

Iran: Sanctions against Iran are also Sanctions against Russia

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If Russia were to vote in favor of a draft UN Security Council resolution on sanctions against Iran, in its current form, it would be backing sanctions against itself, Iran's top nuclear negotiator said Thursday.

Russia rejected a draft resolution drawn up by European powers two weeks ago, and has added its own amendments, saying the sanctions should be limited to measures to prevent Tehran from developing nuclear weapons, and conditions should be provided for continuing negotiations.

Ali Larijani, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said: "If Russia votes for the UN Security Council resolution in its current version, the country will be voting for sanctions against itself."

Larinjani will arrive in Moscow on Friday for talks on the issue in the Russian Security Council and Foreign Ministry.

The Iranian official said, "Although we pursue our own interests, Russia and Iran have similar positions on Iran's nuclear program."

Russia, which has consistently supported Iran's drive to develop nuclear power despite international fears that the program has military goals, is building a \$1 bln nuclear power plant in the Islamic Republic.

The initial set of sanctions drawn up by the EU-3 - Britain, France and Germany - include banning sales of missile and nuclear technologies to Iran, freezing its military bank accounts, and imposing visa restrictions on officials linked to the nuclear industry.

The Bushehr NPP would not be banned under the EU-3 draft resolution, but nuclear fuel supplies to the plant would be restricted, a proposal that Russia wants removed from the document.

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