Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 12612
10 May 2011

Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an effective international response

Information report[1]
Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
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Summary

Iran has been developing a nuclear programme which raises serious concerns among the international community as to its real purpose. Many believe that Iran aims to acquire the capacity to make nuclear weapons. A nuclear Iran would be a nightmare for the whole international community.

The Parliamentary Assembly previously adopted two resolutions dealing with the Iranian nuclear programme: Resolution 1436 (2005) and Resolution 1567 (2007). The key elements contained in those resolutions are still valid today. This information report discusses the latest developments related to the issue, analyses policy options available, and reflects on what could be done at parliamentary level to engage in a dialogue on this and other issues based on Resolution 1567 (2007).

So far, the joint efforts of the international community to oblige Iran, through political and diplomatic means, to comply with the requirements of the United Nations Security Council resolutions have not brought about results. The strategy pursued until now, with priority given to coercive action, may need to be rethought, giving more emphasis to confidence building. One of the main and most urgent tasks for the international community is to ensure that Iran's co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency is completely restored, and that the Agency is able to fully carry out its tasks in that country.

1. Introduction

1. In May 2009, a motion for a resolution "Iran's nuclear program: the need for an effective international response" was tabled in the Parliamentary Assembly by our former colleague and Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee, Mr Göran Lindblad. The motion suggested, *inter alia*, that "The Assembly ought to gather specific data on the recent developments in Iran and on the nature of the threat that it poses. The Assembly will take into account the time element and the increased urgency of the matter. The Assembly should consider adopting additional effective measures vis-à-vis this threat".

2. I was appointed rapporteur in June 2009. In October 2009, the committee authorised me to carry out fact-finding visits to Vienna (International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Headquarters) and Moscow, and endorsed my request for fact-finding visits to Iran and Israel, subject to authorisation by the Bureau. The Bureau, however, did not authorise these latter visits.

3. Following my contacts in Vienna and Moscow in June 2010, I informed the committee of the state of play on the Iranian nuclear file, and asked anew to be allowed to travel to Iran and Israel. This new request was also turned down by the Bureau. However, I am planning to visit Tehran in mid-April with a delegation of the Polish Parliament.

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4. It is worth recalling that the Assembly previously adopted two resolutions dealing with the Iranian nuclear programme, both prepared by the former Chairpersons of the Political Affairs Committee: Mr Ateş in April 2005 (Resolution 1436 (2005))[2] and Mr Lindblad in June 2007 (Resolution 1567 (2007)).[3] The key proposals contained in those resolutions are still valid today.

5. Both reports contain basic information on the Iranian nuclear issue, and I feel no need to repeat here the data gathered and the analysis made by my predecessors. I will therefore provide information on the latest developments related to the issue (from June 2007 until now), analyse policy options available, and reflect on what could be done at our level.

6. From the outset, I wish to stress, as my predecessors did, that in my view, it is not the Assembly's role to assess whether or not Iran's nuclear programme has a military dimension. This task is, and must remain, with the IAEA, which is in charge of monitoring the compliance of states parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) with the requirements of the latter.

7. Moreover, bearing in mind the complexity of the Iranian nuclear issue, I must admit that the Assembly and the Council of Europe in general lack the expertise and the necessary competence to deal with the technical and legal aspects of the problem in a credible manner, let alone to seek to replace the bodies in charge of this matter.

8. At the same time, as the Iranian nuclear issue continues to be in the focus of the international community, and a source of concern for European public opinion, the Assembly, as a pan-European parliamentary forum, is fully within its remit to follow these events, and to envisage political action, in particular at the parliamentary level, aimed at contributing to the solution of Iran's nuclear problem.

9. I intentionally keep the issues of democracy and human rights in Iran out of the scope of my report, even if one cannot overlook the fact that the sensitivity of the Iranian nuclear issue for the international community is to a great extent linked to the nature of Tehran's regime. I recall in this connection that this aspect was reflected upon in the previous resolutions of the Assembly, including Resolution 1678 (2009) on the situation in Iran, adopted after the events following the June 2009 presidential election in that country.

