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IRAN'S hard-line parliament speaker said on Sunday a temporary deal between Tehran and international inspectors to preserve surveillance images taken at nuclear sites had ended, escalating tensions amid diplomatic efforts to save the Islamic Republic's atomic accord with world powers.

As fellow hard-liners demanded Iran delete the images, officials delayed an earlier-planned news conference by the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna. That signaled negotiations between the United Nations agency and Tehran will continue through Sunday night. The last-minute discussions further underscored the

narrowing window for the US and others to reach terms with Iran. The Islamic Republic is already enriching and stockpiling uranium at levels far beyond those allowed by its 2015 nuclear deal.

Iran's hard-line parliament in December approved a bill that would suspend part of UN inspections of its nuclear facilities if European signatories

Under a confidential agreement called an 'Additional Protocol' with Iran, the International Atomic Energy Agency 'collects and analyzes hundreds of thousands of images captured daily by its sophisticated surveillance cameras.

did not provide relief from oil and banking sanctions by February. The IAEA struck a three-month deal with Iran a few days later, in March. That three-month deadline expired Friday under the Gregorian calendar. Under the Persian calendar, the three-month deadline comes on Monday.

On Sunday morning during a session of parliament, speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf

announced the deal had expired. He said Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei supported the decision to see the deal as void. 'After these three months, the International Atomic Energy Agency definitely won't have the right to access the camera footage or transfer them,' he said. Hours later, however, a website called Nournews that's believed to be

close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council quoted an anonymous official suggesting the deal with the IAEA could be extended 'another month.' In Vienna, the IAEA said its Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi would brief journalists Sunday afternoon. The agency said the briefing would be delayed as consultations between the IAEA and Iran continued.

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