

# MEMO

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## **Negotiations with Iran Must Be Backed by Strength**

As world leaders gather in New York for the opening of the United Nations General Assembly, international powers are expected to renew talks soon with Iran about its nuclear program. Washington can improve the prospects of success for such talks by taking steps to expand sanctions against Iran and to enhance the credibility of the option to use force. The international community should only consider sanctions relief if Iran complies with United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions that require suspending its nuclear activities. Any such relief must be commensurate with the extent of Tehran's actions.

### **Iran must demonstrate seriousness in talks by taking concrete actions to suspend and roll back its nuclear program.**

- Iran must comply with UNSC resolutions that demand it suspend all enrichment and heavy water activity.
- Iran must immediately stop the installation of additional centrifuges. From May to August, Iran installed as many as 2,000 new centrifuges, including hundreds of advanced models.
- Iran must cease production of uranium enriched to the 20-percent level and begin sending previously enriched material to a third country.
- Iran must cease development of the heavy water reactor under construction in Arak.
- Iran must allow international inspectors to access the Parchin military facility where nuclear explosive testing is believed to have been carried out.



**Iran cannot be allowed to use negotiations as a stalling technique while pushing forward with its nuclear program.**

### **Pleasant rhetoric will not suffice. If Iran fails to act, sanctions must be increased.**

- The United States should synchronize its approach to sanctions with Iran's compliance with UNSC resolutions. If Iran suspends its nuclear activity, the United States should be prepared to suspend any new sanctions.
- If Iran continues to advance its nuclear program, Washington should step up sanctions. New sanctions should include:
  - Penalizing countries that continue to buy Iranian oil in violation of U.S. law, including China. Measures should target the financial institutions, shipping firms, and ports of those countries.

- Barring from the American financial system those institutions and individuals conducting financial transactions with, or providing services to, the Central Bank of Iran or other sanctioned banks.
- Limiting U.S. market access to companies or individuals engaging in any significant, non-humanitarian commercial trade with Iran.

**Strengthening the credibility of military action against Iran’s nuclear program is crucial if talks are to succeed.**

- Congress and the Obama administration must continue to send a strong message that all options are on the table, and that the United States is prepared to use all instruments of American power to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon capability.
- The United States must support Israel’s right to act against Iran if it feels compelled—in its own legitimate self-defense—to act. Only when faced with a credible threat of military action has Iran previously agreed to suspend its nuclear program. In 2003, faced with U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, Iran suspended its uranium enrichment program, fearing military action against its nuclear infrastructure. The program was restarted when the threat was no longer credible.
- As President Obama said on September 15, “If you have both a credible threat of force, combined with a rigorous diplomatic effort ... you can strike a deal [with Iran].”

**Iran cannot be allowed to advance its nuclear program while using negotiations as a delaying tactic.**

- While President Rouhani’s rhetoric is more positive than his predecessor’s, since his election there has been no change in the nation’s nuclear program. Iran has continued to enrich uranium, increase the number of centrifuges, build the Arak reactor, and obstruct International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors.
- The international community has spent the last 10 years negotiating with Iran over its nuclear program with nothing to show for the effort. Some examples of failure include:
  - Talks in Almaty in April 2013 yielded no progress. Iran made no counter proposal to an earlier offer by the five permanent members of the UNSC plus Germany – also known as the P5+1 – of significant sanctions relief in exchange for its termination of specific nuclear-related activity and its commitment to transparency.
  - Iran refused to discuss its nuclear program during talks with the P5+1 in 2011.
  - In late 2009, Iran rejected the international community’s offer to reprocess a portion of its low-enriched uranium outside the country for use in its Tehran Research Reactor.
  - In May 2006, the P5+1 offered Iran a major package of economic and security incentives and the United States agreed to join multilateral talks if Iran suspended enrichment. After taking three months to consider the package, Iran rejected the offer and accelerated its nuclear activities.