

Iran "To Expand Cooperation" With UN Nuclear Watchdog

By [The Moscow Times](#)

September 16, 2013

The  Moscow Times

VIENNA — Iran's new atomic energy chief pledged increased cooperation with the UN nuclear watchdog on Monday, delivering a conciliatory message ahead of talks between the two sides this month over Tehran's disputed atomic activities.

Ali Akbar Salehi also said Iran was optimistic about the outcome of broader diplomatic negotiations with major powers, should the parties enter "with good intention and with the resolve to solving the ... issue based on a win-win approach."

The election in June of a relative moderate, Hassan Rouhani, as Iranian president and his appointments of senior officials involved in nuclear diplomacy had created a "like-minded group" that would "facilitate the resolution of this issue" if the other side was willing, he said.

"There has always been a movement from the Iranian side. This time we are coming with a more full-fledged ... desire for this," Salehi said, referring to the search for a peaceful

settlement of the decade-old nuclear dispute.

Iran is at odds in particular with Western powers, which fear its nuclear program is covertly directed at giving it the means to build nuclear bombs, something Tehran denies.

Salehi's comments, in a speech at the International Atomic Energy Agency, were in line with the less confrontational signals coming from Tehran since Rouhani succeeded hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president.

But, like Rouhani, Salehi stressed that Iran would never "compromise" over what the Islamic state sees as its inalienable right to a civilian nuclear energy program.

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