

MEMMO

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Backtracking on the Iran Talks?

Last March, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano stated that his agency “needs to clarify issues” concerning past Iranian behavior if it will ever be able to certify that Iran’s nuclear program is peaceful. On June 16, Secretary of State John Kerry asserted for the first time that the U.S. was “not fixated” on Iran accounting for its past nuclear weaponization efforts. According to Secretary Kerry, the U.S. already “knows what Iran did.” The secretary’s statement indicates the U.S. may be backtracking from previous demands that Iran respond fully to the IAEA’s questions – raising the disturbing prospect that the anticipated agreement will be fundamentally flawed.

Iran must fully explain its prior weaponization efforts.

- The IAEA must understand the entire scope of Iran’s weaponization activities if it is to establish a baseline of Tehran’s nuclear program – including breakout time – against which to measure future actions. The IAEA requires access to all suspect sites, scientists, and documents.



Iran must answer questions about its past nuclear activities, said IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano.

- Clearly, Iran has made progress towards weaponization. An Iranian laptop, which came into U.S. possession in 2004, detailed Iran’s work to assemble a nuclear warhead – but did not indicate how far Iran had progressed.
- Iran must comply with prior commitments to the IAEA; allowing Iran to shirk them will only tempt it to defy commitments made in a new deal.
- IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano has repeatedly pressed Iran to address IAEA concerns regarding PMDs. On March 23, he told PBS’s Judy Woodruff that answering the IAEA’s questions about PMDs is “necessary to restore the confidence of the international community in the peaceful nature of Iran nuclear activities.”

The U.S. and the IAEA do not know the extent of Iran’s nuclear capabilities.

- IAEA Director General Amano also said on March 23 “...what we don’t know [is] whether they have undeclared activities or something else. We don’t know what they did in the past. So, we know a part of their activities, but we cannot tell we know all their activities.”

- Further, Amano said on June 8, “The Agency is not in a position to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities.”

The U.S. must not abandon the effort to get Iran to fulfill its PMD commitments.

- When asked in April if Iran must disclose past military-related nuclear activities as part of an agreement, Secretary Kerry said “They have to do it. It will be done. If there’s going to be a deal, it will be done.” (Interview with PBS’s Judy Woodruff, April 8, 2015)
- The April 2 framework’s nuclear parameters stated, “Iran will implement an agreed set of measures to address the IAEA’s concerns regarding the Possible Military Dimensions (PMD) of its program.”

Congress has demanded Iran explain its past weaponization efforts.

- “Unless we have a full understanding of Iran’s past program, it will be impossible for the international community to judge Iran’s future breakout time with certainty.” – *Letter to President Obama signed by 367 House members on March 20, 2015*
- Any agreement “must fully explain the questionable activities in which [Iran] engaged at Parchin and other facilities.” – *Letter to President Obama signed by 83 Senators on March 18, 2014*