Iran to further breach nuclear deal on September 6

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Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif announced on Tuesday that Tehran will further curb its adherence to the international agreement limiting its nuclear program next week unless it can reach an agreement with European powers before then.

“The third phase (of freezing nuclear obligations) will start on September 6,” Zarif told the German Sueddeutsche Zeitung in an interview published Tuesday, according to Iran’s [Tasnim news agency](https://www.tasnimnews.com/en/news/2019/08/27/2084419/iran-to-further-reduce-nuclear-commitments-on-sept-6-zarif%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).

Iran has accused the EU signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal — Britain, France and Germany — of failing to provide sufficient economic relief since US President Donald Trump pulled out of the accord last May and reimposed sanctions on Tehran.

Trump has faulted the agreement, which was also signed by China and Russia, for not addressing Iran’s ballistic missile program or support of terror proxy groups in the region.

Amid the growing bite of US sanctions, Iran has twice scaled back its commitment to the nuclear deal in recent months and increased its uranium enrichment levels beyond those permitted in the accord. In June the UN’s atomic watchdog did not explicitly state that the Islamic Republic is in compliance, the first time it has not done since the accord was inked.

The publication of the interview came as Zarif ruled out the possibility of a meeting between Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Trump, after the US president said Monday that such a sit-down was possible if the right conditions were met.

Trump’s announcement came a day after Zarif received a sudden invite from French President Emmanuel Macron to meet on the sidelines of the G7 meeting in France.

Zarif has called such a meeting unthinkable and said the US president must first lift sanctions imposed on Tehran. Macron has meanwhile said his efforts to bring Iran and the US together are “fragile,” but he believes that there is still a “possible path” to rapprochement after decades of conflict.

Rouhani said in a speech aired live on state television that “the [first] step is to retreat from sanctions. You must retreat from all illegal, unjust and wrong sanctions against the nation of Iran” before direct US-Iranian talks can be held.