

Tehran complains to UN about Clinton's 'obliterate Iran' remarks

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01/05/2008 15:28 MOSCOW, May 1 (RIA Novosti) - Iran has sent a letter of complaint to the UN over comments made last week by Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton that the U.S. would be able to 'totally obliterate' the Islamic Republic if it were to ever launch a nuclear strike on Israel.

Clinton made the remarks in a televised interview last week. Responding to a question about her policy as president should Iran ever attack Israel with nuclear weapons she said, "I want the Iranians to know, if I'm the president, we will attack Iran." She added that, "Whatever stage they might be in their nuclear weapons program...we would be able to totally obliterate them."

She went on to say that, "That's a terrible thing to say, but those people who run Iran need to understand that, because that perhaps will deter them from doing something that would be reckless, foolish and tragic."

In a letter sent to the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon late on Wednesday, Iran's deputy ambassador to the UN claimed that Clinton had "under erroneous and false pretexts threatened to use force against the Islamic Republic of Iran." It also condemned her words as "provocative and irresponsible," calling them "a flagrant violation" of the UN Charter.

Iran has so far defied three rounds of relatively mild United Nations Security Council sanctions over its nuclear program. Many Western nations suspect that the Islamic Republic is using the program as cover to build a nuclear weapon. Tehran insists however that it needs the nuclear program for electric power generation.

Clinton's rival for the Democrat nomination, Barack Obama, had earlier commented on Clinton's choice of words by saying that, "One of the things that we've seen over the last several years is a bunch of talk using words like 'obliterate'. It doesn't actually produce good results. And so I'm not interested in saber-rattling."

A senior Russian government official said on Wednesday after talks with the Iranian leadership in Tehran that the Islamic Republic was not developing nuclear weapons.

"We believe that Iran is currently not involved in nuclear research for military purposes, but we are certain that our opinion must be shared by all countries involved in the resolution of this [Iranian uranium enrichment] problem," Valentin Sobolev, the acting head of Russia's Security Council, said.

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