

# IRAN ON BRINK: Europe ‘NOT HELPING’ to save nuclear deal despite EU’s £16M aid pledge

EUROPE’S attempts of desperately savaging the nuclear deal with Iran are backfiring as the continent’s leaders are “not following an appropriate path”, a powerful Iranian cleric warned.

Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, a leading anti-Western cleric, hit out at Europe for the way it has been handling the crisis that sparked following Donald Trump’s decision to pull out from the Iranian deal.

The Ayatollah argued Europe is not helping preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as Iran nuclear deal, reached in 2015, according to the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA).

Ayatollah Jannati, who is the chair of the powerful Assembly of Experts, said: “Europe has announced that they won’t leave the deal.

“In practice, by bringing up a discussion of missiles and other issues they are not following an appropriate path.”

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*In practice, by bringing up a discussion of missiles and other issues they are not following an appropriate path*

*Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati*

The Assembly is deemed to be one of the most powerful bodies in the theocratic country, as it has the power to select and dismiss Iran's supreme leader, the highest authority in Iran.

The stark warning comes after French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said last week that Tehran should be ready to negotiate on its future nuclear plans, its ballistic missile arsenal and its role in wars in Syria and Yemen.

His proposal was rejected by Iran's foreign ministry.

This is not the first time Iran hastily invited Europe to do more to keep the 2015 deal on track.



Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati said Europe is not helping to save the Iran nuclear deal (Image: GETTY)

Last week, IRNA quoted Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif saying: “It is time for the Europeans to act in addition to voicing their political commitment.

“These measures may be costly, but if countries want to reap benefits and if they believe the nuclear accord is an international achievement, they should be ready to keep these achievements.”

Last month, the European Union sent Iran £16.3million (\$21m) in aid to offset the impact of the sanctions reimposed by the US in August.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani suggested earlier today that an unnamed “enemy” is trying to pressure the country through sanctions.

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Hassan Rouhani suggested an 'enemy' is trying to pressure Iran through sanctions (Image: GETTY)



Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati is the chair of powerful Iran's Assembly of Experts (Image: GETTY)

In a speech broadcast on state TV, he said: "The enemy says 'I want an Iran that's in my control, that's in my fist.

"This is impossible...They want to pull us back 40 years, to surrender."

After revealing the reimposition of a wide range of sanctions, Mr Trump said: "The Iran nuclear deal a horrible, one-sided deal, failed to achieve the fundamental objective of blocking all paths to an Iranian nuclear bomb, and it threw a lifeline of cash to a murderous dictatorship that has continued to spread bloodshed, violence and chaos.

"Since the deal was reached, Iran's aggression has only increased.



Donald Trump reimposed sanctions against Iran in August (Image: GETTY)

“The regime has used the windfall of newly accessible funds it received under the JCPOA to build nuclear-capable missiles, fund terrorism, and fuel conflict across the Middle East and beyond.”

The White House has already warned further sanctions will be issued against Iran in three-month time.

Mr Trump pulled out of the deal in May, just three years after his predecessor, Barack Obama, joined it.

The other parties to the accord - China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany- are now looking for a way to keep the agreement alive.

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