Arab analysts are also not sure how the United States and its allies should proceed. Mr. Zaki and others offered little advice, other than to call on Washington to press to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which many see as the root cause of regional instability.

“No one said it was an easy situation,” Mr. Zaki said.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/01/world/middleeast/01arabs.html>

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New York Times  
October 1, 2009

## **Iranian Statement May Offer Window Into Nuclear Efforts**

By William J. Broad and David E. Sanger

They were two words heard round the world by the intelligence experts and atomic inspectors who are trying to decipher the riddle of the Iranian nuclear program.

On Monday evening, the chief of Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, told Iranian state television that he and his colleagues were “working out a timetable for the inspection” of the just revealed nuclear site outside the holy city of Qum. Then Mr. Salehi said he was preparing a letter for international inspectors in Vienna “about the location of the facility,” adding, cryptically, “and others.”

That got everyone’s attention.

Since the start of the Iranian standoff with the West seven years ago, some intelligence officials and inspectors have suspected that Tehran maintained a network of clandestine nuclear sites, projects and personnel that paralleled the nuclear program that Iran declared. Since inspectors visit the declared facilities, the thinking went, it would make little sense for the Iranians to divert fuel from them for a bomb project; the chances of being caught would be high.

So the hunt has long been on for a hidden production network that replicates the public one. The Friday revelation of the secret enrichment site outside Qum represents the first big breakthrough.

Mr. Salehi's reference to "others" — widely interpreted in the intelligence world as meaning other nuclear sites — has given investigators guarded hope that more pieces of the Iranian nuclear puzzle may finally be coming into view.

That could start, they say, with shipments from a previously declared Iranian uranium mine near the Strait of Hormuz. Investigators have wondered about what happened to 30 to 50 tons of uranium from that mine that are unaccounted for.

But raw uranium is not the stuff of bombs. The Iranians would have to convert it into gas to move down the path to a weapon. As a result, investigators are looking anew at a set of documents obtained by Western intelligence agencies about something called the Green Salt Project, which some believe is meant to do exactly that.

Iran has previously dismissed the documents as fabrications and refused to answer questions from the International Atomic Energy Agency about them.

The project derives its name from uranium tetrafluoride, known as green salt, which is an intermediate product in the conversion of uranium ore into uranium hexafluoride. That is the gas that spinning centrifuges can enrich into fuel for nuclear reactors or, with a bit more enrichment, bombs.

There are also suggestions that the project coordinated work on high explosives that would provide the crushing force needed to start an atomic chain reaction, as well as design work for missile warheads.

"It makes a lot of sense now that they would have been working on all of these things," one foreign intelligence official who has worked on the Iranian riddle for years said in an interview. The Qum plant, he added, "makes no sense in isolation."

For years, the inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna have struggled to persuade Iran to address the growing evidence of what they call a "possible military-nuclear dimension" to its nuclear program. Iran claims that its work is aimed solely at producing electrical power.

"It is against our tenets, it is against our religion, to produce, use, hold or have nuclear weapons," Mr. Salehi told Iranian television. "We have been saying this," he said, for decades.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/01/world/middleeast/01diplo.html>

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Wall Street Journal  
October 1, 2009

## **U.S. and Iran Make Offers on Nuclear Talks**

By JAY SOLOMON and FARNAZ FASSIHI

WASHINGTON—The U.S. expressed a willingness to hold one-on-one meetings with Iranian negotiators in Geneva on Thursday, as the Obama administration and other world powers prepared for crucial talks aimed at preventing Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The American outreach came as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad signaled Wednesday a potential softening of his government's hard-line position on its nuclear program.

The Iranian leader told a Tehran news conference that he might be willing to fuel Iran's nuclear facilities through purchases of enriched uranium from third countries and other parties.

Mr. Ahmadinejad also expressed a desire for a direct meeting with President Barack Obama and other world leaders to discuss a wide range of security and economic issues, including the nuclear question. The invitation to Mr. Obama was the first such overture by an Iranian leader to a U.S. president since Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

"Our nuclear scientists are ready to negotiate with countries willing to sell us enriched uranium," Mr. Ahmadinejad told reporters in Tehran, according to state-run Iranian news agencies. He called Thursday's meetings in Geneva a positive development and said Tehran would arrive with a "strong and well-executed plan and fully ready to endorse all positive proposals in order to have a very good cooperation with the group."

Mr. Ahmadinejad said his face-to-face meeting with Mr. Obama should take place within the international negotiating framework developed to address Iran's nuclear program, which includes the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany.

The Geneva meeting has achieved particular immediacy in light of last week's disclosure by the Obama administration that Tehran had been developing a second, clandestine nuclear-fuel facility outside the monitoring of the United Nations. U.S. and European officials have voiced concern that the facility, built outside the Iranian holy city of Qom, was being prepared to convert uranium feedstock into weapons-grade materials.

U.S. officials said Wednesday that the priority of their meeting in Geneva was to get immediate inspections of the Qom facility by the U.N.'s atomic watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency. As part of this push, the Obama administration said it was willing to have direct meetings with Iranian diplomats as part of the one-day negotiation. U.S. officials said the meeting was critical to assessing Tehran's willingness to negotiate in good faith on the nuclear issue.

"I think it's pretty safe to predict that this is going to be an extraordinarily difficult process," a U.S. official said in Geneva. "I doubt it's going to be measured in terms of one meeting, although we'll see how the Iranians approach the meeting tomorrow."

The U.S. delegation will be led by the State Department's No. 3 diplomat, Undersecretary for Political Affairs William Burns, and include Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's chief adviser on proliferation issues, Robert Einhorn. The Iranian side will be led by Tehran's chief nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili.

U.S. officials said the talks will include two three-hour negotiating sessions and a lunch. Within that context, one-on-one meetings can be arranged, these officials said.

The main thrust of the international community's diplomatic strategy toward Iran remains getting Tehran to agree to a freeze of its nuclear work, U.S. and European officials said. The offer was initially made in June 2008 and calls for Tehran to freeze its nuclear-fuel production at current levels for six weeks, in return for the U.S. and the U.N. holding back from any new sanctions. If negotiations progress during that time, the formula calls for Iran to suspend all of its nuclear work in exchange for the international community providing key economic and diplomatic incentives.

U.S. and European officials also said they will push Iran to agree to other benchmarks to insure that its nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes. These include allowing snap IAEA inspections and access to Iranian scientists and documents tied to Tehran's nuclear program.

The Obama administration and European governments believe their exposure of Tehran's clandestine nuclear-fuel plant in Qom has further isolated the Iranian regime and could provide new leverage for the West. U.S. officials also said they believe Mr. Ahmadinejad has been significantly weakened, both regionally and inside Iran, by post-election political strife inside his country. Opposition parties charge the Iranian leadership rigged a June presidential election.

"I think the recent revelation of the clandestine facility at Qom has strengthened the sense of purpose and unity" among the international community, said the senior U.S. official in Geneva.

The Security Council members and Germany have regularly told Iran that they're willing to help the country pursue a civilian nuclear program, on the grounds it doesn't enrich uranium domestically. U.S. officials believe Iran's own enrichment capacity could easily allow fissile material to be diverted for military purposes.

The U.S. official attending the Geneva talks said the IAEA had already "reached out to a number of governments" to see if they were willing to go along with the Iranian proposal for buying uranium enriched at low levels for civilian use. The official said that while the Obama administration was unlikely to be willing to sell Iran such materials, the proposal is being considered by other governments involved in the negotiations.

"We can't imagine the U.S. providing the fuel or the enriched uranium to Iran," the official said. "But that's not to say the issue is not being considered actively."

In the past, Russia has volunteered to be a supplier of nuclear fuel to Iran, which would allow Iran to develop a peaceful nuclear program without developing the technology to enrich uranium to higher, weapons-grade levels.

