German intel: Iran wants to expand to weapons of mass destruction

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By Benjamin Weinthal

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| The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to a program of weapons of mass destruction, the domestic intelligence agency for the southern German state of Bavaria said in its May 2019 intelligence report.The hair-raising section of the report reviewed by The Jerusalem Post states Iran’s regime is “making efforts to expand its conventional arsenal of weapons with weapons of mass destruction.”Iran was termed a “risk country” in the 335-page document outlining serious threats to the security and democracy of the state of Bavaria.The domestic intelligence agency’s formal name is the Bavarian Office for the Protection of the Constitution in its intelligence report. FoxNews.com first reported on Tuesday that the Bavarian intelligence agency issued a report that “accuses the Islamic Republic of seeking to build weapons of mass destruction.” Although the report was published in May, it covers intelligence gathered in 2018.The intelligence report defines weapons of mass destruction as “the spread of atomic, biological, chemical weapons of mass destruction.”“We know the Iranian regime is on the hunt for money to fund their malign activities, and so it is imperative that the US and our European allies work together to deny this regime the capital they seek,” US Ambassador to Germany Richard Grenell told FoxNews.com. “They will use secretive schemes and dark money; we must be vigilant. They are strapped for cash.”US President Donald Trump withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal in 2018 because he said the agreement failed to stop the Islamic republic's regime from building an atomic weapon.Tehran has agreed to curtail its nuclear program as part of the agreement in exchange for the lifting of sanctions against its economy. The world powers and the UN imposed sanctions on Iran’s regime due to its nuclear program.“In order to obtain the necessary know-how and corresponding components, these states [Iran, North Korea and Pakistan] are trying to establish business contacts to companies in highly technological countries like Germany,” said the Bavarian intelligence report in its section on weapons of mass destruction.The report noted that the country’s criminal customs police prevented an electronic beam-welding machine from being sold to Iran.“The machine can be used for the production of [missile] launch vehicles,” said the document.According to the report, extensive attempts were made “to disguise the actual customer in Iran” with respect to the machine. The real end-user was in Iran but the illicit activity said the end-user company was in Malaysia. The efforts to illegally bypass German export control regulations resulted in a criminal conviction of the director of the Bavarian-based company that sought to sell the welding machine to Iran.The Bavarian agency said it will continue “to monitor whether Iran consistently and consequently complies with the agreement signed in July 2015.”German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her Social Democratic Foreign Minister Heiko Maas remain wedded to the Iran nuclear deal. Traditionally, Germany has been Iran’s most important European trade partner, and in February, Germany’s Foreign Ministry celebrated Iran’s Islamic Revolution at Tehran’s embassy in Berlin.Merkel appointed a German banker, Per Fischer, to head a mechanism to bypass US sanctions against Iran. The so-called special purpose vehicle mechanism is located in Paris and will enable trade with Iran.Fischer previously worked for Commerzbank. In 2015, Commerzbank agreed to pay US authorities $1.45 billion to resolve violations of Iran sanctions and other sanctioned countries.The US has designated Iran’s regime as the top state sponsor of terrorism. |