

Iran Sanctions Continue Even Without Barack Obama's Signature



Washington, December 16 (RHC)-- Outgoing U.S. President Barack Obama has declined to sign a bill continuing sanctions against Iran, but the bill will still become law without his signature, extending sanctions for another 10 years.

The Senate approved the Iran Sanctions Act unanimously in a vote of 99-0 on December 1st, before the bill was then passed to Obama for his signature. While the White House previously indicated that the president would sign the bill, but Obama did not approve the bill before the deadline nor veto it, and it has now become law.

The White House has said that the new sanctions act will not affect the 2015 nuclear deal, which eases economic sanctions on Iran in exchange for downgrading its nuclear program. Along with the U.S., Russia, China, France, Germany and the EU are also signatories to the deal with Iran, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, JCPOA.

While Obama has expressed a number of concerns about the need for the bill, lawmakers argued that continuing sanctions would help maintain important pressure on Iran and is necessary if Iran violates its

obligations under the 2015 deal.

"This administration has made clear that an extension of the Iran Sanctions Act, while unnecessary, is entirely consistent with our commitments in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," said White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest, adding that the deal remains "a top strategic objective."

Thursday's approval of further sanctions is only likely to agitate the already delicate relations with Iran. Tehran has argued that the sanction extensions would mean a violation of the JCPOA and Iran's nuclear chief, Ali Akbar Salehi, said that "Iran will take action accordingly" if more sanctions were implemented.

President-elect Donald Trump has called the JCPOA a "disaster" and at one time said he would tear up the deal.

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