

IRANIAN POLITICAL AND NUCLEAR REALITIES AND UNITED STATES POLICIES

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BEFORE THE

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IRANIAN POLITICAL AND NUCLEAR REALITIES AND UNITED STATES POLICY OPTIONS

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2009

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. John F. Kerry (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present. Senators Kerry, Menendez, Casey, Kaufman, Lugar, and Risch.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will come to order. Thank you very much for being here to join us today.

And we're very pleased to welcome an outstanding panel of witnesses for this hearing. These witnesses, frankly, have a tall order today, because we've asked them to help us understand the way forward in dealing with one of the most urgent challenges that currently faces all of us. I can't imagine a better group to kick off the first of 3 days of public and classified briefings and hearings on Iran's nuclear program and the policy options facing us.

I'm particularly happy to welcome back a couple of very familiar faces. Ambassador Frank Wisner has been here many times, in many capacities. And, Frank, we appreciate your willingness to share the insights you've gained from a very long and distinguished career in public service.

Ambassador WISNER. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I'm pleased also to have Richard Haass here across the table from us once again. There are few people better qualified to provide us with a strong perspective on where Iran fits into the world's geopolitical map. And we appreciate your leadership on the Council on Foreign Relations.

Mark, thank you, also, for joining us here. You bring a long experience in the field of nonproliferation, and an analyst's keen eye on just how far down the road Iran has gotten since its secret nuclear program was exposed 6½ years ago.

Nobody has to emphasize, but I suppose we ought to restate, that we are living through a very difficult and uncertain time. And we are rightly focused heavily on the state of our economy. But, as a nation, and particularly on this committee, we cannot afford to ignore the challenges outside of our borders.

Right near the top of that list of challenges is Iran and its troubling nuclear program. The impact of Iran's steady nuclear progress is real. When I was in the Middle East, just a few days ago, I encountered deep worries in every Arab capital about Iran's ascendancy and the possibility that it will build an atomic weapon. And, of course, in Israel the anxiety is not just high, it is an existential threat.

What we know about Iran's nuclear missile progress raises grave concerns for us and our allies. Iran has built a uranium enrichment plant approximately 75 feet underground at Natanz, where nearly 4,000 centrifuges are spinning away, enriching uranium, with hundreds more centrifuges apparently ready to start up soon. Just 2 weeks ago, the International Atomic Energy Agency reported that the plant has enriched enough reactor-grade uranium to, theoretically, allow Iran to make an atomic bomb.

On Sunday, ADM Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, confirmed the IAEA report, saying publicly that the United States believes Iran has amassed enough uranium to build an atomic bomb, if its leaders were to take the reckless step of further enriching that stockpile to weapons grade. We are determined—and I believe it is the appropriate policy—to stop Iran from taking that very dangerous next step.

At the same time, Iran continues to defy the United Nations Security Council by constructing a reactor at Arak, that, if it were completed, looks to be very well suited for producing weapons-grade plutonium. The IAEA reports that Iran has recently impeded its access to this facility. And Iran continues to test ballistic missiles and to launch so-called space-launch vehicles that Iran can learn from to expand its ballistic missile capability.

But, what we do not know about Iran's program is even more alarming. For 6 years, the IAEA has been asking Iran to answer questions about the possible military dimensions of its nuclear program. The questions have grown more substantive and pointed as time has passed, and Iran has grown more defiant, ignoring sanctions by the U.N. Security Council and obstructing the IAEA.

Because of its history of concealment and deception, we cannot afford to take Iran at its word that its nuclear ambitions are solely civilian. Its leaders must answer the IAEA's questions fully and quickly, and should comply, as other nations have complied that are signatories to the NPT.

These gaps in what we know about Iran's nuclear program are significant, and they are dangerous. I hope our witnesses will help fill some of them in.

