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# Iran's Nuclear Chief Arrives in Moscow to Sign Nuclear Reactor Deal

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Iranian Vice President and nuclear chief Mohammad Eslami. **EPA / TASS**

Iranian Vice President and nuclear chief Mohammad Eslami traveled to Moscow to sign a long-delayed deal for Russia to construct eight nuclear reactors in the Middle Eastern country, media reported Monday.

The plan to build eight nuclear reactors in Iran was announced in 2014, but it has remained largely at the level of framework agreements and preliminary contracts for more than a decade.

"Contract negotiations have taken place and with the signing of the agreement this week, we will enter the operational steps," Eslami was quoted as saying by Reuters.

Russia built Iran's first nuclear power plant in the central city of Bushehr in 2011 and completed the station in 2013 despite strong U.S. objections.

The eight-reactor project is part of Iran's plans to reach 20 gigawatts of nuclear energy

capacity by 2040.

Eslami said four of the future reactors would be located in Bushehr, according to Iran's official IRNA news agency.

The United States and Israel accuse Iran of seeking to develop a nuclear weapon, which Tehran denies, defending its "non-negotiable" right to develop a civilian nuclear program.

Russia says it is opposed to a nuclear-armed Iran, but it has defended Tehran's right to use nuclear technology for civilian purposes.

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