2. Key developments since June 2007

10. In February 2008, Iran started using new, domestically developed "IR-2" centrifuges, which can produce enriched uranium at more than double the rate of the older "P-1" machines. Several months later, it was announced that Iran had considerably increased the number of centrifuges at the Natanz enrichment plant.

11. In March 2008, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1803 which extended previously introduced sanctions to additional Iranian persons and entities, imposed travel restrictions on sanctioned persons, and barred exports of nuclear and missile related dual-use goods to Iran. Iran immediately rejected the resolution and refused to comply with it, announcing that it would no longer negotiate with the "big powers". In September of that year, a new Resolution 1835 was adopted in order to reaffirm the previous four.

12. In July 2008, a new attempt at talks between Iran and the "5+1 Group" (five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany) took place in Geneva. That was the first time that the American and Iranian officials had held face-to-face talks about Iran's nuclear programme. On this occasion, the so-called "freeze-for-freeze" offer was made to Iranians, under which a freeze of Iran's uranium enrichment programme would be matched by a pledge not to strengthen sanctions on Iran. A few days later, the Iranian President refused to halt the uranium enrichment. As a consequence, the European Union introduced new additional sanctions on Iran.

13. In February 2009, the IAEA announced that Iran had produced about 1 000 kilograms of low-enriched uranium (4%-grade uranium), which would be enough to make one nuclear device if enriched to over 90% (weapon-enriched uranium). However, the IAEA acknowledged that, at the Natanz enrichment plant, Iran lacked the technology to make weapon-enriched uranium.

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2. See Resolution 1436 (2005) "Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an international response" (see Doc. 10496, report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Ateş).

3. Resolution 1567 (2007) "Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an international response" (see Doc. 11294, report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Lindblad).

14. According to information made public at the beginning of September 2009, American intelligence agencies had concluded that Iran had produced enough nuclear fuel to rapidly develop a nuclear weapon, but had decided not to take the critical last steps to actually make a bomb.

15. On 21 September 2009, Iran informed the IAEA that it was constructing a second enrichment facility at an underground location at Fordo, near the city of Qom. On 25 September, the United States, the United Kingdom and France criticised Iran for once again concealing a nuclear facility from the IAEA. The United States said that the facility, which was still months from completion, was too small to be useful for a civil programme but could produce enough highly enriched uranium to make one bomb per year. American officials said that they had been tracking the project for years, but that the President decided to make public the American findings after Iran discovered that the secrecy surrounding the project had been breached.

16. On 1 October 2009, new talks were held between Iran and the “5+1 Group”. At the talks, Iran agreed in principle to export most of its low-enriched uranium for processing abroad, in exchange for high-enriched uranium (20%-grade) needed for the operation of the Tehran research reactor. It refused, however, to stop its own enrichment activities.

17. Following these rather contradictory but still promising signals, in an effort to find a compromise between Iran's stated need for fuel for its nuclear reactor and international concerns about the Iranian nuclear programme, the United States, France and Russia proposed an IAEA-drafted agreement on uranium exchange. Under that deal, Iran would export to Russia about 1 200 kilograms of low-enriched uranium (75% of its current stockpile), which would be transformed into high-enriched uranium and then sent to France for re-processing into fuel rods for medical use in Iran’s old, American-built research reactor at the University of Tehran.

18. According to the Iranians, there was a side deal attached to the main agreement, which included a proposed direct transfer of American nuclear technology to Iran, including "control, instrument and safety equipment" for the research reactor at Tehran University.

19. However, shortly after the agreement was announced, Iran began raising objections and backtracking. On 11 November 2009, the Iranians called off the proposed deal, arguing that they “could not trust the West”.

20. On 2 February 2010, the President of Iran again accepted the possibility of sending Iranian low-enriched uranium for re-processing abroad. Almost simultaneously, on 9 February 2010, the Iranians announced that the Natanz nuclear facility had begun processing uranium to a purity level of 20% to provide fuel for the Tehran research reactor to produce medical isotopes.

