

“A Report on Iranian Efforts to Obtain Nuclear Weapons”



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Key: Translator comments, clarifications, and additions are italicized in brackets. Classification markings, highlighted and underlined text, parentheses, and ellipses are from the original Arabic document.

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The time has come to make an Islamic congregation lead by Iran and not the Arabs. The Iranian motivation for accelerating their work is based on the expectation that a huge crisis will occur when the United States interferes to prevent the emergence of the Islamic world.

Comment: The indication for this is the Iranian approach to establish constant [*diplomatic*] relations and contact with the Soviet Islamic Republics [*Central Asian Republics*] after maintaining and developing relations with Pakistan and the Afghani resistance, as well as the Iranian approach toward supporting the fundamental Islamic movements in the Arab countries. The United States fears the emergence of an Islamic movement and works towards preventing an Islamic camp from forming, which is expected to be a principle power by the end of this decade and can be a threat to American interests and the newly aspired world order. Therefore, confrontation is possible if no major changes occur.

C. Since the fall of 1991, Iran has seriously started to investigate requesting nuclear weapons and nuclear [*war*] heads from the Soviet Islamic Republics, regardless of the cost. The religious men and Iranian officials have announced that Islam forms a power through shared relationships. After many years of communist domination of those republics, the goal of Iran now is to build strong relations with Central Asia.

Comment: The Iranian defense budget for 1991 is 3.77 billion dollars while [*widely*] circulated information shows that Iran paid about 19 billion dollars for the purchase of weapons, nuclear technology, and military equipment during the same year.

D. The majority of religious men in the Iranian leadership believe that confrontation with the United States is certain and imminent. This group believes that the strategic goal of Iran is to form an Islamic camp, consisting of Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and finally Turkey as

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the Iranian leaders believe that these countries will be under Islamic regimes or some kind of an Islamic rule soon. Iran will join China, who leads the Southern Bloc [*Non-Aligned Movement*], to confront the United States of America. The bloc led by Iran, in addition to the strategic Iranian-Syrian coalition, will force the Arab countries, especially the Gulf States, to lean toward the Iranian orbit. Iranian officials believe that such consolidation will lead to Iranian-Syrian cooperation for the liberation of Jerusalem, the destruction of Israel, and the liberation of the holy places in Hejaz from Saudi control. The Iranian presence in Sudan will help in accomplishing that [*goal*].

Comment: We believe that what has been mentioned above is the Iranian strategy, and exploiting the coalition with Syria is nothing but a cover to dictate its [*Iran's*] goals on the [*world*] stage. Iran will again announce its hostile intentions toward Iraq, which is considered the front line in preventing hostile Iranian intentions. Iran will increase its activities in the Arab Gulf and its support to the fundamentalist movements in the Arab States, and it will make every effort to avoid any confrontation with the United States of America.

E. The origins of the current developments of Iranian activities in the Republics of Central Asia go back at least one year, as the al-Milali Government of Tehran has sent several intelligence groups to ensure contact and maintain relations with the citizens [*of the Central Asian Republics*]. Qambiz was one of these people (a weapon of mass destruction expert) whose mission was to explore the possibility of employing experts in the field of weapons of mass destruction and obtaining the equipment and materials that would be used for this purpose. In the spring of 1991, he held a meeting with a number of officials that were mostly from Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan, and [*the officials*] showed a willingness to cooperate with the Iranian request for obtaining an Islamic bomb [*nuclear bomb*]. The Iranian Government was worried about the possibility that Soviet Intelligence (KGB) was behind this operation. Therefore, they asked Qambiz to return, as they did not want to ruin relations with Moscow, which Tehran was hoping to improve. However, Iran worked on renewing the mission in the summer of 1991

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and tasked Dr. Mahdi Jamran (who has a Master's Degree in Nuclear Physics from the University of California) who was handling intelligence activities since 1968. Dr. Jamran continued the same mission [that] Qambiz started, and met a high-level official from Kazakhstan who had a detailed offer for supplying Iran with nuclear weapons from the Soviet inventory. The [Kazakhstani] official stated that he had close contacts with the Kurchatov Institute in Moscow and the Semipalatinsk Establishment.

