

EU backs under-fire Iran N-deal

United call: Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders, right, welcomes his Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif in Brussels. AFP/JOHN THYS

European Union powers on Thursday urged U.S. President Donald Trump to endorse a key nuclear agreement with Iran saying the deal is essential for international security.

The Foreign Ministers of Britain, France and Germany threw their weight behind the pact limiting Iran's nuclear ambitions and insisted that the Islamic Republic is respecting it.

"There is no indication today that could call into doubt Iranian respect of the agreement," French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian told reporters in Brussels, after a meeting between the Europeans and their Iranian counterpart Javad Zarif.

Mr. Le Drian called on all parties to uphold the agreement, noting that "our American allies should respect it as well. There is no particular reason for any rupture".

Under the accord, Iran slowed its nuclear programme in exchange for an easing of international economic sanctions. Mr. Trump is expected to decide by Friday whether to extend the sanctions relief or re-impose the restrictions his predecessor, President Barack Obama, suspended two years ago. British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson also noted that no one has put forward a plan that might be as effective in curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions.

No better solution

"It's incumbent on those who oppose the (deal) really to come up with that better solution, because we haven't seen it so far," he said.

Officials from major world powers and Iran meet roughly every three to four months to assess implementation of the deal, which is monitored by the world's nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The pact is underpinned on the U.S. side by a presidential waiver of nuclear-related sanctions on Iran's central bank. U.S. officials and others familiar with the administration's deliberations told the Associated Press that Mr. Trump is likely to back the accord for now but that he may pair his decision with new, targeted sanctions on Iranian businesses and people.

The restrictions could hit some firms and individuals whose sanctions were previously scrapped. This might test Tehran's willingness to abide by its side of the bargain. EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, who hosted Thursday's meeting, said that "unity is essential to preserve a deal that is working, that is making the world safer, that is preventing a nuclear arms race in the region."

END

Downloaded from crackIAS.com

© Zuccess App by crackIAS.com