

Speech

By

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Mr. Chairman, Excellency's, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To begin with, I am delighted for being here among you, at the same time I would like to express my thanks to the organizers for providing this opportunity.

Based on my personal past experiences and current position as the Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran as well as a member of the negotiating team in recent talks with 5+1 on the issue of Iran's nuclear program, I have clearly witnessed how the approach of confrontation and conflict turned, gradually, into an approach of engagement and interaction. Therefore, I will argue how the views and approaches have evolved in this process and will share with you the lessons learned.

As you all may know, Iran's nuclear program came to the fore of international attention when it was alleged that some ongoing activities of Iran in the field of uranium enrichment were undertaken without the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. However, no legally acceptable explanation was presented verifying the above claim.

In spite of this, the accusations continued and Iran chose to enter into negotiations first with the EU3 and later with EU3+E3. As a gesture of good will, we even voluntarily suspended our enrichment activities for about 2.5 years. Moreover, our Supreme Leader's decree -Fatwa- vividly declared that the production, accumulation and the deployment of Nuclear Weapons is prohibited and is against the tenets of our religion.

Despite all these, we continued to encounter a biased, security-oriented and unfair treatment by a few countries mainly the US with whom Iran has had a long history of estrangement and mistrust. As a result of such discord, any political outlook of the U.S towards Iran

was affected by the zero-sum-game paradigm in which anything against Iran was considered as serving the interests of the U.S.

Hence, the U.S remained defiant by pursuing the “zero enrichment policy” and imposing the so-called crippling sanctions which consequently left few options for Iran other than following the path of “strategic resistance and endurance”, resembling a bending- but not breaking- palm in a storming desert.

Throughout this period, numerous rounds of negotiation were convened, whose main objective seemed to be an attempt to delay the settlement of the so called “Iran’s Nuclear File” rather than looking for an objective and fair solution in which our legal rights and capabilities would be respected.

Hence, we were accused of illegal activities under the so called “Alleged Studies” for a while and “Possible Military Dimensions” (PMD) for another. Needless to say, that this trend was doomed to failure and that none of such claims have proved our noncompliance

to the international commitments with respect to the NPT and its related safeguards agreement. This irrational trend reminds us to what Confucius stated that “the hardest thing of all is to find a black cat in a dark room, especially if there is no cat”.

The U.S, tired of exhausting every bending option, gradually shifted the paradigm of its behavior, adopting a more pragmatic approach on Iran’s nuclear issue. This dramatic behavioral change started out in 2011 through the mediation of His majesty the Sultan of Oman and received impetus by the emergence of the new government in Iran. Upon the election of president Rouhani, the ground was paved for a modest agreement which was finally adopted in October 18, 2015 and it is envisaged to begin implementation by the end of December 2015.

Hence, one may sense that the wind of change has begun to blow at the international level and the main players started to build up trust and confidence. As a result, war mongering visions are sidelined and the peaceful orientations have become imperative.

In light of such developments, the United States that for a long time viewed Iran's peaceful nuclear program with suspicion and mistrust became proponent of the fact that a framework agreement can be established, in which the so called weapon "path ways" are prevented and in return Iran's rights to possess a peaceful nuclear program including uranium enrichment are recognized. In Iran, also the win-win approach gradually pervaded the political domain and a chance was given to the negotiators to exhaust this option as well.

A delicate lesson that was learned during these negotiations was that the talks proceeded in two new specialized and professional tracks namely, the technical and political tracks. These two tracks were complementary to each other. In this way not only it was proved that Iran's nuclear intentions remains peaceful, but that the West's artificial concerns were also addressed and our inalienable nuclear rights in return received acknowledgment and respect as well.

All in all, these rational determinations and imperatives culminated in the successful outcome of a historical negotiation on Iran's nuclear issue and resulted in the realization of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Through this agreement, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been acknowledged as a state possessing peaceful nuclear technology including full fuel cycle and the right to enrichment, while preserving its entire existing nuclear infrastructure. As a sign of confidence building, Iran has also accepted some time limited constraints to further consolidate this agreement.

Undoubtedly, the global welcoming of Iran's nuclear talks achievement, has evoked an evolving new paradigm in the international political dynamics and resisting this new trend is futile. In this emerging new paradigm, the power of logic shall overwhelm the logic of using force, and hence the inherent rights of nations will override the guidelines of power oriented politicians who believe that "might makes right". Likewise, justice is also to find

its place as Martin Luther King said “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

Therefore, for having a safe world as well as stable and amicable neighborhood, one should bear in mind that the rights, such as sovereignty, self-determination, right of progress and development as well as peaceful uses of nuclear energy are among the inherent privileges of nations which should be respected and observed.

In this regard, the two great nations of Iran and Japan share many commonalities and we are grateful to their support throughout our negotiations with 5+1 and expect the same for beyond. In our opinion, Japan normally plays a constructive role in international economic and political endeavors and its moderate approach in foreign policy serves the enhancement of the security and well-being of international community and is therefore supported by my country.

Upon the realization and implementation of JCPOA and due experiences acquired, we intend to emphasize on all political, economic, commercial and technical aspects of our foreign relations as well as diversifying them. Therefore, we welcome the utilization of available opportunities in furthering the integration with traditional partners and opening up fruitful relations with new partners. In this respect, Iran would like to benefit working with Japan in the domain of Nuclear Safety as well as other areas of peaceful nuclear activities.

As said before, the JCPOA has just passed successfully the critical juncture of Adoption Date and we are looking forward for its near and earliest implementation. Among the mutual commitments, are the important undertakings of exchange of enriched uranium with natural uranium as well as the redesign and modernization of Arak Heavy Water Research Reactor. Our guidelines for the implementation of the JCPOA are alluded in the latest remarks of our

Supreme Leader emphasizing the removal of all ambiguities before embarking on its implementation.

Before ending, I would like to touch base on the internationally shared principle of global disarmaments efforts. We hereby, urge the Nuclear Weapons States to uphold their commitments to meet their obligations envisaged in article 6 of NPT. It is indeed very annoying to note that after the elapse of about half a century the Nuclear Weapon States have not yet realized their commitments on disarmament.

Moreover, we are the proponent of establishing Nuclear Free Zone in the Middle East. This idea was initiated by Iran in 1974 and has since been reiterated in NPT resolution of 1995 as well as 2010 NPT action plan. Israel which has not acceded to the NPT is indeed the main obstacle in the implementation of this plan and is considered to be a serious threat to the region's security.

Last but not least, as we are now holding our event in a city that has bitterly experienced the disaster of nuclear bomb, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences and deep sorrow to the great nation and the government of Japan as well as the families of the innocent victims and all peace loving nations around the world. My country, as always, spares no effort in making a peaceful world free from nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction. Let's wish for a world full of tranquility, compassion and humanity.

Thank you for your attention.