



Iran's Nuclear Program on the Security Council's Agenda

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Iran is a nation held hostage by a small clerical elite that is isolating and repressing its people and denying them basic liberties and human rights. The Iranian regime sponsors terrorists, opposes Middle East peace, and is actively working to expand its regional influence. The atomic ambitions of this radical regime pose a clear threat to international peace and security.

Iran's Refusal to Comply and Failure to Cooperate

On March 29, the UN Security Council called on Iran's leaders to suspend uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing and to start regaining the confidence of the international community. On April 28, the IAEA Director General, Dr. ElBaradei, reported Iran's response: refusal to comply with a single Security Council request. According to the Director General's report:

- Rather than suspending uranium enrichment, Iran has successfully operated one 164-centrifuge cascade and is building two more.
- Rather than stopping its heavy water reactor project, which is technically well suited to produce plutonium, Iran continues construction.
- Rather than implementing the Additional Protocol, giving the IAEA added authority, Iran has limited the access of IAEA inspectors.
- Rather than meeting IAEA requests for transparency, Iran has provided no cooperation -- no cooperation -- since March.

The Director General's report contains a long list of unmet requests and unanswered questions. These include:

- Iran's repeated refusal to provide additional information on its enrichment program, including an offer and subsequent shipments of P-1 centrifuge technology from the AQ. Kahn network-- an illicit supplier of nuclear weapons technology.
- Iran's failure to explain its President's claims that the regime is working on advanced P-2 centrifuges, after

years of denying such work.

- Iran's continued refusal to turn over a copy of a 15-page document, obtained from the A.Q. Kahn network, related to the fabrication of uranium into nuclear weapons components.
- Iran's failure to explain the relationship of its uranium program to high explosives testing and the design of a missile re-entry vehicle.

The report demonstrates, once again, why the world has lost confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program. Over the past year, countries have increasingly asked basic questions:

- If the program is peaceful, why 18 years of deceit?
- If the program is peaceful, why not cooperate with the IAEA?
- If the program is peaceful, why the unexplained ties to the A.Q. Kahn network?
- If the program is peaceful, why does Iran possess a document on fabricating nuclear weapons components?
- If the program is peaceful, why the unexplained ties to Iran's military and its missile program?
- If the program is peaceful, why the veiled threats to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty?

More and more countries have come to the judgment that this is not a peaceful program. It is, in our judgment, a deliberate, step-by-step process, directed by Iran's highest leadership, to acquire the technology, material, and know-how to build nuclear weapons.

The Threat Posed by Iran's Nuclear Ambitions

This determined pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability by the dangerous regime in Tehran threatens Iran's neighbors and the wider world community.

- A nuclear-armed Iran could embolden its leaders to advance their ambitions across the region, whether with the military forces they are building or the terrorists they support.
- A nuclear-armed Iran could pose an even greater threat to Middle East peace including the very existence of Israel.
- A nuclear-armed Iran could provide the fuse for further proliferation, causing other countries to re-evaluate their nonproliferation commitments.

Iran is already deploying the Shahab-3 missile, a weapon of choice for nuclear delivery. This missile ranges most the Middle East. There are also reports that Iran is collaborating with North Korea on a longer-range missile, the BM-25. This missile would range significant parts of Europe, Africa, India, Russia, and China.

We cannot allow this dangerous regime, one which spreads death through terrorism, one which threatens death to whole nations, to gain access to the most deadly of weapons.

The course chosen by Iran's leaders threatens international peace and security. It also disregards the interests of the Iranian people. Iran is a great country, full of human potential, and positioned for an important role on the world scene. But instead of making Iran an international player, the leaders of Iran are making it an international pariah. Their outrageous statements and defiant behavior have sparked concern and opposition from countries across the world.

Look at February's vote by the IAEA Board to report Iran to the Security Council. Countries that voted to express concern, call for suspension, and report to the Security Council included:

- members of the European Union;
- permanent members of the Security Council, including Russia and China;
- large developing countries -- India, Argentina, Brazil;
- small developing countries -- Sri Lanka, Ghana;
- countries from Asia -- Japan, Korea, Australia;
- countries from the Americas -- Ecuador, Columbia, Canada; and
- countries from the Arab world -- Egypt and Yemen.

This growing isolation is more than a diplomatic embarrassment. It also hurts the Iranian people. The market is already imposing de facto sanctions.

- London's Fitch Ratings has downgraded the outlook for Iran from "stable" to "negative" due poor economic policy and the nuclear dispute.
- Banks, such as Credit Suisse and Union Bank of Switzerland, are refusing to do business in Iran.
- Multinational corporations, like British Petroleum, are looking to invest their capital elsewhere.