The Obama administration, in another sign of its outreach toward Iran, said it had granted Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki a visa so he could visit Tehran's interest section in Washington Wednesday. State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley stressed that Mr. Mottaki wasn't meeting any U.S. officials during his stay. But European diplomats said such a high-level trip to Washington by an Iranian official was "unprecedented" since the revolution.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125435550492854515.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125435550492854515.html?mod=googlenews_wsj)

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London Daily Telegraph  
1 October 2009

## **Nuclear Talks Lead to Rare Meeting Between US and Iran**

Julian Borger in Geneva

Senior American and Iranian officials today held one-to-one talks in Geneva during negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme, marking the most substantive bilateral contact between the two countries for 30 years.

The meeting between the American diplomat William Burns and the Iranian official Saeed Jalili came during a lunch break at the Geneva meeting. It was unclear what the two men discussed, but the encounter had been planned in advance by the US state department in the hope of breaking a four-year impasse over Iran's nuclear activities.

One official described the meeting as a "significant conversation".

A western diplomat said there were no breakthroughs at the morning session but Iran had begun to discuss the nuclear question under concerted pressure from diplomats of six major powers.

He said the session began with both sides restating earlier positions. Jalili, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, said Iran was within its rights to pursue a peaceful nuclear programme and suggested the negotiations focus on broader, global themes.

The six-nation group made up of the US, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China said it would stick by the "freeze for freeze" offer put forward last year, under which the UN would impose no new sanctions and Iran would stop expanding its uranium enrichment programme. Iran has so far rejected a further offer of economic aid and technical assistance in establishing a more proliferation-proof nuclear power industry if it suspends enrichment altogether.

The talks extended into the early evening, taken by some analysts as a positive sign. Iran's Press-TV said further talks were planned before the end of October, but this could not be independently confirmed.

This morning the six-nation group, known as the E3+3, agreed the discovery of a previously undeclared uranium enrichment plant made a resolution to the crisis "all the more urgent", the diplomat said. The group has insisted that Iran name a date for UN inspections of the plant, near the city of Qom.

Western powers say that if the talks fail they will look at wide-ranging sanctions aimed at damaging the Tehran regime.

The talks are taking place in an 18th-century lakeside villa. All the E3+3 group have sent top diplomats, with the exception of China, which has sent a relatively junior official, the head of the foreign ministry's department of arms control and disarmament.

Britain is represented by the Foreign Office political director, Mark Lyall Grant.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/01/iran-nuclear-geneva-talks>

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Reuters  
October 1, 2009

## **Iran Raises Nuclear Issue in Geneva Talks: Diplomat**

GENEVA (Reuters) - Iran's nuclear negotiator touched on the country's nuclear program in his opening statement at talks with six world powers in Geneva, a Western diplomat close to the meeting said Thursday.

He said that Iran's nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili mentioned Tehran's disputed nuclear program "in a general way" in his opening statement, even though Jalili and other Iranian officials had said they would not be willing to discuss Tehran's "nuclear rights" at the one-day talks in Geneva.

"The EU3 (Britain, France and Germany) restated that the July 2008 offer is still on the table," the diplomat, who was present at the talks, said on condition of anonymity.

Along with the Europeans are senior U.S., Russian and Chinese officials and European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana. The six powers made an offer of economic and political incentives to Iran in exchange for a suspension of sensitive nuclear activities.

The diplomat said it was unclear if the Iranians would give any signs behind closed doors that they would be open to a compromise on the issue of suspending enrichment, as demanded by five U.N. Security Council resolutions.

"We'll know better this afternoon," the diplomat said. The talks at a villa in the Geneva countryside are expected to run into the late afternoon or early evening.

Iran has so far refused to halt its enrichment program, saying it is a sovereign right. It insists its atomic program is not aimed at producing weapons, as Western powers fear, but generating electricity.

(Reporting by Louis Charbonneau, editing by Dominic Evans)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/newsOne/idUSTRE59031920091001>

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Bloomberg.com

October 1, 2009

## **Iran Agrees to Inspectors' Visit, New Meeting This Month**

By Ladane Nasserri and Gregory Viscusi

Oct. 1 (Bloomberg) -- Iran agreed to allow international inspectors to visit its new nuclear fuel plant within the next two weeks and will meet with negotiators for the U.S. and other leading United Nations powers later this month, European Union Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana said.

At a news conference following the first day of talks between UN powers and Iran in more than a year, Solana said Iran was offered a freeze in economic sanctions in exchange for a freeze in uranium enrichment activity, and didn't offer a complete response to the plan.

The U.S. was represented in the discussion with Iran's nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, by Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs William Burns, a State Department spokesman, Robert Wood, told reporters outside Geneva where the talks took place. Jalili said he saw room for "new cooperation" following the talks.

At the same time, U.S. and Iranian negotiators met one-on-one near Geneva, where they are attending talks on the nuclear program, the State Department said. Wood said he hadn't any further details on the U.S.-Iranian meeting.

The U.S. broke off diplomatic relations with Iran in 1980, though they have held discussions on Iraq's postwar security. Other participants in the group talks were representatives of the five permanent United Nations Security Council members -- the U.S, Russia, China, France and Britain -- plus Germany, the so-called P5+1.

Solana also said the Tehran government needs more low-enriched uranium for its reactor in the city and that could be processed by a third country and returned. Russia is ready to further enrich Iran's uranium stocks for use as fuel in a civilian research reactor, depending on approval from the United Nations, a person familiar with the matter said today.

### **Absolute Right**

Iran told the six powers today that the country will retain its "absolute" right to develop a nuclear program, the state-run Iranian Students News Agency reported. Before the talks began, Iran signaled it won't curb the nuclear work, which the U.S. and major allies say is aimed at making a bomb. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad yesterday said in Tehran that "the negotiators can adopt any policy they want, but we won't be harmed."

Jalili used the morning session to talk about security in the Middle East and international nuclear disarmament, a Western diplomat said on the condition his name and nationality not be revealed. The other delegations tried to keep the discussions focused on Iran's nuclear activities, the diplomat said.

#### Second Plant

The U.S. and its European allies cite Iran's development of a second uranium-enrichment plant as evidence that the country is flouting UN restrictions on its nuclear program, and say new sanctions may be needed to bring it into line. The underground facility "continues a disturbing pattern of Iranian evasion," President Barack Obama said on Sept. 26.

Iran said it followed standard procedures by notifying the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency last month about the plant, which is 18 months from completion. It says its nuclear program is aimed at generating electricity, and has invited the UN to inspect the new enrichment site, in a mountain near Qom, a city revered by Shiite Muslims.

Ahmadinejad yesterday also said Iran wants to buy enriched uranium from another nation for a nuclear reactor in Tehran. A U.S. official speaking in Geneva yesterday said Ahmadinejad was referring to a research reactor in Tehran.

#### Practical Steps

The U.S. official said the U.S. and its allies are looking for Iran to implement "practical steps and measurable results" to ensure that its nuclear program isn't aimed at producing weapons. Solana said earlier this week that today's talks must focus on Iran's nuclear program, not wider regional issues.

At the last meeting of the world powers and Iran, in July 2008 in Geneva, Jalili lectured about regional threats to his country, and the talks broke up without results. The U.S. didn't directly attend.

In a potential goodwill gesture, the U.S. yesterday allowed Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki to visit his country's interest section at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington, the first such visit in more than eight years.

Mottaki, speaking in New York today, said the atmosphere of talks in Geneva today was "constructive" and opens the way for future discussions with the U.S. and its European allies.

Iran is ready to "enhance" the discussions to the summit level, Mottaki said. He spoke to reporters at the United Nations in New York.

#### Political, Economic Issues

Mottaki said the talks covered political and economic issues didn't deal with compromises on Iran's nuclear program. Iran told the six powers today that the country will retain its "absolute" right to develop a nuclear program, the state-run Iranian Students News Agency reported.

Iran wants to keep the option of becoming a nuclear power and is playing for time by entering into negotiations without conceding any ground, Mark Thomas, a Gulf security expert in Doha, Qatar, for the London-based Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, said by e-mail.

It probably will "hold out the prospect of concessions, whilst continuing a strategy of stalling in order to achieve a 'break-out' nuclear weapons capability," he said.

