



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

KEYWORD SEARCH

[Subject Index](#)[Home](#)[Issues & Press](#)[Travel & Business](#)[Countries](#)[Youth & Education](#)[Careers](#)[About State](#)

You are in: [Under Secretary for Political Affairs](#) > [Bureau of International Organization Affairs](#) > [Speeches, Testimony, Releases, Fact Sheets](#)
> [Other Remarks](#) > [2006 International Organization Affairs Speeches/Remarks](#)

Adoption of Resolution 1696 on Iran and the Situation in the Middle East

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

Remarks at Security Council Stakeout

New York City

July 31, 2006

USUN Press Release #194

For Immediate Release

Ambassador Bolton: I just wanted to say one thing first. We're very pleased that the council has adopted Resolution 1696 by a vote of 14-1. And even though there was a dissenting vote, I think it's clear that was a vote based on timing, not on the substance of the resolution. So this is, in any event, a very strong signal to Iran that they've got a choice to make. They can either choose the route of cooperation and take up the very generous offer made by the Perm-5-plus-Germany, in which case one route is open to them. Or they can choose not to, in which case we will be back here in a month looking at a sanctions resolution. So the ball is now clearly in Iran's court. The choice is up to them. And the clock has begun to tick. So I'll take your questions now.

Reporter: Ambassador, the Iranians called the resolution totally unwarranted and destructive. How do you respond to that?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, I thought it was interesting how similar their reaction was to the North Korean reaction rejecting Resolution 1695. In fact, if my understanding is correct, the Iranians may have broken the North Korean record by rejecting this resolution even before it was adopted, when it was just in blue. I think it shows exactly what they think of the Security Council, and I hope members take that into account if we still have Iranian obfuscation or a flat rejection of the E.U.-3-plus-3 offer by August the 31st.

Reporter: Mr. Ambassador, on the vote, you said the one dissenting voice, that of Qatar I guess you mean, you said it's on timing not on the substance of the resolution. Were you surprised? Because the procedure had us believe this is a presidential draft and that countries can tell if they have any objection on Saturday. Did you know that they had objection? When did you know that the countries involved to surprise you with a no -- or did they surprise you with a no?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, we were informed of the vote beforehand, and of the reasons for it, which, as I say, listening to the explanation of votes, strike me as concerns about timing, not about substance.

Reporter: In one hand, you know, you are complaining about Hezbollah and the Middle East in such turmoil, and the other hand you are supporting the PKK in the north of Iraq (inaudible) Turkey into almost 50 years. How (inaudible) justice?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, actually that's not the case, but not the subject of our discussions here, in any event.

Reporter: On this Iranian resolution which has passed, now there is an indication that Iran may accept this deal before August 22, which they have been saying. So, in fact, if they do, this resolution will still stand as a monitor of what Iran is doing or will it die away?

Ambassador Bolton: No, the resolution will still be there, obviously, as a signal to Iran. But if Iran wants to respond, they should call Mr. Solana's office in Brussels. I'm sure he'll be there or someone will answer the phone and they can give us an answer, instead of the non-answer they've given us so far.

Reporter: Ambassador, in case Iran does not freeze its enrichment program, do we need another resolution, or is this resolution enough to set the motion forward of punitive measures?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, I think the resolution says very clearly that the Security Council will come back to consider matters under Article 41 of the charter, which provides for sanctions, among other things. But it's also clear that in this resolution, 1696, that the council has made a declaratory statement of policy and has made it mandatory on Iran that it must suspend its uranium enrichment and reprocess activities. So from that perspective, the resolution itself clearly grants authority and imposes a mandatory obligation on Iran. And as I said in my explanation of vote, the United States and others have already taken steps previously in this connection, because you don't need the authority of a Security Council resolution to do that.

Reporter: In the Iranian point and the Qatari point of view this morning at the session, it was very clear that the dissension here would be about the sense of urgency. They're asking a little bit why the Security Council is not acting urgently on Qana, while on Iran it seems to be more urgent. Could you explain your comment here?

Ambassador Bolton: I think if you look at the entire length of the Iranian nuclear weapons program, some 18 or more years, this is not exactly hasty action by the Security Council. And with respect to the situation in Lebanon, I think the President, the Secretary of State and others have said very clearly we hope to move to a resolution this week in the Security Council that will provide a political framework for a sustainable solution. So I think we are moving very quickly on the situation in the Middle East. I think we should.

Reporter: Ambassador, on Lebanon, there was supposed to be a troop contributors meeting today. What happened? And also, the French resolution calls for no creation of a multinational force until after there's a political settlement. What does that do to, sort of, the effort to try and put together a force soon?

Ambassador Bolton: We're going to have further discussions with members of the Council on the resolution that we hope to adopt this week. We'll have our own thoughts and perhaps circulate our own resolution, perhaps as early as later today. And that work will go on as rapidly as we can. The question of the meeting of the troop contributor countries was as much a scheduling question as anything else, because we were hoping for representatives from capitals, and among other things there's a European foreign ministers meeting in Brussels tomorrow, which meant that many of the people who might have been able to come here to New York from Europe would not be able to make it. So we're still working on rescheduling that. But the intention is to go ahead. It has zero political significance. This has to do with airline schedules.

Reporter: Ambassador, on the Israel resolution that you might put forward later today, can you give us some indication of what it's going to look like, how it would differ from the French proposed draft; things along that?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, I think I'd prefer to wait until we have the resolution to circulate around. But you can be sure that it will be consistent with what the secretary has been saying and president has been saying and the declaration from the Rome meeting of last week.

Reporter: (inaudible) contribute troops at this hour considering what happened in Qana and elsewhere?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, I think that it's important that we show that there is desire to make the solution that we are hoping to find in the region sustainable. And that, obviously, entails the commitment of a number of countries to provide troops. And I think that we'll have to work out as part of the political solution. Let me just take one more question at this point.

Reporter: Last week, the Syrian ambassador to the U.N. spoke of -- he's willing, his country is willing to discuss a comprehensive solution of the Middle East with the official of the United Nations, namely Secretary General Kofi Annan. Do you have any plans -- are they (inaudible) to discuss with him the Syrian solution in order to resolve the Lebanese problem?

Ambassador Bolton: Well, I think the burden on Syria is to comply with Resolutions 1559 and 1595 and fulfill their obligations to recognize that Lebanon is a free and independent state and to stop the continuing efforts of the Syrian government to influence the actions of the democratically elected government of Lebanon, as well as to cooperate more fully in the Hariri Assassination [investigation], not to mention stopping their supply of finance and weapons to Hezbollah and other terrorist groups in Lebanon. So I think Syria already has a long list of things to do that is not done, and it really ought to focus on that before going any further. Okay, we'll see you later today, because the Lebanese acting foreign minister will be here at 3:00, so we'll have another chance to...

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Bolton: It will be an open meeting at 3 o'clock to hear the minister, as I understand it. And I think the ambassador from Israel will participate, as well. Okay, thanks very much.



[Updates](#) | [Frequent Questions](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Email this Page](#) | [Subject Index](#) | [Search](#)

The Office of Electronic Information, Bureau of Public Affairs, manages this site as a portal for information from the U.S. State Department. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views or privacy policies contained therein.

[About state.gov](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Copyright Information](#) | [Other U.S. Government Information](#)