



Remarks by Federica Mogherini on the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran nuclear deal)

REMARKS

Check against delivery!

We just had a comprehensive point with the Ministers [of Foreign Affairs] on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – the Iran nuclear deal. I will read to you the statement we agreed at 28. So, for once you will have a statement at 28 and probably this will constitute the best possible debrief I can give you of the discussions we have just had:

"The JCPOA, the culmination of 12 years of diplomacy facilitated by the European Union, unanimously endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, is a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation global architecture and crucial for the security of the region. Its successful implementation continues to ensure that Iran's nuclear programme remains exclusively peaceful. The European Union underlines that the International Atomic Energy Agency has verified 8 times that Iran is implementing all its nuclear related commitments following a comprehensive and strict monitoring system.

The European Union is committed to the continued full and effective implementation of all parts of the JCPOA. The European Union underlines that the lifting of nuclear related sanctions has a positive impact on trade and economic relations with Iran including benefits for the Iranian people. It strengthens cooperation and allows for continuous dialogue with Iran.

The European Union considers President Trump's decision not to certify Iran's compliance with the Joint Comprehensive plan of action as being in the context of an internal US process. The European Union encourages the United States to maintain its commitment to the JCPOA and to consider the implications for the security of the United States, its partners and the region before taking further steps.

While the European Union expresses its concerns related to ballistic missiles and increasing tensions in the region, it reiterates the need to address them outside the JCPOA, in the relevant formats and fora. The European Union stands ready to actively promote and support initiatives to ensure a more stable, peaceful and secure regional

environment.

At a time of acute nuclear threat the European Union is determined to preserve the JCPOA as a key pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture."

Q & A

Q. Mr [Jean-Yves] Le Drian, ce matin, a appelé l'Union européenne à faire pression sur les Américains, en particulier le Congrès. Envisagez-vous vous-même de vous rendre aux Etats-Unis pour discuter avec vos homologues et avec les membres du Congrès?

Oui. Je pense que cela n'a pas encore été annoncé officiellement mais je saisis l'occasion de le faire. Je serai à Washington début novembre précisément pour cette raison, mais aussi pour d'autres contacts que j'ai régulièrement - mes visites à Washington ont lieu tous les 2 ou 3 mois et la prochaine aura lieu dans les 3 prochaines semaines.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about the discussion today about the future - you mentioned ballistic missiles and the regional pressure. Was there any discussion today about how the European Union should advance its work on that? Secondly, many of the Ministers noted the Iran decision, the UNESCO decision, the Paris agreement; Mr [Jean] Asselborn - I think - talked about the United States putting itself offside, hors jeu of international diplomacy. Is that a feeling you have as well?

On the first part of the question: the clear unanimous indication from the 28 is that any non-nuclear related issue that we might have and we want to discuss with Iran and with others in the region will be managed, first of all [outside of the JCPOA since those are] not linked to the JCPOA implementation - for us it is very clearly two distinct issues. And second, that the international community, and also the European Union, would not be, in any way, in a better place to address these issues without the JCPOA in place.

For us, it is a matter of security, it is a matter of keeping channels of engagement, dialogue and cooperation with Iran opened; from the economic cooperation to the cooperation we have in other sectors - following the JCPOA implementation. But it is also clear for us that the situation in the region could not be addressed in a better way, but on the contrary in a worsened manner if the JCPOA was not in place - which was also the original thinking we had in the moment when the agreement was done, as you know very well.

So for us, the agreement is a separate issue from any others. It is a nuclear agreement

and it stays as such. But, again, without it we would not be in a better place, on the contrary, also to address all other issues we might and need to, and we will need to.

But there was no further discussion on that. Our point on the agenda today was the JCPOA, nuclear related issues, the nuclear agreement, and the need to preserve it.

My feeling on the United States: today the discussion was not on the United States but on the implementation of the JCPOA. I am very respectful- and we are all I think - of the democratic procedures in the United States. We understand very well that this has now [to go through] some further developments in the Congress; there is a likely debate in the United States, not only on this, also on many other things.

We also understand the politics around it and again, it is not for us to enter into that dynamic.

What is of crucial importance for us, is that our European security interests are taken into consideration. At the end of the day, President Trump in a speech said that they will move ahead in consultation with their partners and allies. This includes the Europeans. This is why I was in touch myself with the Secretary [of State of the United States, Rex] Tillerson just a few minutes before the speech was delivered. And we will continue our conversations with him, with Vice-President [of the United States, Mike] Pence, with Secretary [of Defense Jim] Mattis; and I am convinced that the United States will take into consideration the security interests, not only of their own country but also of their allies, partners and friends.

Q. First of all, the point about other matters, ballistic missiles and so forth. You said this was not discussed today, but can you sketch out a bit how that might evolved. Because the difficulty - it seems - is that a lot of the sanctions that were seen as effective were used before the nuclear deal. Therefore, they are effectively off the table. So, you are in this difficult situation where things you might consider effective are not possible perhaps, because they were lifted under the nuclear deal. So, is there a danger of a kind of conflict there between new measures you might want to do and stuffs that have been taken off the table. Secondly, the Congress has 60 days now. Has there been any formal, informal discussions about how the EU might deal with sanctions, particularly whether they might be new blocking arrangements in place like in the 1990s and so forth?

No, we did not discuss that and we are not discussing introducing further restrictions on Iran. We have lifted all the nuclear-related sanctions, as it is foreseen by the agreement. The other [sides] have done the same and we will stick to that.

Q. Some of the Ministers who came in this morning expressed concern that the threat to the Iran deal could spill over into the EU's role as mediator, for instances, on North Korea. Do you share those concerns?

I will come back in this room in the afternoon because we have a point on DPRK with the Ministers in the early afternoon, so I will be happy to answer to your questions on DPRK issues later today.

But, first, there is no mediator role for the European Union on DPRK. Actually, there is no mediation in place at the moment. But, for sure, part of the discussions we have with the Ministers is the timing and this is also - I know - an issue for debate in the United States.

It is clear that there are extremely different situations in Iran and DPRK. The systems are different, the countries are different, the stage of nuclear development was and is different - luckily - but obviously it is - and it risks to be - more difficult to open any form of dialogue or mediation with DPRK, in the case of a serious threat or dismantling of the nuclear agreement that is working.

So, clearly, the ministers are concerned about the fact that messages on JCPOA might affect negatively the possibility of opening the space for negotiations with DPRK. One of the key elements of multilateralism is the predictability of the maintenance of the agreements in time and this is why our appeal to the United States, our encouragement to the United States, is to continue to maintain its commitments to the JCPOA. By the way, I think this reflects some of the wording that some of the US top officials have used in these last hours.

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