

Saudis Urge Persian Gulf Security Pact With Iran

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A senior Saudi official has called for a security pact between Iran and the Persian Gulf states amid Western efforts to isolate Tehran.

Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz said in a statement that the Persian Gulf region must be free of a 'catastrophic conflict and arms race' and instead work toward 'huge prospects for development and progress', Gulf News reported on Tuesday.

Prince Abdul Aziz, the chief representative of the Persian Gulf Arab littoral states for the UN Development organization, proposed that the agreement obligate all Persian Gulf states not to allow their soil, territorial waters and airspace to be used for launching an attack on Iran.

The Saudi official further suggested that the agreement entail regional and international guarantees to ensure that nuclear technology is only used for peaceful purposes and that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has full access to all regional nuclear reactors.

The proposal comes as British Foreign Secretary David Miliband on Monday called for Arab support in isolating Iran.

"A nuclear-armed Iran would be a decisive blow against those seeking to promote pragmatic and peaceful solutions to the region's problems," Miliband said at the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research Studies in Abu Dhabi.

He called on Persian Gulf littoral states to step up pressure and impose financial restriction on Iran.

The US and its allies accuse Iran, a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), of seeking nuclear weapons and have threatened the country with military action.

Iran says its activities are directed at the civilian applications of the technology such as generating electricity for its national grid, which is currently suffering from major shortages.

The UN nuclear watchdog in its latest report confirmed that the agency 'has been able to continue to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material in Iran'.

The report also declared that there has been 'no indication' of Iran conducting nuclear reprocessing activities.

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