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Kremlin Blames U.S. for Iran Nuclear Deal Rollback, Urges Restraint

By Reuters

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Sergei Lavrov and Mohammad Javad Zarif **Russian Foreign Ministry**

The Kremlin said on Wednesday that Iran had been provoked into rolling back some of the terms of a 2015 nuclear deal due to external pressure which it blamed on the United States.

Iran said earlier on Wednesday it had started scaling back parts of its commitments under the deal and threatened to do more if world powers did not protect it from U.S. sanctions, a year after Washington pulled out of the pact.

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"President Putin has repeatedly spoken of the consequences of unthought-out steps regarding Iran and by that I mean the decision taken by Washington [to quit the deal]. Now we are seeing those consequences are starting to happen," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov

told reporters on a conference call.

Peskov was speaking as talks in Moscow between Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov got underway.

Zarif said that Iran's actions did not violate the original terms of the nuclear agreement and that there was now a 60-day period for diplomatic activity over its decision, the state-run RIA Novosti news outlet reported.

Peskov said Russia wanted to keep the nuclear deal alive and that its diplomats were doing all they could behind the scenes in talks with European officials to try to save it.

Asked if Russia might be ready to join other countries in imposing new sanctions against Iran over its partial roll back on the deal, Peskov said:

"For now, we need to soberly analyze the situation and exchange views on this. The situation is serious."

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