Iran says that despite difficulties it hopes to reach nuclear agreement with world powers

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said on Monday that despite difficulties Iran still hopes to achieve an agreement with world powers that will satisfy their concerns and allow Teheran to pursue the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

"The negotiations between Iran and the P5+1, despite their difficulties, god willing, in the end we will reach an agreement that will be a win-win for all parties," Rouhani told reporters after a meeting at the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, the Iranian foreign ministry reported on its Internet site.

Iranian negotiators earlier reported that no progress had been made in talks in Vienna last week between Iran and the P5+1 group (the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council – China, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and the United States – and Germany), the Associated Press reported.

The talks, agreed to last November in exchange for a reduction in economic sanctions against Iran, aim at requiring Teheran to take actions to confirm the peaceful nature of its nuclear program. The deadline for an agreement is July 20 with a new round of talks scheduled for June 16-20.
"The goal of the Islamic Republic of Iran has and will be the pursuit of peaceful nuclear technology," Rouhani said. "We will pursue this right of our people. But at the same time, we want to pursue an agreement through dialogue that is in the mutual interest of all parties."

The Associated Press quoted a Western insider as saying that efforts to limit Iran’s uranium enrichment program continued being one of the most difficult issues in the negotiations. Reuters said Iranian negotiators also suggested that there was renewed debate on the Arak reactor, which would produce plutonium. Plutonium and highly enriched uranium are key elements for building nuclear weapons.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi said on Sunday that a proposal to cut the power of the Arak reactor from 40 megawatts to 10 megawatts was "ridiculous."