F. Dr. Jamran returned to Tehran in June or July 1991 with the offer. This time, the Iranian leadership was convinced that the Islamic world had awakened. The Iranian President called for an immediate meeting of the High Committee to study the offer, and if it was adequate, to then propose the means and possibilities of implementing it. The aforementioned committee consisted of Dr. Mahdi Jamran, [REDACTED] (the Revolutionary Guard Committee procurement officer), [REDACTED] (there is no information available about him), 'Ali Reza (Deputy Prime Minister and intelligence specialist in Hezbollah's activities) and [REDACTED] (nuclear scientist, one of the pioneers who worked on the Pakistani Nuclear Program).

As a result of the developments in the Soviet Union after August 1991, Iran became convinced of the necessity to carry out the program. The fact that Kazakhstan announced its control of all the weapons and military equipment that existed on its territory in late August 1991, including nuclear weapons, encouraged Iran to go forward with the process. Thus, Dr. Jamran was sent to Kazakhstan in early September 1991, and told the Kazakhstani official that he was speaking on behalf of 25 people including security men, scientists and government officials, who could provide Iran with a nuclear bomb. The bomb would be supplied in several parts and every part would be derived from one of the [former] Soviet Republics. The bomb would be re-assembled in a place in Iran that Kazakhstan selected, a place that had the experts capable of doing so.

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Dr. Jamran returned to Tehran in mid-September 1991 for more negotiations regarding the deal. Due to the strategic importance of the operation, the Iranian President Hashimi Rafsanjani appointed the Deputy President Mahjarani to be in charge of Iran's program for acquiring nuclear weapons. This program would be carried out independently from Iran's program for [indigenously] developing nuclear weapons.

- G. Up to that point, it seemed that Iran did not know what type of nuclear weapons they would be acquiring. Therefore, they evaluated alternative methods for obtaining nuclear weapons. In fact, since the summer of 1991, there has been a notable increase in the number of Chinese experts working in Iran in the field of military industries in places such as Isfahan, Mubarakah, and Arak. The number of the experts who worked in these fields was estimated to be about 3000 at the end of 1991.

One of the new projects that the Chinese experts were working on was an Iranian project to develop medium-range surface-to-surface missiles, almost similar to the M-9 Missile. As [in the past], China has not only supplied Iran with a number of missiles, launchers, and equipment for training [the Iranians], but also with the basic equipment for producing the missiles inside Iran.

Experts from North Korea and China are currently working in Isfahan on a project for developing and producing surface-to-surface missiles. The Iranian missile is similar to the Chinese missile M-11 under the name of Tundar-68. Because of Iran's interest in missiles, they assigned a line for producing Scud-B missiles that have been operating since 4 February, 1991. In addition, Iran has received a shipment of approximately 170 Scud missiles from North Korea.

Comment: Iran was seriously exploring the possibility of working with China to develop its nuclear facilities and produce nuclear weapons, and [working] with China and North Korea to obtain missiles, develop them, and produce them in Iran. We can provide the following indications to confirm the above mentioned information:

First: The increased number of Chinese workers in Iran in this field due to

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Experts from China and North Korea in Isfahan, on a project to develop and produce surface-to-surface missiles

170 missiles from North Korea

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Iran obtaining a Chinese nuclear reactor for research during the second half of 1991, in addition to delivering missile technology related to the joint project, which was developed in China by the end of 1991. (The information related to this subject was submitted in previous letters.)

Second: Iran has signed a contract with North Korea for the supply of 300 surface-to-surface B & C Scud type missiles. It has obtained up to now about 170 missiles out of the 300. (The information was submitted in previous letters). [*The following hand-written note is next to this paragraph: 170 missiles from North Korea*]

Third: Iran started producing missiles on 4 February 1991, assisted by China and North Korea as we indicated in our secret letter no. 68 dated 5 August 1991. [*The following hand-written note is next to this paragraph: Department 1, please attach the letter for discussion*]

Fourth: A group of Iranian experts, engineers, and technicians completed their training in the field of nuclear [*physics*] in China at the end of February 1992, and their number is estimated to be 35 persons. The information was sent in our letters no. 504 dated 20 December 1991, and no. 47 dated 20 January 1992.

H. The issue of launching nuclear bombs by aircraft is a problem that requires aircraft designed for that [*specific*] purpose and having the ability to perform special maneuvering. This problem was solved at the end September 1991, when Iran and Cuba decided to develop their cooperation in the nuclear field. A high-level Cuban delegation, led by the son of the Cuban President [*Fidel Castro*] and the president of the Cuban Atomic Energy Agency who continued his training in the Soviet Union, visited Iran and the Iranian nuclear facilities, including Bushehr. The delegation met the Iranian President Rafsanjani and at the end of the visit they signed the report of bilateral cooperation in the nuclear field.

