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Fact Sheet

Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation

Washington, DC

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UN Security Council Resolution 1803 on Iran's Nuclear Program

UN Security Council Resolution 1803

On March 3, 2008, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution (UNSCR) [1803](#), with 14 votes in favor and none against (one country, Indonesia, abstained). This is the fifth time the Security Council has acted on the Iran nuclear issue. It is the fourth time the Council has acted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter to impose legally binding sanctions on Iran for the proliferation risks presented by its nuclear program and its failure to suspend its proliferation sensitive nuclear activities.

UNSCR 1803 is consistent with the international community's effort to increase incrementally the pressure on the Government of Iran in a targeted way that avoids broader sanctions that would be harmful to the Iranian people. The resolution's adoption follows on the heels of yet [another report](#) by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, which noted that the major issue of Iran's "alleged studies" of activities "with a possible military nuclear dimension" has not been resolved, and other issues are still subject to "correct and complete" verification.

UNSCR [1803](#) (2008) requires Iran to suspend all uranium enrichment, regardless of its location in Iran, as well as research and development associated with centrifuges and uranium enrichment. Although the IAEA has not reported on any ongoing reprocessing activities in Iran, those are also covered by the suspension requirement. In addition, UNSCR 1803 requires Iran to halt its construction of the Arak Heavy Water Research Reactor and activities at the Heavy Water Production Plant at Arak.

The resolution includes several important provisions:

- **Requires Iran to suspend enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, as well as work on heavy water-related activities.**

[Resolutions 1737](#) (2006) and [1803](#) (2008) include exceptions for states to engage with Iran in the limited context of support to Iran's light water reactors, which can provide electricity for civilian use. While all reactors produce plutonium and carry some latent proliferation risk, heavy water reactors (HWRs) are especially problematic because they are more conducive to producing sufficient quantities of weapons-usable nuclear material (plutonium). Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant is a light water reactor that Russia is building for Iran and for which Russia will both provide new fuel and take back used fuel—all under IAEA safeguards. The heavy water reactor that Iran is developing at Arak, however, is a serious proliferation risk. All technical assistance on this heavy water reactor is prohibited under the UN Security Council resolutions. The terms "light water" and "heavy water" refer to the substances used for key functions of a reactor: light water is ordinary water, while "heavy water" is made up of the heavier hydrogen isotope deuterium.

- **Expands the list of designated individuals and entities** subject to an asset freeze and travel restrictions to include:
 - Thirteen individuals, including the heads of several nuclear projects and front companies.
 - Twelve entities, including several front companies and contractors to the nuclear and missile programs.
- Establishes an entirely new **travel ban** on 5 individuals designated in a separate annex to the resolution (Annex II).
- **Strengthens the technology transfer ban** to include all "dual-use" materials and equipment that, because they could be used for both nuclear and non-nuclear purposes, are regulated by the [Nuclear Suppliers Group](#). UNSCR 1803 also prohibits States from transferring certain technologies associated with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV's) to Iran, which were previously exempt from the broad prohibition on Missile Technology Control Regime-listed commodities established in UNSCR 1737.
- Calls upon all States to exercise **vigilance in granting export credits, guarantees, or insurance in connection with trade with Iran**, so that such financial support does not directly or indirectly contribute to Iran's proliferation sensitive nuclear activities or development of a nuclear weapon delivery system.
- Calls for all States to exercise **vigilance over the activities of financial institutions in their territories with all banks domiciled in Iran, as well as their branches and subsidiaries abroad**, especially Bank Melli and Bank Saderat, due to their connections to proliferation sensitive activities and the development of nuclear weapon delivery systems.
- For the first time, calls for all countries to **inspect the cargo** of aircraft and vessels of two companies—Iran Air Cargo and Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines—bound to and from Iran, if that cargo is suspected of containing goods prohibited under previous Chapter VII UN Security Council resolutions [1737](#), [1747](#) or [1803](#).
- Endorses the need for Iran to provide **full transparency to the IAEA**, especially in implementing the Additional Protocol and all aspects of Iran's Safeguards Agreement, including the provisions in "Code 3.1" that require Iran to make early declarations of all nuclear facilities.
- **Expands the mandate of the UNSCR [1737](#) Iran Sanctions Committee** to monitor implementation of measures in both this new resolution and Security Council Resolution [1747](#).

Previous Resolutions

UN Security Council Resolution [1803](#) is the most recent of three legally binding, Chapter VII resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran. The first two, UNSCR 1737 and UNSCR [1747](#), require Iran to:

- Fully cooperate with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues related to its nuclear program;

- Verifiably suspend all proliferation sensitive nuclear activities, including uranium enrichment-related, reprocessing and heavy water-related activities;
- Implement the Additional Protocol to Iran's Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Protocol grants the IAEA expanded access to information and sites, including at the research and development stage. Its aim is to enable the IAEA to provide assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear activities.

Other key elements of both resolutions taken together include:

- A requirement that all States prevent the transfer to Iran of a broad range of proliferation sensitive items and related technical and financial assistance/resources/services related to these items that could contribute to Iran's proscribed nuclear or nuclear delivery system programs;
- An asset freeze on entities and individuals, as well as those acting on their behalf or entities owned/controlled by them, designated by the Security Council or Iran Sanctions Committee for their involvement in Iran's nuclear and missile programs;
- A call for vigilance and restraint regarding travel by designated individuals;
- A ban on arms exports from Iran and a call on states to prevent the transfer to Iran of arms listed on the UN Register on Conventional Arms;
- A call on all States and international financial institutions not to enter into new commitments for financial assistance to the Government of Iran, except for humanitarian or developmental purposes;
- A positive incentive that Iran's full and verifiable compliance will contribute to a diplomatic, negotiated solution beneficial to Iran. These benefits include cooperation on peaceful nuclear energy technology, regional security, and international trade and investment.

Related Additional International Measures and Verification Issues

In addition to the above resolutions, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has issued two guidance papers on implementing the financial provisions of UNSCRs [1737](#) and [1747](#). FATF is an inter-governmental body whose purpose is the development and promotion of national and international policies to combat money laundering and terrorist financing. FATF has also issued two statements in the past six months warning of the risks arising from deficiencies in Iran's anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing (AML/CTF) regime. These guidance papers and statements can be found on the FATF website at www.fatf-gafi.org.





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