

Russia Sees Progress in Iran Nuclear Deal Despite Difficult Talks

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Russia said Thursday that talks between world powers and Iran were "extremely difficult" but that Moscow still hoped a long-term deal to end the standoff over Tehran's nuclear program could be reached by July 20.

Iran and the six powers — the U.S., Russia, France, Germany, China and Britain — are struggling to bridge wide differences on the future of Tehran's nuclear program to meet the self-imposed deadline.

"The discussions are extremely difficult but on the face of it there is some progress," Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Alexander Lukashevich told a news conference.

"We hope to work out a final text of the agreement — despite all the difficulties — by the July 20 deadline."

He provided no details of the main difficulties at the talks on ending the decade-old dispute.

The West fears Iran has been seeking to develop nuclear capability to make bombs but Tehran says its nuclear program is an entirely peaceful project to generate electricity. The powers want Iran to significantly scale back its activities.

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said Tuesday that Iran would need to boost its uranium enrichment capacity in the long term, underlining a gap in positions at the talks but also potentially signaling some flexibility in the short term.

See also:

[France Sees Differences Between Russia and World Powers on Iran Nuclear Talks](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/07/10/russia-sees-progress-in-iran-nuclear-deal-despite-difficult-talks-a37208)

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