The importance of Cuba comes from the military experience that Cuba gained from the Soviet Union as part of the Soviet Union's operational plan to confront the possibility of a nuclear world war. The Soviet Union maintained special systems for launching nuclear weapons in Cuba; the most important one is a squadron of MiG 21 BN (enhanced to MiG 23 Flogger-F) in a place near Havana

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inside special shelters in mountainous regions. The agreement that was signed during the Cuban delegation's visit to Iran includes the exchange of Cuban expertise in the field of nuclear weapon launching systems from aircraft for Iranian oil.

- I. Dr. Jamran returned to Kazakhstan in early October 1991 to complete the final agreement of the contract details. Iran agreed to pay an amount of 130-150 million dollars for the purchase of the three nuclear weapons. Three million [dollars] was paid as a down payment to one of the banks in Montreaux, Switzerland, and other letters of credit opened with banks in Germany. When the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Committee started accelerating in mid-October 1991, the expansion of the Mulwim Kilihah nuclear establishment in Qazvin included two uranium enrichment laboratories and nuclear establishments in Isfahan Complex for Defense Industries. What is worth mentioning here is that the Soviet nuclear reactor, which Iran obtained from India, is located in Qazvin.

Iran managed to employ about 50 nuclear scientists and about 200 technicians to build the weapons, with the majority from the (Semipalatinsk-21) Kurchatov Establishment for the production of nuclear weapons in Kazakhstan. Experts were paid a monthly salary of 5,000 dollars along additional compensation. Experts are supposed to be in Iran by the end of 1991.

Iran invited some advanced nuclear scientists from Kurchatov Nuclear Institute in Moscow to train Iranian scientists in Iran or any other place for a monthly salary of 30,000 dollars along with additional compensation. In late October 1991, [Deputy President] Mahjarani emphasized the necessity for developing nuclear weapons in Iran, so that Muslims can confront Israel. He also emphasized to all Muslims, including [those in] Iran, that they must reach an advanced level [of technological sophistication] in the nuclear field in order to confront the Israeli nuclear challenge. Muslims must work toward obtaining nuclear weapons that will make them strong. Iran has not denied its desire to develop nuclear weapons for this end.

- J. The main decisions [for developing nuclear weapons] were reached in one week in mid-November 1991.

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On 10 November 1991, Iranian President Rafsanjani held a meeting for the National Security Council with a number of the Iranian High Military Command. Scientific questions were addressed to senior officers who were asked to prepare answers within one week. On 17 November 1991, the next meeting was held and after the senior officers presented their answers, they were allowed to leave the meeting. The people who stayed in the meeting were: Iranian Leader 'Ali Khamenei, Iranian President Rafsanjani, Defense Minister 'Ali Akbar Tarkan, Iranian Revolutionary Guards Commander Mohsin Rida'i, Intelligence Director 'Ali Falahi, and Ahmed Khomeini.

At the end of the meeting, President Rafsanjani announced the meeting's decision, saying, "Iran must have nuclear weapons for the benefit of the region, only because the Arabs proved that they are incapable of doing so. Such weapons will be necessary for [Islamic] solidarity and to refresh Islamic unity." President Rafsanjani pointed out the American threats regarding the likeliness of Iran obtaining nuclear weapons. "Under the current international circumstances, the Iranian people must depend on their [own] capabilities and power."

The next day, the Iranians started assessing their military capabilities through discussions and [military] maneuvers under the name of Zuhd-1 in the south of Iran, led by the Chief of Staff of the Joint Command, Major General Shahbazi. Among the forces that were tested was the Airborne Forces Corps, which is a new corps with approximately 30,000 troops emphasizing airborne operations and the use of helicopters.

The operations included the concentration [of forces], fast deployment, and crossing of water barriers by units of the marines, commandos and many squadrons of fighter and bomber aircraft that consisted of 40 aircraft formations at a time, the C -130 transport aircraft, and helicopters that participated with the airborne forces in activities deep inside the enemy's territory. Also, fighting in circumstances in which chemical agents are used was one of the main operations. The [military] maneuvers were attended by some of the High Command members such as [REDACTED], representative of 'Ali Khamenei, Dr. Fairuz Abbadi, Chief of Staff of the General Command Headquarters;

[The following are hand-written notes on the right side of the page]

- 1) Make photocopies of this page and the next page to keep it in Zuhd-1 maneuver file.*
- 2) Department 1 to follow on the airborne forces (Beijing secret letter 43 dated 31 March 1992)*
- 3) Confirm the ranks of officers whose names are mentioned in their troops [units]*

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the Chief of Consultants Board at the General Command, Major General Zahir Nijad, Brigadier General Rashid, Dr. Jamran from the General Command Headquarters, and a number of high-ranking officers and officials.