21. In May 2010, the IAEA issued a report that Iran had declared production of over 2.5 metric tons of low-enriched uranium, which would be enough if further enriched to make two nuclear weapons, and that Iran had refused to answer inspectors’ questions on a variety of activities, including what the agency called the “possible military dimensions” of Iran's nuclear programme.

22. On 17 May 2010, Iran, Brazil and Turkey issued a joint declaration "in which Iran agreed to send low-enriched uranium to Turkey in return for enriched fuel for a research reactor." Iran reported the joint declaration to the IAEA on 24 May 2010, asking it to inform the "Vienna Group" (the United States, Russia, France and the IAEA), in order to conclude a written agreement and make contingent arrangements between Iran and the Vienna Group.

23. However, after having carefully studied the proposed deal, the Vienna Group concluded that the new proposal fell short of addressing the main concerns, and in particular did not foresee that Iran would stop its own enrichment activities. Moreover, the Group felt that the deal was an attempt by the Iranians to avoid new sanctions which were under consideration at the United Nations Security Council.

24. On 9 June 2010, a new United Nations Security Council Resolution 1929 was adopted, with 12 countries in favour, Turkey and Brazil against, and Lebanon who abstained. This was the fourth “sanctions” resolution, which stated once again that Iran had failed to meet the requirements of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council Resolutions as regards its nuclear programme. The resolution further extended sanctions against Iranian entities and physical persons involved in uranium enrichment and missile technologies. In addition, export to Iran of seven categories of conventional weapons is now forbidden.

25. On the other hand, the resolution contains, in Annex IV, proposals for co-operation with Iran in a number of areas, including nuclear energy and some other high-technology fields, which would be implemented if Iran complies with its obligations and the United Nations Security Council demands.

26. As on previous occasions, Iran flatly rejected the resolution. However, later on, the Iranian authorities sent mixed signals, indicating their readiness to continue dialogue under some conditions, but at the same time worsening conditions of Iranian co-operation with the IAEA.

27. In July 2010, Iran barred two IAEA inspectors from entering the country. The IAEA rejected Iran's reasons for the ban and said it fully supported the inspectors, which Tehran had accused of reporting wrongly that some nuclear equipment was missing.

28. During the summer of 2010, the European Union and the United States adopted their own, tougher sanctions on Iran. Those sanctions went beyond those agreed in the United Nations Security Council resolution, but were only binding on European Union members and the United States.

29. The American Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, recently stated that the United States is considering imposing additional unilateral sanctions against Iran. She also said that, due to sanctions, the Iranian nuclear programme had suffered considerable delays. However, some experts[4] believe that those delays result from the computer virus STUXNET that was introduced into the computer systems of the enrichment plant in Natanz. According to these reports, this virus was created and tested by the Israelis at their nuclear facility in Dimona, and then implanted in Natanz.

30. According to the latest IAEA report, Iran continues not to implement the requirements contained in the United Nations Security Council resolutions. It continues its enrichment activities in Natanz and probably in Qom. It also continues with the construction of the heavy water reactor in Arak.

31. Contacts between Iranians and representatives of the international community resumed in December 2010 in Geneva and in January 2011 in Istanbul, but brought no results.

32. In January 2011, Iran made an attempt to show “openness”, and invited some foreign diplomats accredited to the IAEA in Vienna to visit its nuclear facilities, including the Natanz enrichment facility and the Arak heavy-water reactor under construction. Among others, the Hungarian Ambassador was invited to represent the European Union; the Russian and the Chinese Ambassadors were also invited, but not the United States, the French, the British or the German envoys.

33. Iran said it was a gesture of goodwill and transparency. While welcoming this move, China, Russia and the European Union refused the invitation, and said that, instead, Iran should co-operate with the IAEA and allow its inspectors to monitor all its nuclear facilities.

34. There were reports in January 2011 that Iran is now able to produce its own nuclear fuel plates and rods, which means that it now has the full nuclear fuel cycle.

35. The Iranians say that they have produced about 40 kilograms of 20% enriched uranium and hope to inject the first batch of the domestically produced uranium into the Tehran research reactor "by the middle of next year" (the Iranian year begins on 22 March).

