

Pezeshkian: Iran's response to Israel's aggression prevented spread of war

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'Fearless Presence'

Leader attends Ashura mourning ceremony

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Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei waves to the audience during a mourning ceremony in Tehran on July 5, 2025, marking the ninth day of the Islamic month of Muharram in the lead-up to Ashura, a 10-day period commemorating the seventh century martyrdom of Prophet Mohammed's (PBUH) grandson Imam Hussein (PBUH).
● khamenei.ir

A suspension with a political message:

Iran, the IAEA, and the future of nuclear diplomacy

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O P I N I O N
E X C L U S I V E

The recent decision by the Islamic Republic of Iran to suspend parts of its voluntary cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has raised concerns in international diplomatic circles. However, to interpret this move merely as a reaction to technical disagreements would be to overlook the deeper strategic rationale behind Tehran's recalibration. This is not a withdrawal from the principles of non-proliferation, but rather a political signal aimed at recalibrating an increasingly asymmetrical and, in Iran's view, politicized monitoring dynamic.

From maximum transparency to strategic reassessment

Since the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran has provided the IAEA with extensive access to its nuclear infrastructure, well beyond its legal

obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Voluntary application of the Additional Protocol, deployment of surveillance cameras, and detailed responses to safeguards inquiries have characterized Iran's approach for nearly a decade. Yet, from Tehran's perspective, this extensive cooperation has not been met with reciprocal recognition or constructive political outcomes. Instead, it has coincided with intensified pressure, increasingly critical IAEA reports, and a perceived instrumentalization of the agency by certain political actors. In this light, Iran's latest move should be seen not as a repudiation of oversight, but as a strategic reassessment of the costs and benefits of continued unilateral transparency.

A crisis of confidence, not of compliance

Iran's leadership has consistently emphasized that its nuclear program remains peaceful and that enrichment activities are fully within its rights under the NPT. The core of the current dispute is not technical, but trust-related. Tehran argues that the

IAEA's recent reports—particularly those addressing “undeclared sites” and trace particles of uranium—lack methodological rigor and appear aligned with the narrative of adversarial states, especially Israel. Such perceptions have fueled a growing belief in Tehran that transparency has ceased to serve its original purpose of trust-building and has instead become a tool for political leverage. The decision to suspend voluntary cooperation must therefore be understood as a response to what Iran sees as a breach of the principle of good faith.

Professionalism vs. political pressure

The IAEA occupies a unique and delicate position as a technical body with significant geopolitical implications. While its credibility rests on its impartiality, it is not immune to the geopolitical currents within which it operates. Iran's concern is that the agency, under pressure from some member states, has increasingly blurred the lines between technical assessment and political signaling.

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