

Israel threatens Iran

By [Global Research](#)

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Israel urges world to be firm on Iran nuclear aims

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JERUSALEM (Reuters) – Israel urged world powers on Friday to press Iran to end its nuclear programme, a day after the United Nations nuclear watchdog said Tehran, an arch-foe of the Jewish state, had expanded uranium enrichment.

An Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman made the remarks after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued a report saying Iran had made important strides towards transparency about its nuclear activity but had yet to resolve key questions.

“It is clear that Iran continues to openly violate its obligations under two unanimous Security Council resolutions and that this continued violation must have consequences,” Mark Regev said.

“Israel believes it is incumbent upon the international community to send a crystal clear message to the leadership in Tehran that their nuclear programme is unacceptable and must cease immediately.”

Israel is widely believed to possess the only atomic arsenal in the Middle East. It has not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) so its facilities are not open to inspection by the IAEA.

Avigdor Lieberman, a right-wing minister in Prime Minister Ehud Olmert’s coalition, called Thursday’s IAEA report “unacceptable” and accused the Egyptian head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog, Mohammed Elbaradei, of bias towards Iran.

“This is further proof of Elbaradei’s one-sided and pro-Iranian position,” the Jerusalem Post quoted him as saying.

Israeli political and defence sources told Reuters on Thursday that the Jewish state is quietly preparing for the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran despite public pledges to deny Tehran the means to threaten Israel’s existence.

Tehran denies seeking atomic weapons but its open hostility to Israel and speculation about Israeli or U.S. pre-emptive strikes on its nuclear sites have inflamed regional concerns.

Olmert has endorsed U.S.-led efforts to curb Iran’s atomic ambitions through U.N. Security Council sanctions. He has also hinted that Israel, which bombed Iraq’s nuclear reactor in 1981, could similarly hit Iran if diplomacy was deemed a dead end.

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