

Barack Obama defends Iran n-deal, calls it best alternative

16/07/2015 12:26 by admin

Washington: US President Barack Obama said on Wednesday that the Iran nuclear agreement was the best way to avoid a nuclear arms race and more wars in the Middle East, urging Congress to approve the deal.

"Without a deal, there would be no limits to Iran's nuclear programme and Iran could move close to a nuclear bomb," Obama said during a press conference held at the White House. "Without a deal, we risk even more war in the Middle East," Xinhua quoted him as saying.

While stressing that other countries in the region would feel compelled to pursue their own nuclear weapons programmes, Obama defended the deal "is our best means of assuring that Iran does not get a nuclear weapon".

Obama announced on Tuesday that a comprehensive long-term Iran nuclear deal has been reached between Iran and six world major countries, claiming it will prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and makes US and the world "safer and more secure".

The agreement is seen as a political triumph for Obama.

Republican lawmakers and US ally Israel, however, blasted the deal vehemently. Critics said Obama abandoned many of his goals set for the negotiations and made too much concessions to Tehran in striking such a deal.

"I'm hearing a lot of talking points being repeated," Obama said. "What I haven't heard is what is your preferred alternative?" He scolded the critics of deal, including Republicans in Congress and Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, for ignoring the facts of the deal.

"My hope is that everyone in Congress also evaluates this agreement based on the facts," Obama said. "Not on politics. Not on posturing. Not on the fact that this is a deal that I bring to Congress, as opposed to a Republican president. Not based on lobbying."

Obama on Tuesday urged Congress to approve the deal and threatened to veto any vote against it.

"I believe it would be irresponsible to walk away from the deal, but on such a tough issue, it is important that the American people and the representatives in Congress get a full opportunity to review the deal," Obama said.

"I am confident that this deal will meet the national security interests of the United States and our allies, so I will veto any legislation that prevents the successful implementation of this deal."

US Congress has 60 days to review and vote on the Iran nuclear agreement.

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