

Iran and its nuclear programme

European Parliament resolution of 2 February 2012 on Iran and its nuclear programme

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran,
 - having regard to the statement of 22 January 2011 by the EU High Representative on behalf of the E3+3 countries following the talks held with Iran in Istanbul on 21 and 22 January 2011,
 - having regard to letter of 21 October 2011 from the EU High Representative to the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Saeed Jalili,
 - having regard to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General's report of 8 November 2011 on implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
 - having regard to the IAEA Board of Governors resolution of 18 November 2011,
 - having regard to the EU High Representative's statement of 18 November 2011 on the IAEA Board of Governors resolution,
 - having regard to the EU High Representative's statement of 29 November 2011 on the attack on and pillaging of the UK Embassy in Tehran,
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of 9 December 2011,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on Iran of 14 November 2011, 1 December 2011 and 23 January 2012,
 - having regard to Iran's commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to the need for all States Party to that Treaty to comply fully with all their obligations, and to the right of States Party, in conformity with Articles I and II of that Treaty, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination,
 - having regard to the recommendation by its Committee on Foreign Affairs to the Council on a consistent policy towards regimes against which the EU applies restrictive measures, when their leaders exercise their personal and commercial interests within EU borders,
 - having regard to Rule 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Iran has, by ratifying the NPT, fore sworn the acquisition of nuclear weapons and is legally bound to declare all its nuclear activities, including nuclear material, and place them under IAEA safeguards;

- B. whereas Iran has still to comply with its obligations under all relevant UN Security Council UNSC resolutions, the most recent of which is Resolution 1929 (2010), and all the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors, which specify full and unconditional access by the Agency to all sites, equipment, people and documents that would allow for proper inspection of Iran's nuclear programme and would enable the IAEA to fulfil its role as nuclear watchdog;
 - C. whereas the November 2011 IAEA report expresses 'serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme' because 'some activities' 'relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device' 'may still be ongoing';
 - D. whereas on 27 December 2011 the Iranian Vice-President, Reza Rahimi, threatened to use military force to close the Strait of Hormuz if sanctions were imposed on Iran's oil exports; whereas there has been a further deployment of European and US navy forces to counteract this threat and the military status has risen to 'high alert' throughout the region;
 - E. whereas, in breach of its obligations under the NPT, Iran has clandestinely constructed an enrichment facility at Fordow close to Qom and only notified the IAEA of its existence long after its construction started; whereas this secretive approach further undermines trust in Iranian assurances about the purely civil character of its nuclear programme;
 - F. whereas on 5 January 2012 the Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutoğlu, conveyed an invitation from the EU High Representative to Iran to resume nuclear talks with the E3+3; whereas during the visit of the Turkish Foreign Minister the Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Salehi, stated that Iran is ready to resume talks;
 - G. whereas the EU Foreign Ministers have agreed additional restrictive measures against Iran in the energy sector, including a phased embargo of Iranian crude oil imports to the EU, in the financial sector, including against the Central Bank of Iran, and in the transport sector, as well as further export restrictions, notably on gold and on sensitive dual-use goods and technology, and additional designations of persons and entities, including several controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC);
 - H. whereas the Council again reaffirmed its commitment to work for a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue in accordance with the dual-track approach;
 - I. whereas the Council reaffirmed that the objective of the EU remains to achieve a comprehensive and long-term settlement which would build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme, while respecting Iran's legitimate right to peaceful use of nuclear energy in conformity with the NPT;
- 1. Reiterates that the proliferation risks in connection with the Iranian nuclear programme remain a source of serious concern to the EU and is deeply worried by the IAEA report's statement that credible information 'indicates that Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device';
 - 2. Deeply deplores Iran's acceleration of enrichment activities in violation of six UNSC resolutions and eleven IAEA Board resolutions, as reflected in the recent start of operations of enrichment of uranium to a level of up to 20% in the underground facility in Fordow near Qom;

3. Reiterates its call on Iran to stop developing enrichment technology which goes far beyond the need to ensure secure fuel supplies for civil purposes, with disregard for international concerns over clandestine military intentions;
4. Supports the additional restrictive measures adopted by the Council against Iran in the energy and financial sectors, as well as additional sanctions against persons and entities, including several controlled by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC); recognises that sanctions and diplomatic measures could be helpful in bringing the Iranian government to accept and respect UN resolutions avoiding further escalation; notes that sanctions are not an end in themselves and that to date the EU sanctions against Iran have not achieved their stated goals;
5. Reiterates the EU's long-held position that the outstanding issues with Iran over its nuclear programme must be solved peacefully and that there is no military solution to the conflict;
6. Notes that there will be a phased embargo on Iranian crude oil exports to the EU and that contracts already concluded may still be executed until 1 July 2012; calls on the Council to decide on measures to offset the impact of the embargo on the various EU Member States;
7. Asks for sanctions or restrictive measures to be targeted at and proportionate to the objective pursued and aimed at influencing mainly the accountable elites of repressive or criminal regimes and the responsible non-state actors of failed states and minimising, as far as possible, the adverse impact on civilian populations, especially the most vulnerable groups;
8. Supports the Council's commitment to work for a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue in accordance with the dual-track approach and the EU's objective of achieving a comprehensive and long-term settlement; calls on the Iranian authorities to reply positively to the offer for substantial negotiations as set out in the EU High Representative's letter of 21 October 2011, by clearly demonstrating its readiness to engage in confidence building measures and, without preconditions, in meaningful talks to seriously address existing concerns on the nuclear issue;
9. Renews its call on the Iranian authorities to fulfil Iran's obligations under the NPT; calls on the Iranian Parliament and Government to ratify and implement the Additional Protocol and to fully implement the provisions of the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement;
10. Welcomes the fact that Iran agreed to receive a high-ranking IAEA delegation for inspections, headed by Deputy Director General Herman Nackaerts, from 29 to 31 January 2012;
11. Strongly urges Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA on all outstanding issues, particularly those which give rise to concerns about the possible military dimensions of the Iranian nuclear programme, including by providing full and unconditional access without delay to all sites, equipment, persons and documents requested by the IAEA, and not to object to the appointment of inspectors; stresses the importance of ensuring that the IAEA has all necessary resources and authority for the fulfilment of its work in Iran;
12. Supports the efforts of the IAEA to monitor the development of Iran's nuclear programme in order to provide the international community with an accurate overview of the situation;

13. Recognises that the dialogue and cooperation with Turkey can play an important role with a view to reaching a settlement;
14. Strongly condemns the Iranian threat of a closure of the Strait of Hormuz; urges the Iranian authorities not to block the Strait of Hormuz; believes that such an act could lead to a regional conflict and trigger retaliation by the international community;
15. Regrets the ongoing refusal of China and Russia in the UN Security Council to support sanctions against Iran; calls on Russia to cease providing assistance with Iran's nuclear development until Iran has fully complied with its obligations under relevant UN resolutions;
16. Strongly condemns the attack on the UK Embassy in Tehran on 29 November 2011; calls on the Iranian Government to fulfil its international obligations, including the Vienna Convention, to protect diplomats and embassies;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States, the Government and Parliament of Turkey, the Government and Parliament of the People's Republic of China, the Government and Parliament of the Russian Federation, the Director General of the IAEA, the Secretary-General of the UN, the Office of the Supreme Leader and the Government and Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran.