

# Understanding Progress Under the Joint Plan of Action

By Peter Billerbeck | Published: 02/20/15

There is a global consensus that the best way to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon is at the negotiating table. The Obama Administration is leading a process that includes the U.S., UK, France, Russia, China, plus Germany, known as the P5+1, that has broken four decades of silence with Iran. As a result, the P5+1 was able to reach a major breakthrough in November 2013, when Iran agreed to an interim set of conditions, called the Joint Plan of Action (JPOA). The JPOA has had a significant effect in delaying Iran's nuclear weapons development and provides a way forward for measured re-engagement with Iran.

As Congress considers different legislative proposals, it's important to remember what the JPOA has accomplished.

The JPOA froze, and in some cases rolled back, components of Iran's nuclear weapons development for the first time. This included three important gains: (1) Freezing the processing of 20% enriched uranium, the installation of additional centrifuges, and construction of the Arak reactor; (2) Downblending 20% enriched uranium as well as newly-produced 3.5% uranium hexafluoride to uranium oxide; (3) Giving the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) unprecedented access to monitor Iranian nuclear facilities.





This matters because reducing 20% enriched uranium stocks reduces the quantity of material that is otherwise a short step away from becoming weapons-grade. Downblending or converting this material to uranium oxide powder makes it less usable for weapons purposes, as does limiting all enrichment to 5% (a level only sufficient for energy but not for weapons). These represent key steps towards preventing a nuclear Iran. These measures make it more difficult for Iran to make a break for the bomb and thus provide additional warning time to the U.S. and international community of any Iranian attempt to weaponize.

## References:

[January 20, 2014 IAEA report](#); [February 12, 2014 IAEA report](#); [July 20, 2014 IAEA report](#); [Arms Control Association on JPOA](#)

# PROGRESS UNDER THE JOINT PLAN OF ACTION

NATIONAL SECURITY  
PROGRAM

Key JPOA Accomplishments	Status	Proof
Freezing processing of 20% enriched uranium gas stocks.	Completed 	<b>VERIFIED</b> by January 20, 2014 IAEA report; outside experts concur
Downblending high enriched uranium gas down to uranium oxide powder for non-weapons use.	Completed 	<b>VERIFIED</b> by July 20, 2014 IAEA report; outside experts concur
Stopping operation of centrifuge cascades used to produce 20% enriched uranium.	Completed 	<b>VERIFIED</b> by January 20, 2014 IAEA report; outside experts concur
Allowing daily IAEA inspector access to nuclear facilities at Fordow and Natanz and monthly access to the Arak site.	Completed 	IAEA installed standing monitoring devices at Fordow and Natanz facilities as well as agreement on daily access to nuclear facilities. First monthly monitoring visit to Arak was Feb 12, 2014. [per Feb 20, 2014 IAEA report]