

Iran Switches From Dollar to Euro for Official Reporting Currency



U.S. Dollar and Euro notes are seen in this June 22, 2017 illustration photo.

LONDON (Dispatches) – Iranian government institutions will start reporting foreign currency amounts in euros rather than U.S. dollars, state media said on Wednesday as part of the country's

effort to reduce its reliance on the American currency.

The decision was made at a cabinet meeting, state broadcaster IRIB said.

Central bank governor Valiollah Seif said last week that Leader Islamic Republic Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei had welcomed his suggestion to replace the dollar with the euro in Iran's foreign trade, as "dollar has no place in our transactions today".

Tehran has been trying for years to move away from the dollar because of political tensions with Washington, although much of the country's international trade is still conducted in dollars and ordinary Iranians use them for travel and savings.

U.S. President Donald Trump has threatened to exit a 2015 nuclear deal Iran made with world powers unless it is revised. U.S. sanctions will resume unless Trump issues new "waivers" to suspend them on May 12.

Bank transactions involving the dollar are already difficult for Iran because legal risks make U.S. banks unwilling to do business with Tehran. Foreign firms can be exposed to sanctions if they do Iranian deals in dollars, even if the operations involve non-U.S. branches.

As a result, France will start offering euro-denominated credits to Iranian buyers of its goods later this year to keep its trade out of reach of U.S. sanctions, the head of state-owned French investment bank Bpifrance said in February.

14 ATR, Airbus, Boeing Aircrafts to Join Iran Air This Year



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran should receive 14 new passenger aircraft this year under agreements signed with Airbus, Boeing and ATR planemakers, a government official has said.

Tehran has ordered more than 200 planes since U.S.-led sanctions against the country were lifted in 2016 under a nuclear agreement but U.S. President Donald Trump's threat to rip up the deal next month has raised doubts about deliveries.

Former Deputy Roads and Urban Development Minister Asghar Fakhrieh-Kashan said on Wednesday Iran should receive eight turboprop ATR 72-600 aircraft from the Franco-Italian company plus three planes from Airbus and another three from Boeing in 2018.

Iran Air has agreed to buy 80 aircraft from Boeing and 100 from Airbus in addition to 20 from ATR. Iran's Aseman Airlines has also signed a deal for 30 Boeing jets of the 737 MAX model.

Last year, the national flag carrier received three brand-new Airbus jets and eight new ATR turboprops.

Fakhrieh-Kashan said ATR is about to deliver two more planes soon and negotiations are underway with Boeing on certain changes in the contract "so that Iran Air can receive three new jets in the current year".

"According to the contract, Boeing will have to deliver three planes to Iran Air in 2018, provided that we finance the purchases," he said.

As for Airbus, "if we are able to make our downpayments in 2018, three planes will be delivered to Iran Air this year", he added.

Iran Chief Executive Farzaneh Sharafbafi has stated that the company did not have problems financing plane purchases from Boeing and Airbus.

Her remarks came after industry sources said Iran Air had been slow to pay deposits, which are needed for Boeing and Airbus to start building new jets.

There are already doubts over whether Boeing planes will be delivered as early as 2018, due to the lead time needed to order parts for the planes involved, especially long-range 777s.

Those doubts aside, there remains the question of what would happen to the deal if Trump withdrew from the nuclear agreement with Iran and whether the US Treasury will extend licenses for sales of the parts which are built in the United States.

"If the American statesmen put restrictions on the delivery of Boeing aircraft to Iran, it would be against the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," Fakhrieh-Kashan said using the official name for the nuclear deal.

Current licenses expire at the end of 2020 and would need to be extended to complete the planned deliveries.

According to Sharafbafi, the existing licenses are valid until 2020 and include 37-38 Airbus jets, 15 from Boeing and all 20 ATRs.

Total Holds Workshop on SP11 Offshore Platform Installation



TEHRAN (Shana) -- France's Total held a technical workshop on installation and operation of offshore platforms in Iran.

The technical workshop of Total Company, held on Wednesday, was organized with senior operators, executives and representatives of South Pars development projects at Pars Oil and Gas Company.

Total and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) have signed a 20-year contract for the development of and production from Phase 11 of the South Pars gas field in the Persian Gulf.

The facilities will have a

production capacity of 2 bcf/d, or 400,000 boe/d including condensate. Produced gas will supply the Iranian domestic market from in 2021.

