

# MEMMO

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## **Iran Expanding Enrichment, Finishes Fordow Facility**

Iran continues to make rapid progress towards a nuclear weapons capability. The latest International Atomic Energy Agency report (IAEA) found that Iran recently completed a once-secret uranium enrichment facility. The step significantly expands Iran's nuclear program and its ability to enrich uranium. Iran also continues to deny IAEA requests to inspect sites that the IAEA suspects conducted nuclear weaponization work. America and its partners must step up diplomatic, political, and economic pressure on Iran to meet its international obligations.

### **Iran is increasing its nuclear weapons capability at an alarming rate, according to a new IAEA report.**

- The IAEA said Iran has finished installing centrifuges at the previously secret uranium enrichment site, Fordow.
- Once fully operational, these centrifuges could quadruple production at Fordow and dramatically reduce the time needed to produce weapons-grade material.
- With its current centrifuges, Iran increased its stored amount of 20 percent enriched uranium by nearly 50 percent in the last three months.

Enrichment to the 20 percent level level represents 80 percent of the work needed to produce fissile material for the core of a weapon.

- At the same time, Iran continues to produce low-enriched uranium (LEU) at its Natanz facility. It has now enriched enough material that, if further processed, could produce six or seven nuclear weapons.
- Iran also installed more than 600 new centrifuges at Natanz, including many advanced models that if installed on a large scale will enable Tehran to significantly increase the pace of enrichment.
- Work also continues on heavy water related projects, including the construction of the heavy water research reactor at Arak, which can be used to produce plutonium for nuclear arms.
- Iran, according to a *Wall Street Journal* report, also has raised U.S. concerns by discharging nuclear fuel from its Bushehr reactor. Experts cited by the paper said the discharged fuel was “made up of between 22 and 220 pounds of weapons-grade plutonium, enough to produce as many as 24 nuclear bombs, if reprocessed further.”

### **Iran continues to block access to a suspected weaponization site at Parchin and has taken great steps to cover up previous activity.**

- The IAEA reported in November 2011 that it suspected Parchin—an Iranian military complex near Tehran—was used to test designs for a nuclear weapon. Iran is believed to have carried out



**Recent activity discharging nuclear fuel at Iran's Bushehr reactor has raised concerns amid U.S. officials.**

experiments in a large explosives containment vessel at the site in order to simulate the first stages of a nuclear explosion.

- Since the IAEA's initial request to visit Parchin was denied in February 2012, Iran has made extensive changes to the site that suggest the regime is trying to clear it of any evidence that nuclear weapons development activity occurred, according to the new IAEA report.
- One attempt included digging up an area covering the area of almost nearly 46 football fields and then refilling it with fresh earth, according to satellite imagery used by the IAEA.
- The IAEA report indicates that five buildings and structures were razed and removed from the site.

**The report stressed Iran's unfulfilled international obligations, which prevent the IAEA from guaranteeing the nature of Iran's nuclear program.**

- For more than four years, Iran has refused to address IAEA concerns about possible military dimensions of its program. On Nov. 27, the AP released an Iranian-produced graph showing that Iranian scientists have run computer simulations to determine the yield of a nuclear explosion.
- Iran has not provided the IAEA with additional information about the Fordow plant in order to clarify the original stated purpose of the facility versus how it is being used today.
- Similarly, the U.N. nuclear agency has not received a response to its requests for more information on the construction of 10 new uranium enrichment facilities. Iran's intransigence hinders the IAEA from verifying and reporting fully on such matters.
- Iran has refused access to a Heavy Water Production Plant and has failed to answer questions about a foreign expert that the agency believes aided Iran's activities at Parchin.
- Contrary to the demands of the Security Council, Iran has not signed and is not implementing the Additional Protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would allow inspectors enhanced access to suspect sites. The IAEA has said it will not be in a position to provide credible assurance that Iran is not carryout secret nuclear activities without such access.

**Enforcement of crippling economic sanctions must be accelerated and conditions to engage in negotiations must be reaffirmed.**

- The time needed to prevent Iran from achieving a nuclear weapons capability is quickly expiring. The United States and its international partners have imposed crippling sanctions on Iran and must now dramatically step up enforcement of these measures to prevent such a scenario.
- The United States must work with nations still buying Iranian oil to ensure they continue to significantly reduce purchases. Nations that fail to do so must face consequences, including the sanctioning of any financial institutions involved in the purchases.
- Foreign entities that continue to do business and provide support to the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) must be sanctioned. Shipping companies that continue to call at ports controlled by the IRGC must also be sanctioned.
- Financial institutions that continue to conduct significant financial transactions with or provide significant financial services to the Central Bank of Iran or other sanctioned banks must be held to account. Persons helping Iran to evade financial sanctions must be identified and sanctioned.
- The international community must also seek to diplomatically isolate Iran. America should seek the indictment of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at the International Criminal Court for violating the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
- The United States must reaffirm the conditions necessary for Iran to participate in bilateral or P5+1 talks, including taking steps to demonstrate its willingness to meets its international obligations.