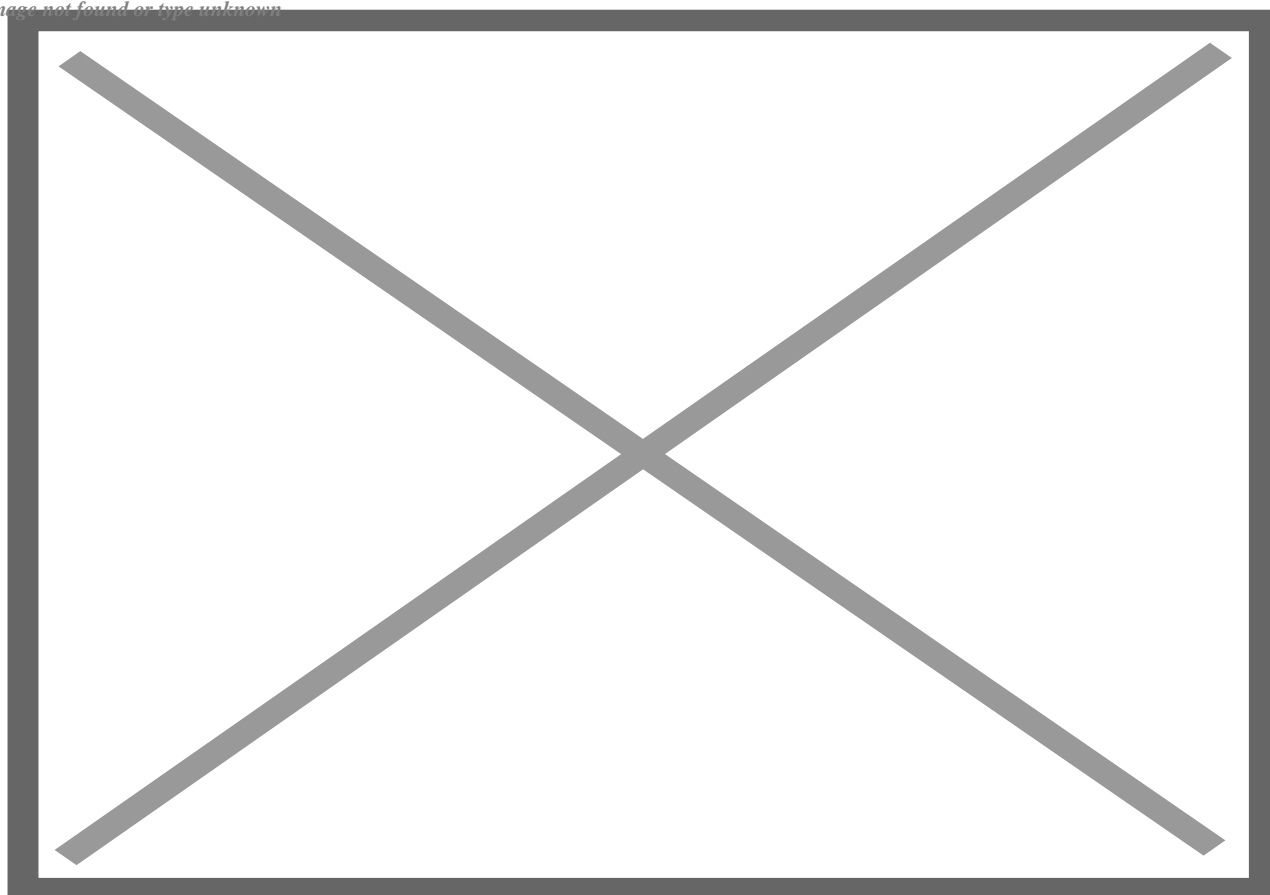


Iran says Trump highly unlikely to take nuclear action

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Iran's ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht-Ravanch

United Nations, January 10 (RHC)-- Iran's ambassador to the United Nations says it is highly unlikely that lame-duck President Donald Trump will use his power to launch a nuclear strike in his last days in office given the international and domestic reactions to the latest U.S. president's decisions. "The U.S. president has done a lot of weird things over the past years, raising concerns that he may do something unexpected, even in the final days of his presidency," Majid Takht-Ravanchi said in an interview with Iran's think tank the Strategic Council on Foreign Relations.

"But given the current international atmosphere, including [the atmosphere] within the United States, towards Trump's possible decisions and measures in his final days in office, I personally find it highly unlikely that Trump would cause concerns, especially with regard to the issue of nuclear action," Takht-

Ravanchi added. However, he said, since Trump is an unpredictable person, nothing should be ruled out, and “we should be vigilant and ready.”

On the recent movements by the US military in the Persian Gulf, Takht-Ravanchi dismissed the moves as “mischievous” and said Iran should be ready to counter possible threats, but anticipated no new act of adventurism.

In recent months, Washington has taken provocative measures that exacerbated the already tense situation with Tehran. It has flown B-52 bombers over the Persian Gulf, dispatched a nuclear-powered submarine to the region, and extended the stay of an aircraft carrier as a warning to the Islamic Republic.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Iranian ambassador argued that there is not much difference between the Democrats and Republicans when it comes to their foreign policy. “For instance, the use of sanctions against Iran has continued under both Democratic and Republican administrations in the US,” he said. “Hence, to say that the new administration will abandon the use of sanctions may not reflect reality.”

Takht-Ravanchi pointed to Trump’s humiliating actions towards European leaders and his harsh policies toward China, saying while the administration of President-elect Joe Biden may be more subtle in its conduct, it will not completely change course. “We will see a series of policies that may be different on the surface, but they are, deep down, a continuation of the same policies and there will be no U-turn in this regard,” the envoy predicted.

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