

<http://jamejamdaily.ir/?nid=5786&pid=8&type=0>

Interview with Marc Finaud, former spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry

Agency inspections of Iran should be based on available safeguards

Jamejam Daily, Tehran (25 October 2020)

Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, told the Swiss newspaper *Neue Zurich Zeitung* in response to a question from a reporter that former US President Barack Obama had said that the IAEA nuclear deal would allow inspections anytime, anywhere. "Iran, like Iraq, has not been an occupied country since 2003 where foreign inspectors can travel freely with the support of the United Nations and enter anywhere from the kitchen to the warehouses," he said. Iran is a sovereign country. He added that Iran cooperates with us on two grounds: agreed regulatory measures (safeguards) and the Additional Protocol.

That being said, it may be very repetitive, but the Additional Protocol gives us more options for inspection. The Islamic Republic of Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) announced on September 25 that they had reached an agreement to strengthen cooperation and build mutual trust to facilitate the full implementation of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol. The statement stated that Iran would voluntarily access the two sites designated by the Agency and would facilitate the Agency's verification activities to resolve these issues. According to the statement, the agency had no further questions from Iran and no request for access to locations beyond what is stated by Iran under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol. The agreement between Iran and the IAEA stated that the parties had agreed on dates for such access. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in a quarterly report released on September 5 that Iran had granted access to one of the two sites for environmental sampling. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) also said that IAEA inspectors had been able to visit a second location in Iran.

In this regard, we have held talks with Marc Finaud, a former spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry. The former French diplomat currently heads the Arms Proliferation Division at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP).

The International Atomic Energy Agency has announced that the results of recent samplings from two locations in Iran will be shared with Iran first after the end of the investigation and will not be made public. What is your assessment of the recent agreement between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency?

This was the best solution for all, which is the result of cooperative negotiations, not a confrontational approach. Iran shows that it has nothing to hide in terms of its safeguards obligations, and that the IAEA respects Iran's sovereignty and dignity.

Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said that Iran, like Iraq after 2003, was not an occupied country where foreign inspectors could travel freely with UN support. What message does this send to the United States, which wants the agency to inspect it anytime, anywhere?

This is first a statement of fact and a reminder of the need to respect the national sovereignty of the inspected countries. It is also a clear message to the Trump administration that the IAEA is enforcing its agreed-upon rules and standards. According to the Additional Protocol implemented unilaterally by Iran, all relevant activities and facilities can be inspected, but it should be noted that these inspections can be carried out in accordance with the legal provisions of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Additional Protocol and the JCPOA.

What is your assessment of the recent agreement between Iran and the IAEA to visit the two identified locations?

This agreement shows that the inspection regime for Iran is carried out within the framework of bilateral agreements between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the IAEA acts on the basis of the information available to it.

EU foreign policy chief Joseph Borrell recently said he was working on Instex and that if international sanctions on Iran returned, it would mean the end of the JCPOA. Europe still seems to be rhetorically trying to justify its non-commitment. What is your assessment?

Finding an agreement between the 27 EU countries is, of course, more complicated and time consuming than representing one country. The Instex mechanism - which is now operational - cannot replace the complete lifting of unilateral US sanctions because its scope is limited to humanitarian goods such as food, medicine and medical equipment, and the threat of US secondary sanctions against European companies still acts as a strong deterrent. Expanding access to Instex to companies outside the EU, such as Russia, China or India, which have smaller shares in the US market, will be beneficial.

The British Foreign Secretary has stated that the country has always welcomed efforts to include a larger agreement (within the UN Security Council). He has tended to this issue and, in fact, has emphasized it. As long as there is no prospect of a broader agreement, the JCPOA is what we have. The British view seems to be another form of Trump's call for talks on Iran's missile issue and Iran's regional policy. But Britain is trying to pursue these issues in the form of other negotiations while maintaining the JCPOA. What is your assessment?

Although Britain is now outside the European Union, it has stated its determination to maintain the JCPOA and opposes US sanctions snapback. However, he may agree with the Trump administration that a new agreement with Iran should include other issues. Other European members (France and Germany) have this goal to some extent. However, it is clear to everyone that such negotiations are unlikely until US sanctions are lifted. If Biden is elected on November 3 and the United States normally rejoins the JCPOA, then Iran is expected to return to full implementation, and then new talks on other issues will be facilitated, preferably in a regional context.