

Iran's President-Elect Praises Ties With Russia

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TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's president-elect says Tehran's relations with Russia will take high importance during his term in office.

The statement carried late Monday on the official website of Hasan Rouhani is the first to a permanent member of the UN Security Council, which along with Germany is in talks with Iran on the country's disputed nuclear program. They follow President Vladimir Putin's congratulations on Rouhani's June 14 victory.

Iran's first nuclear power plant went online with Russia's help in 2011. The two countries have also cooperated militarily in the past.

Both Russia and Iran back Syrian President Bashar Assad in his fight against rebels.

The West accuses Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons technology. Iran denies this, saying its program is for peaceful purposes.

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