

US Dismisses Iran's Offer to Coordinate Return to Nuclear Deal

State Department says the US will consult with allies before talking to Iran

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The US State Department dismissed an idea floated by Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, [who suggested the EU could help coordinate](#) the actions needed to be taken by the US and Iran to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

When asked about Zarif's offer, [State Department spokesman Ned Price said](#) there are “many steps” the US has to take before engaging “directly with Iran” and before the US is willing to “entertain any sort of proposal.”

Price restated the Biden administration's demand for Iran to return to commitments it agreed to when the JCPOA was negotiated. Iran's argument against this demand is that since the US violated the deal, it is on Washington to return to compliance.

Price also stressed the need for the administration to consult with US allies, partners, and Congress on Iran before going forward.

A US official [speaking to Reuters](#) on the condition of anonymity said Price's comments should not be taken as a “rejection” of Zarif's proposal. The official said the US has not “begun negotiating with Iran, or with anyone else, because our priority is to consult” with allies and partners.

The focus on consulting with other countries before even talking to Iran shows the Biden administration is in no hurry to revive the JCPOA and give Iran sanctions relief. Most regional US partners, like Israel and Saudi Arabia, are strongly opposed to the JCPOA.

European signatories to the deal are also signaling opposition to reviving the JCPOA as it was agreed to in 2015. French President Emmanuel Macron called for new, “strict” nuclear negotiations with Iran that include regional countries like Saudi Arabia, [something Iran rejected](#).

Zarif offered the idea to coordinate a return to the JCPOA in an interview with *CNN* on Monday. He also said that [the time for a possible return to the deal is “not unlimited,”](#) a sign of Tehran's frustration with the Biden administration's failure to act.

As per a law passed by Iran's parliament in the wake of the assassination of Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakrizadeh, if sanctions are not lifted by February 21st, IAEA inspections on Iran's nuclear program [will be slightly restricted](#).

"Iran has the strictest IAEA inspection mechanism anywhere in the world," Zarif said. "We will be limiting that, but there is a very easy way of addressing it, and that is for the United States to come back into compliance before that date."

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