It is very important for the Airborne Forces Corps to have the ability to cross the water barriers because this gives indications of the [illegible] and ambitions of the Iranian leadership at the regional level, such as crossing the [Arabian] Gulf and intervening in the Arabian Gulf countries.

In late November 1991, the Iranian leadership held a meeting with the High Command of Volunteers, the Basij, a popular force established to defend the [Iranian] Revolution. 'Ali Khamenei stressed the importance of strengthening and expanding the Basij Forces. The leader of the Basij Forces, Brigadier General 'Ali Rida Aqshar, also explained the procedures and preparations for training and organizing the 20 million man army. The Iranian leadership has performed an exercise to test national mobilization, during which the Minister of Foreign Affairs 'Ali Akbar Wilayati completed a tour of the Soviet Republics of Central Asia, signed contracts with them, and promised them the financial support for establishing various projects. A high-ranking employee at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kyrgyzstan said, "Iran used Wilayati and the accompanying delegation to send a number of intelligence officers to be sure of the smuggling routes and the movement of parts of nuclear weapons and other relevant equipment." The parts and the equipment were transferred by vehicles and trains through the Turkmenistan Republic, as there are no checkpoints on the border with Iran.

K. The President of Turkmenistan [*Saparmurat Niyazov*] visited Tehran early October 1991 and signed many agreements during his visit. He gave special consideration to improving and expanding roads, building bridges and railways, and opening the borders for individuals and commodities [*to pass*] between the two countries. Iran sent many thousands of Basij militia and engineers from the [*Iranian Revolutionary*] Guards to the border area in order to open roads and build bridges and railways in the border area, especially in Marzbul. In the meantime, military nuclear activities in the Soviet Islamic Republics had developed greatly since late December 1991. Russian observers believe that the existence of nuclear weapons in the Republic of Kazakhstan means that the Islamic nuclear bomb already existed.

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Officials from Kazakhstan have indeed announced that they are in control of the nuclear weapons that are present on their territory. Russian officials believe that the government of Kazakhstan will provide nuclear assistance to the Islamic countries as a way of announcing their return to the Islamic world. At the time, Tajikistan controlled the uranium and nuclear weapons production establishments present on its territory, along with [providing] suggestions to develop uranium production with the Arab countries. In Dushanbe, several discussions were held with representatives from Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Pakistan about preparing enriched uranium and [nuclear] weapons-related technology. Hence, it was indicated that it was possible to purchase 15 kilograms of enriched uranium in mid-January 1992. However, Tajikistani authorities [later] declared that no enriched uranium would be sold outside of the country.

- L. An accurate inspection of the main Iranian [nuclear] arming programs since the summer of 1991 will clarify the strategic priorities in this field; among these programs are: [*There is a hand-written note to the right side of this paragraph that reads, "To be photocopied and sent to Department 3. Beijing Secret Letter 43 of 31 March 1992."*]

First: Updating the Iranian Navy takes place while taking into consideration the possibility of confronting the American Navy. Admiral Ahmad Mohammad Zadeh, Commander of the Guards' Navy Forces in the Second Zone, warned that the US Navy is determined to dominate the Gulf, and emphasized that the Iranian Navy is armed, trained, and ready to repel any intervention attempt.

Second: In late November 1991, Iran started updating its Silkworm missiles and other anti-ship missiles within a short program under the supervision of Vice Admiral Tawwab and Vice Admiral Abbas Muhtaji. A number of batteries were withdrawn from the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf area to the factory in Dar Khawin, where the Chinese experts are in the process of updating the warheads and guidance systems.

Third: Training the crews of the Kilo-class Soviet submarines that Iran had previously purchased from the Soviet Union is still ongoing in Riga in the former Soviet Republic of Latvia, where the first submarine will arrive soon.