3. What policy options?

36. It is fair to say that there is a broad international consensus that Iran should not be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons. Both for global powers and for regional actors, the prospect of the emergence of an Iran having nuclear bombs or warheads in its arsenal is a nightmare.

37. Furthermore, even if there is no such general consensus on the question whether Iran is actually trying to build nuclear weapons, most countries agree that Iran is moving towards having the technical know-how and the ingredients necessary for making nuclear weapons, and that it should be obliged to suspend enrichment-related activities until all well-founded concerns about the nature of its nuclear programme are dissipated.

38. Although there are different positions among international actors on whether there should be a temporary suspension of uranium enrichment in Iran or a permanent ban on it; most actors agree that suspension must be the necessary first step. This requirement is the cornerstone of the six United Nations Security Council resolutions on the Iranian nuclear issue. Four of these resolutions introduce international sanctions against Iran.

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4. For example, “Israeli Test on Worm Called Crucial in Iran Nuclear Delay”, article by William J. Broad, John Markoff and David E. Sanger, *New York Times*, 15 January 2011, www.nytimes.com/2011/01/16/world/middleeast/16stuxnet.html.

39. Moreover, the United States, the European Union and some other countries have decided to impose even stricter “unilateral” sanctions on Iran.

40. We must acknowledge that, to date, all the efforts by the international community aimed at compelling Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment activities, including legally binding resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and economic sanctions, have failed to produce the desired results. Iran is continuing to enrich uranium and to develop its nuclear technology.

41. In view of Iran's refusal to comply with demands to halt its nuclear activities, the policy options available to the international community are rather limited. If one excludes a direct military threat, the remaining alternative is diplomacy, including both coercive action (sanctions) and positive engagement (incentives). For obvious reasons, I do not refer to other options which are beyond the limits of public policy. Since the previous strategy, which was a mix of both elements, has been unsuccessful, the choice is between more sanctions or more incentives.

42. Whether the sanctions against Iran have been effective at all is difficult to assess. On the one hand, some American officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, have recently stated that “Iranians start to feel the pain” and their nuclear programme had slowed down. They argue that the sanctions are “beginning to bite”, cutting off Iran’s access to foreign capital, halting investment in its energy sector and impeding its ability to send its ships in and out of some foreign ports.

43. On the other hand, according to many experts, sanctions can be most effective before they actually go into force, when the target of those measures fears their impact most. In the case of Iran, some analysts believe that if further sanctions are imposed, that will only increase the secrecy in Iran and push forward the military orientation of its nuclear programme. It would seem that, until now, the Iranian nuclear programme has proven to be relatively insensitive, even if not totally immune, to sanctions.

44. Moreover, one of the first consequences of the sanctions is to reduce the capacity of the IAEA to work in Iran and be duly informed of its nuclear activities. In this sense, sanctions run against the declared aim of the Agency, namely to verify that the Iranian nuclear programme has no aspects related to the weaponisation of nuclear materials.

45. However, the prevailing political thinking tends to privilege more sanctions rather than more incentives.

46. On the one hand, this is understandable: with Iran's persistent refusal to comply with the requirements of the international community, weakening sanctions would amount to rewarding Iran for its defiance. Moreover, sanctions are seen as an alternative to a military option, even if, for proponents of the latter, they are a “necessary obstacle” to cross before launching an attack.

47. On the other hand, there are growing doubts that a policy based solely on the toughening of sanctions would bring about results. While sanctions do have consequences on the overall economic situation in Iran, and have probably slowed down the nuclear programme, they will not be sufficient to stop it, and will not oblige the Iranian leadership to abandon it.

48. According to experts, there is no direct evidence that Iran has started weaponisation. However, there are indications that the Iranian leadership intends to develop technologies that would allow it to acquire military nuclear capacity if it so decides. In these circumstances, the sharp toughening of sanctions, let alone the threat of, or the use of force, might provoke Tehran to withdraw from the NPT, and quickly build a nuclear weapon.