For me, some of the most troubling unanswered questions were raised in documents that were reportedly found on a laptop computer obtained by the CIA in 2004. Among the thousands of pages of data from that computer are, according to press reports, documents that appear to show blueprints for a nuclear warhead and designs for missiles to carry it. One of those designs apparently tracked the flight of the missile and showed the detonation of its explosives 600 meters above the ground. Well, folks, that's a lousy height for a conventional weapon, but it's a devastating altitude for a nuclear weapon intended to wipe out a city.

Iran has refused to answer the toughest of these questions. And just last week, a U.N. official acknowledged to my staff that talks between the IAEA and Tehran have reached an impasse. The official said he didn't know what comes next.

Well, we do know what comes next. The Obama administration has said that it wants to open direct talks with Iran. This is the right first step, and I applaud the President for taking it. But, we also need to be honest with ourselves: Just talking will not solve this problem, even direct talks between Washington and Tehran. While Iran was "just talking" to the IAEA and the Europeans, it deftly sidestepped every redline laid down by the international community. While Iran was "just talking" to the world, it moved to the threshold of becoming a nuclear state.

I point this out, not to lay blame; I point this out, because we cannot move forward to a solution without understanding how we got to this dangerous juncture in history. The time for incremental steps and unanswered questions is over.

Talking with Iran is the right starting point. I have supported this idea for many years, and I'm glad that the day is coming. But, the fact is that the United States must open these talks from a position of strength. The President's recent announcement of a responsible redeployment plan for Iraq is a step in the right direction, but we need the full backing of our allies in Europe, as well as Russia, China, and other countries, as we sit down across the table from the Iranians. This is not just an American problem, and it will not be just an American solution. Our friends and allies need to understand this.

And Iran needs to understand that these will not be drawn-out negotiations. That's a scenario that would give Tehran a green light for more progress on enrichment and other nuclear projects, some still being carried out in the dark.

We need to set a timetable for substantive progress, and we need to make sure that Iran's leaders understand that the full weight of the international community will come down on them if this issue is not resolved. And by "full weight," I mean tougher economic sanctions, such as further restrictions on trade and finance, which will apply meaningful pressure on the Iranian regime at a time when oil prices have plummeted and its economy is hurting.

The solution to this problem does lie within our reach. With our friends and allies, we need to act boldly and wisely to engage Iran, backed by real consequences for its continued noncompliance.

I look forward to the guidance that we're going to receive from our distinguished panel this morning, and from GEN Brent Scowcroft and Zbigniew Brzezinski on Thursday morning.

And let me welcome, now, our one other witness who is here, Karim Sadjadpour, now an associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, whose intimate knowledge of Iran's senior officials, clerics, and dissidents offers the committee a genuine insider's perspective. Frankly, we've operated frequently without understanding fully the realities on the other side of this critical issue, and I think—we welcome your contribution to that.

With that, let me turn now to Senator Lugar.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD G. LUGAR, U.S. SENATOR
FROM INDIANA**

Senator LUGAR. Why, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing on our policy toward Iran.

Two weeks ago, as you pointed out, the International Atomic Energy Agency released a report on Iran that reached four major conclusions.

First, the report said that, "There remains a number of outstanding issues which give rise to concerns about the existence of possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program."

Second, Iran has refused to permit IAEA inspectors access to additional locations related to the manufacture of centrifuges, research and development on uranium enrichment, and uranium mining and milling.

Third, unless Iran implements transparency measures and the additional protocol, the IAEA will not be in a position to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran.

Last, the report said Iran has not suspended its enrichment-related activities or its work on heavy-water-related projects.

The exact status of Iran's nuclear program and the degree of progress Iran has made toward a potential nuclear weapon have been debated extensively, but, as the IAEA report underscores, Tehran clearly is not complying with international nonproliferation regime, and there is widespread agreement that Iran has not been truthful about its nuclear program or its missile development. Its decision to move ahead with uranium enrichment was condemned by the international community. Iran's intransigence has triggered United Nations Security Council sanctions on three occasions.

In recent weeks, Tehran announced the launching of its first domestically produced satellite into space. Iran has also announced that the Russian-built nuclear powerplant at Bushehr will undergo testing prior to beginning operations this year.