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Fourth: Rebuilding the supersonic air [*force*] capability once the 40-50 MiG-29 aircraft arrive in Iran the summer of 1990, and **then Revolutionary Guards pilots will be sent for training in North Korea.** In mid-July 1991, the Iranian Air Force Commander, Brigadier General Mansur Sattari, negotiated an aircraft deal in Moscow for 48 MiG-29, 24 Sukoi-24, 24 MiG-31, Tupolev bombers, and reconnaissance aircraft. Moreover, experts and technicians from Russia and North Korea participated in the maintenance operations for 91 Iraqi fighter aircraft [*seized during the Gulf War*] made by the Soviets: 24 Sukoi-24, 40 Sukoi-22, 40 Sukoi-20, 7 Sukoi-25, 4 MiG-23 BN, 7 MiG-23 ML, 1 MiG-23 U, and 1 MiG-29, wherein at least 85 [*aircraft*] are operable and will be given to the Revolutionary Guards' Aviation [*division*] who will have more than 100 Russian fighter aircraft. Additionally, Iran and Pakistan are cooperating to maintain 24 Mirage F-1 aircraft [*Iraqi planes seized during Gulf War*]. Moreover, in autumn 1991, the Syrians sent a large air force delegation, including pilots and technicians, to help the experts and technicians from Russia and North Korea to maintain and operate the Iraqi aircraft. This delegation worked with the Iranian experts in order to enable the Iranian pilots to fly the Russian-made aircraft.

Fifth: On 3 February 1991, the Commander of the Iranian Air Force, Brigadier General Sattari, announced that the Iranian Air Force had MiG-29, Sukoi- 24, and F-7 aircraft in good condition in terms of personnel and equipment. Going back to mid-November 1991, Iran requested to expedite supplying it with the aircraft, as a part of its strategic agreement with Russia. From November to December 1991, in addition to what was agreed on in September, Russia provided Iran with 24 to 28 MiG-27 aircraft and a few Sukoi fighter-bomber aircraft

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Beijing Secret letter no. 43 of 31 March 1992

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although at the end of January 1992, it was decided to deliver 18 combat aircraft and 2 new Ilyushin A-50 aircraft that are equipped with reconnaissance and early warning devices.

Sixth: More than 80 Iranian pilots and technicians graduated from the Soviet Air Force Academy and returned to Iran. More importantly, MiG-27 Flogger D/J aircraft were the ones that were rushed to Iran but were not included in the previous original contracts because of their similarity to the MiG-23 BN Flogger-F aircraft that were in Cuba, which were equipped with a nuclear bomb launching system. This means that, in mid-November 1991, Iran had realized its need for aircraft equipped with a nuclear weapons launching system.

M. All available evidence strongly indicates that Iran had obtained all of what it needs to assemble three tactical nuclear weapons by the end of 1991. At the beginning of January 1992, there was an indication that an assembly process started for three nuclear weapons in Iran, from parts that were obtained from Kazakhstan. A highly reliable Iranian official source confirmed in late January 1992 that Iran had obtained three nuclear bombs and a number of Soviet specialists and experts who are in Iran, in the Al-Kubra area [*Greater Iran area*]. Henceforth, the Russian response to this incident states that it is possible to purchase tactical nuclear weapons from Kazakhstan, and Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated that certain Islamic countries tried [*such a thing*], but all of these tactical nuclear weapons were withdrawn into Russia before the operation. It is notable to mention here that Yeltsin's admission does not directly conflict with the incoming reports from Iran, which indicate that the Iranians have purchased parts and equipment for nuclear weapons while Yeltsin's statement indicated that the nuclear weapons were withdrawn into Russia.

N. The first answered question was, "What type of weapons has Tehran obtained?" The Iranian sources did not explain this. They indicated, however, that Iran obtained air-dropped bombs and missile warheads. When the *Pravda* [*Soviet Party*] newspaper reported the subject,

[*The following is a hand-written note to the right side of this page that reads*]:

What is the number of pilots who had graduated (from academies in the Soviet Union)?

