

MEMMO

April 9, 2015

U.S. Drops Prior Demands in Iran Talks

The announced framework between the P5+1 and Iran represents a significant departure from previously outlined administration requirements for a good agreement. Rather than requiring an “end” to Iran’s nuclear program or even “significant” dismantlement of Iran’s nuclear infrastructure, the administration will have to rely on international monitoring and the untested willingness of future leaders to take rapid concerted action. A final agreement based on this framework will likely allow Iran to become a nuclear threshold state. Congress must carefully review any final agreement and insist that it foreclose all Iranian paths to a nuclear weapon.

No Nuclear Program:

Administration: “The deal we’ll accept is they end their nuclear program. It’s very straightforward.”

- *President Barack Obama, Third Presidential Debate, Oct. 22, 2012*

Announced Framework: Iran will be allowed to continue its nuclear program, including uranium enrichment, research on advanced centrifuges and heavy water activity.

Dismantlement:

Administration: “Iran will be required to agree to strict limits and constraints on all aspects of its nuclear program, to include the dismantlement of significant portions of its nuclear infrastructure.”

- *White House Press Secretary Jay Carney, Press Briefing, Jan. 23, 2014*

Announced Framework: Apart from the core at Arak, Iran will not be required to dismantle any of its nuclear infrastructure, and will likely remain a nuclear threshold state for the duration of the agreement.

Centrifuges:

Administration: “We are willing to consider a very limited, very intrusive, very heavily monitored, small limited enrichment program if it becomes a necessary.”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: Iran will be permitted to operate over 6,000 centrifuges for the first 10 years of the agreement and unlimited numbers thereafter.

Heavy Water Reactor:

Administration: “Arak is unacceptable. You can’t have a heavy water reactor.”

- *Secretary of State John Kerry, House Foreign Affairs Committee Testimony, Dec. 10, 2013*

Announced Framework: The Arak heavy water reactor will be reconfigured to run at a reduced capacity—not dismantled.

Possible Military Dimensions:

Administration: “...we have required that Iran come clean on its past actions as part of any comprehensive agreement...”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: The framework is ambiguous on how and when Iran will address its past weaponization efforts.

Fordow:

Administration: “We see no reason for Fordow to remain an enrichment facility.”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: Iran will not close the Fordow facility and will be allowed to use the site to further develop enrichment technology.

Agreement Duration:

Administration: “Our goal is to reach a mutually-agreed long-term comprehensive solution that would ensure Iran's program will be exclusively peaceful.”

- *U.S. Negotiator Wendy Sherman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Feb. 4, 2014*

Announced Framework: Most nuclear restrictions will be lifted in 10-15 years. Iran could then possess the capacity to produce weapons-grade uranium for a bomb within days.

Inspections and Verification:

Administration: “We can envision a comprehensive agreement that involves extraordinary constraints and verification mechanisms and intrusive inspections, but that permits Iran to have a peaceful nuclear program.”

- *President Barack Obama, Saban Forum, Dec. 7, 2013*

Announced Framework: It is unclear whether inspections of suspect nuclear sites will be guaranteed. A yet-to-be established international mechanism may, or may not, allow for access. The timeframe for decisions of this mechanism remains to be established, but there clearly will not be “anywhere, anytime” inspections in Iran.