

[◀ Back to Article](#)[🖨 Click to Print](#)

Monday, Mar. 26, 2007

Russia, China Urge Iran to Heed U.N.

By AP

(MOSCOW) — The presidents of Russia and China on Monday called on Iran to fulfill the U.N. Security Council's demands over its disputed nuclear program — a sign of impatience from Iran's two closest allies over its continued defiance.

The joint call from Vladimir Putin and Hu Jintao came a day after Iran announced it was partially suspending cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency in response to the latest Security Council sanctions — a decision the United States said was a "step in the wrong direction."

Iran insisted it was not aiming to escalate the standoff with its partial suspension, which truncates the time period in which it will notify the U.N. about new nuclear projects. "Iran is not after adventurism. It does not want to violate international measures," said Kazem Jalali, the spokesman of parliament's committee on foreign policy and national security.

In their joint statement, Putin and Hu said their countries — permanent, veto-wielding Security Council members — were ready to "search for a comprehensive, long-term and mutually acceptable solution to the Iranian nuclear problem." They also emphasized that the increasingly tense dispute should be resolved "exclusively through peaceful means."

Russia and China have significant trade ties with Iran and have used their veto power to push for less stringent sanctions against their ally. That stance has often put them at odds with the other veto powers, the United States, Britain and France, which favor a tougher approach to the nuclear dispute.

But the two joined the rest of the Security Council on Saturday in voting to impose the new sanctions — the second in three months against Iran for its refusal to suspend uranium enrichment. The sanctions included the banning of Iranian arms exports and the freezing of assets of 28 people and organizations

involved in Iran's nuclear and missile programs. Iran rejected the sanctions and later announced a partial suspension of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Its hardline President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said the latest U.N. sanctions would not halt the country's uranium enrichment "even for a second."

Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, on Monday renewed an offer from six world powers to negotiate differences with Iran over its nuclear ambitions in a phone call with the country's top atomic negotiator, but the two sides came no closer to bridging differences, said Cristina Gallach, Solana's spokeswoman.

Ali Larijani, Iran's senior nuclear envoy accepted "an invitation for future contacts" with Solana, she told The Associated Press.

Solana and Larijani have been the principal negotiators on the issue of Iran's nuclear program, which the country says is intended for peaceful purposes but the West believes may be a cover for the development of nuclear weapons.

The European Union is eager to continue talks with the Iranians as part of the West's "twin-track" approach — gradually imposing tougher sanctions if the country refuses to halt enrichment while offering economic and political advantages if it falls into line.

Nicholas Burns, undersecretary for political affairs at the State Department, has indicated that the United States may seek a third round of penalties unless Iran responds positively to demands to end the enrichment program. Referring to the unanimous Security Council vote, Burns pointed out that even fellow nonaligned countries such as Indonesia — the world's largest Muslim country — and South Africa supported the measure. Iran is a longtime member of the Nonaligned Movement.

"Iran is isolated in the world, it has few friends," Burns said in Brussels. "Iranians have to understand they don't run the world, they don't have unlimited power, and we are sending a clear message from the rest of the world ... that we want to contain and block Iranian power, especially on the nuclear side."

 [Click to Print](#)

Find this article at:

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1603027,00.html>

Copyright © 2007 Time Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Add TIME Headlines to your Site](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Customer Service](#)