

# Chronology of Iran's Nuclear Programme, 1957-2007

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1 July 2007

**1957** The United States and Iran sign a civil nuclear co-operation agreement as part of the US Atoms for Peace program.

**1957** The Institute of Nuclear Science, under the auspices of the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), moves from Baghdad to Tehran, and the Shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, takes a personal interest in nuclear energy.

**1959** The Shah orders the establishment of a nuclear research centre at Tehran University.

**1960** Iran arranges to establish a 5MW research centre at Tehran University. The United States is supplying a research reactor, it also sells Iran many hot cells.

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**11 February 1961** The US Joint Chiefs of Staff suggested to place nuclear weapons in Iran as part of its close links with Iran.

**1964** During his visit to the United States the Shah decides to start an ambitious plan for nuclear power.

**September 1967** The United States supplies 5.545kg of enriched uranium, of which 5.165kg contain fissile isotopes, to Iran for fuel in a research reactor. The United States also supplies 112kg of plutonium, of which 104kg are fissile isotopes, for use as "start-up sources for research reactor."

**November 1967** The 5MWt pool-type, water-moderated research reactor supplied to Iran by GA Technologies of the United States goes critical, using 5.585kg of 93% enriched uranium supplied by the United Nuclear Corporation to the United States.

**1 July 1968** Iran signs the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on the day it is opened for signature. Iran ratifies NPT on 2 February 1970.

**March 1974** The Shah announces that Iran intends to generate 23,000MWe at nuclear power plants "as soon as possible." The first reactor in Bushehr nearly completed by 1978.

**11 April 1974** US State Department says the United States considers co-operation with Iran in the field of nuclear energy as an alternative means for energy production to be a suitable area for joint collaboration and co-operation. The majority of reactors are to be built by the United States.

**June 1974** The Shah says that Iran will have nuclear weapons, "without a doubt and sooner than one would think." ("The Shah Meets the Press," Kayhan

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**June 1974** Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Chairman Akbar Etemad and the Shah travel to Paris, where France and Iran ratify a preliminary agreement for France to supply five 1,000MWe reactors, uranium, and a nuclear research centre to Iran.

**June 1974** The United States and Iran reach a provisional agreement for the United States to supply two nuclear power reactors and enriched uranium fuel.

**20 October 1974** A State Department document says the United States and Iran are preparing to negotiate an agreement that would permit the sale of nuclear reactors as well as enriched fuel "at levels desired by the Shah." The United States also notifies the Shah of their support for Iran's proposal to buy up to 25% interest in a commercial uranium enrichment plant.

**November 1974** Iran signs agreements to purchase two 1200MWe pressurised water reactors (PWRs) from the German firm Kraftwerk Union (KWU) to be installed at Bushehr and two 900 MWe reactors from Framatome of France to be installed at Bandar Abbas. Under the contracts, France and Germany will provide enriched uranium for the initial loading and ten years' worth of reloads. The French reactors are to be built under license from Westinghouse of the United States.

**January 1975** US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Iranian Finance Minister Hushang Ansari sign a broad trade agreement that calls for the purchase of eight reactors valued at \$6.4 billion. The US Atomic Energy Commission agrees to supply Iran with fuel for two 1,200MWe light water

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reactors and signs a provisional agreement to supply fuel for as many as six additional reactors with a total power capacity of 8,000MWe.

**February 1979** The Islamic revolution in Iran puts an end to nuclear program.

## **Post-Revolution**

**July 1989** Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani signed the 10-point Iran-Russia co-operation pact on peaceful utilisation of "nuclear materials and related equipment."

**13 April 1993** The Iranian Majlis [Parliament] ratifies bills on co-operation pacts with Russia and China.

**19 September 1993** China agrees to sell two 300MW Qinshan reactors under a project named Esteqlal for the facility of Darkhovin located south of the city of Ahvaz.

**1993** China provides Iran with an HT-6B Tokamak fusion reactor that is installed at the Plasma Physics Research Centre of Azad University.

