



Written by on February 24, 2010

Japan Offers to Enrich Uranium for Iran

Citing a February 24 report from the the Nikkei Business Daily, AFP news reported that Japan has offered to enrich uranium for Iran to allow it to have access to nuclear power, while relieving international fears that the Islamic nation might be trying to build atomic weapons.

The Japanese daily said that the issue was expected to be discussed in Tokyo by the speaker of Iran's parliament, Ali Larijani, and Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada.

The *Nikkei* daily, in a report that did not cite sources, reported that the proposal for Japan to enrich uranium for Iran was first discussed in December, with U.S. approval, when Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Saeed Jalili, visited Tokyo. The uranium would be used at Tehran's research reactor to produce medical isotopes, the report noted.

Iran's Press TV news also cited a Japanese foreign ministry spokesman's quote of Katsuya, who said during his meeting with Larijani: "Japan strongly hopes Iran's nuclear issue will be resolved peacefully and diplomatically ... and that Iran considers a related UN Security Council resolution seriously."

The Press TV report stated:

Iran says that it is a signatory of the NPT and, unlike Israel, neither believes in atomic weapons nor, as a matter of religious principle, does it intend to access such weapons of mass-destruction. Furthermore, Tehran has repeatedly called for the elimination of all nuclear weapon development, production and arsenals throughout the globe.

Iran's nuclear facilities and enriched uranium remain under the supervision of IAEA inspectors, as outlined in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Safeguards Agreement.

The UN nuclear watchdog has carried out the highest number of inspections in Iran, compared to any other country throughout its history and has found nothing to indicate any diversion toward weaponization.

Iran has reportedly begun the process of enriching uranium fuel to a 20-percent level of U-235 required for a reactor in Tehran that is used to make medical isotopes. Weapons-grade uranium is enriched to about 90 percent U-235.

According to a report published in the *Richmark Sentinel* of South Africa, Japan's offer "is seen as a compromise that will allow Iran to have the level of enrichment it will need for such [medical isotope production] purposes and allay Western and especially Israeli fears of a nuclear Iran."





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The report noted:

Iran has so far refused Western offers of enrichment, with the last offer being that Russia and France would enrich and process uranium and has instead pressed with its own enrichment processes. Japan remains the only country in the world that has been attacked with nuclear weapons and is a strong advocate of nuclear non-proliferation.

As the Nikkei report observed, Japan extended its offer to Iran with U.S. approval. Yet it has been U.S. policy to strenuously object to Iran's ongoing nuclear enrichment programs. For example, last November 29, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs issued a statement on the "Reports About Iran's Nuclear Program," which said:

If true, this would be yet another serious violation of Iran's clear obligations under multiple *UN security council resolutions*, and another example of Iran choosing to isolate itself. The *international community* has made clear that Iran has rights, but with those rights come responsibilities. As the overwhelming *IAEA board of governors* vote made clear, time is running out for Iran to address the *international community's* growing concerns about its nuclear program. [Emphasis added.]

The ultimate agenda of our current foreign policy may be revealed by the fact that in this short, 71-word statement, "international community" is mentioned twice, "UN security council resolutions" is mentioned once, and "IAEA [the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency] board of governors" once. It is obvious that — just as the enforcement of several UN resolution was cited as authority for our invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq — U.S. foreign policy is predicated upon serving "the international community."

We can search in vain for a reference to anything "international" in our Constitution, which was written to establish a structure that would ensure the common defense of our states, while threatening neither state nor national sovereignty. So why does a statement issued by the White House presume to tell Iran what its rights and responsibilities are, as if national sovereignty itself were a gift from "the international community"?

One further observation: If Japan, which has suffered more from nuclear weapons than any other nation on Earth, is not threatened by the prospect of supplying enriched uranium to Iran, why should the United States be?

The answer is, Iran's nuclear program threatens us no more than did Saddam Hussein's alleged "weapons of mass destruction." But both regimes posed a threat to the UN's ongoing progression towards making all sovereign nations subservient to the "international community."

Furthermore, while the United States has given its tacit approval to the Japanese deal, it is certain that that approval will come with strings attached, strings ultimately held by an agency of the UN.

Photo of Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada (with interpreter) during his meeting with Iran's parliament speaker Ali Larijaniright: AP Images



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