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Remarks on Iran

Ambassador John R. Bolton, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

Remarks at the Security Council Stakeout

New York City

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For Immediate Release

Ambassador Bolton: Okay, let me just say a word quickly about Iran. We, I think as Ambassador Churkin has explained, we had another Perm 5 plus Germany meeting. We'll have further discussions this afternoon while the Russians and others check with their capital on some discussions that we've had today. You know, we've been at this for some time now and we'll have to see if we'll be able to reach agreement or if we have to refer this to our Ministers, at least some of whom will meet in Rome tomorrow. If we have to, we're certainly prepared to do that to get a reaffirmation of the agreement that the Ministers made when they met last time to make mandatory on Iran the requirement that they suspend all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities. We'd like to reach agreement without having to go back to the Ministers but if we have to go back, we will.

Reporter: Mr. Ambassador, on two things. First, on UNIFIL, which you are going in to discuss, does the United States support the Secretary General's recommendation for a one month's rollover and despite your best efforts, it appears that the results of the straw poll have leaked out and been published quite widely. Could you comment on the results?

Ambassador Bolton: I think we will have a clear position on UNIFIL after Secretary Rice's meeting in Rome tomorrow. We have been considering the possibility of some interim extension of UNIFIL until some of the larger questions have been resolved, but I think really the answer depends on the further discussions that Secretary Rice will be having in the region today and then what may come out of Rome. So we'll reserve our position on that. In terms of the results of the straw poll, certainly it violated the gentlemen's agreement that we had that the results were not going to get out. And I think it is unfortunate, in a way, although not surprising around here. So the question, as I said yesterday, before you knew what the results were, was that the individual candidates who have declared now have to examine those results

and decide what their next step is, and others who have been considering whether to become candidates can look at the results and decide whether they will now enter the race. Those are all decisions up to them.

Reporter: Mr. Ambassador, how big of a failure is this that you haven't been able to get an agreement now actually months after this process began and weeks after the agreement in Paris? Where do we stand now? Do you hope to (inaudible)?

Ambassador Bolton: Why don't you ask me that question after the afternoon meeting and we'll see whether it's a failure or not?

Reporter: (Inaudible) do you think that this has a chance of being accepted by the Russians?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, we're going back and forth over fairly familiar territory. And the question is whether we've found a way to accommodate. What we think the Ministers agreed upon, which is to make the suspension of uranium enrichment activity mandatory, that's what we seek in this resolution; that's what we believe the Ministers agreed to, and that's the product we want.

Reporter: But the other side, just to follow up on that, the other side fundamentally feels that the agreement was not achieved in Paris, that there was no clear -

Ambassador Bolton: It's not clear to us what they think was agreed in Paris, which is one reason why we may have to go back to the Ministers. But our view is that the ministerial agreement was very clear, that uranium enrichment has to be suspended and made mandatory, and that if the Iranians fail within some reasonable period of time to comply with that in a full and verifiable fashion that we're going to move to a sanctions resolution here in the Security Council. Thanks a lot.

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