

Iran calls sanctions ineffective, 'rusty'

by UPI

TEHRAN -- Iran's foreign minister Tuesday dismissed sanctions against his country as a "rusty approach" that has failed to curb uranium enrichment programs.

Speaking with reporters in Tehran, Hassan Qashqavi called sanctions "ineffective," saying they will not stop Iran from pursuing a peaceful nuclear expansion program designed to create energy, not weapons, Fars news agency reported.

Currently, Iran is under U.N. Security Council sanctions for refusing to halt its nuclear program.

On other matters, Qashqavi said he was unaware of reports that the U.S. military last month shot down an unmanned Iranian aerial drone over Iraq after tracking it northeast of Baghdad.

Qashqavi declined to say whether Iran would send representatives to a March 31 conference in Brussels on the future of Afghanistan. Iran was invited earlier this month by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The United States and Iran severed diplomatic relations in 1980 after Iranian students seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

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