

U.S. Releases Another \$1 Billion to Iran

Iran has received \$2.55 billion since February



A missile on display at an Iranian Army parade / AP

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The United States has released \$1 billion in cash assets to Iran in April alone under the interim nuclear deal aimed at ratcheting back Iran's nuclear program, according to the White House.

The Obama administration unfroze Iranian assets totaling \$550 million on April 10 and another \$450 million on April 15. The United States has now released \$2.55 billion to Iran since February, when the scheduled cash infusions first began.

The cash releases were contingent upon Iran halting some aspects of its nuclear program and scaling back its stockpiles of highly enriched uranium, the key component in a nuclear weapon.

In return, Iran was promised these monthly cash infusions from Washington.

While the White House maintains that Iran will receive about \$7 billion in economic relief under the interim accord, outside experts calculate that with oil revenues and other business deals Iran could pocket at least \$20 billion over the next several months.

Lawmakers remain concerned that the White House continues to release funds as Iran maintains its support for terrorism.

“It’s an outrage that the administration continues to provide massive sanctions relief to Iran, even as the Iranian government maintains its brazen support for terrorism and continues to develop advanced missile and nuclear warhead technologies,” Rep. Peter Roskam (R., Ill.), the House’s chief deputy whip, told the *Washington Free Beacon*. “Iran’s economy is gradually recovering thanks to the White House’s latest move to unfreeze billions of dollars as a part of the nuclear agreement signed last year, yet we’re no closer to ending Iran’s illicit nuclear weapons program.”

“How can this White House justify bolstering Iran’s economy by giving them the one thing they desperately need, while the mullahs continue to violate international obligations and pursue an incredibly dangerous nuclear weapons capability?” Roskam asked.

Japan has paid Iran some \$1 billion for crude oil deliveries, adding to concerns that Iran is profiting much more than the White House anticipated.

“Iran is on pace to receive at least three times the amount of sanctions relief than the White House originally predicted,” according to Matan Shamir, research director for the advocacy group United Against Nuclear Iran (UANI).

Iran has earned some \$7.33 billion in extra profits from crude oil exports from November through February of this year, according to Shamir.

Iran is scheduled to receive another \$550 million on May 14, then again on June 17, followed by one last \$550 million release on July 20 if Iran proves to have fulfilled its end of the nuclear bargain.

Seyed Abbas Araqchi, Iran’s deputy foreign minister and one of its chief negotiators, confirmed receiving the latest \$450 million installment and said that the money has already been deposited into the Central Bank of Iran, [according](#) to the country’s state-run media.

The April 15 cash release was supposed to be “contingent on the [International Atomic Energy Agency] confirming that Iran has completed dilution of its entire stockpile of near-20 percent enriched uranium it is required to dilute,” according to a White House fact sheet released shortly after the deal was signed.

However, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says that Iran has cut its key uranium stockpiles by 75 percent, [according](#) to Reuters, raising questions as to whether Iran is fully complying with its requirements.

When asked for further information on Iran’s compliance with the nuclear deal and the recent release of cash assets, the White House referred the *Free Beacon* to the Treasury Department, which did not respond to inquiries by press time.

State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf told reporters late last week that “all sides have kept the commitments made” under the deal and that “as Iran remains in line with its commitments,” the United States and Western nations “will continue to uphold our commitments as well,” according to Reuters.

Just days before the latest funds were released to Tehran, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani predicted that the country will “witness the sanctions shattering in the coming months.”

“With your support, this government has taken the first steps towards the lifting of the brutal sanctions. ... We will witness the sanctions shattering in the coming months,” Rouhani told a crowd during a tour of Sistan-Baluchestan, a restive underdeveloped province bordering Pakistan.

“Today we already see the sanctions unraveling,” Rouhani was [quoted](#) as saying last week by Iranian news outlets.

Iran is required to dilute its stockpiles of 20 percent enriched uranium, which it could have easily converted into fuel a nuclear bomb.

The IAEA has said that Iran has diluted [half of its stockpiles](#) and is working to convert the other half of its highly enrich uranium into fuel for a reactor.

The IAEA additionally found that Iran is experiencing delays in the construction of a facility aimed at ensuring that Iran cannot further enrich uranium in weapons-grade material.

The delay means that Iran’s uranium stockpiles will continue to grow until the facility is complete.

Ongoing nuclear negotiations with the West have recently been eclipsed by Iran’s announcement that it is completing a trade deal with Russia worth some \$20 billion.

The deal will enable Iran to trade crude oil for goods from Moscow and has prompted [concerns on Capitol Hill](#) that it will open the floodgates for nuclear materials and weapons to flow into Tehran.

Senators say that the deal would flatly violate the terms of the interim agreement.

Another issue of concern is the substantial rise in Iranian oil exports, which have steadily increased over the past five months.

Iran exported 1.61 billion barrels of crude oil in February alone, resulting in about \$2.71 billion in extra profits.

“The additional oil revenues alone have already exceeded that \$6 to \$7 billion figure,” said UANI’s Shamir. “Iran is now exporting more than twice the oil it was exporting before the Geneva deal was signed, which translates to \$7.33 billion in

extra oil revenue for the regime through February.”

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