49. I tend to agree with the view of Dr Mohamed ElBaradei, the former Director General of the IAEA, that “…the only way to resolve the Iranian issue is to build trust. … And it's about time now to understand that the Iranian issue is not going to be resolved except, until and unless we sit with the Iranians and try to find a fair and equitable solution”.[5]

50. Therefore, in the policy mix vis-à-vis Iran combining incentives and pressure, it is time to consider strengthening the “incentive” component and put on the negotiating table more credible and far-reaching proposals of co-operation which would become effective if Iran reviews its attitude of non-compliance.

5. Interview with France 24 TV, 18 May 2010, available at http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2010/elbaradei230510.html.

51. The accident at the Japanese nuclear power plant Fukushima, after an earthquake and a tsunami in March 2011, has put the issue of nuclear industry safety in the spotlight of the international community, and has shown to what extent nuclear installations may prove to be vulnerable to natural disasters. All the countries which develop civil nuclear programmes should co-operate in order to upgrade the safety of their installations. Iran should be offered the possibility to fully take part in such co-operation.

52. At the same time, an offer of broader co-operation with the international community should go hand in hand with the strict enforcement of the regime of sanctions imposed on Iran by the United Nations Security Council Resolutions. In recent months, there have been reports on several attempts by Iran to circumvent sanctions and to import elements of equipment which fall under international restrictions. In addition, an Iranian cargo aircraft carrying arms to Syria was recently intercepted by the Turkish authorities and the cargo confiscated. These cases show that, rather than introducing new sanctions, the international community should primarily guarantee full and strict implementation of those sanctions already in force.

53. In my view, one of the main and most urgent tasks for the international community, is to ensure that Iranian co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency is completely restored, and that the Agency is able to fully carry out its tasks in that country. The Agency, which has a long experience of working with Iran as well as the necessary technical expertise, is the best tool of the international community to verify the character of the Iranian nuclear programme. Bringing all Iranian nuclear-related activities back under the strict control of the IAEA is a necessary first step towards restoring confidence.

54. It is also essential to strengthen, not weaken, the cohesion of the international community on the Iranian nuclear issue. Further unilateral sanctions would run counter to this goal.

4. Is there any room for specific action by the Council of Europe?

55. As stated before, the Council of Europe has no competence to directly deal with the Iranian nuclear issue. However, we could contribute to creating conditions for a more confident dialogue with the Iranian authorities.

56. In their respective reports, my predecessors Mr Ateş and Mr Lindblad put forward a number of suggestions on the ways in which the Council of Europe, and especially the Assembly, could help to restore confidence and to promote a dialogue with various parts of Iranian society. Most of those remain valid today. I simply refer colleagues to those proposals (Doc. 10496 and Doc. 11294).

57. In particular, by Resolution 1567 (2007), the Assembly resolved, in paragraph 17.2., to “seek to open, at committee level, a dialogue with the Iranian Parliament on matters relating to the core values of the Council of Europe, as well as on other issues of mutual concern. …”.

58. According to my information, the former Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee, Mr Lindblad, made at least two attempts to invite representatives of the Iranian Parliament to attend meetings of the committee, but without success. I nevertheless think it would be worthwhile to make a new attempt and to renew an invitation to the Parliament of Iran to engage in a dialogue with us on a number of issues, including, but not limited to, the nuclear issue. Resolution 1567 (2007) provides the basis for this and no new resolution is therefore needed.

59. More generally, I do not consider it appropriate for the Assembly to adopt yet another resolution on the Iranian nuclear issue. All key elements of the two previously adopted resolutions remain valid, and there is hardly any new action which could be initiated at the Assembly level. In particular, I cannot imagine any “additional effective measures vis-à-vis this threat” (as suggested in the motion) which would be available to the Assembly. Rather than producing a redundant resolution with uncertain impact, we should fully explore ways of implementing the existing ones. That is why I have decided to submit an information report, without proposing a new resolution.