**1993** Iran asks Russia for heavy water reactors. President Clinton convinces Russian President Boris Yeltsin to kill negotiations with Iran on the sale of a natural-uranium-burning [heavy water] reactor.

**13 December 1993** Germany refuses to resume construction of the 80-percent-complete Siemens-built nuclear power plant at Bushehr.

**19 December 1993** Russian Ambassador to Iran Sergei Tretyakov confirms that Russia will help Iran to complete nuclear reactor in Bushehr, indicating

that a preliminary agreement has been reached but that financing is still being negotiated.

**21 March 1994** Russian experts start work on the first unit of Iran's 1000MW plant, according to a source at the plant. The Bushehr nuclear power plant is scheduled to be finished in four years.

### **Recent Developments**

**August 2002** Exiled opposition group, National Council of Resistance of Iran, reports existence of uranium enrichment facility at Natanz and heavy water plant at Arak.

**22 September 2002** Russian technicians restart work on the abandoned Bushehr reactor despite strong US objection.

**December 2002** United States accuses Iran of "across-the-board pursuit of weapons of mass destruction".

**June 2003** International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report, after February inspection of Natanz and Arak, says Iran has failed to comply with nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

**October 2003** Iran tells France, Britain and Germany – the "EU3" negotiating for the European Union – it will suspend all enrichment-related activities.

**December 2003** Iran signs protocol allowing snap inspections of nuclear facilities.

**June 2004** IAEA board complains of inadequate co-operation from Iran. In retaliation, Iran says it will resume production and testing of centrifuges.

**November 2004** Iran agrees to suspend voluntarily all of its uranium enrichment activity as part of a deal with EU3 (Paris Agreement).

**February 2005** President Mohammad Khatami says no Iranian government will give up nuclear technology programs.

August 2005: Iran says it has resumed uranium conversion at its Esfahan plant.

**2 September 2005** Report by IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei confirms Iran has resumed uranium conversion at Isfahan.

**15 September 2005** New Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says Iran ready to transfer nuclear know-how to other Muslim nations.

**1 January 2006** Iran says it has developed machinery to separate uranium from its ore.

**7/8 January 2006** Russia and Iran discuss Russian proposal to enrich uranium for Iran. Talks due to resume on February 16.

**10 January 2006** Iran removes UN seals at Natanz uranium enrichment plant and resumes research on nuclear fuel under IAEA supervision, despite Western warnings it would endanger efforts to find compromise.

**12 January 2006** EU3 call off nuclear talks with Iran and say Tehran should be referred to UN Security Council. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says

military attack on Iran's nuclear program not on U.S. agenda "at this point", but all options on the table.

**4 February 2006** The IAEA votes to report Iran to the Security Council for resuming uranium enrichment if Iran does not stop enrichment within a month. Iran ends snap UN nuclear checks the day after.

**13 February 2006** Iran postpones talks with Russia.

**14 February 2006** Iran confirms it has restarted some uranium enrichment work, says that talks with Russia to go ahead on February 20.

**8 March 2006** The IAEA Board of Governors voted to report Iran to the UN Security Council. The Security Council called on the IAEA director general to issue another report on Iran by the end of April.

**11 April 2006** During a large, carefully staged and nationally televised celebration in Mashhad, President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad announced that Iran had enriched uranium to 3.6 percent. He declared: "The nuclear fuel cycle at the laboratory level has been completed, and uranium with the desired enrichment for nuclear power plants was achieved... Iran has joined the nuclear countries of the world." Currently, uranium enrichment plants are operating in China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Netherlands, Pakistan, Russia, United Kingdom and United States.

**28 April 2006** In his report ElBaradei confirmed Iran's claim to have enriched uranium to 3.6 percent, but also mentioned that there had been no sign of any diversion to military use. However, he called on Iran for greater transparency and said that in the absence of such co-operation he would not be able to give Iran's program a clean bill of health.

**2 May 2006** The representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany met in Paris to discuss Iran's nuclear program, but failed to reach agreement.

