



Parchin: A Pre-Comprehensive Agreement Update

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A May 18, 2015 commercial satellite image of the Parchin military site shows activities possibly related to the on-going refurbishment of the site's buildings or post-refurbishment clean-up. A priority is the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) gaining access to this site. However, the extent of Iran's modifications to the site and its buildings since 2012 have likely disrupted the IAEA's verification methods. As a result, Iran will need to allow access to additional military and military-related sites, key individuals associated with the alleged activities at Parchin, and inspection of related equipment. Iran meeting these terms should be one of the key conditions for suspending European Union (EU) and U.S. economic and financial sanctions.

Recent DigitalGlobe imagery dated May 18, 2015 shows activity at a site at the Parchin military complex, possibly relating to the refurbishment of the site's buildings or post-refurbishment clean-up (see figure 1). Five buildings at this site (at least one of which is alleged to have hosted high explosive tests related to the development of nuclear weapons) are surrounded by some type of debris, which could either be related to previous refurbishment activities or cleanup activities after the refurbishment. In [January 2015](#) imagery, debris outside these buildings was not visible (see figure 2).¹

This type of debris has been visible in earlier images (see figures 3, 4, and 5). In May 2014, the IAEA reported that satellite imagery showed construction activity related to the removal/replacement or refurbishment of the site's two main buildings' external wall structures."² The April 25, 2015 image (figure 4) taken just before the May 2014 IAEA finding shows debris similar to that in the most recent image. Similarly, the debris in the most recent image may be related to refurbishment of the external parts of the buildings or the subsequent clean-up.

In addition, the recent imagery shows a series of eight unidentified circular-shaped objects in a strip of asphalt along the adjacent road (see figure 1). Oil or dirt spills and a large open bed truck are visible at the site, while a small building that had been located in the far north corner of the site (right of figure 1) has been dismantled.

Urgency of Access to Parchin

Iran's extensive modifications to this site and its buildings since 2012 have likely disrupted the IAEA's ability to conduct necessary verification. As a result, successfully implementing a long-term nuclear agreement with Iran will require that IAEA inspectors have access not only to Parchin but other related sites, equipment, and individuals. In particular, Iran will need to:

- Allow visits to Parchin and related military sites where nuclear weapons-related activities are alleged to have taken place;

¹ Why this debris is not visible in January 2015 image is unknown. It is possible that the pavement had been altered as a result of resurfacing activities. Several signatures in the January image suggest that Iran was sealing chips and cracks in the asphalt.

² Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency, *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, GOV/2014/28, May 23, 2014, <http://www.isisnucleariran.org/assets/pdf/iaea-iranreport-230514.pdf>.

- Allow access to the company where the explosive chamber was manufactured and provide information about other, similar chambers made by this company in the past; and
- Allow access to key equipment and individuals associated with the alleged activities at Parchin.

Iran meeting these terms should be one of the key conditions for suspending EU and U.S. economic and financial sanctions.

