

Is it Game Over for the P5+1 Deal with Iran's Nukes?



Negotiators of Iran and six world powers face each other at a table in the historic basement of Palais Coburg hotel in Vienna April 24, 2015.

Reuters/Heinz-Peter Bader

Reuters has two reports on negotiating hiccups possibly forestalling conclusion of the P5+1 deal with Iran and its nuclear program. One report [indicates](#) another possible extension of the 'final agreement' deadline beyond June 30th. A related report reveals a stiffening position of France, that there will be no deal unless full access is provided to military facilities. As we have heard previously, that is verboten according to Iran's Supreme Ruler. Thus, are we witnessing the a denouement or simply kicking the can down the road. Either way, President Obama's legacy of an opening to Iran may be slipping from his grasp. Doubtless that may bring up short those EU and US companies poised to partake tens of billions in development deals under discussion with Islamic Republic should economic sanctions be lifted under the proposed P5+1 deal. If the diplomatic deal is cratering, it leaves the question of whether this a momentary speed bump or a finality? If the latter what options would the US and especially Israel have to deter Iran's quest for nuclear hegemony?

On the matter of a possible delay in the P5+1 deadline, Reuters [noted](#):

A self-imposed deadline of June 30 for Iran and six major powers to reach a final nuclear deal to resolve a decade-long standoff may be extended, Iran's state TV reported.

France's ambassador to the United States, Gerard Araud, said on Tuesday that the deal was not likely by June 30 because technical details would remain to be agreed.

"The deadline might be extended and the talks might continue after the June 30 (deadline)," Iranian senior nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi was quoted as saying.

"We are not bound to a specific time. We want a good deal that covers our demands."

Ambassador Araud said it could take a few weeks of July to complete the technical annexes that are envisaged under an agreement if one can be reached.

Iran and the six powers resumed talks in Vienna on Wednesday to bridge gaps still remaining in their negotiating positions ahead of the deadline.

"The meetings on deputy negotiators level take place in the context of the E3/EU +3's diplomatic efforts towards a negotiated, comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue," the EU said in a statement.

Once, France's redoubtable Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius exhibited toughness in these negotiations by going public with a demand that could be a deal killer: *Reuters* [reported](#):

France's foreign minister said on Wednesday his country would not back any nuclear deal with Iran unless it provided full access to all installations, including military sites.

"France will not accept (a deal) if it is not clear that inspections can be done at all Iranian installations, including military sites," Laurent Fabius told lawmakers .

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei last week ruled out international inspection of Iran's military sites or access to nuclear scientists under any nuclear agreement. Iran's military leaders echoed his remarks.

Fabius said he wanted other countries negotiating with Iran in the framework of the so-called P5+1 – also including Britain, China, Germany, Russia and the United States – to adopt France's position.

“‘Yes’ to an agreement, but not to an agreement that will enable Iran to have the atomic bomb. That is the position of France which is independent and peaceful.”

However, it would be premature to exhibit schaden freude until a possible declaration occurs. The P5+1 side is stacked with cunning appeasers intent on cutting any deal that allows them to achieve economic bounty from development deals, while Iran gets away with an unverifiable and “very bad deal”, as Israeli PM Netanyahu and many GOP members of Congress have said innumerable times. They may have their limited opportunity to vote on a deal under the recently passed bi-parrisan INARA, leaving President Obama to trump their possible negative vote with a veto. But first let's see if a final agreement is in the offing sometime in July or later. Stay tuned for developments.