

plastic, have become polluted. The fragmented plastic particles enter the aquatic nutrition on a molecular scale and ultimately create health problems for humans. At present, at the global level, nuclear methods are utilized to confront this problem, and their results have been effective. In other domains as well, extensive applications exist, such as in the military sector — of course not nuclear weaponry, but in the domain of defense capacity. One example is submarines that operate with nuclear fuel and possess long-term underwater endurance. The higher the enrichment of atomic fuel, the shorter the interval required for its replacement. At present, France and the United States possess submarines whose fuel is replaced once every 30 to 40 years. In general, the scope of nuclear technology and industry is exceedingly vast and creates high added economic value and plays a significant role in other sectors as well. This subject is beneficial. Alongside the two other technologies, namely quantum technology and artificial intelligence, these three domains shall shape the future of the world. Although nuclear technology has been raised for 80 years, it continues to be exceedingly important in the long-term horizon.

Our principal advantage in this domain is the knowledge and expertise of our human resources and the valuable experience we have attained during recent years. Unfortunately, precisely this point is what adversaries cannot stand; that is, a powerful Iran, whether in the nuclear, atomic, missile, or other strategic domains, is unacceptable to them. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the nuclear industry must not be viewed solely from the perspective of the Atomic Energy Organization; rather, it must also be viewed from the perspective of the populace because this industry is an important and indispensable capacity for the country.

**At present, Mr. Grossi and the IAEA Board of Governors believe that Iran, as a member of the NPT, must act in accordance with this treaty and emphasize the inspection of Iran's bombarded and damaged facilities. The question is whether, essentially, such inspection and presence are considered among the obligations of NPT member states, and what Iran's perspective regarding this request of the IAEA is.**

When a country becomes a member of the NPT, it accepts that, in addition to that convention, it must also conclude an agreement with the agency, which Iran also did. The INFIRC/153 agreement is formulated in a manner that presupposes normal conditions, not wartime conditions. However, Article 68 exists, which refers to "unusual circumstances"; that is, cases in which, by an "unusual incident or circumstances," the state "believes that there is or may have been loss of nuclear materials". In such circumstances, the country is obligated to notify the agency. In 1991, when this convention was under review, precisely this issue received attention.

At the time of the finalization of the NPT convention, a question was raised regarding this article of the agreement because, as you know, agreements possess similar structures. At that time, the representative of Australia asked whether this article also includes wartime circumstances or not. We examined the negotiations of 1970, that is, 9 years before Iran's Islamic Revolution. The agency's repre-

sentative at that time, who bore responsibility for preparing the groundwork for these agreements, responded that, officially, wartime circumstances are not included in this article, but, practically, there is no alternative but to have such an interpretation. Therefore, from a legal perspective, it may be said that the safeguards agreement did not provide specific grounding for wartime circumstances. The reason is evident; if access is granted under such circumstances, its meaning is that the agency would obtain information and transfer it to the Board of Governors, and ultimately, this information would reach governments. As a result, confidential, military, and usable information would reach our enemy, and this means that we would, by our own hands, provide them information that could form the basis of their future actions. No country does such a thing; I do not imagine that any country in the world that possesses nuclear facilities and is attacked would be prepared to grant the agency access under those circumstances.



The USS Hyman G. Rickover floats along the pier at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility in Bremerton, Washington, on September 23, 2024. A defueled nuclear reactor compartments from dismantled nuclear submarines sit on a pier to the right. ● EUGENE OLIVER/DOD

Our position is that in the sectors of the facilities that are undamaged, no issue exists; the agency can possess the necessary information because this information is not subject to enemy misuse. However, regarding damaged facilities, we must first reach an understanding and an agreement. This requires negotiation, and the safeguards system itself provides such capacity. The grounding for amending the agreement also exists; although its path is legal and must be pursued in Iran through the Parliament and in the agency through the Board of Governors and other legal stages. This is one of the ways. Because this matter is to create precedent, perhaps it is necessary to involve other countries as well; this event may also occur for them, and they cannot remain indifferent. Therefore, we now return again to our initial legal assertion. We had discovered a political pathway, on the condition that they also politically assisted. Now that this possibility is not available, we possess a firm legal foundation and position, and our belief is that the safeguards agreement provided no grounding for wartime circumstances. The safeguards system also permits this. Articles 20, 21, and 22 state that, if necessary, the agreement must be amended. If, in wartime circumstances in which a portion of these facilities has been destroyed and, as they themselves say, "annihilated," this is not a reason for amendment, what other reason could exist? When must the agreement be amended? These arguments of ours, when placed in a legal framework, are entirely logical; however, the subject receives political treatment —

that is, they say, "No, the same Article 68 of the agreement suffices." Of course, from a legal standpoint as well, capacity exists. If a dispute arises in interpretation and implementation, various stages exist that may even be referred to international arbitration or, if necessary, the International Court of Justice may intervene.