The nuclear program began under Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, who was overthrown in the 1979 Islamic Revolution that brought Shiite Muslim clerics to power.

While Iran suspended uranium enrichment in 2003 as a goodwill gesture when Mohammad Khatami was president, subsequent talks with European nations to resolve international concerns over its atomic work led nowhere. That was a "bitter" experience for Iran, Ahmadinejad said on Sept. 25.

#### Opposition Weakened

The Iranian opposition, weakened by a campaign of arrests and public trials since the protests, has steered clear of criticizing the government's nuclear program.

The UN between December 2006 and March 2008 imposed three sets of sanctions on Iran for refusing to suspend enrichment of uranium, which can produce material for a nuclear reactor or a bomb. The measures ban the sale of any equipment that could be used in Iran's nuclear program, block travel by certain individuals, and cut links to

Iranian banks and companies involved in the program. The U.S. has its own set of sanctions which amount to a near trade embargo.

In recent weeks, Iran has sought to widen its sources of refined petroleum fuel, suggesting it may be preparing for further sanctions.

The world's fourth-largest oil producer, Iran imports at least one-third of its domestic fuel needs because it doesn't have enough refineries.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=aJRIaHNYTkZU>

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London Guardian  
1 October 2009

## **Iran Agrees to Send Uranium Abroad after Talks Breakthrough**

Julian Borger in Geneva

Iran agreed in principle today to export much of its stock of enriched uranium for processing and to open its newly revealed enrichment plant to UN inspections within a fortnight.

The agreements, struck at negotiations in Geneva with six major powers, represented the most significant progress in talks with Tehran in more than three years, and offered hope that the nuclear crisis could be defused, at least temporarily.

Western officials cautioned that the preliminary agreements could unravel in negotiations over the details. But if the deals are completed, it will push back the looming threat of further sanctions and possible military action.

A full day of talks in a lakeside villa just outside Geneva included the most senior and substantive bilateral meeting between an American and an Iranian official for three decades. At a lunchtime break in the proceedings, the US delegate, William Burns, took aside Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, for a one-to-one chat that lasted 40 minutes.

At the end of the negotiations, the EU foreign policy chief, Javier Solana, on behalf of the six-nation group – known as the E3+3 and consisting of Britain, France, Germany, the US, Russia and China – said the meeting "represented the start of what we hope will be an intensive process".

The most concrete, and potentially most significant, gain from the Geneva talks was an agreement in principle that Iran would send a significant quantity of its stockpile of low-enriched uranium (LEU) for further enriching and processing in Russia and France respectively, so that it could be used as fuel in its research reactor in Tehran, which makes isotopes for medical uses. President Barack Obama said yesterday: "Taking the step of transferring its low-enriched uranium to a third country would be a step towards building confidence that Iran's programme is peaceful."

Western experts at today's session said that up to 1,200kg of LEU could be involved, three-quarters of Iran's declared stock. It would be further enriched in Russia from below 5% purity to just under 20% – enough for the research reactor, but not enough for a warhead.

Once it had been turned into fuel at a French plant it would be extremely hard to turn into a weapon, and so would defuse the immediate international tension surrounding the purpose of Iran's uranium stockpile, which some scientists say is enough to make a warhead.

The proposal has been put together over the past month between the US and Russia, and seeks to fulfil an Iranian need for reactor fuel in a way that reduces international tensions.

Solana said that the details of the deal would be hammered out at a meeting of experts from Iran, France and Russia at the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on 18 October.

On Saturday, the IAEA director, Mohamed ElBaradei, is due in Tehran to seal another of the deals struck in Geneva – on when inspectors from the UN agency can inspect a new enrichment plant under construction in Qom, the existence of which only became known last week. Solana said that he hoped the inspection would take place "within the next couple of weeks".

The third agreement struck in Geneva is for the six-nation group to meet Iranian officials again before the end of this month to negotiate a long-standing offer to Iran of a "freeze-for-freeze".



Under that proposal, first put forward last year, the international community would impose no new sanctions, and Iran would not expand or accelerate its uranium enrichment programme.

NEW ADDA senior US official in Geneva said yesterday that until uranium enrichment was suspended "the overall problem of Iran's nuclear programme remains".

The Iranians were assured yesterday that a freeze on sanctions would include all multilateral and bilateral measures, and that the Obama administration – unlike its predecessor – would remain a full participant in the negotiations throughout.

The deadline for further progress on all these fronts is still December, as stipulated earlier this year by Obama.

Yesterday, the US president said: "We're not interested in talking for the sake of talking. If Iran does not take steps in the near future to live up to its obligations, then the United States will not continue to negotiate indefinitely, and we are prepared to move towards increased pressure."

Speaking in Washington after the talks ended, the US secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, said it had been a productive day, but added a note of caution. "I will count it as a positive sign when it [Iran] moves from gestures and engagements to actions and results," she said.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/01/iran-uranium-enrichment-plant-inspection>

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Brisbane Times – Australia

October 2, 2009

## **Diplomats, Inspector Split on Iran Weapons**

JULIAN BORGER AND RICHARD NORTON-TAYLOR

LONDON: The chief weapons inspector of the United Nations, Mohamed ElBaradei, has reiterated he had seen "no credible evidence" that Iran was developing nuclear weapons and rejected British allegations that a weapons program had been under way for at least four years.

The claims and counter-claims came as diplomats met yesterday for potentially decisive talks in Geneva about Tehran's nuclear ambitions.

Iran has insisted its program is for peaceful purposes and that there is nothing illegal about the uranium enrichment plant it is building near the city of Qom, a fact that came to light last week.

The meeting between the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany (P5+1) and Iran took on a critical importance after the disclosure.

Before the meeting, the United States said it was prepared to enter a one-on-one dialogue with Iran during the talks.

An official said it was up to the chief US negotiator, William Burns, to decide whether the process could be helped by such talks, and breaks in the schedule would allow the delegations to caucus. "It will also provide for an opportunity, if it's useful in the talks, for there to be bilateral conversations between members of the P5+1 group and the Iranian group in Geneva."

Iranian officials have said the nuclear program is non-negotiable, despite five UN Security Council resolutions calling for Iran to suspend enrichment.

Dr ElBaradei, the outgoing director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, rejected British intelligence claims Iran had reactivated its weapons program at least four years ago.

By making the claims, British officials broke for the first time with the US intelligence position that Iranian work on developing a warhead probably stopped in 2003. Britain said that even if there was a halt, as reported in a US National Intelligence Estimate two years ago, the program began again in late 2004 or early 2005.

BND, the German intelligence organisation, this year provided evidence in a court saying it believed weapons work in Iran had continued after 2003. A leaked internal memo written by the IAEA also found Iran probably had "sufficient information" to build a bomb, and that it had "probably tested" a high-explosive component of a nuclear warhead.

Dr ElBaradei disagreed there was evidence Iran was weaponising, but said it had acted illegally in not disclosing the Qom plant, as it was obliged to tell the agency "on the day it was decided to construct the facility". He said the Iranian Government was "on the wrong side of the law".

In the Geneva meeting yesterday, Western diplomats were to push for a date for an IAEA inspection of the Qom plant and for concrete steps from Tehran to restore international confidence in the peaceful purpose of its program. Failing that, multilateral talks will start on the imposition of more sanctions.

The US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, warned Iran on Wednesday that it risked "greater isolation and international pressure" if it failed to give UN inspectors access to nuclear facilities or to freeze sensitive activities. The Guardian News & Media; Agence France-Presse; Bloomberg

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/diplomats-inspector-split-on-iran-weapons-20091001-geqj.html>

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New York Times  
October 2, 2009

## **Iran Agrees To Send Enriched Uranium To Russia**

By Steven Erlanger and Mark Landler

GENEVA — Iran agreed on Thursday in talks with the United States and other major powers to open its newly revealed uranium enrichment plant near Qum to international inspection in the next two weeks and to send most of its openly declared enriched uranium outside Iran to be turned into fuel for a small reactor that produces medical isotopes, senior American and other Western officials said.

