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Obama, Rouhani Talk on Phone, ‘Deal Possible’

By Jason Ditz

September 27, 2013

For the first time since 1979, US and Iranian presidents have confirmed a direct conversation, coming in the form of a telephone call. The two discussed the ongoing P5+1 talks with Iran, and ended with Obama echoing Rouhani’s comments that a deal is “possible.”

Rouhani’s official confirmation said that the two sides agreed to “rapidly solve” the ongoing dispute over Iran’s civilian nuclear program, though President Obama downplayed the prospect.

“There will surely be important obstacles to moving forward and success is by no means guaranteed,” Obama insisted in comments afterwards, adding that there was “deep mistrust” between the two nations.

Rouhani has been emphasizing the desire for diplomacy since his inauguration, saying that there is a new environment and a new tone on both sides that could open up the prospect of a quick settlement. His government has expressed hope to have a permanent settlement within 3-6 months.