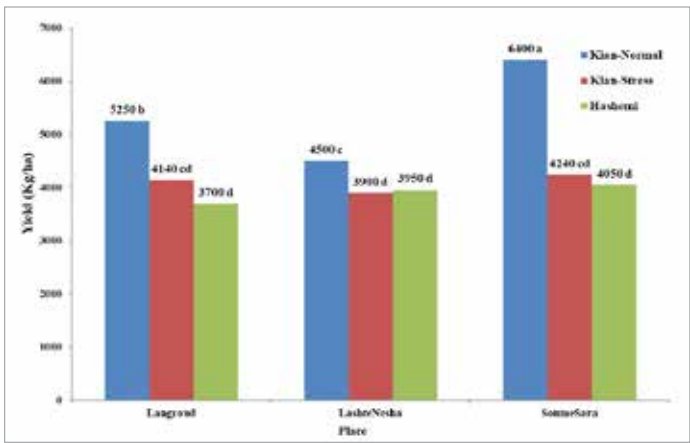
**This legal and rightful argument that you elucidated has surely been transmitted to the agency. Have Iran's concerns and apprehensions been specifically raised, and has a definite legal response been received? We are hoping for a legal response and a new framework because, in any case, the agency bears responsibility for the supervision of the nuclear activities of countries, and it appears that the solution must commence from them. Have they, essentially, provided any response to Iran's concerns?**

When they proposed meeting in Cairo, and negotiation was conducted there, they essentially ac-

cepted that the agreement was not adequate for the existing circumstances. Even the Cairo Accord talked about the post-war circumstances. There, preparations were made, and matters were divided into two categories of damaged and undamaged zones, and the pathway was selected through our own Security Council. When the agency accepts that this pathway must be traversed, and when, after considerable time, we speak with them, and they themselves reach an initial political agreement concerning those 72-hour deadlines — which in the agreement is based on Article 68, and then, in the safeguards approach, it becomes Article 73 — its meaning is that they accepted our legal argument. Otherwise, they could have decisively stated that the information must be delivered within 72 hours. Thus, from a legal standpoint, they accepted the issue, but their interpretation is that political pressure on Iran is effective. Instead of solving the matter legally, they desire to resolve it politically and through pressure. Therefore, if we maintain perseverance — and perseverance is not solely martial perseverance, but also continuity in pursuing our rightful legal claims and presenting legal arguments — we can continue the correct path.

**How, with regard to all security considerations, does our cooperation with the agency stand at present? Has it been completely terminated? In what fields does cooperation exist? Does the agency possess inspection presence in Iran?**

There were requests that the agency had, and there was the trajectory that was followed with regard to the law that suspends Iran's cooperation with the agen-



The bar chart shows the average grain yield (kg/ha) of Kian Rice, developed through mutation induced by gamma radiation in the local cultivar, under normal conditions and drought stress, as well as another brand of rice (Hashemi), across three cities in Gilan province, northern Iran, in 2017.

● JOURNAL OF NUCLEAR RESEARCH AND APPLICATIONS

cy, which permits issues to be referred to Iran's Security Council to be decided. In connection with undamaged sites, we may state that the major portion of them has been inspected. Occasionally, cases existed in which, for example, one type of inspection was conducted once, and the next time, another type of inspection was conducted. There are diverse inspections — for design verification, inventory measurement, and such. We endeavored, in these severe circumstances, to maintain the utmost cooperation. The request we submitted to the Security Council, with a relatively reasonable interval, received its response, and we raised it. We are now approaching the subject of the damaged sites. I elucidated that we cannot easily permit access; there must certainly exist measures, and conditions must be created under which this becomes possible. Our most significant issue is the security issue. As I stated, in the safeguards agreement, this circumstance was not anticipated; that is, they wrote the safeguards as if no war would ever occur. Even Article 68, which refers to "unusual circumstances", intends flood, earthquake, fire, and similar cases. For example, it says you must notify within 72 hours that the materials have been lost. Now, if a fire occurred, it says that if 72 hours became four days, then they cannot accept that the materials have been lost. However, no country can perform such a task within 72 hours. We had 12 days of war just recently; that is, on the first and last day of the war, attacks were conducted upon our nuclear facilities. How is it possible to notify the agency within 72 hours, and for them to come and conduct verification? For this reason, I state that neither practically, nor rationally, nor legally, is the safeguards agreement adequate. I think that if we raise this subject in the agency, the countries of the world shall also reflect that the statute of this agreement must be amended. Until the agreement is amended and until threats exist, the ra-

tional and logical course is that the country exercise caution. For this reason, they must not expect normal behavior under normal circumstances from us. At least in private sessions, the officials of the agency state precisely this and confirm it; the countries also state this. But when they come under the pressure of the United States and European powers, they utter different remarks. Alongside our legal discussions, the capacities and capabilities of the country are also raised. They cannot impose many things upon Iran, provided that this resolve exists. We must sit with the agency, converse, find a method, and determine a procedure. We have also contemplated this subject. Because the principal subject of the agreement, which is mentioned in paragraph "d" of Article 1 of the GOV/2025/38 agreement, is to ensure "verification of the non-diversion of nuclear material" toward weaponry. We possess various other methods that create this assurance for them, even under "unusual circumstances" and under threat conditions. And when they observe, they shall state, "Yes, this is also a correct method." These are matters that are negotiable and require that we sit, provided that these negotiations are not coercive, meaning that both sides must persuade each other in negotiation, not compel each other. The principal point, which I repeatedly emphasize, is that we are not a country they can compel. If they accept this subject, they shall recognize that some of the desires, aspirations, and objectives they pursue must be abandoned. They desired many things, and even now they desire many things, but they must abandon these. If this occurs, things shall be easier for both sides. I think that with the agency, we can find a path; it is not as if no path exists. They desire paragraph "d" of Article 1; that is, assurance of "non-diversion". Various methods exist, and we can, in negotiation, converse with them regarding these methods.

The full interview first appeared in Persian on IRNA.



IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi (2nd-R) meets with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi (3rd-L) for the second time in two days in New York, the US, on September 24, 2025, on the sidelines of the annual session of the UN General Assembly. ● WANA

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