Iran's agreement in principle to export most of its enriched uranium for processing — if it happens — would represent a major accomplishment for the West, reducing Iran's ability to make a nuclear weapon quickly and buying more time for negotiations to bear fruit.

If Iran has secret stockpiles of enriched uranium, however, the accomplishment would be hollow, a senior American official conceded.

The officials described the long day of talks here with Iran, the first such discussions in which the United States has participated fully, as a modest success on a long and complicated road. Iran had at least finally engaged with the big powers on its nuclear program after more than a year and had agreed to some tangible, confidence-building steps before another meeting with the same participants before the end of this month.

But despite the relatively promising outcome, the Obama administration was at pains to strike a cautious tone, given Iran's history of duplicity, its crackdown on its own people after the tainted June presidential elections and President Obama's concern about being perceived as naive or susceptible to a policy of Iranian delays.

Mr. Obama, speaking in Washington, called the talks "constructive," but warned Tehran that he was prepared to move quickly to more stringent sanctions if negotiations over Iran's nuclear ambitions dragged on.

"We're not interested in talking for the sake of talking," Mr. Obama told reporters in the White House Diplomatic Reception Room. "If Iran does not take steps in the near future to live up to its obligations, then the United States will not continue to negotiate indefinitely."

France and Britain have spoken of December as an informal deadline for Iran to negotiate seriously about stopping enrichment and cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency. American officials say that timeline is "about right," but Iran continues to insist that it has the right to enrich uranium for what it calls a purely civilian program.

Mr. Obama said Tehran must allow international inspectors into the site near Qum within the next two weeks, a timeline Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, agreed to here.

The atomic energy agency's director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, will travel to Tehran this weekend to discuss the details and timing of the inspections, officials said. But the Americans also want Iran to cooperate with the inspectors and make personnel and documents about the site near Qum available.

Besides the scheduling of another meeting, the main practical accomplishment on Thursday was Iran's agreement in principle — to be worked out by experts later this month in Vienna — to ship what American officials called "most" of its declared stockpile of lightly enriched uranium to Russia and France to be turned into nuclear fuel.

While American officials refused to specify the amount, other Western officials said it could be 1,200 kilograms, or more than 2,600 pounds, of enriched uranium, which could be as much as 75 percent of Iran's declared stockpile. While there may be hidden stocks of enriched uranium, such a transfer, if it occurs, "buys some time" for further negotiations, a senior American official said.

Given the assessment that Iran has made enough low-enriched uranium to produce at least one nuclear weapon at some time in the future, a sharp reduction in its stockpile would be "a confidence-building measure to alleviate tensions and buy us some diplomatic space," the official said.

Israel, the nation most concerned about a nuclear-armed Iran, has been informed of the discussions, another American official said.

Iran's uranium is enriched to about 3.5 to 5 percent, the officials said; the Tehran reactor for making medical isotopes, last powered by Argentine-made fuel in 1993, needs uranium enriched to 19.75 percent, still far below weapons grade. And that uranium must then be fabricated into metal rods for the reactor.

Iran had told the International Atomic Energy Agency that it needed fuel for the Tehran reactor before December 2010. Washington, with its allies, pushed the agency to offer Iran the fuel, but made from Iran's own enriched uranium as a feedstock. Mr. Jalili agreed to that in principle on Thursday.

The talks were between Iran and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council — the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France — as well as Germany, and led by the European Union's foreign policy chief, Javier Solana.

The tone of the discussions, held just outside Geneva, was considerably more positive than just a week ago, after the United States revealed the existence of the uranium enrichment site near Qum and, with its European allies, threatened Iran with tough new sanctions if it refused to halt its uranium enrichment program, which they suspect is meant for creating atomic weapons.

"This was a day very much for the engagement track of the two-track strategy," a senior American official said, with the second track — increased sanctions — to be discussed only if this new round of negotiations founders.

After a plenary session in the morning, the participants adjourned to a lunch where informal discussions continued, followed by three hours of informal bilateral meetings. Those included a 45-minute session between the chief American diplomat here, Under Secretary of State William J. Burns, and Mr. Jalili, the highest level United States-Iranian talks in three decades.

Mr. Burns raised a range of topics, including the nuclear dispute and the plant near Qum and human-rights issues, American officials said, while the Iranians raised their own concerns, including the need for a world free of nuclear bombs and access to peaceful nuclear energy for all.

Mr. Jalili, in a news conference, called the discussions "good talks that will be a framework for better talks," and expressed satisfaction that the world had engaged with Iran's global agenda, which includes nuclear disarmament. He denied that there were any other Iranian nuclear facilities hidden from the I.A.E.A.

Many diplomats and analysts believe that the plant near Qum is only one of a series of hidden installations that Iran has constructed, in addition to its publicly acknowledged ones, for what is considered to be a military program. Iran insists that its program is purely peaceful and that it has a right under the nonproliferation treaty to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes. But it has regularly lied to the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency about its facilities.

Despite the uncertainties, nuclear experts hailed the tentative agreements. "It's significant," David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, a private group in Washington that tracks nuclear proliferation, said. "The principle is important."

Mr. Albright said the amount of low-enriched uranium to be shipped out of Iran was also significant. Iran's stockpile has worried some arms controllers, who fear that Tehran may drop out of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and further enrich the material into fuel for a bomb.

The new accord would end that prospect — at least for the exported uranium.

Mr. Albright cautioned that the deal would become a real solution only if Iran expanded the accord to cover all the uranium that it wanted enriched. "Iran's made a concession," he said. "But it has little meaning for the long term unless Iran continues to send out" its uranium for enrichment.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/02/world/middleeast/02nuke.html>

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Xinhua News – China  
2 October 2009

## **News Analysis: Iran Nuclear Talks Send Positive Signals**

GENEVA, Oct. 1 (Xinhua) -- International talks on the Iranian nuclear issue concluded here on Thursday with positive signals, seemingly providing a good start for a process aimed at finding a comprehensive solution to the long-standing problem, analysts said.

### **SEVERAL GOOD SIGNALS**

The one-day closed-door talks were participated by EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana, senior diplomats from the five UN Security Council permanent member states plus Germany, as well as Iran's top nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili.

It was the first time that the United States participated fully at the talks with Iran -- the U.S. representative were present at a similar session in July 2008 only as an observer.

More noticeably, U.S. Undersecretary of State William Burns held informal bilateral consultations with Jalili on the sidelines of the talks. This meeting was considered the highest-level U.S.-Iran contact since the two countries severed diplomatic relations following the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

In his meeting with Jalili, "Burns addressed the need for Iran to take concrete and practical steps that are consistent with its international obligations and that will build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its program," according to Robert Wood, deputy spokesman of the U.S. Department of State.

The two officials also had a frank exchange on other issues, including human rights, Wood told reporters in Geneva.

Another good signal that emerged from the talks is Iran's willingness to open a newly-disclosed nuclear facility to UN inspectors.

The Iranian delegation promised that Tehran would soon invite UN inspectors to its uranium-enrichment facility near Qom, and hopefully that would happen in the next couple of weeks, Solana told reporters.

He added that Iran also pledged to "cooperate fully and immediately" with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

According to the EU official, the Iranian delegation also agreed to meet again with the six world powers by the end of this month. Analysts also see this as a positive signal showing Iran's readiness to engage further on its nuclear issue.

### **OUTLOOK REMAINS UNCLEAR**

Thursday's talks can be seen as a good start, but whether a comprehensive and appropriate solution to the Iranian nuclear issue can finally be found depends on future talks and the actions of related parties, according to analysts.

U.S. President Barack Obama have praised the Geneva talks as "a constructive beginning." But he reiterated that Iran must come clean about its nuclear program and demonstrate with concrete actions that the program is purely for peaceful purposes, media reports from Washington said.

Despite Iran's pledge to open its Qom nuclear site very soon to UN inspectors, whether it would grant "full and unfettered access" to inspectors in the shortest possible time, as requested by the United States, remains unknown.

After all, the U.S. and its Western allies could still push for tougher sanctions on the Islamic republic if they think that it is not cooperating fully.