5. Conclusions

60. Iran has been developing a nuclear programme which raises serious concerns among the international community as to its real purpose. Many believe that Iran, while claiming its programme to be of a peaceful nature, is actually aiming to acquire the capacity to make nuclear weapons. A nuclear Iran would be a nightmare for the whole international community, including for its neighbours.[6]

61. Equally dangerous would be attempts to destroy by force the Iranian nuclear facilities. It would probably delay, but not stop, its nuclear programme, and it would dramatically destabilise the situation in the Middle East and globally.

62. So far, the joint efforts of the international community to oblige Iran, through political and diplomatic means, to comply with the requirements of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, have not brought about results. The strategy pursued until now, where priority is given to coercive action, may need to be rethought, with more emphasis on confidence building. As I mentioned above, one of the main and most urgent tasks for the international community is, in my view, to ensure that co-operation of Iran with the International Atomic Energy Agency is completely restored, and that the Agency is able to fully carry out its tasks in that country.

63. While the Council of Europe is not, as such, an actor in the efforts to solve the Iranian nuclear issue, it could contribute, especially at the parliamentary level, to creating a climate of confidence between Europe and Iran.

6. There is a growing concern that Iran could use recent developments in the Mediterranean and the Middle East to increase its influence in the region.

Appendix 1 – Resolution 1436 (2005)[7]

Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an international response

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is worried by various reports claiming that the Iranian authorities have been developing nuclear technologies that might be used for producing nuclear weapons, following evidence of the development of missiles with a range which would include Council of Europe member states.

2. Iran has acknowledged that it has been developing, for almost twenty years, and without informing the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a secret nuclear programme including, *inter alia*, uranium enrichment. In so doing, Iran has failed in its commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has raised suspicion that its nuclear programme has a military purpose.

3. If Iran were to become yet another state equipped with nuclear weapons this would substantially increase the risk of destabilisation in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf area, and would become a major threat to the whole international community.

4. Iran must be aware that the international community will not tolerate its attempts to develop nuclear weapons and is ready to adopt a common response for which the consequences for Iran would largely outweigh the supposed benefits of nuclear status.

5. On the other hand, Iran should be assured that its legitimate security concerns will be addressed, but it must agree to recognise the security concerns of all states in the region and, in particular, the existence of the State of Israel and its right to security. Moreover, Iran should be reassured that its readiness to meet the international community's concerns about its nuclear programme would open up new possibilities for international co-operation for the benefit of the Iranian people.

6. In this context, the Assembly welcomes ongoing diplomatic efforts by France, Germany and the United Kingdom (E3/EU) aimed at ensuring, through negotiations, that Iran proves its full compliance with its obligations under the NPT and allay the international community's concerns that its nuclear programme is aimed at building nuclear weapons.

7. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that the United States has recently announced its readiness to provide support to European diplomatic efforts.

8. The Assembly calls on the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran:

i. to fully co-operate with the IAEA;

ii. to strictly abide by the NPT and the Safeguards Agreement thereto;

iii. to ratify the Additional Protocol to the NPT which provides a more efficient verification framework and to continue to comply with its provisions pending ratification;

iv. to take further steps towards meeting the international community's concerns over Iran's nuclear programme and rebuilding lasting confidence in its peaceful nature and, *inter alia,* to:

   a. provide full and accurate information to IAEA on its past and current nuclear programmes;

   b. allow free and unimpeded access to its nuclear sites and research facilities, as well as to other sites if necessary, whether or not they fall under the NPT regime;

   c. take voluntary action going beyond the NPT requirements, including in particular a sustained suspension and eventually the end of its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities.

9. The Assembly calls on Council of Europe member and Observer states:

i. to provide full support to the E3/EU diplomatic efforts with Iran;

ii. through bilateral contacts, to encourage the Iranian authorities to show good will and restore the confidence of the international community by opening its nuclear programmes, in particular those which raise suspicion, to international control;

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7. *Assembly debate* on 26 April 2005 (11th Sitting) (see Doc. 10496, report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Ateş).
Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 April 2005 (11th Sitting).