This is the first signing under the new Iranian Petroleum Contract (IPC), and is based on the technical, contractual, and commercial terms outlined in the heads of agreement signed last November.

Total is operator of the SP11 project with a 50.1% interest, in partnership with Chinese state-owned oil and gas company CNPC (30%), and NIOC subsidiary Petropars (19.9%).

arranged," Novak told reporters on Tuesday. He said Russia and Iran were working on an extension of the barter scheme.

"The agreement is effective; it has been extended for the year, but in general, we think it should be extended for five years," Novak was quoted by RIA news agency as saying.

The first delivery was reportedly made in November 2017 and totaled 1 million tonnes.

Iran and Russia agreed to "strategic cooperation in the energy sector", ranging from

Zangeneh: Oil, Condensate Production Grows

TEHRAN (Dispatches) – Iranian Petroleum Minister said the country's oil and condensates production had growth during the last Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2018),

"Final negotiations are underway with Indonesia, China and Russia to sign contracts," Zangeneh said in a joint meeting with members of parliament energy commission.

He referred to the inauguration of 6 phases of South Pars oil and

gas field and extracting more oil than Qatar, and said "Other phases except phase 11 and some parts of phase 14 will be finalized this year."

Zangeneh also pointed to joint Iran-Iraq West Karoon oilfield, saying Iran's production is more than Iraq.

The inauguration of the Persian Gulf Star Oil Company was one of the most important achievements last year, he said.

Ukraine Calls for Promotion of Banking Cooperation With Iran

MOSCOW (Dispatches) – Head of Ukraine-Iran parliamentary friendship group Leonid Kozachenko on Wednesday called for promotion of banking cooperation with Iran and urged elevation of all-out ties between the two states.

In a meeting with Iranian ambassador to Ukraine Mohammad Beheshti Monfared, Kozachenko stressed that he will do its best to deepen ties between Tehran and Kiev.

Kozachenko and Beheshti Monfared conferred on the issues to be discussed in the upcoming Iran-Ukraine joint economic commission.

They also discussed preparations for Iranian Parliament speaker Ali Larijani's visit to Kiev.

Russia Receives Iran's First Oil-for-Goods Supply

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Russia's Energy Minister Alexander Novak says the first Iranian oil supply to Russia under the oil-for-assets program has been completed and the two sides could extend the deal for five years when it runs out at the end of the year.

The arrangement dates back to 2014 under which Russia would initially buy 100,000 barrels a day of Iranian oil in exchange for Russian equipment and goods.

"The first supply has already been completed, the next ones are

development of Iran's oil and gas fields to collaboration on research during President Vladimir Putin's visit to Tehran last November.

At the time, the two sides signed six provisional agreements to collaborate on "strategic" energy deals worth up to \$30 billion.

Presidential aide Yuri Ushakov said earlier this month that Russian investment in developing Iran's oil and gas fields could total more than \$50 billion.

Last month, Iran awarded its second post-sanctions oil

contract to Zarubezhneft to re-develop Aban and West Paydar oil fields in the country's west.

Iran's Minister of Petroleum Bijan Zangeneh said the agreement was the first oil field development deal awarded to a Russian company and also the first oil deal sealed through the new format of Iran's oil and gas contracts.

Novak has said more than 10 different Iranian fields had been presented to Gazprom, Rosneft, Gazprom Neft, Zarubezhneft, Tatneft and Lukoil for development.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Iran and Pakistan are planning to launch ferry service between their Chabahar and Karachi ports which will not only promote people-to-people contact, but also boost tourism and generate economic activity in the region, Road and Urban Development Minister Abbas Akhoundi announced.

Akhoundi said that the issue has been discussed during a recent visit of high-ranking Iranian delegation to Pakistan.

"Iran and Pakistan are two neighboring states which enjoy strong brotherly ties, but despite the fact that large number of Pakistanis travel to Iran for religious and commercial purposes, there is no ferry service available between the two countries and the people have to use road and air links for the travel which is quite

expensive," the Iranian minister added.

Karachi-Chabahar ferry service is the top priority of the Pakistani government because it is economically more viable. More than 200,000 Pakistani pilgrims visited Iran last year and the ferry service would provide them better and fast traveling facility.

The national flag carrier, Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC), is busy in finalizing the project and its arrangements, including acquisition of ferries.

The ferry service would prove to be a major step to enhance people-to-people contact and generate economic activities in the region. Iran and Pakistan share same culture, religion, values and they have so many other things in common which no other two countries of the world have.

