IRAN-CHINA DIPLOMATIC MEETING IN BEIJING

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On September 15, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif visited China for a series of meetings with the Chinese officials. This was Zarif`s first visit to China after the nuclear deal between Iran and the p5+1 countries.

During his visit Minister Zarif referred to Irans expectation for the Chinese investments in Iran once the sanctions are lifted. Minister Zarif stated that economies of Iran and China are "complementary" and two countries face similar challenges, as well as opportunities. Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on the other hand, said that China wishes to deepening China-Iran relations and enhancing all-round cooperation under the new circumstances, in reference to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which calls for the lifting of sanctions on Iran in exchange for limits on the countrys nuclear program .

Minister Zarif also pointed that two countries share compatible views on regional issues and expressed his hope for cooperation between Iran and China on issues such as the recent developments in in Yemen, Syria and the Middle East in general. Minister Zarif said that Iran expects China to play a more active role for the resolution of the political problems in the Middle East.

Minister Zarifs statements in China are not unexpected; China and Iran have close diplomatic, economic, trade and energy ties. China has been active in pushing both the United States and Iran to reach an agreement on Iran's nuclear program. China and Iran find mutual benefits in many areas. Importantly, China is the primary customer of Iranian oil. A significant point as regards to Iran-China economic relations is that deepening economic relations between the two countries would provide Iran with not only economic but also political advantages as such a development could be used by Iran to demonstrate the US and other countries that Iran is able to develop relations with powerful countries like China.

After his official visit to China, Minister Zarif acclaimed that Chinese President would visit Tehran in the coming months to continue the deliberations on the enhancement of trade between the two countries. According to Minister Zarif, improvement of the transportation infrastructure and facilities, the New Silk Road project and cooperation in science and technology would be the other items in the agenda.

From a Chinese perspective, Iran plays a very crucial role in Chinese foreign policy strategy. For China, Iran is one of the gates to the West. As such, Iran is a key actor in the

New Silk Road project. Certainly, Irans hydrocarbon resources are an important factor, as well.

All in all, it can be seen that both Iran and China are in an expeditive mood to improve their relations after the nuclear deal.

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