

World Powers and Iran to Resume Nuclear Talks in February

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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BRUSSELS — World powers and Iran will very likely resume negotiations on the Islamic Republic's nuclear ambitions in February, shortly after an interim, six-month deal restricting its atomic work goes into effect, a diplomatic source said Monday.

The goal of the new round of talks is to find a broad settlement in the decade-old dispute over Iran's nuclear program and ease the risk of mistrust leading to deeper tensions or even conflict in the Middle East.

The diplomatic source said the first meeting between Iran and six powers — the U.S., Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany — would include Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton.

"It will not happen in January, because of the Chinese New Year, but it is very, very, very likely in February," the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Senior diplomats from the seven countries, led by the EU, will hold talks ahead of the meeting to prepare an agenda.

Iran says its atomic energy program is aimed purely at electricity generation and other civilian purposes, although past Iranian attempts to hide sensitive nuclear activity from United Nations non-proliferation inspectors raised concerns.

Senior officials from the EU and Iran met in Geneva on Thursday and Friday to iron out remaining practical questions related to the implementation of a Nov. 24 deal under which Iran agreed to curb its most proliferation-sensitive nuclear activity — higher-level uranium enrichment — in return for some relief from Western economic sanctions.

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