

*Iranian president says no
conditions or negotiations on
nuclear deal*

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Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. (Photo: Reuters)

Tehran, December 15 (RHC)-- Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said his country will not accept any preconditions in returning to the nuclear deal it signed with world powers and will not negotiate its missiles program or regional activities.

The United States and European powers have said in recent weeks they remain committed to revitalising the nuclear deal -- formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) -- which outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally abandoned in 2018.

In his first news conference in Tehran since February when the first COVID-19 cases in Iran were identified, the president defied calls by the incoming Biden administration in the U.S. and European powers. “We will not accept any pre-conditions from anybody. Neither is the JCPOA negotiable, nor can we set it out on the negotiation table and discuss it part by part,” he said in the televised event. “Either everyone will implement the JCPOA as it is or they don’t. If they do, we will too.”

In an interview with Der Spiegel earlier this month, German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas suggested a “nuclear agreement plus” is needed. But Rouhani was adamant these issues have nothing to do with the nuclear deal and cannot be broached.

“They had talked to us about these before. When the P5+1 was talking to us as part of the JCPOA they discussed all of this,” Rouhani said in reference to nuclear signatories – the United States, France, the United Kingdom, China, Russia, and Germany.

“The U.S. tried for months to include the missiles programme and we told them it’s non-negotiable. They tried for months to include regional issues as well. They were all discussed and rejected.” The Iranian president said Trump was unaware of this, but President-elect Joe Biden – who was vice president when the JCPOA was signed under President Barack Obama – was there and knows all of this. “What can be on the table is that everyone will return to their full commitments,” Rouhani said.

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