

BREAKING BUSINESS

# Iran Now Has Enough Uranium For Nuclear Weapon, U.N. Watchdog Reportedly Says

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*I cover breaking news for Forbes.*

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**TOPLINE** Iran has amassed enough enriched uranium to make a nuclear weapon, according to a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency viewed by [several media outlets](#) Monday, as the IAEA presses Iran to cooperate with a probe into its nuclear program and the United States seeks to re-enter a 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.



## KEY FACTS

- Iran now has around 43 kilograms (95 pounds) of uranium enriched to 60%, a roughly 10-kilogram jump since March, the IAEA said in a quarterly report obtained Monday afternoon by the *Wall Street Journal*, Reuters and Agence France-Presse.
- That's **just above** the quantity of uranium that the IAEA considers to be enough to theoretically make an explosive device—though in the real world, some material would be lost as it is further enriched, **Reuters said**, citing a diplomatic source.
- To reach weapons grade, the material needs to reach **at least 90% enrichment**—which means 90% of the uranium belongs to a rare and more fissile isotope called uranium-235—but the **process becomes easier** as the enrichment level increases.
- Iran has long insisted its nuclear program is peaceful.
- *Forbes* has reached out to the IAEA for comment.



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#### TANGENT

A separate IAEA report Monday said Iranian officials have not given “technically credible” answers to [long-standing questions](#) about why old nuclear material was discovered at several sites in Iran, [according to multiple reports](#).

#### KEY BACKGROUND

Iran’s nuclear program has [drawn international scrutiny](#) for decades, with some foreign powers alleging the country’s claims to be running a civilian power program were a cover for weapons development. In 2015, Iran [struck a deal](#) with the United States, China, Russia and three other powers to limit its nuclear development—including [uranium enrichment levels](#)—in exchange for relief from sanctions. However, the Trump Administration [withdrew](#) the United States from the deal in 2018 and [ratcheted up sanctions](#) against Iran, part of a “maximum pressure” campaign. President Joe Biden has sought to reenter the nuclear agreement, but indirect talks between the two countries have been [inconclusive](#) and challenging, with Iran [asking for relief](#) from some Trump-era measures against the country and [assurances](#) the U.S. won’t pull out of the deal again. Meanwhile, Iran started enriching uranium to 60% last year, according to the [IAEA](#) and [Iranian officials](#), following an apparent attack on an Iranian nuclear facility that [Iran blamed on Israel](#).

#### FURTHER READING

[U.N. Says Iran Has Enough Uranium to Produce Nuclear Weapon \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

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