The West and Iran are also divided about the agenda of the next round of talks, despite their agreement to meet again, analysts said.

The U.S. and its Western allies have stressed that the focus of next talks should be on Iran's nuclear program, while Iran highlights a series of global security threats, including the proliferation of weapons of mass-destruction and nuclear warheads and their stockpiles.

According to Solana, the six world powers on Thursday reiterated a "freeze-for-freeze" proposal, in which Iran would halt its uranium enrichment and the building of more centrifuges in exchange for no more new sanctions against Iran. But the Iranian delegation did not give a "complete answer" on that.

And at a press conference following the talks, Jalili defended Iran's rights to the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

In general, all the parties, including the United States, recognize that the Iranian nuclear issue is quite complicated and more and continuous diplomatic efforts are need to find a comprehensive solution.

"China welcomes the progress made in the Geneva talks and appreciates the flexibility shown by all parties," said Cheng Jingye, chief of the Department of Arms Control of China's Foreign Ministry, in a statement.

Cheng, who represented China in the Geneva talks, said that all parties need to "further strengthen their diplomatic efforts, keep and push forward the process of dialogue, and seek a comprehensive, long-term and appropriate solution to the Iranian nuclear issue."

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/02/content\\_12172238.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-10/02/content_12172238.htm)

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Washington Times

October 2, 2009

## **EXCLUSIVE: Obama Agrees to Keep Israel's Nukes Secret**

By Eli Lake

President Obama has reaffirmed a 4-decade-old secret understanding that has allowed Israel to keep a nuclear arsenal without opening it to international inspections, three officials familiar with the understanding said.

The officials, who spoke on the condition that they not be named because they were discussing private conversations, said Mr. Obama pledged to maintain the agreement when he first hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House in May.

Under the understanding, the U.S. has not pressured Israel to disclose its nuclear weapons or to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which could require Israel to give up its estimated several hundred nuclear bombs.

Israel had been nervous that Mr. Obama would not continue the 1969 understanding because of his strong support for nonproliferation and priority on preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons. The U.S. and five other world powers made progress during talks with Iran in Geneva on Thursday as Iran agreed in principle to transfer some potential bomb fuel out of the country and to open a recently disclosed facility to international inspection.

Mr. Netanyahu let the news of the continued U.S.-Israeli accord slip last week in a remark that attracted little notice. He was asked by Israel's Channel 2 whether he was worried that Mr. Obama's speech at the U.N. General Assembly, calling for a world without nuclear weapons, would apply to Israel.

"It was utterly clear from the context of the speech that he was speaking about North Korea and Iran," the Israeli leader said. "But I want to remind you that in my first meeting with President Obama in Washington I received from him, and I asked to receive from him, an itemized list of the strategic understandings that have existed for many years between Israel and the United States on that issue. It was not for naught that I requested, and it was not for naught that I received [that document]."

The chief nuclear understanding was reached at a summit between President Nixon and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir that began on Sept. 25, 1969. Avner Cohen, author of "Israel and the Bomb" and the leading authority outside the Israeli government on the history of Israel's nuclear program, said the accord amounts to "the United States passively accepting Israel's nuclear weapons status as long as Israel does not unveil publicly its capability or test a weapon."

There is no formal record of the agreement nor have Israeli nor American governments ever publicly acknowledged it. In 2007, however, the Nixon library declassified a July 19, 1969, memo from national security adviser Henry Kissinger that comes closest to articulating U.S. policy on the issue. That memo says, "While we might ideally like

to halt actual Israeli possession, what we really want at a minimum may be just to keep Israeli possession from becoming an established international fact."

Mr. Cohen has said the resulting policy was the equivalent of "don't ask, don't tell."

The Netanyahu government sought to reaffirm the understanding in part out of concern that Iran would seek Israeli disclosures of its nuclear program in negotiations with the United States and other world powers. Iran has frequently accused the U.S. of having a double standard by not objecting to Israel's arsenal.

Mr. Cohen said the reaffirmation and the fact that Mr. Netanyahu sought and received a written record of the deal suggest that "it appears not only that there was no joint understanding of what had been agreed in September 1969 but it is also apparent that even the notes of the two leaders may no longer exist. It means that Netanyahu wanted to have something in writing that implies that understanding. It also affirms the view that the United States is in fact a partner in Israel's policy of nuclear opacity."

Jonathan Peled, a spokesman for the Israeli Embassy in Washington, declined to comment, as did the White House National Security Council.

The secret understanding could undermine the Obama administration's goal of a world without nuclear weapons. In particular, it could impinge on U.S. efforts to bring into force the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, two agreements that U.S. administrations have argued should apply to Israel in the past. They would ban nuclear tests and the production of material for weapons.

A Senate staffer familiar with the May reaffirmation, who asked not to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue, said, "What this means is that the president gave commitments that politically he had no choice but to give regarding Israel's nuclear program. However, it calls into question virtually every part of the president's nonproliferation agenda. The president gave Israel an NPT treaty get out of jail free card."

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, said the step was less injurious to U.S. policy.

"I think it is par for the course that the two incoming leaders of the United States and Israel would want to clarify previous understandings between their governments on this issue," he said.

However Mr. Kimball added, "I would respectfully disagree with Mr. Netanyahu. President Obama's speech and U.N. Security Council Resolution 1887 apply to all countries irrespective of secret understandings between the U.S. and Israel. A world without nuclear weapons is consistent with Israel's stated goal of achieving a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. Obama's message is that the same nonproliferation and disarmament responsibilities should apply to all states and not just a few."

Israeli nuclear doctrine is known as "the long corridor." Under it, Israel would begin to consider nuclear disarmament only after all countries officially at war with it signed peace treaties and all neighboring countries relinquished not only nuclear programs but also chemical and biological arsenals. Israel sees nuclear weapons as an existential guarantee in a hostile environment.

David Albright, president of the Institute for Science and International Security, said he hoped the Obama administration did not concede too much to Israel.

"One hopes that the price for such concessions is Israeli agreement to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty and an acceptance of the long-term goal of a Middle East weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone," he said. "Otherwise, the Obama administration paid too much, given its focus on a world free of nuclear weapons."

[http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/oct/02/president-obama-has-reaffirmed-a-4-decade-old-secr/?feat=home\\_top5\\_shared#](http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/oct/02/president-obama-has-reaffirmed-a-4-decade-old-secr/?feat=home_top5_shared#)

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John Tester: U.S. Senator for Montana, Press Release  
September 29, 2009

## **Baucus, Tester Team Up with Colleagues to Push Support for ICBMs**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) –Max Baucus and Jon Tester are teaming up with a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators, pushing the U.S. Secretary of Defense not to cut the number of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls operates, maintains and guards 150 ICBMs. The long-range nuclear missiles are housed in silos throughout central Montana.

In a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Baucus and Tester—along with Senators from other states that maintain the nation’s land-based missile force—this week asked the Pentagon not to make any further cuts to the number of ICBMs.

The senators want to send a clear message to the military as it considers possible changes to its force structure.

“We would strongly oppose a reduction below the current force structure of 450 missiles, divided into three wings (Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota) of 150 missiles each,” the Senators wrote. “We believe this structure represents the optimal number of missiles and the optimal organization.”

Baucus and Tester also said maintaining the nation’s current land-based missile force is a relatively inexpensive way to strengthen national security. Any further cuts would create problems in recruiting and retaining highly skilled Airmen and officers, they added.

“We are certain that the ICBM force as currently constituted provides an extraordinary benefit to our national security while delivering high value to the taxpayer,” the senators wrote to Gates.

In addition to Malmstrom, Air Force bases in Wyoming and North Dakota each maintain 150 ICBMs. Hill Air Force Base in Utah serves as a missile maintenance center. Effective December 1, Louisiana’s Barksdale Air Force Base will serve as command center for all of the Air Force’s nuclear operations.

The senators’ letter to Secretary Gates appears below.