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it mentioned missile warheads. Because the parts of the [*nuclear*] weapons arrived from different sources, Iran could have obtained the two types [*of nuclear weapons*]. This leads us to the second question, "When would Iran obtain an active nuclear weapon?" In fact, this depends greatly on the parts and equipment. The team in charge from the [*former*] Soviet Republics was described as a specialized team, which means that the team assembled the parts of the same weapon. Failing at that time would complicate the matter, and the assembling process would require a long time. However, losing the equipment or the materials is not a central problem. Specifically, in mid-October 1991, some equipment that was used in the production of special materials for the manufacturing of nuclear weapons was seized in Italy. So determining the approximate time for the production of nuclear weapons by Iran can be predicted if we suppose that most or all the parts and a number of technicians and scientists arrived in Iran in December 1991, and the process started as all sources have indicated. Furthermore, there is no decision by Tehran to delay the start of the process to a specific time, so the process should not take more than 3 to 4 months. Thus, Iran will own operational nuclear weapons between February and April 1992. Strategic military considerations could determine the final date for Iran obtaining effective nuclear weapons. Since the late 1980s, and specifically since the fall of 1991, Iran offered to provide Syria with a nuclear [*power*] plant in order to have the final requirements to confront Israel from all sides. Hence, Syria reached advanced negotiations with China to obtain a small reactor, which, in spite of its size and inability to be used for direct military usages, will be the foundation for developing the military nuclear capabilities of Syria.

Q. Syria and Iran coordinate their regional policy at the highest levels, including discussions of their joint strategic policy at the presidential level. In late September 1991, the Chief of Staff of the Syrian Army, General Hikmat al-Shihabi, visited Tehran to coordinate their [*mutual*] defense policy. He visited the Iranian establishments for military industries and agreed to cooperate in the field of military industry.

[*There is an illegible hand-written note to the right side of this page*]

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The aforementioned individual was carrying a written letter from the Syrian President to the Iranian President, which confirms the importance of relations between the two countries. In his letter, the Iranian President emphasized the joint strategic goals of the two countries. Al-Shihabi stated that the participation of Syria in the Madrid Conference was to emphasize the Palestinian right to retrieve the occupied territories rather than to achieve peace with Israel. The final agreement between the two countries was ready to be signed on 12 October 1991, but both sides decided to delay the official signing for political reasons. Consequently, they assured implementation of the agreement's contents and confirmed the following:

First: In early October 1991, a high [*ranking*] official Syrian military delegation led by the presidency of Lieutenant General Dillati arrived in Tehran to work on implementing the technical and practical aspects of the agreement, and stayed there until the end of January 1992. Some of the sources mentioned that the cooperation agreement between the two countries was signed in mid-January 1992, in Damascus, while other sources confirmed that the agreement is in place without being officially signed.

Second: After the first round of negotiations [*Israeli-Palestinian*] in Washington, it seems that Syria realized that there has been no concession on the part of Israel and the gap between both sides remained the same. Additionally, the Syrian President is convinced that there is no way to break this stalemate except by war.

Third: The Syrian Government announced the decision of the Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad, stating that Syria is not going to participate in the multilateral discussions because Israel is not serious about achieving peace and withdrawing from the occupied Arab territories. Moreover, Syria will oppose arms control, because the West should force Israel to remove the nuclear weapons and all weapons of mass destruction instead of criticizing the Islamic nuclear weapons [*program*] as the first stage for disarmament in the region.

Fourth: One of the important Syrian officials predicted that in December 1991

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... the war between Syria and Israel would break out between June and September 1992, and that Syria has an idea that the first phase of this war will be a preemptive strike by the Israeli Air Force deep inside Syria to curb a series of Syrian attacks using the M-9 and SS-21 missiles on Israel. Moreover, Syria is confident that it will avoid the impact of the first Israeli strike, while Israel will be cautious about the impact of Syrian missiles and aware that Syria will consequently be working under a cover (what is meant here is the nuclear cover).

However, Tehran disclosed its nuclear weapons activity at the beginning of February 1992. In the Friday sermon on 7 February 1992, 'Ali Khamenei confirmed that American arrogance and the Great Powers threaten the world more than the danger of nuclear weapons, which was discussed in the summit in America. Discussing the real danger of the international imperialist countries lead by the United States, which the developing countries are confronting, and recognizing American arrogance in the world will automatically lead to a decrease in nuclear danger. The next day, during a speech addressed to the [Iranian] Air Force officers, Khamenei specified his argument widely [to a wide audience] by stating that the United States is using reports indicating that Iran is trying to obtain nuclear weapons and experience, in order to dominate the Gulf. "Today, the Great Powers prepare a campaign accusing Iran of being armed with advanced weapons. However, this campaign is illusive and exaggerated because their main goal is to justify their existence and to scare other states, especially in the region."

