

Iran Still on the Hunt for Nuclear Weapons Technology Across Germany

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Startling new evidence from German intelligence reports shows the Tehran regime is working to illegally obtain technology and know-how to advance its nuclear weapons and missile programs, despite the 2015 agreement to curb its nuclear program.

A report from the state of Hamburg holds that “there is no evidence of an complete about-face in Iran’s atomic policies in 2016” [after the Islamic Republic signed the JCPOA deal with Western powers in 2015, aimed at restricting Tehran’s nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief]. Iran sought missile carrier technology necessary for its rocket program.”

The report noted that the federal prosecutor filed criminal charges against three German citizens for violations of the export economic law due to the deliveries of 51 special valves to Iranian company that can be used for the Islamic Republic’s sanctioned Arak heavy water reactor. The installation, the intelligence officials wrote, “can be used to develop plutonium for nuclear weapons.” Iran pledged, under the JCPOA deal, to “dismantle the [Arak] facility,” the intelligence report states.

On the proliferation of atomic, biological and chemical weapons, a second report from Baden-Württemberg’s state intelligence agency report states: “Regardless of the number of national and international sanctions and embargoes, countries like Iran, Pakistan and North Korea are making efforts to optimize corresponding technology.”

The 181-page document outlines the technology Iran is seeking: “Products and scientific know-how for the field of developing weapons of mass destruction as well [as] missile technology.”

Iran’s illegal procurement and terrorist activities are cited 49 times in the report

and range from cyberwarfare to espionage to support of the EU- and U.S.-classified terrorist organization Hezbollah.

The Baden-Württemberg report provides detail on Iran's development of ballistic missiles with the aid of a Chinese front company. A Chinese import-export business approached a company in the southern German state that manufactures "complex metal producing machines" to buy equipment.

Berlin's Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control requested an end-use receipt for the Iranian purchase. The intelligence agency informed the engineering company that the merchandise was set to be unlawfully diverted to Iran. "This case shows that so-called indirect-deliveries across third countries is still Iran's procurement strategy," wrote the intelligence officials.

A third intelligence report from last month, from another German state, says that in 2016, "German companies located in Rhineland-Palatinate were contacted for illegal procurement attempts by [Pakistan, North Korea and Iran]. The procurement attempts involved goods that were subject to authorization and approval on account of legal export restrictions and UN embargoes. These goods, for example, could be used for a state's nuclear and missile programs."

Germany's federal intelligence agency (the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution or BfV)—the rough equivalent of the FBI—published its intelligence report on Tuesday. The federal data did not cite Iran's activity in Baden-Württemberg—a state that is home to highly advanced engineering and technological companies.

Nonetheless, the 339-page federal document reports that Iran has not curtailed its missile program: "The amount of evidence found for attempts to acquire proliferation-sensitive material for missile technology/the missile program, which is not covered by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, remained about the same."

The report did find "significantly less evidence of Iranian attempts to acquire proliferation-sensitive material for its nuclear program. As far as the BfV was able to verify such evidence, it did not reveal any violation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action."

The second anniversary of the JCPOA will fall on July 14. Days after the

agreement was signed in 2015, German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel rushed to Tehran with a delegation of business leaders. The U.S. State Department has designated Iran as a top state-sponsor of terrorism.

The Social Democrat Gabriel, who is widely considered to be one of the European leaders most sympathetic toward the Islamic Republic, hosted Iranian leaders in May and June, including Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif in Berlin last month. In May, Gabriel welcomed Hamidreza Torabi, a radical anti-Western Iranian cleric who called for Israel's destruction at the annual pro-Hezbollah al-Quds rally Berlin in 2016.

Germany's foreign ministry invited Torabi to its event titled "The Conference on the Responsibility of Religions for Peace."

Meanwhile, Iran's aggressive cyberwarfare activities were stressed in the reports. According to the federal document, "The Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China and the Islamic Republic of Iran are the major players behind espionage activities that are directed against Germany. Cyberattacks can now also be attributed to presumed government agencies in Iran."

It is clear from all this that the Islamic Republic of Iran remains determined to be able to hit its foes with weapons of mass destruction, either before or after the restrictions supposedly placed on it by the 2015 nuclear agreement expire.

Source: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/iran-still-on-the-hunt-for-nuclear-weapon-s-technology-across-germany/article/2008747>

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