###

The Honorable Robert M. Gates  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Gates:

We write to commend your leadership on the vital issue of maintaining the nation’s nuclear force. The renewed attention that you and Air Force Secretary Donley have shown in particular to the Air Force’s nuclear enterprise already has instilled renewed confidence in this mission. As negotiations with Russia and the Nuclear Posture Review and Quadrennial Defense Review continue, we urge you to retain the land-based leg of our nation’s strategic nuclear deterrence force at current levels.

As you know, our ICBM force is the most stabilizing in our nuclear arsenal. As nuclear warhead levels decrease, this stabilizing effect becomes even more profound. The U.S. and Russian Joint Understanding of July 2009 has limits of 1,500-1,675 warheads and 500-1,000 delivery vehicles. While we are pleased to see this further reduction in the nuclear arsenal, of some concern to us is the wide range of delivery vehicles. If this level falls much below 1,100, there is the potential to damage decades of U.S. arms control efforts for both a stabilizing triad and our ability to respond as world events change. The 450 Minuteman ICBM force creates a widely dispersed single warhead target that adds significant stability to a crisis.

We are proud that the ICBM force provides the United States with the most highly cost-effective and operationally effective nuclear deterrent in the triad. As we have indicated to the president, we would strongly oppose a reduction below the current force structure of 450 missiles, divided into three wings of 150 missiles each. We believe this structure represents the optimal number of missiles and the optimal organization. We are concerned that any reduction below the current three-wing structure would run counter to the Air Force’s renewed attention and care to the nuclear enterprise. Additionally, reductions below the current structure would pose significant challenges to the recruitment and retention of highly skilled Airmen and officers. We need to keep the best and brightest in the nuclear force.

In light of the current economy, the cost-effectiveness of the ICBM force is another issue that we believe deserves particular attention. ICBMs cost less than \$1 billion annually to maintain, and the ICBM program has nearly



completed a modernization program that will allow the Air Force to move forward with its proposal to maintain the ICBM program to 2030.

While we may not oppose modifications or some reductions to our nuclear force, we are certain that the ICBM force as currently constituted provides an extraordinary benefit to our national security while delivering high value to the taxpayer. We strongly urge you to maintain a strong land-based strategic nuclear deterrent with 450 single-warhead ICBMs.

Sincerely,

(s)

Max Baucus

Jon Tester

Michael B. Enzi (Wyo.)

John Barrasso (Wyo.)

Kent Conrad (N.D.)

Byron L. Dorgan (N.D.)

Orrin G. Hatch (Utah)

Robert F. Bennett (Utah)

Mary L. Landrieu (La.)

David Vitter (La.)

Mike Johanns (Neb.)

[http://tester.senate.gov/Newsroom/pr\\_092909\\_icbms.cfm](http://tester.senate.gov/Newsroom/pr_092909_icbms.cfm)

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RIA Novosti – Russia

29 September 2009

## **Russia to Dismantle 191 Nuclear Submarines by Late 2010**

ST. PETERSBURG, September 29 (RIA Novosti) - Russia's state-run civilian nuclear power corporation Rosatom will by late 2010 dismantle 191 out of 198 nuclear submarines decommissioned from the Russian Navy, a company executive said on Tuesday.

"As of today, 198 nuclear submarines have been decommissioned from the Navy. The disposal of about 25 submarines is not yet over; many of them are in the process of disposal. By the end of 2010, 191 nuclear submarines will have been dismantled," said Yevgeny Yevstratov, Rosatom deputy general director.

Russia has signed cooperation agreements on the disposal of decommissioned nuclear submarines with the United States, Britain, Canada, Japan, Italy and Norway.

During the dismantlement, spent nuclear fuel is removed from the submarine's reactors and sent into storage, the hull is cut into three sections, and the bow and stern sections are removed and destroyed. The reactor section is sealed and transferred into storage.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090929/156290860.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

RIA Novosti – Russia

29 September 2009

## **Russian-NATO Joint Missile-Defense Viable Option – Envoy**

MOSCOW, September 29 (RIA Novosti) - Moscow believes it would be possible to establish a missile-defense system jointly with NATO, Russia's envoy to the military alliance said on Tuesday.

"If we are convinced that the European missile-defense initiative is not part of a U.S. theater missile-defense system, such efforts are possible," Dmitry Rogozin said.

U.S. President Barack Obama announced on September 17 that Washington would not deploy missile-defense elements in the Czech Republic and Poland due to a re-assessment of the threat from Iran, refocusing U.S. missile defenses on a more flexible approach.

NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen said in Washington on Monday that the Western alliance and Russia should consider linking their missile defense systems, an idea in general welcomed by Russia.

Rogozin said Russia was closely studying the Western initiatives but "it is too soon to say how this will pan out."

Speaking at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Rasmussen invited Russia to work with the bloc on a joint assessment of security challenges, adding that NATO, the United States and Russia had shared interests in working to prevent the proliferation of intercontinental ballistic missile technology.

The NATO chief also said Russia should join the alliance's efforts to pressure Iran to renounce its nuclear plans.

President Dmitry Medvedev has said Russia is ready to continue missile defense cooperation with the U.S. and Europe, praising the recent U.S. decisions on missile defense as "sensible."

According to the Obama administration's new plan, land-based missile-defense shields will not be implemented before 2015. Sea-based defenses will be operating in the Mediterranean up to 2015.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090929/156290240.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

RIA Novosti – Russia  
29 September 2009

## **U.S. could Deploy Missile Shield in Arctic - Russia's NATO Envoy**

MOSCOW, September 28 (RIA Novosti) - The U.S. missile defense program is becoming less predictable with missile shield elements deployed in the Arctic as the worst-case scenario, Russia's envoy to NATO told the Vesti 24 channel.

U.S. President Barack Obama has announced that Washington would not deploy its missile shield elements in Central Europe, due to a re-assessment of the threat from Iran. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev said on Saturday he decided against deploying Iskander missiles in Russia's Kaliningrad Region, near Poland.

"We knew for sure that there will be ten interceptor missiles in Poland and a radar in Czech Republic, and that we will have our Iskander [missiles] in the Kaliningrad Region... now the U.S. missile elements are to be based on U.S. cruisers, and you can never tell where they will be tomorrow," he said.

He added that the reduction of sea ice in Arctic due to climate change could lead to the all-year-round opening of the Northern Sea Route, is a shipping lane running along Russia's Far Eastern and Siberian coasts that is usually only free of ice for around eight weeks a year.

"The ice would retreat, it would melt, which means that NATO would definitely be present in the Arctic. They have been planning it for a long time, and under the very bad circumstances the U.S. strategic missile defense would arrive there onboard these ships," Rogozin said.

In his interview Rogozin also said that Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) could send it representative to Russia's NATO mission to boost anti-terrorism cooperation with the alliance.

"FSB... is charged with anti-terrorism issues, they would have their own official contacts with appropriate NATO structures," Rogozin said.

In his interview he also praised NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen's efforts to improve relations with Russia.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090929/156282845.html>

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Times of India  
1 October 2009

## India can't be Expected to Sign NPT in Present Form: IAEA Chief

NEW DELHI: In a clear authentication of India's stand, IAEA chief Mohamed El-Baradei on Wednesday said that India cannot be expected to sign NPT in its present form and that CTBT instead could be more acceptable to New Delhi.

El-Baradei was speaking after being conferred the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for his "impassioned opposition to use of nuclear energy for military purposes".

El-Baradei's statement came a day after PM Manmohan Singh said that any global non-proliferation attempt must be linked to complete nuclear disarmament and that NPT in its present form was discriminatory.

"I do not expect India to sign the NPT in its present form... Maybe the CTBT would be more acceptable," he said.

El-Baradei said India has to lead efforts for complete nuclear disarmament, an idea it first mooted as far back as in 1948, and that the world was looking at India for the future of nuclear energy research and development.

On reports of Iran developing a secret uranium enrichment plant, he said that Tehran was "on the wrong side of the law" by not declaring its plans when construction began.

"Iran has been on the wrong side of the law in so far as the IAEA regulation to inform the agency at an earlier date," El-Baradei said.

