

Iran increases uranium production beyond nuclear deal's limit



Tehran, July 2 (RHC)-- Iran said European countries had offered too little in the way of trade assistance to persuade it to back off from its plan to breach the limit of Uranium production.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Monday his country has increased the level of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) production to over 300 kgs, breaching the limit set by the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. "According to my information, Iran has surpassed the 300kg limit [in producing low-enriched uranium] and we had already announced [that we were planning to do] this," Zarif said to the ISNA news agency.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said Iran's steps to decrease its commitments to the nuclear deal were "reversible." The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said later on Monday that its inspectors confirmed that Iran had accumulated more enriched uranium than allowed under the U.S.-broken treaty, the French news agency AFP said.

Last Wednesday, the IAEA verified that Iran had roughly 200 kg of low-enriched uranium, just below the deal's 202.8 kg limit. A quantity of 300 kg of UF₆ (uranium hexafluoride) corresponds to 202.8 kg of LEU.

After talks in Vienna, Iran said European countries had offered too little in the way of trade assistance to persuade it to back off from its plan to breach the limit, a riposte to U.S. President Donald Trump's decision last year to quit the deal and reimpose economic sanctions.

Mousavi urged them Monday to step up their efforts. "Time is running out for them to save the deal," state TV quoted him as saying. The deal between Iran and six world powers lifted most international sanctions against Iran in return for restrictions on its nuclear work aimed at extending the time Iran would need to produce a nuclear bomb, if it chose to, from roughly 2-3 months to a year.

Iran says its nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes, including generating power.

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