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IRAN EXPECTS IAEA DIRECTOR GENERAL TO FULFILL THE WORK PLAN

The escalating crisis over Iran's nuclear program urges the international community to impose new sanctions against this country. What are the current relations between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)? And how does Iran estimate the possible steps for trust-building between Iran and the international community?

We have put our questions to Iran's Permanent Representative to the IAEA Ali Asghar Soltanieh.

SECURITY INDEX: What measures could be taken to restore the confidence between Iran and the international community on Iran's nuclear program?

SOLTANIEH: In order to enhance the confidence both sides should try to find out what are the reasons for the confidence deficit and take steps to improve the situation for the future. From our side we've taken bigger steps in order to remove ambiguities. We are still an active party to the NPT. We are cooperating fully with IAEA despite the UN Security Council's resolutions imposing sanctions against Iran. The Western countries involved the UN Security Council in the Iranian nuclear issue, which belongs to the IAEA in Vienna. This proves that Iran is helping to remove questions, problems, and to take steps towards confidence building.

Now the question is, what has the other side done? Nothing. They've taken steps to destroy the confidence by passing resolutions and bringing this issue to New York. At the NPT Review Conference we were working together to find a common solution but they were talking about resolutions. This has shown that the United States and a couple of European countries just want to destroy the constructive environment. And this is the case. It is unfortunate that they are not taking steps in the right direction.

SECURITY INDEX: What is the main purpose of a new Iran–Brazil–Turkey agreement?

SOLTANIEH: This agreement clearly proves Iran's political will for cooperation. Although usually any country should pay and get the fuel, we are ready to send the material out. And this shows that we are really going to help the negotiation's process using peaceful means. This is a clear indication of our political goodwill. And we appreciate the attempts made by Brazil and Turkey—they wanted to show to the whole world that Iran has the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. They are asking Iran to help, and we are affirmative and positive towards their request. We do not see any necessity to send the material out but we want to show our positive approach to it.

SECURITY INDEX: What is your current evaluation of relations between Iran and the IAEA?

SOLTANIEH: Generally we have full cooperation with the IAEA. Nevertheless the new Director General has arrived. Of course, his first report was not suitable because he was reviewing past history, which was not necessary. They criticize. We hope that in the next report he will be more constructive, and the report will be more balanced. Nevertheless in general we have been working very hard and even after we started up to 20 percent enrichment activities we had a meeting with IAEA specialists. Our new safeguard approach also shows that Iran is fully determined to



cooperate with the IAEA in order to make sure that every nuclear activity is under surveillance of the IAEA.

SECURITY INDEX: What are the prospects of these relations? What goals is Iran putting forward?

SOLTANIEH: The future is very clear: we will continue the same trend working with the IAEA under NPT comprehensive safeguards, and Iran expects the IAEA Director General to immediately fulfill the work plan which was agreed between Iran and IAEA. According to that document the Agency should immediately announce the safeguards as a routine inspection and put an end to the political discussion around the world. If such a thing happens we will open up a new chapter of cooperation with the IAEA.

SECURITY INDEX: The Iranian enrichment program is developing very fast. What is the reason for the hurry? Would you comment on the possibility of an Iranian moratorium on uranium high enrichment?

SOLTANIEH: We are not going to produce high-enriched uranium even for a research reactor. We will go up to 20 percent, which is not categorized by the IAEA as high-enriched. It is categorized as low-enriched. We need uranium enriched up to 20% for a research reactor and low-enriched uranium for the Bushehr Power Plant. And we will definitely continue our enrichment program because otherwise there is no assurance and guarantee for the fuel. Today there is no international legally binding instrument to guarantee this kind of fuel.

SECURITY INDEX: The Iranian position concerning the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East is connected with the position of Israel concerning the NPT. Does Iran see any other ways of implementing the idea of a Nuclear-Free Middle East?

SOLTANIEH: We are looking for a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Iran in the long term will support a WMD-free zone but on this stage we have to focus on a nuclear-weapon-free zone and we are supporting it. But the only way for this is a prompt Israeli accession to the NPT. The international community understands that we are very disappointed with Israel's nuclear capability and not joining the NPT. All 116 countries of the non-aligned movement have condemned Israeli nuclear capability and have expected Israel to join the NPT immediately and put all nuclear installations and activities, and nuclear materials under the safeguards of the IAEA. We should give only two years—by the time of the next Preparatory Committee of the NPT Review Conference—for Israel to join the NPT.

SECURITY INDEX: In your interviews you often talk about the new Iranian policy of full transparency. What will be the further development of this policy? What steps is Iran going to take?

SOLTANIEH: First of all the transparency itself should be defined because there is no internationally negotiated definition of what transparency means. For instance, if you say that Russia is not transparent, what does that mean? Russia should open the door of each house for inspectors to come, then is it transparent? Every inch of the country should be inspected? What is transparency? If a country like Iran is fully committed and all inspectors are coming 24 hours a day with the cameras installed in Iran according to the comprehensive safeguard agreement—this is transparency. We are following the NPT and this is the way transparency should be measured. We fully support the transparency which accords with the definition of the safeguards agreement.



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