Despite these steps, the international community's leverage with regard to Iran has increased significantly in recent months. The Iranian regime is under economic pressure due to falling oil prices and multilateral sanctions. Iran's isolation has contributed to lagging investments in its oil and natural gas industries. The National Academy of Science speculates that this trend could lead to sharply lower Iranian energy exports by 2015.

United Nations sanctions have also encouraged foreign governments and banks to curtail or end commercial ties to Iran.

It is clear that Tehran would like to split the international community, or at least delay concerted action. The task for American diplomats continues to be to solidify an international consensus in favor of a plan that presents the Iranian regime with a stark choice between the benefits of accepting a verifiable limitation on its nuclear program and the detriments of proceeding along the current course.

And even as we pursue sanctions or other joint action, it's important we continue to explore potential diplomatic openings with Iran. I strongly supported the Bush administration's decision to send Under Secretary of State Bill Burns to participate in negotiations, hosted by our European allies, with Iran's chief nuclear nego-

tiator, the so-called “P5+1.” I believe we must be open to some level of direct communication with Iran. Even if such efforts do not produce agreements, they may reduce risk of miscalculation, improve our ability to interpret what is going on in Iran, and dispel anti-American rumors among the Iranian people, and strengthen our efforts to enlist the support of key nations in responding to Iranian threats.

Despite the Iranian Government’s provocative policies, the young and educated people of Iran are among the most pro-American populations in the Middle East. Most Iranians favor greater economic and social integration with the rest of the world, access to technological advancements, and a more open political system. Positive transformation in Iran is inhibited by the lack of accurate information reaching the Iranian people about what their government is doing and about the international community’s efforts to resolve the current crisis.

The United States and other nations must work to broaden the information available to Iranians. Among other steps, the possibility of establishing a United States visa office or some similar diplomatic presence in Iran should be on the table, and such an outpost would facilitate more exchange and outreach with the Iranian people.

Regardless of its precise strategy on Iran, the Obama administration must make execution of an Iran policy a priority, and this will require focused diplomacy, with European allies and with other partners, on constructing a multilateral program that intensifies the costs to Tehran if it resists transparency and continues its nuclear weapons activities.

I welcome, along with our chairman, the distinguished witnesses that we have before us, and look forward to their testimony.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks so much, Senator Lugar. And I appreciate, without collaboration, the sort of synchronicity of our comments. And I think it’s important.

Normally by, sort of, rank, we would start with you, Ambassador Wisner, but we want to, if you don’t mind, lay out, sort of, first—we’re going to ask Mark Fitzpatrick to start with his testimony to sort of look inside. Then we’d like to ask Karim Sadjadpour to look inside the nuclear issue, and then—Karim will sort of lay out—and then both of you can really lay out the policies, sort of, in response to that. And I think it would be great.

So, if we could begin with you, Mark, we’d appreciate it.

**STATEMENT OF MARK FITZPATRICK, SENIOR FELLOW FOR
NONPROLIFERATION, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
STRATEGIC STUDIES, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM**

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, other Senators. It’s an honor to be asked to testify today on a matter that I’ve been following for almost 12 years, in and out of government. Iran today has reached a status I have long dreaded. It operates a semi-industrial-scale uranium enrichment facility and is building up a stockpile of enriched uranium that is of no current use to its civil nuclear energy program, but that could be put to weapons purposes. Meanwhile, Iran is also building a research

reactor that will be ideal for producing plutonium, the other path to nuclear weapons.

Whether or not Iran chooses to go down the weapons route, its persistence in developing such capabilities could have profoundly disturbing consequences, including by potentially sparking a proliferation cascade in the Middle East and beyond.

The danger is compounded by Iran's failure to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency's investigation of past Iranian nuclear activities and its verification of new undertakings.

Iran refuses to answer questions about the strong evidence of past nuclear weapons development work, including, for example, evidence of foreign help with experiments on a detonator suitable for an implosion-type weapon. Iran has also unilaterally and illegally rejected its treaty obligation to provide advance declarations of new nuclear facilities, and to allow inspectors regular access to facilities under construction, such as the research reactor at Arak. What Iran chooses not to disclose is difficult to discover.

