Head of UN Watchdog Highlights Serious Gap in Iran Nuclear Deal Verification

September 27, 2017

#### [By Ben Cohen](https://www.algemeiner.com/author/ben-cohen-alg)

The Algemeiner

<https://www.algemeiner.com/2017/09/27/head-of-un-watchdog-highlights-serious-gap-in-iran-nuclear-deal-verification/>

As US President Donald Trump deliberates over whether to re-certify the 2015 Iran nuclear deal in two weeks time, new concerns about verification expressed by the head of the UN’s nuclear watchdog may yet tip the balance against his administration doing so.

On Tuesday, Yukiya Amano – the Director General of the  International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) – said that the Vienna-based organization did not have the resources to adequately monitor a part of the 2015 deal known as “[Section T](https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/245318.pdf),” which forbids Iran from engaging in a range of listed activities “which could contribute to the development of a nuclear explosive device.” Prohibited activities include work on detonation systems and the use of computer models to simulate nuclear explosive devices.

However, “Section T” makes no mention of the IAEA and does not explain how activities in this area are to be verified. Russia maintains that the IAEA has no authority under Section T, fueling concerns among the US and its allies that an agreement depicted as watertight contains several loopholes. In August, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley met with Amano, [telling him](https://www.algemeiner.com/2017/08/24/iran-protests-to-un-nuclear-agency-as-us-ambassador-haley-presses-for-extra-scrutiny-of-nuclear-related-activities/) that a “robust” verification regime depended on “access to facilities in Iran…including obtaining access to any locations in Iran where the IAEA has information regarding activities related to the JCPOA.”

Amano [told](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear-iaea/iaea-chief-calls-for-clarity-on-disputed-section-of-iran-nuclear-deal-idUSKCN1C12AN) Reuters news agency on Tuesday that the IAEA’s “tools are limited” when it comes to monitoring “Section T.”

US Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) issued a powerful appeal to President Donald Trump's administration on Wednesday to recognize Kurdistan...

“In other sections, for example, Iran has committed to submit declarations, place their activities under safeguards or ensure access by us,” Amano said. “But in ‘Section T’ I don’t see any (such commitment).”

“More clarification would be helpful,” Amano added. “Russia has a different view. They believe that it is not the mandate of the IAEA. Others have different views and discussions are ongoing.”

Yet the ambiguities over “Section T” could well mean that the debate in Washington “on certification is pretty close to game over,” one leading Iran analyst told The Algemeiner on Wednesday. Congressional legislation passed after the deal was announced in July 2015 requires the president to certify every 90 days whether Iran is “transparently, verifiably, and fully implementing the agreement.”

“The IAEA hasn’t caught Iran cheating because they haven’t been able to look where Iran is cheating,” the analyst said.