

Iran's Nuclear Program: IAEA Desperate to Find "Smoking Gun"

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In its latest report, the IAEA once again repeats the standard accusations about Iran "not providing the necessary cooperation"[1]. Following from this, the agency claims to be "unable to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities." [2]

It is not surprising that mainstream media is gleefully jumping on these claims. Among the usual suspects is the *New York Times*, pointing out that over the summer Iran has "doubled the number of centrifuges installed deep under a mountain near Qum." [3]

However, this process is nothing that Iran hadn't already declared almost three years ago. As we can see in an IAEA report from November 2009:

"The IAEA verified Iran's declaration that the facility was designed to hold 16 cascades of approximately 3000 P-1 centrifuges, though Iranian officials noted that the plant could be reconfigured to hold centrifuges of a more advanced design should such a decision be taken. Iran stated that the facility will be operational in 2011." [4]

As the *New York Times* states, the current number of Fordow-based centrifuges is 2140, not yet the estimated 3000 from the 2009 report. [5]

In addition, the repeated claim of Iran still having an increased stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium can hardly be described as an illegal act. 20 percent enrichment is needed in order to build isotopes serving medical purposes. Gareth Porter points out that Iran has actually been quite cooperative on this matter as well:

"Iran has actually reduced the amount of 20-percent enriched uranium available for any possible breakout to weapons grade enrichment over the last three months rather than increasing it." [6]

As we see from the IAEA report, all the enrichment taking place in the facilities of Fordow as well as Natanz is being carried out under the use of the so-called IR-1 type of centrifuges. This type of centrifuge is outdated (from the 1970s) and is inefficient for high enrichment of uranium. By using this type of method "you lose a lot of material", according to Olli Heinonen, former deputy director of the IAEA. [7] In fact, Pakistan replaced these systems

back in the 80s in order to develop their own nuclear weapons:

“This is why A.Q. Khan [Pakistani nuclear scientist and founder of the country’s atomic bomb project] in the 1980s himself gave up the P-1 design and developed the more efficient centrifuges used today by Pakistan.”[8]

Christina Walrond, a research analyst for the Institute for Science and International Security, referred to the outdated centrifuges as well. According to *The Daily Beast*:

“It is interesting to note they have not yet deployed any of the advanced machines despite having worked on them for a long time.”[9]

Might there be a chance that Iran has not yet installed advanced machines in order not to give the US/Israeli warmongering establishment any pretense that they could use as “justification” for their plans to attack? Obviously the factions pushing towards an attack on Iran do not leave any option unexplored when it comes to the creation of accusations, absurd as they may be.

In addition, unlike Israel, Iran has joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This treaty does not allow the creation of nuclear weapons, and enrichment for peaceful purposes is legal. The watchdogs so far have not found any evidence for non-peaceful nuclear enrichment in Iran, and they have permanent access to the country’s nuclear facilities. Despite that, the IAEA demands access to the military site of Parchin. However meeting this kind of requirement is not mandatory, according to the NPT. Iranian MP Jalil Jafari explains the refusal by Iran’s government for IAEA inspections in Parchin as follows:

“In one of the clauses of the report, the issue of inspecting the Parchin site has been stated once again. But the point that should be taken into consideration is that no nuclear activity has been carried out at the Parchin site and the Parchin site is a military site. And permission to inspect military centers has not been granted to IAEA inspectors under any of the articles of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.”[10]

Prior to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, members of the Bush administration at least made an effort to invent fake evidence on the alleged existence of Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction. This time, against Iran, accusations without any basis seem to be sufficient in order justify a pro-war policy.

Notes

[1] http://www.isisnucleariran.org/assets/pdf/Iran_report_-_August_30_2012.pdf.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/31/world/middleeast/nuclear-inspectors-confirm-iranian-progress.html>.

[4] <http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Documents/Board/2009/gov2009-74.pdf>.

[5] <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/31/world/middleeast/nuclear-inspectors-confirm-iranian-progress.html>.

[6] <http://therealnews.com/t2/component/content/article/92-more-blog-posts-from-gareth-porter/1237-iaea-report-shows-iran-reduced-its-breakout-capacity>.

[7] <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/08/30/the-silver-lining-on-iran-s-nukes.html>.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] <http://www.tehrantimes.com/component/content/article/101155>.

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