iii. to envisage economic incentives that would compensate Iran's readiness to go beyond its commitments under the NPT;

iv. to give appropriate consideration to Iran's security concerns, and to consider ways of ensuring peace, enhancing stability and promoting co-operation in the Middle East and Persian Gulf, including the promotion of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the region, as recommended by the United Nations General Assembly;

v. to engage in a multi-level dialogue with Iran aimed at promoting pluralist democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law and open society;

vi. to provide full and efficient support to the IAEA activities in relation to Iran and to ensure full and timely information sharing;

vii. to take advantage of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference (May 2005) to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, including, *inter alia*:

a. strengthening the IAEA inspection and verification capacities;

b. *b.* strengthening export control policies and practices on dual-use technologies;

c. *c.* ensuring that any possible misuse of civilian programmes for military purposes will be excluded;

d. *d.* giving proper consideration to the IAEA initiative aimed at limiting the spread of nuclear enrichment technologies and putting all enrichment activities under international control while ensuring access to nuclear fuel for countries without enrichment capabilities;

e. *e*. providing better security guarantees to non-nuclear states;

viii. to encourage co-operation with the IAEA and accession to the NPT by states not yet parties to the treaty.

10. The Assembly calls on the European Union to:

i. resume negotiations with Iran on a trade and co-operation agreement with due regard to the progress of negotiations on nuclear issues and to the implementation of democracy and human rights;

ii. envisage other incentives, including in the field of nuclear energy and other high technologies, that could be offered to Iran in the case of a substantial progress in the negotiations conducted by the E3/EU.

11. The Assembly resolves to remain seized by the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme and instructs its Political Affairs Committee to continue to follow this matter closely.

12. The Assembly resolves to envisage measures to be taken in order to promote democratic values, full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and an open society in Iran through parliamentary dialogue.

Appendix 2 Resolution 1567 (2007)[8]

Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an international response

1. The Parliamentary Assembly refers to Resolution 1436 (2005) on Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an international response, in which it resolved to remain seized of the question of the Iranian nuclear programme. It takes note of the main developments relating to the Iranian nuclear issue since April 2005 and regrets that the situation has deteriorated considerably.

2. The Assembly is preoccupied by Iran's continuing failure to respond to serious and well-founded concerns of the international community about the nature of its past and present nuclear programme, and is concerned by the declared intention of the Iranian authorities to speed up and broaden work carried out in the nuclear field, including uranium enrichment on an industrial scale.

3. It takes note that on 24 September 2005 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) adopted a resolution stating that Iran is not in compliance with its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Safeguards Agreement.

4. It particularly deplores that Iran, to date, has not ratified the Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement, has put an end to its voluntary implementation of this protocol on a provisional basis and has significantly lowered its level of co-operation with the IAEA.

5. It further regrets the rejection by Iran of a comprehensive solution to the nuclear issue presented by Mr Javier Solana on behalf of the group of six countries (China, France, Germany, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and United States) in June 2006.

6. It is particularly concerned by Iran's refusal to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007), which make it mandatory for Iran to suspend all uranium enrichment activities. Such an attitude constitutes an open challenge to the international community and calls for a common response.

7. In this context, the Assembly underscores the common understanding among the group of six countries that the possession of nuclear weapons by Iran would pose an unacceptable threat both to the already fragile situation in the Middle East and to international peace and security as a whole. It welcomes the fact that the members of the UN Security Council showed unity on Iran by unanimously adopting Resolutions 1737 and 1747, and that this common position is gathering growing international support.

8. The Assembly believes that Iran has the potential to become a respected actor in regional and global affairs and assume the role of a pillar of regional stability to which it aspires. It acknowledges that Iran's legitimate rights must be respected and its security concerns addressed. However, this requires that Iran act in a responsible manner and in full compliance with its international obligations. Iran must also fully respect human rights as being universal and individual. The Assembly also considers it to be of great importance that Iran establishes democracy and the rule of law.

9. Regrettably, acts by the Iranian leadership, such as provocative statements regarding Israel, the refusal to recognise Israel and its right to security, the denial of the Holocaust, as well as its support for the Hamas and Hezbollah terrorist groups, are in clear contradiction with generally accepted norms of international relations.

