

Iran warns against US ‘intervention’ in IAEA affairs

Iranian officials have urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) not to give in to the pressures from the United States pertaining to Iran’s international nuclear deal reached in 2015.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that any move of the United States to exert pressure on the IAEA over Iran’s nuclear deal is a violation of the accord, local media reported on Saturday.

“We are sure that the IAEA is aware of regulations on its behavior as an international body and will not let its independence and status be undermined by the US pressures,” Zarif was quoted as saying.

On Friday, Nikki Haley, US ambassador to the United Nations, said that the IAEA has the support of the United States to use all the authorities to monitor Iran’s nuclear program.

The Vienna-based UN nuclear watchdog has true experts and professionals and has a very strong verification program in Iran. However, the agency is not allowed to see the whole picture of Tehran’s nuclear program, Haley told reporters at UN headquarters in New York.

Iran has publicly declared that they will not allow access to military sites. But the international agreement in 2015 makes no distinction between military and non-military sites, said Haley after she returned from a trip to the IAEA headquarters in Vienna.

On Saturday, Alireza Rahimi, a member of the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission of Iran’s Parliament, said that US pressure on the IAEA for Iran’s nuclear activities is an “unconventional intervention” in the international body’s affairs, Tehran Times daily reported.

The Islamic republic has informed the agency of its activities in full transparency and within the framework of the Additional Protocol, and all the visits to Iran’s nuclear facilities have been within the framework of the Protocol, Rahimi was

quoted as saying.

“In this regard, Iran has not committed any breach of the regulations of the agency and has made necessary cooperation beyond the agency’s expectations,” Rahimi said.

The Iranian security official said that, however, visits to Iran’s military sites would not be available to the IAEA since the so-called Possible Military Dimensions (PMD) file of Iran has already closed.

Iran’s permanent mission to the IAEA also said in a statement that the objectives and the results of Haley’s trip to Vienna “contradict” the nuclear deal and UNSC Resolution 2231.

The statement said that Iran is abiding by its duties and responsibilities in dealing with the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, IAEA Safeguard Agreements, nuclear deal as well as additional protocol, and under no circumstances let misuse of these rules and regulations for ill-wishing political means of a specific country and reserve the rights to remind all parties to remain committed to their pledges with regards to JCPOA.

Iran expects the IAEA head and its inspectors to perform their tasks regarding the nuclear deal with professionalism and honesty, the statement said.

On Wednesday, Iranian Foreign Minister wrote to IAEA Chief Yukiya Amano and European foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini warning that Haley’s visit is meant to violate the nuclear agreement.

“This visit, with its announced purpose, is not in conformity with several provisions of the JCPOA (or the nuclear deal) and the UNSC Resolution 2231 which deal with the role of the agency and the necessity of upholding its independence and protecting the sensitive information that comes to its knowledge,” he said.

After years of tension with the West, Iran struck a deal with the five world powers of Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States in July 2015 on a comprehensive deal, under which Iran agreed to limit its uranium-enrichment activities in return for the lifting of western and international sanctions.

The IAEA is responsible for the verification of Iran’s compliance with the

agreement through regular access to all Iranian nuclear facilities.

The international agreement is facing serious threats of collapse as tensions mounted between Washington and Tehran recently.

US President Donald Trump, who during his election campaign had called the Iranian nuclear deal a “disaster” and “the worst deal ever negotiated,” approved new sanctions on Tehran this month for its missile program.

Iran accused Washington of breaching the 2015 agreement. But Washington argued that they were not related to the nuclear deal.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani warned that his country could pull out of the deal should Washington impose any new sanctions. Iran’s atomic chief Ali Akbar Salehi warned Tuesday that his country could resume production of highly enriched uranium within five days if the 2015 deal is revoked.

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