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speeches

U.S. Statement on Other Safeguards Implementation Issues, Iran

Delivered by U.S. Permanent Representative, Ambassador Gregory L. Schulte

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the United States, I would like to express my government's appreciation for the hard work of the Director General and the IAEA Safeguards Department to monitor and report to the Board the status of Iran's implementation of its safeguards obligations. In particular, my delegation appreciates the Agency's efforts to investigate all unresolved issues with Iran, including concerns about possible undeclared nuclear activities. Similarly, we appreciate the Agency's efforts to verify Iran's suspension commitments, which, as the Director General has informed us, Iran continues to violate.

September 24 Resolution

Mr. Chairman,

Two months ago, the Board of Governors adopted a resolution that made two important findings. First, we found that Iran's many breaches and failures of its obligations to comply with its safeguards agreement constituted noncompliance as described in Article XII.C of the IAEA Statute. Second, we found that the long history of deception and concealment of Iran's nuclear activities, the nature of those activities, and the absence of confidence in Iran's peaceful nuclear intentions, have given rise to questions that are within the competence of the UN Security Council. Both of these findings are cause to report Iran to the UN Security Council. However, we chose instead to give Iran time to take positive steps that could then be reflected in the content of the requisite report. With that goal in mind, the September resolution urged Iran to take a number of steps, including:

to provide the Agency with the extended transparency requested by Dr. ElBaradei in his September report, including access to individuals, documents relating to procurement, dual use equipment, certain military owned workshops, and research and development locations;

to re-establish full and sustained suspension of all enrichment-related activity, including uranium conversion;

to reconsider the construction of the heavy water reactor at Arak;

to promptly ratify and implement an Additional Protocol;

to continue acting as if the Protocol is in force pending its ratification;

and finally, to observe fully its commitments and return to the negotiating process.

The Director General's November 18 Report

Mr. Chairman,

On the basis of Dr. ElBaradei's November 18 report, one cannot avoid the conclusion that Iran has failed on each and every count to meet this Board's requests. Even on the fundamental issue of Iran's transparency and cooperation with inspections, Iran is continuing its long-held practice of choosing one or two areas for limited, selective, and incomplete cooperation, and then claiming the Agency's needs have been fully met. Moreover, the Director General's report underscores that the IAEA's concerns about Iran's past nuclear activities are growing instead of diminishing, and emphasizes that "Iran's full transparency is indispensable and overdue." For example:

The IAEA still seeks information, documentation, and access related to military workshops, the Physics Research Centre, the Lavisan-Shian site, and specific individuals associated with those efforts. Documents described in the IAEA report – documents that Iran previously said did not exist regarding the 1987 offer of centrifuge technology by a proliferation network – raise new issues, including information Iran received on casting and machining hemispheres of enriched uranium, characteristic of weapons components and opening up a new field of safeguards enquiry.

The IAEA is still seeking information on the scope of Iran's P-1 and P-2 centrifuge programs, and continues to find implausible Iran's claims that it undertook no work on P-2 designs between 1995 and 2002.

Operation of the Esfahan uranium conversion facility is picking up, with the latest batch of yellowcake introduced into the facility on November 16, despite calls for re-suspension by the Board. The new batch of conversion is reportedly 50 percent larger than the previous batch.

Construction of the heavy water reactor at Arak continues, despite calls for reconsideration by the Board.

There has been no resolution of questions concerning uranium mining, Iran's past activities with polonium and beryllium, or the scope and history of Iran's plutonium separation experiments.

Rather than ratifying the Additional Protocol, Tehran has orchestrated through the Iranian Parliament a threat that appropriate and responsible Board action to address Iranian noncompliance, which is fully in accord with the IAEA Statute, will lead to even less Iranian cooperation with the IAEA.

Mr. Chairman and fellow delegates, we can draw only one conclusion: Iran is not taking seriously the legitimate international concerns that have arisen over its covert nuclear programs and continued stonewalling.

The Way Forward

Mr. Chairman,

Given Iran's record of willfully disregarding the Board's requests, it would have been appropriate for this Board to adopt this week a resolution reporting Iran to the UN Security Council required under Articles XII.C and III.B.4. We believe a majority of Board members would support taking that step, even right now. But, just as we join with all in this room in seeking a diplomatic resolution, we likewise are willing to support the request of our EU-3 colleagues again to defer for a short period the required report to the Council. We do so in the sincere hope that Iran will reverse course and demonstrate it will meet its obligations and commitments before the report to the Security Council must be made.

Iran must understand that the report to the Council is required and will be made a time of this Board's choosing. We again urge Iran to re-engage in good faith with the EU-3 on the basis of the Paris Agreement. For their part, it is clear the EU-3 are working hard to broaden the international consensus about how to address the crisis in confidence Iran has created. In that context, we welcome Russia's efforts to encourage Iran to return to negotiations, and the ideas that Russia has put on the table.

But the Board cannot and should not have unlimited patience if we seek to re-establish confidence about Iran's program, as well as demonstrate that states cannot simply ignore their IAEA and other nuclear nonproliferation obligations. Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability is a danger to all of us. The September resolution addressed the requirement for a report to the Security Council, while still providing Iran

some time to change course. Two months have passed since that resolution was adopted. The question for all of us is: How long can we give Iran to meet its obligations before we report to the Security Council? This question is before us at a time when the Director General continues to be unable to assure us that there are no more hidden elements to Iran's program, especially its centrifuge efforts. If so, how can we know that such covert efforts are not proceeding even now? The Director General has also now reported, despite previous Iranian denials, that Iran did indeed receive at least one document indicative of a weapons end-use.

The United States, and, we believe, a majority of Board members, are prepared to conclude that, absent a verified change of course in Iran, very little more time can pass before the Board must make its report to the UN Security Council. The Board will need to see Iran return to negotiations with the EU-3 on the basis of the Paris Agreement, and the Board will need to see that Iran is providing the full transparency that the IAEA has requested. We hope Iran will finally realize that the burden is squarely on it to do exactly what the Board has asked in hopes of rebuilding confidence. If Iran does not do so, this Board will have to choice but to make a report to the Security Council that reflects the need for further action. Failure to do so would undermine the authority and credibility of the Agency and hinder its efforts to investigate Iran's nuclear program.

Mr. Chairman,

I close by requesting that Iran's noncompliance be formally included on the agenda of our next meeting, that the Director General provide a follow-up written report to the Board in advance of that meeting, and that the Agency make available to the public the Director General's November 18 report.

Thank you.

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