Accepting the Prize, El-Baradei said: "India has become a beacon of hope to the developing world... I trust that India will spare no effort in practising and advocating the highest standards of nuclear safety and security."

Speaking on the occasion, PM Manmohan Singh said the growth of nuclear energy must go hand in hand with measures to reduce and eliminate risks of misuse.

"The IAEA and its statute weave together these important factors. The international community has a vital stake in strengthening global energy security through the use of nuclear energy as a clean, safe and sustainable energy source. So we should spare no effort in providing the necessary support to IAEA to perform its functions as provided in its statute," said Singh as he complimented El-Baradei for being a vocal advocate for nuclear disarmament.

"The role of the IAEA is bound to expand in the years ahead not just in the traditional areas of nuclear energy and applications, but also in helping nations secure themselves against other nuclear dangers, such as those posed by terrorists gaining access to nuclear materials," said Singh.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/news/india/India-cant-be-expected-to-sign-NPT-in-present-form-IAEA-chief/articleshow/5073444.cms>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times

OPINION

September 30, 2009

OP-ED CONTRIBUTORS

### Lifting Iran's Nuclear Veil

By GARY MILHOLLIN and VALERIE LINCY

THE disclosure of Iran's secret nuclear plant has changed the way the West must negotiate with Tehran. While worrisome enough on its own, the plant at Qum may well be the first peek at something far worse: a planned, or even partly completed, hidden nuclear archipelago stretching across the country.

The Qum plant doesn't make much sense as a stand-alone bomb factory. As described by American officials, the plant would house 3,000 centrifuges, able to enrich enough uranium for one or two bombs per year. Yet at their present rate of production, 3,000 of Iran's existing IR-1 centrifuges would take two years to fuel a single bomb and 10 years for five weapons. This is too long a time frame for the American assessment to be feasible. To build one or two bombs a year, Iran would have to quadruple the centrifuges' present production rate. (While this feat is theoretically within the centrifuges' design limits, it is not one Iran has shown it can achieve.)

Perhaps Iran was planning to install more efficient centrifuges at the plant, like a version of the P-2 machine used by Pakistan. These could fuel a five-bomb arsenal in just over a year. But while we know Iran has tested such machines, there is no evidence that it can make them in bulk.

Regardless of the machines used, it would take a couple of years at the front end to get them installed. Iran would be looking at three to five years of high activity at the site, during which the risk of discovery would skyrocket.

Clearly, the new plant makes more sense if it is one of many. If Iran built a second plant of the same size as the Qum operation and ran them in tandem, the production times described above could be almost halved. And if Iran had a string of such plants, it would be able to fuel a small arsenal quickly enough to reduce greatly the chance of getting caught. This would also limit the damage if one site were discovered or bombed, because its loss might not affect the others. Such a secret string of plants, however, would probably require a secret source of uranium. Intelligence agencies have been looking for such a source; the Qum discovery should be a signal to increase their efforts.

The Qum plant might also be linked to Iran's known enrichment plant at Natanz, which is under inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Natanz has a stockpile of uranium that is already enriched partway to weapon-grade. By feeding this uranium into the new Qum plant, Iran could fuel one bomb in about seven months, even at the present low production rate. If the rate were quadrupled, as Washington is projecting, the plant could fuel a five-bomb arsenal in less than a year.

But because the Natanz plant is being watched over by international inspectors, diversion of its material would probably be detected. The question is whether Iran might chance it, deciding that its production rate was high enough to give it a nuclear deterrent before other countries could organize a response to the diversion.

Having begun the Qum plant to supply a bomb's fuel, wouldn't Iran also create what's needed to produce the rest of the bomb's components? This means laboratories to perfect nuclear weapon detonation and workshops to produce the firing sets, high-explosive lenses and other necessary parts. Although there is plenty of suspicion that such sites exist, Iran has not admitted having them.

All must be found. When talks begin in Geneva tomorrow, there should be little concern with the formerly dominant question of suspending enrichment at Natanz. Rather, Iran must be made to produce a complete map of its nuclear sites, together with a history of how each was created and provisioned.

This means getting access to scientists, records, equipment and sites. It is a lot to ask, and we may not have the leverage to get it. But anything less will provide no protection against what we now know is Iran's determination to build the bomb.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/30/opinion/30milhollin.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/30/opinion/30milhollin.html?_r=1)

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RIA Novosti  
ANALYSIS  
30 September 2009

## **Do Iranian Missiles Pose Potential or Real Threat?**

MOSCOW. (RIA Novosti military commentator Ilya Kramnik) - Media outlets from around the world are discussing Iran's new missile tests. It is clear that the Islamic Republic is continuing to develop its missile arsenal. What capabilities have Iranian missiles reached by now?

On September 27 and 28, Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps conducted a series of military exercises code-named "The Great Prophet IV," in the course of which Iranian officials revealed they had conducted a series of missile tests. The Iranian media reports that the military tested the Fateh and Tondar short-range ballistic missiles and multiple rocket launchers on the first day of the exercises, and test-fired Shahab-3 and Sejil missiles, their most powerful ballistic missiles, on the second.

Experts have many questions about the Sejil missiles. Many of them believe that a separate Sejil project does not exist, and that Iran periodically launches its Shahab-2 and Shahab-3 missiles disguised as Sejil or Sejil-2 to mislead observers.

The Shahab-3 missile is capable of striking targets in Israel, Asia Minor, the Balkans, and Russia. Today, it is the most powerful missile in Iran's arsenal.

Iran also has many short-range missiles (with ranges of up to 300 kilometres) both guided and non-guided, which could be used against both targets behind enemy lines and on the battlefield. Terrorists use some Iranian unguided missiles with a range of up to 30 to 40 kilometres to attack Israel from adjacent areas.

The missiles with a range of more than 300 kilometres that are being developed in Iran are primarily based on the technology of the old Soviet R-17 missile, which is known in the West as the Scud. At one time, Iran bought them from Libya and North Korea. Iran used upgraded Korean R-17 versions to develop its medium-range ballistic missiles.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards received its first ballistic missiles in 1985. Before long, Iran started firing them at Iraqi cities in response to the latter's attacks during the Iran-Iraq war. Scud-B missiles were launched intensively during a 52-day period in 1988, which came to be known as "the war of the cities". At that time, Iran launched 77 Scud-B missiles against Baghdad, Mosul, Kirkuk, and Tikrit.

Later on, Iran used Scuds to develop its Shahab-1 and Shahab-2 missiles, with a range of 350 kilometres and 750 kilometres respectively, and began designing its Shahab-3 missile, which has a range of over 2,000 kilometres.

Iran used the Shahab-3 missile to develop the Safir carrier rocket, which put the first Iranian satellite Omid into orbit. Iran is believed to be working on an intercontinental missile as part of this project.

Iran relies extensively on technological assistance from foreign countries in developing its missiles, primarily on China and North Korea. In addition to technological assistance, China supplies Iran with CSS-8 ballistic missiles with a range of up to 180 kilometres. With China's help, Iran has been very successful in upgrading its missiles. Thus, the Nazeat-10 tactical missile, which has been a part of Revolutionary Guards' arsenal since 1996, has been upgraded so that it can hit targets up to 300 kilometres away (its former range was 163 kilometres) and renamed the Fateh-110A.

The Iranian missile program was one of the most important official justifications for the U.S. plan to deploy its missile defence shield. The reality of the Iranian missile threat and the resources necessary to counteract a potential strike are crucial issues in the long-standing discussion on the missile defence shield.

Russia has repeatedly suggested considering the possibility of deploying missile interceptors in the direct proximity of Iran's borders, for instance, in Turkey, Kuwait, and probably Iraq, as an alternative to a third missile defence positioning area in Europe. This would make it much easier to intercept missiles launched from Iran, and would not pose a threat for Russia's nuclear missile power and the global nuclear balance.

The United States has recently changed its position on missile defence. Barack Obama's administration is now planning to deploy sea- and ground-based missile interceptors in Europe. They will be capable of destroying medium-range missile warheads but will not threaten Russian ICBMs.