**3 May 2006** President Bush and German Chancellor Angela Merkel discussed Iran's nuclear program in Washington, but in the joint press conference Angela Merkel stressed that Iran's nuclear issue should be resolved through patient and step-by-step diplomacy.

**5 May 2006** Russia and China reject the draft resolution prepared by the United States, Britain and France under Chapter VII of the UN Charter that would make it binding on Iran to cease all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities.

**8 May 2006** Foreign ministers from the five permanent members of the Security Council meeting in New York fail to reach agreement over the resolution prepared by France and Britain.

**6 June 2006** On behalf of the five permanent members of the Security Council Javier Solana flew to Tehran to convey to Iran a package of incentives if Iran suspends her uranium enrichment. The package also contains threats of specific actions that might be taken if Iran does not accept the package.

**12 July 2006** Foreign ministers of the five permanent members of the Security Council - the US, Britain, France, Russia and China - plus Germany at a meeting in Paris ahead of the Group of Eight summit in St Petersburg agreed to refer Iran's file back to the Security Council.

**31 July 2006** Security Council passes Resolution 1696, under Article 40 of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which:



"1. Calls upon Iran without further delay to take the steps required by the IAEA Board of Governors in its resolution GOV/2006/14, which are essential to build confidence in the exclusively peaceful purpose of its nuclear program and to resolve outstanding questions;

2. Demands, in this context, that Iran shall suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development, to be verified by the IAEA...."

**22 August 2006** Iran gave its formal reply to an offer by the European Union, backed by the United States, for trade and other concessions if Iran suspends its enrichment of uranium. In a 21-page response Iran suggested that it was prepared to talk again about suspension but would not accept this as a precondition.

**23 November 2006** The IAEA deferred an Iranian request for help in building a heavy-water nuclear reactor at Arak. The technical meeting of the IAEA's board of governors was split between the United States and most of its EU allies who feared that Iran could use the reactor to make fuel for a nuclear weapon, and the members of the Developing nations who argued that barring Tehran's request would set a precedent for denying technical aid to them for peaceful atomic energy programs. As Western and developing nations failed to reach consensus on Iran's request, they decided to defer the decision for one year. Meanwhile, Mohamed ElBaradei, the head of the IAEA, said that Iran had agreed to give inspectors access to records and equipment from two of its nuclear sites. ElBaradei also said that Iran had agreed to let the IAEA inspectors take environmental samples from equipment at a former military site at Lavizan, as well as to give them access to records from a uranium

enrichment plant in Natanz. ElBaradei welcomed the moves but said that Iran needed to show more transparency over its nuclear programme.

**23 December 2006** After two months of tough negotiation, the UN Security Council unanimously approved resolution 1737, imposing a number of sanctions on Iran for refusing to suspend uranium enrichment, aimed at pressuring Tehran to return to negotiations and clarify its nuclear ambitions. The resolution orders all countries to stop supplying Iran with materials and technology that could contribute to its nuclear and missile programs. It also freezes Iranian assets of 10 key companies and 12 individuals related to those programs. Iran's UN Ambassador Javad Zarif denounced the council for imposing sanctions on Iran, whose facilities are under UN safeguards, while doing nothing about Israel, whose prime minister recently confirmed that it is a nuclear power. "A nation is being punished for exercising its inalienable rights" to develop nuclear energy, primarily at the behest of the United States and Israel, "which is apparently being rewarded today for having clandestinely developed and unlawfully possessed nuclear weapons," Zarif said. Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs dismissed the resolution as illegal and invalid and stressed that Iran would continue her uranium enrichment programme under the supervision of the IAEA.

**24 March 2007** The UN Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 1747, imposing further sanctions on Iran, banning export of Iranian weapons and freezing the assets of 15 additional individuals and 13 organisations allegedly involved in Iran's nuclear and missile programmes and connected with the Revolutionary Guards. The Resolution also asks the IAEA to report within 60 days on whether Iran has suspended its efforts at enriching uranium or not. The resolution also stressed the importance of a nuclear-free zone in the

Middle East, in an indirect reference to Israel's nuclear weapons. In a speech after the vote, the Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki made a defiant rebuttal to the Security Council, dismissing the sanctions as “unlawful, unnecessary and unjustifiable” and said they would have no effect. “Iran does not seek confrontation nor does it want anything beyond its inalienable rights,” Mr. Mottaki said. “I can assure you that pressure and intimidation will not change Iranian policy.”

