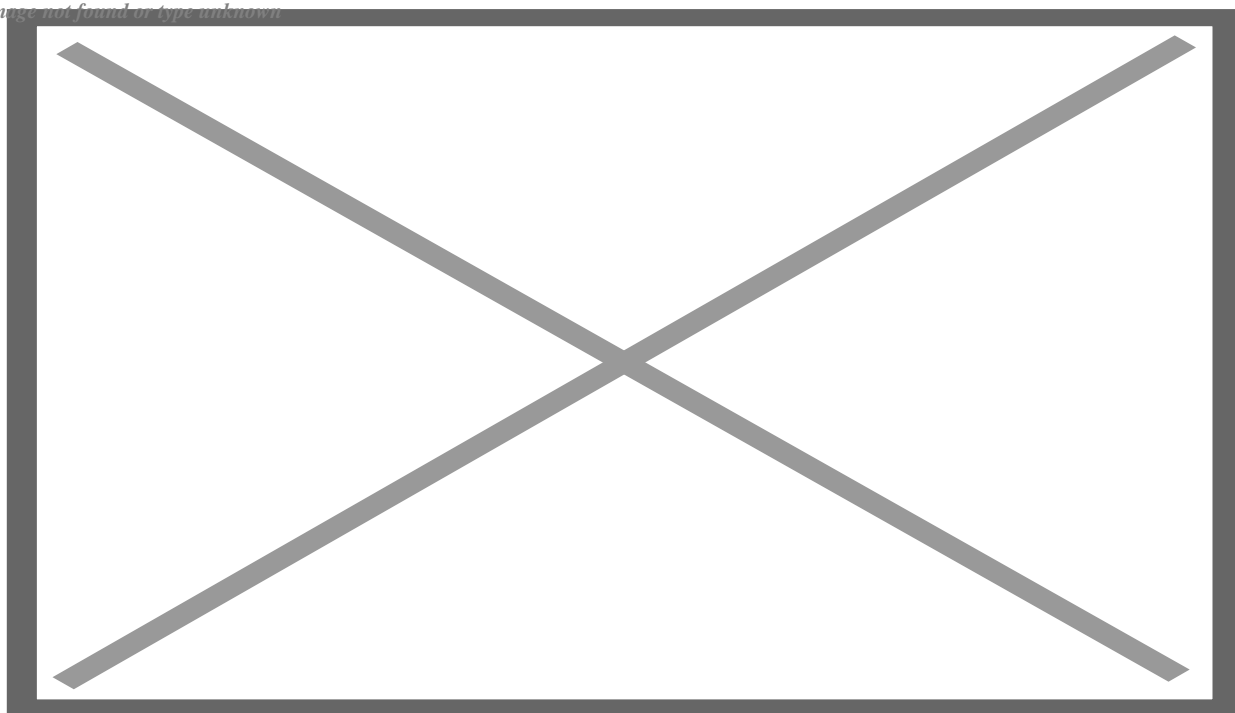


Iran warns of harsh response to U.S. hostile actions

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Ali Rabiei, spokesman of the Iranian government.

Tehran, November 18 (RHC)-- Iran has warned of a "harsh response" to any U.S. hostile action after a leading U.S. daily newspaper reported that President Donald Trump was considering an attack on Iranian nuclear facilities.

Ali Rabiei, Iran's government spokesman, made the comment on Tuesday in response to a New York Times report that Trump had asked his top aides about striking Iran's nuclear facilities. "It is highly unlikely that the Americans will seek to jeopardize the security of the region and the world, because Iran's response to any aggression will be harsh and severe," Rabiei told reporters.

The Iranian official also described the U.S. daily report as a "psychological warfare" by Israel and "classic opponents" of the Islamic Republic. The American president reportedly floated the idea of the strikes last Thursday during a meeting with the U.S. vice president, the secretary of state and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, among other officials.

The senior aides dissuaded Trump by warning him that an attack on Iran could escalate into a broader conflict in the last weeks of his presidency.

Playing down reports about Trump's intention to attack Iranian nuclear sites, Alireza Miryousefi, spokesman for Iran's permanent mission to the United Nations in New York, also on Tuesday said Iran will respond to any act of "adventurism" from its aggressors by means of its military prowess.

Miryousefi said the Islamic Republic's nuclear program is purely devised for peaceful purposes and civilian use, underlining that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has verified this issue in several reports.

Trump, a hawkish critic of Iran's 2015 landmark nuclear deal, unilaterally withdrew Washington from the agreement in May 2018, and unleashed the "toughest ever" sanctions against the Islamic Republic in defiance of global criticism.

The U.S. unleashed the so-called maximum pressure campaign and targeted the Iranian nation with draconian restrictive measures in order to bring it to its knees, but Iran's economy keeps humming and is getting back on its feet.

Following its much-criticized exit, Washington has been attempting to prevent the remaining signatories -- the UK, France, China and Russia plus Germany -- from abiding by their commitments and thus kill the historic agreement, which is widely viewed as a fruit of international diplomacy.

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