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German Vice Chancellor's first visit to Iran

by Helene Rang



*H.E. Sigmar Gabriel, Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy of the Federal Republic of Germany;
H.E. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran*

Vice Chancellor of Germany and Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy H.E. Sigmar Gabriel has become the first high-ranking Western official to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran since the historic Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was signed between the P5+1 Group and Iran on 14th July 2015. The Vice Chancellor embarked on a three-day visit to Tehran from 19th-21st July with a small delegation of representatives from companies, industry groups and the sciences, as part of which he held talks with Iranian President H.E. Hasan Rouhani in addition to several government ministers. His tight schedule included talks with: H.E. Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade; H.E. Bijan Namdar Zangeneh, Minister of Oil; H.E. Mohammad Javad Zarif, Foreign Minister; H.E. Hamid Chitchian, Energy Minister; and H.E. Ali Ardashir Amoli Larijani, Chairman of

the Parliament. This was also the first high-ranking German government engagement in Tehran for more than 10 years, in the wake of which a ministerial-level meeting of a long dormant German-Iranian economic commission is due to take place early next year. By that time, some of the current sanctions may have already been lifted, if the stipulations of the agreement are implemented.

In a statement concerning the landmark agreement, which could lift the severe international sanctions on Iran, H.E. Sigmar Gabriel expressed his optimism that the development could herald a new era in bilateral relations: "The agreement reached in Vienna between the P5+1 and Iran lays the foundations for normalising economic ties with Iran on the condition that the steps set out in it are now implemented." With H.E. Gabriel

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