10. Such attitudes further undermine the international community's trust in Iran, which has already been compromised by an almost twenty year-long policy of concealment of its nuclear programme. Moreover, they lead to an even greater isolation of Iran, which is contrary to the interests of the Iranian people. Iran's poor human rights record is a cause for additional mistrust and concern.

11. The Assembly remains convinced that the solution to the Iranian nuclear issue must be found through negotiation and diplomacy. It welcomes the renewed efforts by Mr Solana, on behalf of the group of six countries, aimed at convincing Iran to comply with the UN Security Council requirements. It further welcomes the United States' readiness to engage directly in the negotiations, subject to Iran's suspension of uranium enrichment.

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8. *Assembly debate* on 28 June 2007 (26th Sitting) (see Doc. 11294, report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Lindblad).
Text adopted by the Assembly on 28 June 2007 (26th Sitting).

12. Mutual confidence is of key importance, both in finding a solution to the nuclear issue which would take into account Iran's rights while responding to other countries' concerns and in allowing the Iranians to take the place they deserve among the community of nations. In order to restore that confidence, the Iranian leadership must change its position from defiance to co-operation.

13. Broader contacts with various parts of Iranian society, including individual contacts, would be instrumental in building trust and confidence, whereas the further isolation of Iran would hinder them.

14. The Assembly stands ready to contribute to efforts to build confidence by engaging in a dialogue with the Iranian Parliament and in contacts with the civil society of the country. Such a dialogue should not be limited to nuclear issues but should encompass the Council of Europe's basic values of democracy, the rule of law and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and could include other matters of mutual concern. In this context, it refers to its Resolutions 1520 (2006) and 1550 (2007) which call on the parliaments of the Middle East, including that of Iran, to contribute to regional stability and to engage in a meaningful dialogue for peace.

15. The Assembly urges Iran to:

15.1. put an end to its policy of defiance and to co-operate with the international community so as to alleviate concerns about its nuclear programme, and in particular to:

15.1.1. comply without delay with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1696, 1737 and 1747, and to suspend all activities in the nuclear field which are matters of concern as reflected in the said resolutions;

15.1.2. resume full co-operation with the IAEA, to provide it with exhaustive and accurate information on its past and current nuclear programme, and to resolve outstanding issues which prompted the agency to declare it in non-compliance with its obligations under the NPT Safeguards Agreement;

15.1.3. ratify without delay and to effectively implement the Additional Protocol to the NPT Safeguards Agreement, and to take voluntary action going beyond the requirements of the additional protocol;

15.2. address other issues which cause the international community to mistrust Iran, and in particular to:

15.2.1. reconsider fundamentally its attitude towards the State of Israel, to recognise its right to security and to abstain from anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic statements;

15.2.2. stop supporting terrorist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah;

15.2.3. refrain from any activities aimed at destabilising Iraq and to use its influence in order to promote peace, order and reconciliation in this country;

15.2.4. respect universally recognised human rights and fundamental freedoms.

16. The Assembly calls on Council of Europe member and observer states to:

16.1. provide full support to the efforts of the group of six countries aimed at a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, along the lines of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions;

16.2. contribute to strengthening international support for the UN Security Council position on sanctions against Iran, in particular among states participating in the Non-Aligned Movement, and to fully and rapidly implement them;

16.3. intensify contacts and multiply channels of dialogue with Iran at government and parliamentary levels, as a means of confidence building and conveying to Iran the concerns of the international community;

16.4. develop co-operation with Iran in areas of mutual interest and shared concerns which do not fall under the UN Security Council sanctions, such as the fight against drug trafficking;

16.5. facilitate people-to-people contacts, scientific, cultural and student exchanges with Iran, thus contributing to its opening to the world.

17. The Assembly resolves to:

17.1. remain seized of the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme, and asks its Political Affairs Committee to continue to follow this matter closely;

17.2. seek to open, at committee level, a dialogue with the Iranian Parliament on matters relating to the core values of the Council of Europe, as well as on other issues of mutual concern. It reiterates its call on the parliaments of the Middle East, including the Iranian Parliament, to contribute to regional stability and to engage in a meaningful dialogue for peace.