

Iran criticizes hypocrisy of Security Council over Israeli WMDs

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Iran denounced UN sanctions imposed on its nuclear program, accusing the Security Council of double standards for ignoring Israel's recent admission of its nuclear capabilities.

Speaking after the adoption of a Security Council resolution aimed at pressuring Tehran to suspend its uranium enrichment program, Iran's UN ambassador on Saturday called the sanctions illegal and accused Europe and the United States of trying to prevent Iran from pursuing peaceful nuclear technology.

"A nation is being punished for exercising its inalienable rights," Javad Zarif said in a speech after the vote, accusing the Council of acting at the "behest of a dangerous regime with aggression and war crimes as its signature brand of behavior," referring to Israel.

Earlier this month, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert appeared to abandon Israel's longstanding policy of ambiguity on nuclear weapons when he listed Israel among countries that possess them.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry was equally strong in its reaction to the council vote, declaring that the government will defy the resolution and continue enriching uranium.

"Iran considers the new UN Security Council resolution ... an extralegal act outside the frame of its responsibilities and against the UN Charter," the statement said.

"The Iranian nation, relying on its national capabilities and within the framework of its rights stipulated in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, will continue its peaceful nuclear activities," it added.

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