

Russia says there's no alternative to Iran nuclear deal



Moscow, April 25 (RHC)-- The Kremlin has thrown its weight behind the 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran, saying there is no alternative to the accord amid U.S. threats to try to re-negotiate the international document.

"We do not know what is being talked about, but we support the nuclear deal as it is today. We think that there are no alternatives," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Wednesday. He also stressed that Moscow supports keeping in place the nuclear pact, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Peskov further questioned whether it would be possible to reach a new Iran deal amid pressure by U.S. President Donald Trump to renegotiate the accord or face a U.S. exit.

Separately on Wednesday, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini emphasized that the JCPOA was working and thus should be saved. "On what can happen in the future, we'll see in the future, but there is one deal existing, it's working, it needs to be preserved," she said upon her arrival for an international conference on the future of Syria and the region in the Belgian capital, Brussels.

Trump has been a vociferous critic of the Iran nuclear agreement, which was negotiated under his predecessor, Barack Obama. He has called the agreement the "worst deal ever" and even threatened to tear it up.

Back in January, Trump said it was the last time he was extending the sanctions relief for Iran as part of the nuclear deal, giving the European signatories a May 12 deadline to fix what he claimed to be the “flaws” in the agreement or he would refuse to waive those bans.

During a joint press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday, Trump reiterated his hostile stance on the JCPOA and described it as a “bad” deal “with decayed foundations,” noting: “Nobody knows what I’m going to do on the 12th.”

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Tehran will “mostly likely” abandon the agreement should the United States choose to withdraw from it.

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