

## Iran to powers: No more "condescending" atom talks

Contributed by Mark Heinrich  
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VIENNA (Reuters) - Iran has told big powers it will enter no more "condescending" talks meant to scrap its nuclear program but wants to negotiate a broader peace and security deal, according to an Iranian letter leaked on Tuesday.

The July 4 letter, published on a French weekly's website and verified by diplomatic sources, was Iran's response to an improved incentives package from the six powers aimed at halting a uranium enrichment program they fear could yield atom bombs.

The classified reply ignored the demand by the sextet -- the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China -- that Iran suspend enrichment to obtain the benefits but made clear this was not up for negotiation.

"We have no intention of changing this path," said the three-page, English-language version of letter by Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, alluding to its campaign for a nuclear fuel industry.

Iran says it wants to refine uranium only for electricity but the program has triggered U.N. sanctions since Tehran covered it up in the past and continues to curb U.N. inspections meant to verify the work is wholly civilian in nature.

"The time for negotiating from the condescending position of inequality has come to an end," Mottaki wrote, citing "our lack of trust (due to) the duplicitous behavior of certain big powers" rooted in a post-World War Two colonial mindset.

"The world has changed ... The people of Iran have worked out plans for the advancement of their country without asking for help from others," the letter said.

Mottaki did not address any of the sweeteners in the revised incentives packet.

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said talks had produced little so far.

"We are for dialogue with Iran, but we have tried it for years, (EU foreign policy chief) Solana and us. It hasn't delivered very much, let's be realistic," he said.

"And here we are. The Iranian response says "Yes" to dialogue, but nothing on the conditions," he said.

### PROPOSAL TO EASE IMPASSE IGNORED

Mottaki's letter also ignored the powers' proposal to ease the deadlock over preconditions for negotiations under which Iran would freeze expansion of enrichment for six weeks while steps to more sanctions would be frozen in order to launch "pre-negotiations".

But Iran has not warmed to the idea since the powers still insist on a full suspension for the full range of benefits.

Mottaki reiterated Iran's stance that pressure to shelve its program was "illegal" as U.N. inspectors had found no proof of enrichment being diverted to bomb making.

But his letter pointed to "several similarities" between an Iranian proposal in May for comprehensive dialogue -- which also sidestepped the suspension issue -- and the powers' incentives offer, and said broad negotiations could start on this basis.

Only such a comprehensive approach, it said, could create lasting peace and security in the Middle East and beyond.

The world powers have authorized European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana to resume talks with Iran on Saturday in Geneva to probe for any flexibility from Tehran.

"The text of Iran's response was pretty much at the bottom of our expectations. It's not really useful," said a European diplomat accredited to the U.N. nuclear inspection agency.

"It could be the letter was more for a domestic audience and they could say something different to others. Solana will in part be looking to see if Iran is more willing to engage in a preliminary 'freeze for freeze' to unblock this process."

(additional reporting by Crispian Balmer in Paris and David Brunnsrom in Brussels; Editing by Matthew Jones)

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