

MEMMO

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Iranian Nuclear Activities Rapidly Advancing

The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) latest report officially details Iran's rapid uranium enrichment advances and Tehran's continued defiance of the U.N. Security Council. If Iran's nuclear program is not stopped, the regime could enrich nuclear fuel on a commercial scale later this year. To change Iran's course, the U.N. Security Council must quickly adopt stiffer sanctions aimed at heightening tensions within Iranian society that could persuade the government to end its nuclear program.

The IAEA confirmed that Iran has significantly advanced its uranium enrichment program.

- Iran has installed and is operating two 164-centrifuge cascades at its enrichment site in Natanz. Cascades are linked machines that rotate at supersonic speeds to enrich the uranium needed to produce fuel for nuclear reactors or bombs.
- Iran is in the final stages of installing two additional 164-centrifuge cascades at the facility, which will bring the number of centrifuges in place at the site to more than 650. Iran has advised the IAEA that it plans on having 3,000 centrifuges operating by May, which could potentially give the regime the capability to produce one or two nuclear weapons a year.
- Iran said it plans to begin injecting uranium gas into the centrifuges by the end of the month. The IAEA reported that Iran, which is already injecting uranium gas into more than 200 centrifuges at a separate test facility in Natanz, recently transferred nearly nine tons of gas to the site, enough to make at least one nuclear weapon.
- IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei recently stated in an interview with *The Financial Times* that "it could be six months, it could be a year" until Iran is capable of enriching uranium on an industrial scale. Once Iran can enrich uranium on an industrial scale, it will be able to produce fuel for an atomic reactor and possibly nuclear weapons.

The IAEA reported that Iran has refused to implement long-demanded transparency measures.

- Iran banned 48 IAEA inspectors from entering the country in January; a decision the IAEA made clear "would lead to diminished operational flexibility and less efficient use of resources." Tehran has not changed its position.
- The IAEA reported that Iran has made clear that it will not allow remote monitoring of the Natanz facility as required under its IAEA Safeguards Agreement once it begins introducing uranium gas into the centrifuges.

- The IAEA has not been able to gain any more information on Iran's so-called Green Salt Project, which reportedly involves research on using uranium gas and high explosives, as well as the design of a missile re-entry vehicle.
- Iran has left other critical issues unresolved, including those related to the regime's alleged experiments with advanced centrifuges and the source of highly enriched uranium found in the country.

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- Security Council Resolution 1737, unanimously approved in December, represented the first time the world body imposed mandatory sanctions on Iran under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter, thereby declaring that Iran's atomic program represents a threat to international peace and security.
- The resolution banned trade related to Iran's nuclear and missile programs, froze the assets of individuals associated with those programs and imposed strict monitoring of the foreign travel of these individuals.
- While Iran has refused to meet Security Council demands, the initial sanctions are beginning to have an impact—banks and other companies are backing away from doing business with Tehran while internal criticism of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has increased.
- A second resolution including an arms embargo, enforced travel bans, asset freezes and other economic sanctions could bring more pressure to bear on an Iranian government and further stimulate internal forces already pushing the regime to abandon its nuclear pursuit.

Basic Facts Summary

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- The Security Council must now implement additional sanctions to further pressure and isolate the Iranian regime.