Foreign & Commonwealth Office (UK)

"Iran is failing to cooperate over its nuclear programme"

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Speaking today, he said:

“The Director General’s latest report reminds us that that Iran continues to defy UN Resolutions and is failing to cooperate fully with the IAEA over its nuclear programme. The latest report once again flags the possible military dimensions to the Iranian programme and the increasing concerns of the Agency.”

“Full cooperation by member states with the Agency is essential to supporting the important work that the IAEA undertakes in the area of safeguards. This is why following the Board of Governors resolution on Syria’s non compliance with the IAEA over the building of an undeclared nuclear facility; we continue to urge Syria to give the IAEA full disclosure and cooperation that it has promised.”

“The UK continues to be deeply concerned by the DPRK’s continued lack of co-operation with the IAEA, particularly in light of last year’s revelation of the Yongbyon uranium enrichment facility, built without the Agency’s knowledge. We call again on the DPRK to resume co-operation with the Agency, comply immediately with all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, and refrain from any further provocative actions.”

Read the full text of his

statement

Alistair Burts speaks about Iran’s nuclear programme

The IAEA has been at the centre of international cooperation on nuclear issues since the 1950s. The scope of the work dealt with by the Agency’s General Conference this week demonstrates how much the Agency’s activities have grown since then. One of its central activities is implementing the safeguards system that is a crucial feature of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Iranian case demonstrates its continuing relevance and importance.

What makes Iran such a challenging issue is not simply Iran’s failure over many years to declare a staggering amount of the nuclear material and activities that it ought to have declared under its agreement with the Agency. To an extent exposing the extent of the Iran’s secret programme was the more straightforward aspect of the Agency’s role. The bigger challenge for the Agency now lies in verifying the nature of the Iranian programme which Iran,

despite recent developments, continues to claim is entirely peaceful. There are three main challenges to achieving this.

The first is tackling the crucial issue of “possible military dimensions to Iran’s nuclear programme”. In his most recent report to the IAEA Board last week, the Director General highlighted the Agency’s “increasing concern” about the existence of work related to the development of a nuclear armed missile. Iran must urgently and truthfully address this fundamental question before confidence in the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme can be restored.

Second, is the Agency’s ongoing efforts to safeguard Iran’s nuclear activities. Successive reports by the Director General have shown that Iran has failed to co-operate and obstructed the IAEA. The Agency has complained that the repeated objection by Iran to the designation of inspectors with experience of Iran’s nuclear fuel cycle and facilities hampers the inspection process. And there are many activities the IAEA describes as “contrary to the resolutions of the Board of Governors and the Security Council”. But most importantly, given Iran’s track record is one of deliberate concealment of its activities, the Agency needs to be able to provide the international community with credible assurances that Iran does not still have undeclared nuclear material and activities. The Additional Protocol signed by Iran on 18 December 2003 provides the means to do this. But unfortunately Iran has not been implementing this since 6 February 2006. This is extremely concerning, and critical if Iran wants to reassure the international community about its nuclear intentions.

Finally, the IAEA plays a key role in charting the continuing development of the programme. The Director Genera’s recent report noted that Iran has recently begun installing centrifuges underneath a mountain near Qom, as part of Iran’s plans to expand production of 20% enriched uranium. This is the most significant and alarming change in the Iranian programme for some time - enrichment to 20% is necessary to produce weapons-grade material and Iran has no plausible civilian use for this.

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/iran-is-failing-to-cooperate-over-its-nuclear-programme