

## Israel will not unilaterally attack Iran: Peres

Israel does not rule out a military solution in the nuclear row with Iran, but it will not unilaterally attack the country, President Shimon Peres said in an interview published in France's Le Figaro newspaper Saturday.

'If the development of the bomb is not stopped economically (with sanctions), the non-military options are exhausted,' Peres told the Paris-based newspaper.

'I prefer to stop the development of the bomb without having to resort to war.'

Israel would 'under no circumstances' act unilaterally, he said.

'We are not so imprudent as to focus the Iranian danger on Israel.

'It is a problem that the rest of the world has to resolve. With the long-range missiles developed by Iran, it is no longer solely an Israeli problem.'

Peres accused Tehran of arming the radical Islamic Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip.

'If a minority of terrorists manages to get hold of nuclear devices, the world would become ungovernable,' Peres said.

He rejected talks with Hamas, saying these 'would kill the Palestinian Authority'.

Peres is due to meet French President Nicolas Sarkozy in Paris Monday at the start of an official state visit.

Figaro called him the 'father of the Israeli nuclear programme' and asked whether the transfer of French atomic know-how had been crucial for the Israeli deterrent.

Peres said that the 'suspicion' that Israel had atomic weapons was an 'essential' component of the deterrent.

'I know of no other country that helped Israel as much as France did.'

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