

12/17/2015

Nuclear Watchdog Organization needs Funding to Effectively Monitor Iran

Dear Members of Congress,

We write to you regarding the crucial need to fully fund the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the watchdog organization responsible for overseeing the implementation of the nuclear agreement between the United States, its negotiating partners, and Iran.

The IAEA is responsible for verifying Iran's compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which restricts Iran's nuclear activity in exchange for economic sanctions relief related to its nuclear program. Through an unprecedented system of intrusive inspections and safeguards, the IAEA will monitor Iran's nuclear program and ensure it serves strictly peaceful purposes.

The Director General of the IAEA has estimated it will cost an additional \$10.6 million per year to complete this task. This funding is necessary for hiring new inspectors and installing and maintaining requisite safeguard and verification technology.

Despite the critical function of this agency, some members of Congress are advocating to restrict the transfer of U.S. funds to the IAEA for implementation of the Iran nuclear agreement. Earlier this month, Representative Ryan Zinke (R-MT) introduced a resolution urging a freeze of additional funding unless the IAEA releases confidential documents between the agency and Iran.

The IAEA has confidential agreements with every country in which it implements safeguards and conducts inspections. Releasing these documents violates the IAEA's standard operating procedure, and would compromise the legitimacy and confidentiality that are critical to maintaining the IAEA's role as the global nuclear watchdog.

Leaving the IAEA unprepared to monitor Iran's nuclear activities is detrimental to U.S. national security. Without proper verification, there is an increased potential for Iran to hide violations of the agreement by reducing the likelihood of detection.

As organizations dedicated to nuclear nonproliferation and smart national security, we urge you not to withhold funding that will make Americans safer. Ensuring the IAEA can effectively monitor compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is our best hope for keeping Iran nuclear weapons-free.

Signed,

Americans for Peace Now

Arms Control Association

Center for Arms Control & Non-Proliferation

Center for International Policy

Council for a Livable World

Friends Committee on National Legislation

National Security Network

NIAC Action

Win Without War

Women's Action for New Directions