Russia is also concerned about protecting itself against the threat of medium-range missiles. Considering possible changes in Tehran's policy, Iran's missiles may endanger our security. In these circumstances, consolidation of national air defence and cooperation with other countries in building a common European security system, including missile defence, seem to be the only reasonable options for all parties.

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti.

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20090930/156300499.html>

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New York Times

OPINION

October 2, 2009

OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR

## **Iran Again: Is Everyone Bluffing?**

By IMMANUEL WALLERSTEIN

Iran is back in the forefront of public diplomacy. President Obama, jointly with Prime Minister Gordon Brown of Britain and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France, held a press conference in which they seemed to give Iran one more ultimatum: Conform to their demands, what they called the demands of the "international community," by December of this year or face new sanctions. Mr. Obama said that Iran is "breaking the rule that all nations must follow."

The immediate occasion was the fact that Iran announced — or, in the view of the three Western leaders, “admitted” — that it is constructing an installation near Qum in which there will be 3,000 centrifuges to enrich uranium. According to President Obama, this is far too small a number for the ostensible purpose — electricity generation — but of the right size to produce material for nuclear warheads. Ergo, Iran is lying about its intentions.

It seems that Western intelligence discovered the existence of the construction some time ago. The Western view is that Iran announced the existence of this construction only because it became aware that the West was about to reveal this fact to the world. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran is only required to announce the existence of such construction six months before it becomes operational, and that is why he announced it only now.

In any case, Mr. Obama is making a big thing of it, and is using this new, agreed-upon fact as the basis on which to obtain further U.N. sanctions on Iran. He is evidently hoping this new fact will be enough to persuade Russia and China into either supporting or at least not opposing new sanctions.

The U.S. political right and the Israelis are saying in effect, “we told you so.” In their view, Iran has always been lying, is lying now, and must therefore be seriously punished.

So, are we on the verge of further sanctions, or of bombing Iran — either by the United States or by Israel with the tacit consent of the United States? I don’t think so. I think what is happening is a gigantic bluff by all and sundry.

Let us start with Iran. I have always agreed with the U.S. right and the Israelis that Iran intends to achieve the status of a nuclear power. My difference with them has simply been that this seems to me normal, inevitable, and not at all a geopolitical disaster.

From Iran’s point of view, there are three nearby nuclear powers — India, Pakistan and Israel — who not only have never signed the nonproliferation treaty but actually have nuclear weapons, many nuclear weapons. They are not, however, being accused of violating the norms of the “international community.”

So, the Iranians say, why pick on Iran? Iran has, unlike these three nearby countries, signed the nonproliferation treaty, and has up to now not violated its specific provisions. Nonetheless, it is being denounced for a far lesser violation of international norms than that of the three other countries. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil points out that Brazil is also enriching uranium and sees nothing wrong with Iran doing that.

Why did President Obama make his announcement just now if he has known for some time that Iran was building this plant? He claims he just wanted first to be absolutely sure of the quality of his intelligence. But it is also clear that Mr. Obama is under attack from the U.S. right for his health care proposals and for his seeming hesitation to send more troops to Afghanistan. Talking tough to Iran protects his right flank.

The same might be said for Iran. Mr. Ahmadinejad, like Mr. Obama, is having some internal political difficulties. Talking tough to the West is obviously something that enables him to tap nationalist sentiment, especially if the West obliges him by talking tough back.

Russia and China have always argued that tougher sanctions would be counterproductive. They also don’t want to go too far in antagonizing the United States. So they will probably continue to move slowly and ambiguously.

As for military action, consider the following: Mr. Obama is being faced with a demand for a significant escalation in U.S. military commitment in Afghanistan. Given the situation in Afghanistan, who in the United States is going to support real military action against Iran? And the Israelis, whatever their anxieties and wishes, will not be accorded the necessary overflight rights.

So, where does all this leave us? It leaves the world in a stalemate. Lots of words and very little action. Is that what Mr. Ahmadinejad wants? Probably. Will the U.S. right and the Israelis denounce it? Probably. Can Mr. Obama do anything to change the situation? I don’t see what. Hype is not the same thing as reality.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/02/opinion/02iht-edwallerstein.html?hpw>

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Washington Post  
OPINION  
October 2, 2009

## Obama's French Lesson

By Charles Krauthammer

When France chides you for appeasement, you know you're scraping bottom. Just how low we've sunk was demonstrated by the Obama administration's satisfaction when Russia's president said of Iran, after meeting President Obama at the United Nations, that "sanctions are seldom productive, but they are sometimes inevitable."

You see? The Obama magic. Engagement works. Russia is on board. Except that, as The Post inconveniently pointed out, President Dmitry Medvedev said the same thing a week earlier, and the real power in Russia, Vladimir Putin, had changed not at all in his opposition to additional sanctions. And just to make things clear, when Iran then brazenly test-fired offensive missiles, Russia reacted by declaring that this newest provocation did not warrant the imposition of tougher sanctions.

Do the tally. In return for selling out Poland and the Czech Republic by unilaterally abrogating a missile-defense security arrangement that Russia had demanded be abrogated, we get from Russia . . . what? An oblique hint, of possible support, for unspecified sanctions, grudgingly offered and of dubious authority -- and, in any case, leading nowhere because the Chinese have remained resolute against any Security Council sanctions.

Confusing ends and means, the Obama administration strives mightily for shows of allied unity, good feeling and pious concern about Iran's nuclear program -- whereas the real objective is stopping that program. This feel-good posturing is worse than useless, because all the time spent achieving gestures is precious time granted Iran to finish its race to acquire the bomb.

Don't take it from me. Take it from Sarkozy, who could not conceal his astonishment at Obama's naivete. On Sept. 24, Obama ostentatiously presided over the Security Council. With 14 heads of state (or government) at the table, with an American president at the chair for the first time ever, with every news camera in the world trained on the meeting, it would garner unprecedented worldwide attention.

Unknown to the world, Obama had in his pocket explosive revelations about an illegal uranium enrichment facility that the Iranians had been hiding near Qom. The French and the British were urging him to use this most dramatic of settings to stun the world with the revelation and to call for immediate action.

Obama refused. Not only did he say nothing about it, but, reports Le Monde, Sarkozy was forced to scrap the Qom section of *his* speech. Obama held the news until a day later -- in Pittsburgh. I've got nothing against Pittsburgh (site of the G-20 summit), but a stacked-with-world-leaders Security Council chamber it is not.

Why forgo the opportunity? Because Obama wanted the Security Council meeting to be about his own dream of a nuclear-free world. The president, reports the New York Times citing "White House officials," did not want to "dilute" his disarmament resolution "by diverting to Iran."

Diversion? It's the most serious security issue in the world. A diversion from what? From a worthless U.N. disarmament resolution?

Yes. And from Obama's star turn as planetary visionary: "The administration told the French," reports the Wall Street Journal, "that it didn't want to 'spoil the image of success' for Mr. Obama's debut at the U.N."

Image? Success? Sarkozy could hardly contain himself. At the council table, with Obama at the chair, he reminded Obama that "we live in a real world, not a virtual world."

He explained: "President Obama has even said, 'I dream of a world without [nuclear weapons].' Yet before our very eyes, two countries are currently doing the exact opposite."

Sarkozy's unspoken words? "And yet, *sacre bleu*, he's sitting on Qom!"

At the time, we had no idea what Sarkozy was fuming about. Now we do. Although he could hardly have been surprised by Obama's fecklessness. After all, just a day earlier in addressing the General Assembly, Obama actually said, "No one nation can . . . dominate another nation." That adolescent mindlessness was followed with the declaration that "alignments of nations rooted in the cleavages of a long-gone Cold War" in fact "make no sense in an interconnected world." NATO, our alliances with Japan and South Korea, our umbrella over Taiwan, are senseless? What do our allies think when they hear such nonsense?



Bismarck is said to have said: "There is a providence that protects idiots, drunkards, children, and the United States of America." Bismarck never saw Obama at the United Nations. Sarkozy did.

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