



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Thursday that the United States must make its position on Israel's nuclear strategy clear before talks on Tehran's atomic programme could resume. Sanctions imposed by "arrogant" Western powers would not slow Iran's nuclear progress, he said.

The United States, Europe and the United Nations have imposed sanctions on Iran over its disputed nuclear programme. Iran says its aim is to generate electricity and rejects Western suspicions it is seeking to build a nuclear bomb.

Iran's chief nuclear negotiator suggested in a letter to the European Union's foreign affairs chief this week that talks could be held as soon as September on issues including Tehran's atomic programme.

Speaking in Nigeria after a summit of the D8 group of developing nations, Ahmadinejad said Iran supported dialogue but blamed the United States for the failure of previous talks. Asked what conditions must be met for talks to resume, Ahmadinejad said Washington must make its position on Israel's nuclear strategy clear.

"The first condition is they should express their views about the nuclear weapons of the Zionist regime. Do they agree with that or not. If they agree that these bombs should be available to them, the course of the dialogue would be different," he said.

Israel is widely assumed to have the only nuclear arsenal in the region but it refuses to confirm or deny having such weapons.

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