**The Devil’s in the Details**

As the July 7 deadline for the nuclear deal between Iran and P5+1 countries draws near, several contentious points in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action have been raised by skeptics. Without clarifying these points, Iran can take advantage of subtleties and potentially develop weapons capabilities, rendering previous negotiations useless. The matrix below highlights specific elements of the deal that negotiating parties ought to consider in the Vienna talks this week.

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| **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action Parameters** | **Contentious Points** |
| **Reducing Breakout Time** | |
| Natanz will be the only uranium enrichment facility for the next 10 years. Enrichment levels will not exceed 3.67% -- insufficient for a bomb, but useful for civilian purposes. The number of centrifuges will be reduced by ⅔ to 5,060, as well as the stockpile of low-enriched uranium from 10,000 to 3,000 kg. | How exactly will Iran reduce its uranium stockpile? Will it ship it to another country or reduce it through some mechanism domestically? |
| The Arak and Fordow nuclear facilities will be converted into research sites for 10 years. | What are the restrictions on the scope of research and whether these restrictions will remain after 10 years? |
| Redesigned Arak reactor that will not produce weapons-grade plutonium. | What will the details of the remodeling be and what will be the level of reduction in plutonium production? |
| Byproducts of fission from the Arak reactor will be shipped out. | How will this be verified? |
| Iran has committed to not pursue reprocessing indefinitely and to not conduct reprocessing R&D. | What does indefinitely mean? Does this mean for the duration of the deal? |
| After 10 years, Iran will be bound by a long-term enrichment and R&D for enrichment program shared with the P5+1. | Most of the restrictions on Iran’s nuclear enrichment program are lifted after 10-15 years. Iran’s breakout time beyond this point will be contingent on the details of this long-term program, which have not been announced. |
| **Eliminating Sneakout Possibility** | |
| Suspected breaches in the agreement by Iran will lead to sanctions snapback. | What is the time frame and mechanism for the snapback sanctions? How will the P5+1 members prevent any of the UN Security Council’s permanent members from vetoing a snapback of UN Security Council sanctions? |
| Architecture of US Sanctions will be maintained for much of the duration of the deal to allow for snapback sanctions. | What does “much of the duration of the deal” mean and why not the entire duration? |
| The IAEA will have regular access to all of Iran’s nuclear facilities and the supply chain that supports Iran’s nuclear program. | Given the resistance within the Iranian leadership to international inspection, how will the IAEA and P5+1 enforce regular access? How frequently will “regular access” take place? |
| UN Security Council Resolutions regarding Iran’s Nuclear Program will be voided and replaced with a new Security Council Resolution that will endorse the JCPOA, and keep core provisions from previous Resolutions that deal with transfers of sensitive technologies and activities. | Given that previous Resolutions called on Iran to cease enrichment entirely and to not build heavy water reactors, what “core provisions” are going to be retained in this new resolution? |

Unsurprisingly, most of the contentious points are centered around the need for proper verification. A deal is not a deal until its stipulations are implemented and followed, therefore a clear and mutually-agreed upon inspections regime is crucial to assessing Iran’s compliance. There is also tremendous uncertainty regarding what will happen after most of the restrictions on Iran’s nuclear program expire in 10-15 years. Iran will supposedly be bound by a plan covering enrichment and research and development for enrichment submitted to the P5+1 after this point, but the details of such a plan are unclear. Negotiating parties must hammer out the fine print, because as with most deals, the devil’s in the details.