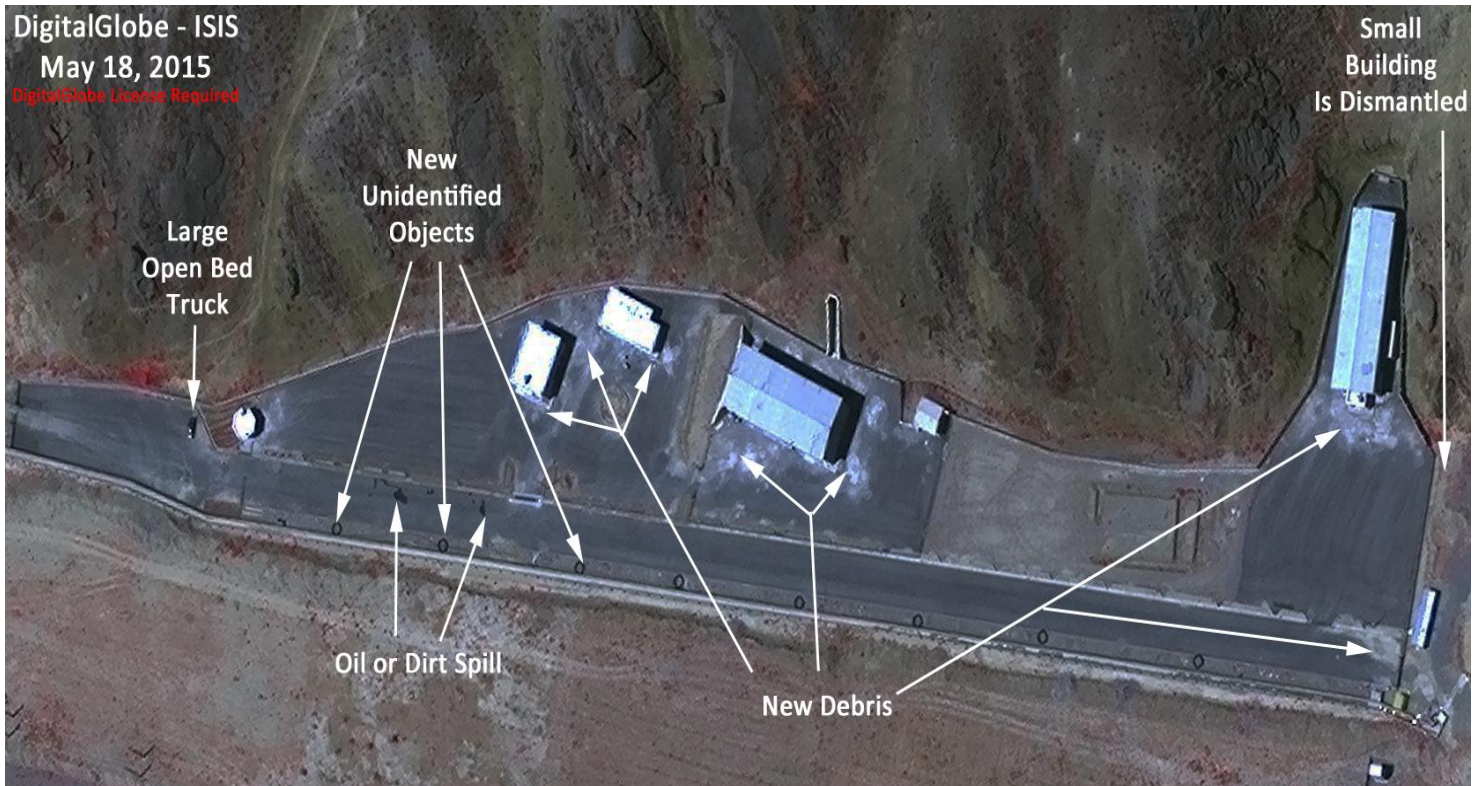


Figure 1. DigitalGlobe imagery showing the status of the alleged high explosive test site at the Parchin military complex on May 18, 2015. This is a color infrared image in which healthy vegetation appears red.



Figure 2. DigitalGlobe imagery showing the status of the alleged high explosive test site at the Parchin military complex on January 31, 2015. This is a color infrared image in which healthy vegetation appears red.



Figure 3. DigitalGlobe imagery shows the status of the alleged high explosive test site at the Parchin military complex on August 12, 2014.

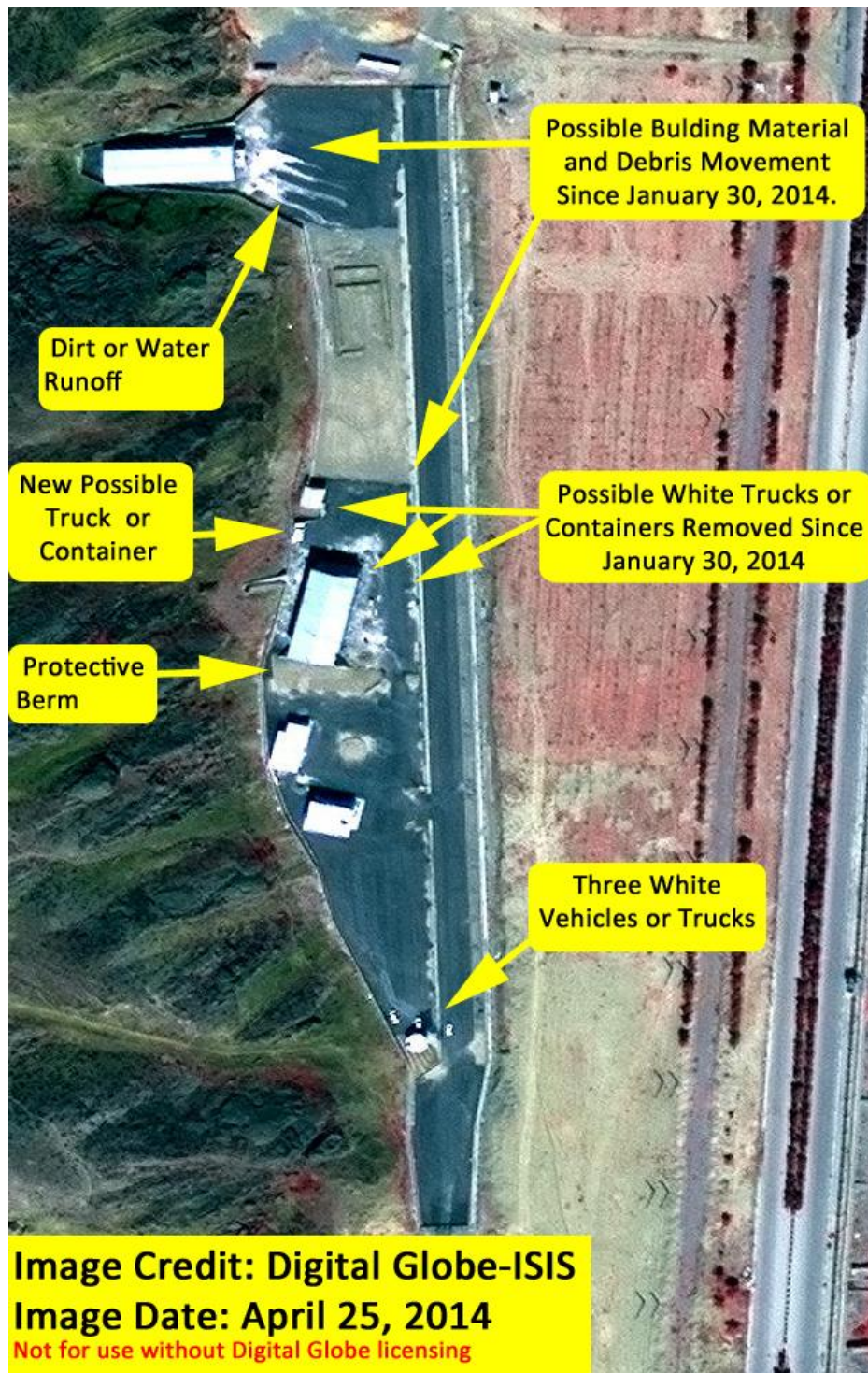


Figure 4. DigitalGlobe imagery shows the status of the alleged high explosive test site at the Parchin military complex on April 25, 2014. This is a color infrared image in which healthy vegetation appears red.



Image Credit: Digital Globe-ISIS
Image Date: January 30, 2014
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Figure 5. DigitalGlobe imagery shows the status of the alleged high explosive test site at the Parchin military complex on January 30, 2014.