According to the International Monetary Fund, both inflation and unemployment remain double-digit in Iran. The President of Iran has failed to deliver on his promise to improve the lives of the Iranian people. Instead, he tries to distract, and to strengthen his radical rule, by celebrating technology that has little relevance to the daily lives of ordinary Iranians.

- Iran's leaders claim that nuclear energy is crucial to Iran's future. We do not dispute Iran's right to peaceful nuclear power. But look at the facts:
- Iran's leaders say they need enriched uranium for nuclear power plants. But Iran has no nuclear power plants. The one under construction at Bushehr will receive fuel from Russia under a long-term contract.
- Iran's leaders say they need the capability to enrich uranium to be self-sufficient. But Iran's known reserves of natural uranium are only sufficient to power a single reactor for under seven years. Even adding speculative reserves, Iran would run out of uranium soon after completing construction of modestly-sized reactor program.

- If Iran's leaders were serious about energy diversity, they would invest in Iran's immense reserve of natural gas -- the second largest in the world. Instead today a high percentage is flared off -- wasted -- at the wellhead.
- If Iran's leaders were serious about energy diversity, they would follow the lead of South Korea and Sweden. Korea has twenty nuclear power plants. Sweden gets 40 percent of its electricity from nuclear power. Both are advanced countries. Neither enrich uranium.

Some argue that Iran needs nuclear weapons for its own security. But atomic ambitions of Iran's leadership can easily ignite a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. This is a dangerous dynamic for a region already so violent and volatile. It would certainly not make the people of Iran any more secure. The security of Iran is best met, not through nuclear confrontation, but through diplomatic negotiation, constructive engagement, and respect for international obligations.

Why Iran Should Choose a New Course

Our goal is to secure a diplomatic solution. This means convincing the leadership in Iran to make a fundamental choice: a choice for cooperation and negotiation over confrontation and defiance. The path Iran's leaders are taking is leading toward further isolation and sanction. But there is another path, one opened by the European Union, widened by the Russian Federation, and supported by the United States. It is worth recalling what Europe offered last August. The EU3 proposals:

- reaffirmed Iran's inalienable rights to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, exercised in conformity with the NPT;
- offered Iran assurances of fuel supply for light water power and research reactors;
- met Iran's desire to expand international cooperation in the civil nuclear field;
- offered a new political and security relationship based on cooperation;
- proposed a new framework for expanded economic and technological cooperation. The leaders in Tehran turned down this offer. It is time for them to reconsider, to listen to international concerns, and to think about the best interests of the Iranian people.

There are some in Tehran who question the wisdom of regime's current policy:

- An open letter by five reformists, members of the Revolutionary Council during the early days of the Revolution, advised the leadership to "come to its senses and accept reality."
- A group of clerics met with the Supreme Leader to express their concerns about the nuclear program and to call on him to take responsibility for nuclear policies.
- The head of Iran's Expediency Council, Hashemi Rafsanjani, recently told a conference in Tehran that "Iran's nuclear dossier is not on the right track."
- The former Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said that Iran needed to proceed with more "rationality" and adopt a more "balanced" approach. He warned that the country was paying "a heavy price" for the tactics adopted by President Ahmadinezhad.

This discussion is good. We must encourage it, both among the Iranian people and within the ruling elite.

Making Diplomacy Succeed

Iran's leaders are determined. The rest of the world must be equally determined to defend against all aspects of the Iranian threat. We need to bar the regime's access to materials and technology for nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and missile delivery systems. We need to expand and deepen cooperation under the Proliferation Security Initiative to end proliferation traffic. We need to strengthen cooperation with neighboring countries which feel increasingly threatened by Iran's ambitions.

Our goal remains a diplomatic solution, one in which Iran's leaders set aside their ambitions for nuclear weapons capabilities and grasp the diplomatic opportunities offered by the world community. But inducing the current leadership to make this choice will clearly require tough and sustained diplomacy, including action by the Security Council. Last week, the United Kingdom and France introduced a Security Council resolution, backed by Germany and the United States, that would make the Security Council's requests mandatory under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The United States and the European Union are already discussing a range of targeted sanctions if Iran fails to heed a Chapter VII resolution.

For diplomacy to succeed, we must be prepared to use the full range of diplomatic tools available to the Security Council and the international community. For diplomacy to succeed, individual countries, and the European Union as a whole, must apply leverage. And for diplomacy to succeed, Europe, the United States, and other like-minded countries must work together, with unity and resolve, in tackling this common challenge.