

BY KELSEY DAVENPORT
AND DARYL G. KIMBALL

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An Effective, Verifiable Nuclear Deal with Iran

The comprehensive nuclear agreement that Iran and the P5+1 (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) are working to finalize by June 30 would verifiably block Iran’s pathways to nuclear weapons development—the uranium-enrichment route and the plutonium-separation route—and guard against a clandestine weapons program. A final agreement based on the framework announced April 2 will be a net-plus for nonproliferation and will enhance U.S. and regional security.

Blocking the Highly Enriched Uranium Route

The agreement will put stringent limitations on Iran’s uranium enrichment program that would push Iran to more than 12 months away from producing enough weapons-grade uranium for one bomb. Achieving this “so-called breakout time” is not just about counting centrifuges. It involves a combination of measures, including:

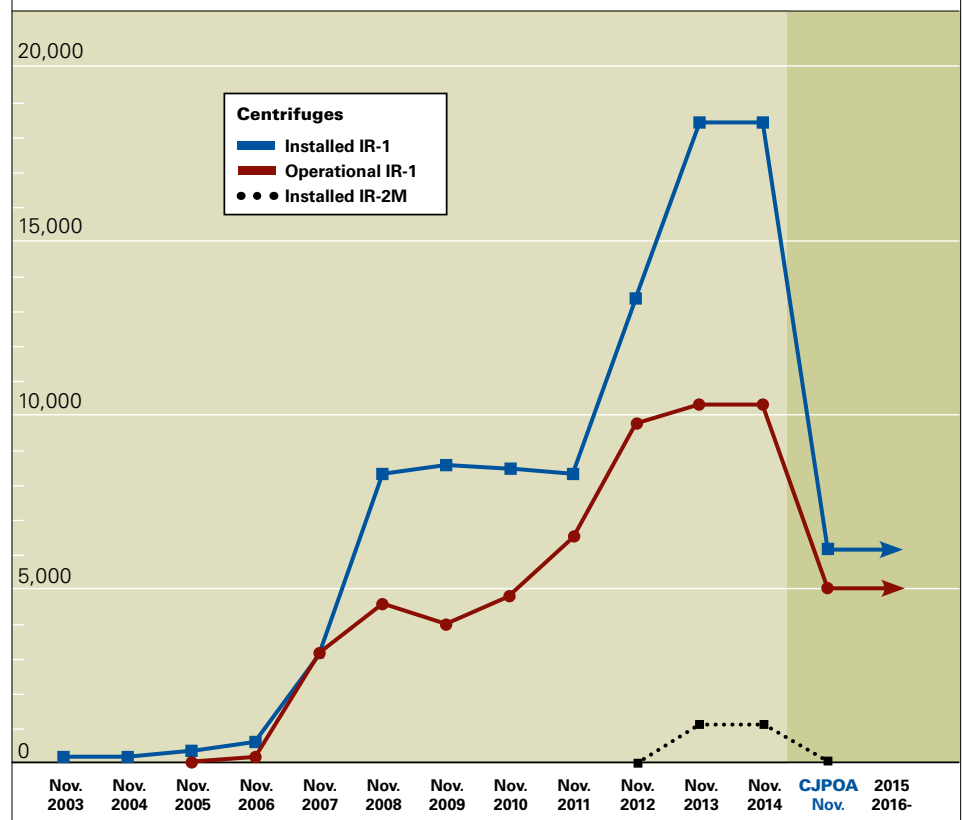
- Cutting Iran’s enrichment capacity in half and reducing the number of installed centrifuges from over 20,000 to 6,100 first-generation machines for 10 years;
- Barring enrichment of uranium above normal reactor fuel-grade and eliminating 97 percent of Iran’s stockpile of low-enriched uranium (LEU) and capping it at 300 kg for 15 years;
- Limiting research and development of advanced centrifuge machines;
- Converting the underground Fordow facility for medical research

using less than half of the current centrifuges and prohibiting uranium enrichment there for at least 15 years.

No Plutonium Path

The agreement will eliminate Iran’s plutonium pathway to nuclear

The Impact of a Comprehensive Nuclear Deal on Iran’s Deployment of Centrifuges



Source: International Atomic Energy Agency; Parameters for a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (CJPOA)

weapons for at least 15 years. Iran will redesign the unfinished Arak reactor so it will not produce weapons-grade plutonium and not build any new heavy water reactors for 15 years. Iran will be indefinitely barred from reprocessing spent nuclear fuel, which produces weapons-grade plutonium.

Intrusive Monitoring

The agreement will put in place enhanced international monitoring and accountancy to promptly detect and deter Iranian noncompliance. The agreement will set up a multi-layered approach to monitor and inspect every aspect of Iran’s nuclear supply chain and fuel cycle, including continuous monitoring at some sites for 20–25 years. Other elements, including access a wider number of nuclear sites and conduct inspections on short notice under the terms of its additional protocol, will be permanent. Inspectors will have access to any site, anywhere, including military sites, if there is evidence of suspicious nuclear activities. With sufficient resources, the International Atomic Energy



Agency will be able to verify Iran’s commitments effectively.

Incentives for Iranian Follow-Through

The structure of the nuclear deal gives Iran incentives to follow through on its commitments under a deal. No sanctions relief will be granted until Iran has taken steps to limit its uranium enrichment program, convert the Arak heavy

water reactor, and provide the IAEA with information about past activities with possible military dimensions. If Iran violates the agreement, sanctions will snap back into place and the United States and the international community would have the time necessary to respond.

No Deal, No Limits

The final P5+1 agreement with Iran should not be judged on how it addresses any single element of Iran’s nuclear program. Instead, policymakers should assess its overall impact on reducing Iran’s nuclear capacity and improving international monitoring and verification.

There is no better deal on the horizon.

Efforts to apply more pressure through additional sanctions would unravel the talks, undermine global support for the existing sanctions architecture, and allow Iran to accelerate its nuclear program and escape more intrusive international monitoring. The risk of an Iranian nuclear weapon and a military conflict over the issue would grow.

Key Restrictions Will Last Well Over a Decade

