

# Israel says Iran has nearly enough uranium for a bomb, as talks remain stuck

Negotiations for the US and Iran to return to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action ended weeks ago.

Iran is close to having enough enriched uranium for a weapon as negotiations to return to the 2015 nuclear deal remain stuck, a diplomatic source said on Wednesday.

The Islamic Republic is very close to having a significant quantity of enriched uranium – meaning enough to produce one bomb and a redline set by Western parties to the talks.

While Iran is not yet enriching uranium to weapons-grade material at 90% purity, larger quantities of uranium enriched to a lower purity can be enough for a bomb. Jerusalem's assessment is that Iran is close to having a significant quantity of uranium enriched to 60%.

Negotiations for the US and Iran to return to the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action ended weeks ago, with Iran making a demand outside of the nuclear agreement, for its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to be removed from the US Foreign Terrorist Organization list.

Washington has not yet officially responded to the demand, but a State Department spokesperson said last week that US President Joe Biden views the IRGC Quds Force as a terrorist organization.

Thus far, none of the Europeans' proposals for a compromise or alternative agreement between the Americans and Iranians have been accepted by the Iranians, who have made removing the IRGC's FTO designation the sine qua non of an agreement, a diplomatic source said.

Foreign Ministry Deputy Director-General Joshua Zarka was in Brussels on Tuesday to meet with the coordinator of Iran nuclear negotiations and EU Political Director Enrique Mora.

“Thank you @enriquemora\_ for a significant and in-depth discussion on Iran, its nuclear program and regional behavior,” Zarka tweeted. “We agreed to continue this conversation in the near future.”

Israeli officials have also asked European interlocutors to ensure that another of Iran’s demands not be met and that the International Atomic Energy Agency’s open investigations of possible military dimensions of Iran’s nuclear program not be closed for political reasons, which could set a dangerous precedent. IAEA Secretary-General Rafael Grossi did not agree to close the probes but the matter is expected to be discussed in an IAEA board meeting in June.

The P5+1 negotiated with the US and Iran for 11 months to return to compliance with the JCPOA, which restricted Tehran’s uranium enrichment to 3.67% and cut almost all of its stockpile of enriched uranium in exchange for gradually lifting sanctions.

The US left the deal in 2018, arguing that Iran lied about its nuclear program and that the agreement was too weak. US President Joe Biden promised to return to it.

Israel opposed the original deal and its revival, pointing out that most of its limitations on Iran’s nuclear activities expire at the end of 2025. Further, Jerusalem notes that the agreement neither restricts Iran’s malign actions in the region nor its ballistic missile program, while lifting sanctions would lead to a major cash influx for terrorism, proxy warfare and weapons.

In recent months, the US, EU and E3 – Britain, France and Germany – have warned that little time remains before the deal’s nonproliferation benefits will become irrelevant, as Iran continues to violate the JCPOA.

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