**9 April 2007** On the first anniversary of the announcement that Iran had succeeded to enrich uranium, in ceremonies held in Natanz enrichment plant, the Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad announced that Iran was now enriching uranium on an industrial scale. Addressing government officials, diplomats, and foreign and local journalists at the Natanz site, he declared: “With great pride, I announce that as of today our dear country is among the countries of the world that produces nuclear fuel on an industrial scale.” He stressed that Iran's nuclear programme would be for peaceful purposes. Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said that Iran had injected gas into 3,000 centrifuges.

**21 August 2007** After extensive talks in Tehran between Iran and the UN's nuclear agency, both sides said that they have made progress on Iran's nuclear programme. In July the two sides announced a two-month arrangement aimed at clearing up outstanding questions and giving the agency better access to nuclear sites. After the talks in Tehran both said that they have agreed on a timeline for implementation. Olli Heinonen, deputy director of the International Atomic Energy Agency who was leading the talks on behalf of the IAEA, described the two days of talks as “good, constructive”. Since July's agreement, Iran has allowed the IAEA's inspectors to visit its heavy water research reactor

at Arak, and has been holding talks with a UN technical team on guidelines for inspecting its uranium enrichment plant at Natanz. Chief U.S. delegate to the IAEA Gregory Schulte, however, described Tehran's new openness as "clearly trying to take the attention from its continued development of bomb-making capabilities." In Washington, State Department spokesman Gonzalo Gallegos said the United States believed the Council "must move forward as soon as possible with additional sanctions." But the U.S. stance drew criticism, with some diplomats suggesting that Washington was trying to derail important progress in getting to the bottom of Iran's nuclear programme.

**27 August 2007** The IAEA announced on 27th August that "earlier statements made by Iran [about Plutonium experiments] are consistent with the Agency's findings, and thus this matter is resolved." The agreement further states: "The Agency has been able to verify the non-diversion of the declared nuclear materials at the enrichment facilities in Iran and has therefore concluded that it remains in peaceful use." The Agency also said in its report that Iran was being unusually cooperative and had reached an agreement with the agency to answer questions about an array of past nuclear activities. "This is the first time Iran is ready to discuss all the outstanding issues which triggered the crisis in confidence," Mohamed ElBaradei, the IAEA Director General, said in an interview. "It's a significant step."

**2 November 2007** The representatives of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council - Britain, France, the United States, Russia and China - plus Germany meeting in London to discuss strengthened sanctions against Iran under a third UN resolution failed to reach agreement. US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns said he "was disappointed in China and in Russia" for not agreeing with tougher sanctions on Iran. Shortly before the

meeting, in an interview with the CNN, IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei said that he had seen no indication of any diversion in Iran's peaceful nuclear programme.

**15 November 2007** IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei circulated his latest report on Iran's nuclear activities to the upcoming meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors on the Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and Relevant Provisions of Security Council Resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The report covers developments since Dr. ElBaradei's report of 30 August 2007. The 35-member Board considered the report at its meetings in Vienna on 22 November. Although the report's circulation was restricted, the full text of the report was published by a number of news agencies. The report pointed out that as far as the agency can determine, Iran has told the truth about its nuclear activities and its black market purchases of centrifuge technology used to enrich uranium. However, ElBaradei added that he could not draw a definite conclusion on whether some activities had possible military aspects. He called on Iran to implement the Additional Protocol and to suspend uranium enrichment in keeping with the previous UN Security Council resolutions.

**30 November 2007** Iran's new chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili met with Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, in London. Solana expressed disappointment about the talks, while Jalili described them as positive.

**1 December 2007** The permanent members of the Security Council met in Paris to discuss more punitive resolution against Iran, but failed to reach agreement, a French diplomat said.

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