

MEMMO

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Iran Must Be Pressed on Nuclear Program, Human Rights

The Iranian regime continues to oppress its people and defy international demands that Tehran cease uranium enrichment. A new International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report warns that Iran could be on the brink of a major advance in its uranium enrichment efforts. Despite the turmoil elsewhere in the region, the United States must not lose its focus on Iran. Now is the time to impose increasingly severe sanctions on Iran to persuade Tehran to end its destructive nuclear policies and human rights abuses.

Iran has overcome technical hurdles and continues to make dramatic progress towards a nuclear weapons capability.

- Despite reported setbacks to Iran's nuclear program, the IAEA report finds that Iran has resumed a steady production level of low-enriched uranium (LEU) and now has stockpiled enough LEU that if further enriched could serve as the core for three nuclear weapons.
- Iran also continues to enrich and stockpile uranium to a 20 percent purity level, representing 85 percent of the work needed to produce fuel for a nuclear weapon.
- Iran has yet to install the necessary equipment to utilize this higher-grade uranium for medical use, revealing the falsity of Iran's claims that this activity is for civilian purposes.
- Iran will soon begin a small-scale installation of next-generation centrifuges. The large-scale use of these faster, more efficient centrifuges will dramatically decrease the amount of time Iran needs to stockpile highly enriched uranium.
- The introduction of high speed centrifuges also means Iran will need far fewer centrifuges, enabling easier concealment.
- The new IAEA report says the agency has received new information about undisclosed nuclear activity with possible military dimensions. For more than two-and-a-half years, Iran has refused to answer the IAEA's questions about the possible military aspects of its program.
- Iran has also informed the IAEA that it will begin this summer to install centrifuges in a previously secret facility near Qom. President Obama has noted that "the size and configuration of this facility is inconsistent with a peaceful program."



Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has called for the prosecution, and potential execution, of opposition activists.

The Iranian regime is stepping up its suppression of dissent as anti-government protests spread throughout the region.

- Iran's anti-regime Green Movement—reinvigorated by protests throughout the Middle East calling for greater freedoms—has faced brutal suppression, including beatings, arrests and the disappearance of its two leaders.
- While cynically encouraging protests in Egypt and other Arab countries, Iranian leaders have prevented—often violently—pro-democracy and human rights activist from staging similar demonstrations in Iran.
- Iranian authorities are engaged in an “execution binge,” according to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran. Iran has reportedly executed more than 90 individuals, including political prisoners, during the past two months.
- President Obama has criticized the regime for “gunning down and beating people” who were protesting peacefully, and said that the Iranian people should be able to express their opinions and grievances against the regime without fear of violence.

Despite the turmoil elsewhere in the region, the United States and its allies must further press Iran to suspend its nuclear program and abide by international human rights norms.

- The Obama administration should now enforce U.S. sanctions laws and penalize those investing in Iran's energy sector, selling Iran refined petroleum, aiding Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or facilitating Tehran's illicit financial activities.
- At the same time, the United States must do more to address Iran's human rights record. Congress required the president as part of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability and Divestment Act (CISADA) to take action against those responsible for the systematic human rights abuses in Iran.
- The United States has sanctioned 10 individuals for their roles in the human rights crackdown that followed the fraudulent 2009 presidential elections.
- Responsibility, however, for the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran extends far beyond these 10 sanctioned individuals. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has called the protesters infidels, which means they can face execution on charges of “waging war” against Islam.
- Tougher sanctions provide the best hope to change Iran's calculus. Failure to enforce nuclear and human rights sanctions against Iran could leave policymakers with a stark choice: accepting a brutal dictatorship with nuclear weapons or using military action to prevent this regime from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.