In fact, all technicians, politicians, and strategic men who are aware of this indicate that Iran will own three nuclear weapons as of February - April 1992. Also, Iran is very close to developing its nuclear capabilities by using its [own] resources. Iran is expected to develop nuclear weapons before the end of the current decade. In addition to the assistance and experience from China and North Korea, Iran has obtained the appropriate Pakistani assistance to develop its efforts in this field.

In November 1991, Iran coordinated with Pakistan to obtain more expertise in order to [more fully] develop its nuclear capabilities;

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yet, Iran was no longer in a hurry to reduce its nuclear program. It allocated 500 million dollars to complete its nuclear program, which is a large increase from the 200 million dollars that was allocated at the end of the 1980s, where most of the allocations went to cover the costs of obtaining technology from the West. During that time, Iran tried hard to tempt and persuade advanced nuclear scientists from the Soviet Union to train Iranian scientists in Iran or any other place and to develop the Iranian nuclear establishments. Among those scientists were: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] from Kurchatov Nuclear Academy in Moscow, [REDACTED] from Kazakhstan, and [REDACTED] from Tajikistan.

Six of the advanced Soviet scientists and experts that had been contracted are currently working in the Iranian Nuclear Establishment to produce heavy-water and enrich the uranium in Karj near Tehran. By the end of January 1992, tens of Soviet experts have already started working in establishments in Karkan near the Caspian Sea, Sluwim Kaylih in Qazvin, Karj, Isfahan, and Drakhuwayn.

R. Nonetheless, Iran is convinced that these matters and other efforts will make Iran a main nuclear power that will lead the Islamic world. [*The following hand-written note was to the right side of the paragraph above; it reads, "Russian experts in Iran"*]

3. Conclusions:

- A. Since the 1980s, Iran resumed interest in developing its nuclear [*weapons*] programs. This interest started seriously when its war with our country [*Iraq*] came to an end. Moreover, Iran made some contacts and sent delegations to Germany, France, Argentina, Mexico, Pakistan, and China to develop the programs mentioned. Consequently, the collapse of the Soviet Union helped in supporting the interests of Iran and gave it the opportunity to secure what it needs in terms of nuclear technology and weapons until it obtained most of what it needed by the end of 1991.
- B. The activities listed below show the advanced stage that Iran has reached in the nuclear field, in addition to its determination to continue [*progressing*] in this field in order to become a principle [*powerful*] country in the region:

First: Opening the Jabir Bin-Hayyan Center on 10 February 1990 to train Iranian technicians and experts in the nuclear field.

Second: Sending groups of nuclear technicians and engineers to be trained in China in addition to close cooperation with Pakistan in this field.

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Third: Announcing the opening in February 1992 of a course that includes 20 nuclear experts and scientists, who would be trained by experts from Iran and [other] friendly countries.

Fourth: Focusing on nuclear research, searching for and extracting uranium in Yazd, and following the local procedures to separate and enrich uranium.

Fifth: Working on obtaining missiles and aircraft that would carry these nuclear weapons.

Sixth: Expediting the creation of an Iranian military arsenal regardless of the costs, to be at an appropriate level [which would be] suitable for possessing nuclear capabilities.

Seventh: Working on public training and implementing the idea of building an army of 20 million soldiers.

C. We do not believe that Iran can finish producing nuclear weapons through the program, on which Iran is working with the assistance of China, Pakistan, and other countries, before the end of the current decade, as mentioned in our secret letter 129 of 25 October 1991. Nonetheless, the technology and nuclear materials, in addition to the Soviet scientists that Iran obtained, could help in expediting this production.

D. We believe that the Iranian regime will declare its aggressive expansionist policy after possessing nuclear weapons. This policy will be directed first and foremost against Iraq by taking advantage of the current [unfavorable] international position towards Iraq. At the same time, Iran will try to avoid confrontation with the United States, in spite of the media rousing against the United States. Furthermore, Rafsanjani's government will work on expanding relations with the West and communicating with the United States after the elections [1992 legislative elections], which all sources expect the Moderates (Rafsanjani Group) to win with a majority.

E. In spite of the current conditions, threatening Iraq means threatening the Arabic Peninsula and the Arab Gulf. Thus, the recurrence of the fears of the sheikhs, governments, and people of the Gulf regarding the growth of Iranian power will make them resort to the United States, whose confrontation with Iran is going to be based on its interests and political developments.

Please review.

Attachments

(Illegible) of the original report written in English

[Signature]
Staff Colonel
Khudayr 'Abbas Nasif
Military Attaché
31 March 1992

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