

Obama at Odds with Netanyahu, Warns Israel Not to Disrupt Iran Nuclear Talks



Washington, February 10 (RHC)-- U.S. President Barack Obama says he has sharp differences with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the Iranian nuclear issue, warning him against souring the ongoing negotiations with Tehran by visiting Washington, DC next month.

"I don't want to be coy. The [Israeli] Prime Minister and I have a very real difference around Iran's sanctions," Obama said at a joint press conference in the White House on Monday with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"I have been very clear -- Angela agrees with me, and [British Prime Minister] David Cameron agrees with me, and the others who are members of the negotiations agree that it does not make sense to sour the negotiations a month or two before they're about to be completed and we should play that out. If, in fact, we can get a deal, then we should embrace that," Obama said in response to a question.

The Republican-dominated Congress is pushing a new round of sanctions on Iran, which could be part of its agenda in the coming weeks. Obama has vowed to veto the final Kirk-Menendez bill if it is put on his desk after passing both houses of Congress.

Observers say that the illegal sanctions on Iran have been imposed based on the unfounded accusation that Tehran is pursuing non-civilian objectives in its nuclear program. Iran rejects the allegation, arguing that as a committed signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), it has the right to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

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