



Technical Note on Iran's Enrichment-Related Notifications to the IAEA

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Regarding Iran's notification to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that it will start to increase several uranium enrichment related activities, these announcements are not dire, but likely signal a return to Iran's past behavior of pushing against Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) provisions and testing the resolve of the parties to strongly enforce it.

As [reported](#) by The Associated Press, Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) spokesman Behrouz Kamalvandi stated that Iran notified the IAEA in a letter that it is making arrangements for "production of UF4 and UF6 gases." This is not a banned activity under the JCPOA. It sets up future ramped up enrichment, so it should not be dismissed, but for now the announcement is more bark than bite.

Kamalvandi also stated that Iran notified the IAEA of rotor production. Rotor production is supposed to be limited to Iran's needs for allowed centrifuges under the JCPOA. Again, such production sets up future enrichment. Iran has [pushed the envelope](#) before on rotor production.

Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the AEOI, also stated that Iran will prepare work to increase advanced centrifuge production and that work is so far limited to centrifuge production. It is unclear which advanced centrifuges Salehi is talking about, but Iran has JCPOA limits it must stay under on all of its advanced centrifuges. Iran is supposed to only produce what it needs to stay under those limits and those involved in R&D cannot accumulate enriched uranium. Whether Iran intends to surpass the JCPOA limits is yet to be seen. Iran has [pushed against the limits](#) on advanced centrifuge production before.

Taken together, these announcements are not cause for alarm but likely represent Iran trying to increase pressure on Europe to maintain the JCPOA. It will be up to the parties to the JCPOA to ensure Iran does not surpass the limits or intended meaning of provisions that are not spelled out concretely, a behavior that the Trump administration's policy of strong JCPOA enforcement largely curtailed in 2017.