

Psychological Warfare and the P5+1 Iran Nuclear Talks

90% of Media Speculations Not True, Iran Negotiator

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Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister and senior negotiator Seyed Abbas Araqchi blasted the western media for attempts to wage psychological war amid nuclear talks between Tehran and the world powers, and underlined that 90% of the media speculations are wrong.

There is a hot market of rumors in Vienna, but 90% of the discussions raised by the western media are untrue and stated in pursuit of special objectives and for psychological warfare," Araqchi told reporters in Vienna on Thursday.

He said different media from across the world are present in Vienna and each one releases reports based on its own special view points, and each one runs some psychological operation to push the negotiations to its desired direction.

"The honorable Iranian nation shouldn't pay attention to such speculations and God willing, when the job is done through its correct path, it will be announced," Araqchi said.



Iran and the 6 world powers are in the final phase of their last round of talks in Vienna to draft a final deal to end their over-a-decade-long nuclear standoff.

Araqchi said on Tuesday his country and the six world powers won't have a deal as long as the US is adamant in its decision to maintain the sanctions policy.

Speaking after days of marathon talks with negotiators from the six world powers, Araqchi said the US intends to strike a deal with Iran without giving up its sanctions policy despite earlier agreements between Tehran and the Group 5+1 (the US, Russia, China, Britain and France plus Germany) in Geneva and Lausanne that both envisaged removal of all sanctions under a final deal.

"We are now at a highly sensitive stage and we are trying to narrow down the gap and reach an agreement if possible," he said.

Araqchi, who is Iran's deputy foreign minister, said his country "wants all sanctions removed. The US cannot keep the sanctions structure and reach a deal with Iran".

He mentioned that the US wants to maintain a part of the sanctions even after endorsing a

final agreement with Tehran, stressing that Tehran would never agree to such terms.

“The West should give up the sanctions regime completely if it is willing to strike a deal with Iran,” he stressed, reiterating that the opposite party to the talks in the Austrian capital “needs to show it is ready to change its approach towards its favored-sanctions policy”.

Yet, the senior negotiator said Iran and the world powers have come into terms with each other over the “removal of all financial and economic sanctions on the day that a final deal is signed”.

“But there are still differences over other sanctions, including the arms embargoes against Iran.”

Araqchi said the arms embargoes have been a blessing in disguise for Iran as they have encouraged the country to stand on its own and achieve extraordinary growth in its defense and weapons production industries.

“Thus,” he said, “the arms embargoes themselves are not so much important to Iran, but the point is that no sanctions should be kept if there is to be a deal with Iran” as agreed by the US under the initial interim deal struck between Iran and the sextet in Geneva in November 2013 and the Lausanne statement agreed in the Swiss city in April, 2015.

The deputy chief negotiator further pointed out that there have only remained “7 to 10 issues of difference between Iran and the G5+1, and explained that “only 2 or 3 of them are fundamental and important”.

“The rest are minor technical issues” which are not that much important, he continued.

“What matters is that the differences have reduced now,” he said.

“The main text of the draft deal is almost complete,” Araqchi said, and explained, “There are only a few more paragraphs in the main text that have been left open and need political decision-making by the ministers.”

Asked about the degree of progress in drafting the five annexations to the main text, the negotiator said the “sanctions annex is 96% complete, with 2 to 3 small issues left undecided”.

He said the same thing is true with another annex that focuses on nuclear cooperation between Iran and the powers.

Araqchi said negotiations are still underway over the timetable for implementing each phase of the deal, and explained that this third annex cannot be accomplished until all other annexations and the main text are fully drafted, “because the date for exercising a move can be specified only when the move itself is approved”.

Araqchi said Iran does not see any deadline for the talks. “We are ready to continue the talks as long as needed.”

“Deadlines are no sacred sanctuary,” he said, and added, “Others (the US) might have specified a deadline for themselves, but we are ready to stay here as long as it takes.”

“Good Agreement is the only thing that matters to us,” he said.

Yet, the Iranian deputy top negotiator underscored that there won't be a several-month or long-term extension of the talks.

Separately, another negotiator, who asked to remain unnamed, said that Iran has offered “constructive proposals” to resolve the remaining differences with the US-led West.

The Geneva interim deal envisaged the removal of all the UN and unilateral US and EU sanctions against Iran under a final comprehensive deal.

Also, in a framework agreement approved by the six powers and Iran in April known as the Lausanne Statement, the seven nations agreed that a final deal would include removal of all sanctions as well as a UN Security Council resolution which would call all the five UNSC sanctions resolutions imposed against Iran's nuclear activities as “null and void”.

The first two UNSC resolutions boycotted export of military, specially missile, hardware and software to Iran, a sanction that – along with all the other embargoes imposed against Iran under the five UNSC resolutions – would be automatically removed under the new UNSC resolution that, according to the Lausanne framework agreement, should be issued on the same day that the final deal is endorsed.

Hence, the debate over the removal of the UN Security Council arms embargoes against Iran means US defiance of both agreements.

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