

Press release: Joint statement on the new mechanism to facilitate trade with Iran

Joint statement by the E3 Foreign Ministers Jean-Yves Le Drian (France), Heiko Maas (Germany), Jeremy Hunt (United Kingdom):

France, Germany and the United Kingdom, in accordance with their resolute commitment and continued efforts to preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) endorsed by United Nations Security Council resolution 2231, announce the creation of INSTEX SAS (Instrument for Supporting Trade Exchanges), a Special Purpose Vehicle aimed at facilitating legitimate trade between European economic operators and Iran.

The E3 reaffirm that their efforts to preserve the economic provisions of the JCPOA are conditioned upon Iran's full implementation of its nuclear-related commitments, including full and timely cooperation with the IAEA.

INSTEX will support legitimate European trade with Iran, focusing initially on the sectors most essential to the Iranian population – such as pharmaceutical, medical devices and agri-food goods. INSTEX aims in the long term to be open to economic operators from third countries who wish to trade with Iran and the E3 continue to explore how to achieve this objective.

The creation of INSTEX is a major first step taken by E3 countries today. The operationalisation of INSTEX will follow a step-by-step approach: The E3 together with INSTEX will continue to work on concrete and operational details to define the way the company will operate; the E3 will also work with Iran to create an effective and transparent corresponding entity that is required to be able to operationalise INSTEX.

INSTEX will function under the highest international standards with regards to anti-money laundering, combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) and EU and UN sanctions compliance. In this respect, the E3 expect Iran to swiftly implement all elements of its FATF action plan.

The E3 underline their commitment to pursue the further development of INSTEX with interested European countries to make this instrument in support of trade exchanges with Iran operational by following the steps set out above.

Speaking at the EU Foreign Ministers' meeting in Bucharest, Foreign Secretary

Jeremy Hunt said:

Today we have taken a significant step forward in delivering our commitment under the Iran nuclear deal to preserve sanctions relief for the people of Iran. We – the E3 – have registered a new Special Purpose Vehicle which, when operational, will allow legitimate trade between Europe and Iran.

This is a clear, practical demonstration that we remain firmly committed to the historic 2015 nuclear deal struck with Iran, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, for as long as Iran keeps implementing it fully.

The SPV will facilitate legitimate trade under European and international law. Its immediate focus will be on enabling trade in goods where the immediate need of the Iranian people is greatest, i.e. foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods. Registration is a big step, but there is still more work to be done. The E3 are working closely to address all the technical and legal aspects required to make this vehicle operational. That includes work with Iran to establish necessary counterpart structures. The Iran nuclear deal remains central to international efforts to halt nuclear proliferation and is crucial for the security of the region. But we are clear, this commitment does not in any way preclude us from addressing Iran's hostile and destabilising activities.

[PDF of E3 statement](#) (PDF, 179KB, 1 page)