According to the latest IAEA report, as of mid-February Iran was operating almost 4,000 centrifuges at its underground uranium enrichment facility at Natanz, and was getting ready to begin operating about 2,000 more. The piping is being installed for an additional 9,000 centrifuges, which would bring the total to 15,000 at some unspecified future date. All the centrifuges operating in the underground facility so far are of the P-1—that is, Pakistan first generation—model, although Iran continues to experiment with more efficient later model centrifuges in an above-ground pilot plant at Natanz.

By the end of January, Iran had produced a metric ton of gasified uranium enriched to the 3-percent U235 isotope level needed to fuel most nuclear powerplants. The IAEA estimates that Iran was adding about 100 kilograms a month to its stockpile. If it is further enriched—and that is a big “if”—the uranium content of the Natanz production to date is sufficient, in principle, to provide the fissile material for one nuclear weapon. Iran thus has a latent breakout capability.

The accumulation of this much low-enriched uranium makes the Iran challenge more acute, but several caveats are in order, including the range of uncertainty in the variables that feed into the equation of how much is enough for a weapon. Because the low-enriched uranium is under IAEA's surveillance, further enriching it could not be done without tipping off inspectors.

And the basic truth bears repeating, that having a stockpile of enriched uranium is not the same as having a bomb. Treating Iran's enrichment capabilities as equivalent to nuclear-weapon status would empower its hardline leaders and exaggerate the perception of danger among Iran's neighbors, increasing whatever security motivations they may already have for keeping open a nuclear weapons option of their own.

For a weapon, the low-enriched uranium first would have to be further enriched to 90 percent or more. Although it may be counterintuitive, about two-thirds of the effort required to produce weapons-grade uranium has already been expended by the time it is enriched to just 4 percent. Nevertheless, the further enrichment to weapons-grade would still take several weeks.

Based on public information, it is impossible to say how long it would then take Iran to reconvert the gaseous highly enriched uranium to metal and fashion a weapon from it, but a rough estimate might assign at least 6 months or more to the task. Other nations would then have some time to react.

Having just enough enriched uranium for one weapon, even once enriched to weapons-grade, cannot be said to confer nuclear weapons status. A real deterrent capability would require more. Most countries also feel the need for a test to ensure reliability, although this perhaps would not be necessary if Iran received a proven weapons design through the black market. The notorious Pakistan black-marketer, A.Q. Kahn, sold a nuclear weapons design to Libya at the beginning of the decade, and other members of his network made digital copies of the blueprints.

There is no publicly available evidence that Iran obtained a weapons design, as well. It is noteworthy, however, that the Libya blueprints have been described as being from the same family as the documentation that Iran admitted it did receive from the Kahn network in 1987 on the casting of uranium in hemispherical shapes.

As has been widely reported, the U.S. intelligence community assessed that Iran was working on a nuclear weapons development up until late 2003. What has not been reported, and is probably unknown, is how far Iran got in this research. The publicly available evidence suggests that it was at the developmental, not yet operational, stage.

Whether Iran has actually made a decision to build nuclear weapons is uncertain, but its purpose in pursuing uranium enrichment clearly seems to have a weapons options for the future. It is hard to reach any other logical conclusion, based on the secrecy and deception behind the program, the military connections, and evidence of weapons development work, and the economic illogic of investing in these expensive technologies without having any powerplants that can use the enriched uranium.

With regard to this last point, for example, the Bushehr reactor that underwent a startup test last week, can be run safely only on fuel made in Russia. Iran's claims about the purpose of its enrichment program obfuscate this point.

Iran's main justification has been an argument for self-sufficiency. The argument breaks down, on several grounds, however, including that Iran's known uranium reserves are insufficient for the nuclear power program it envisions. Iran already has exhausted most of its stock of uranium concentrate, known as "yellow cake," in order to produce 357 metric tons of uranium hexafluoride at its facility at Esfahan. This is far from sufficient for a power program, but is enough feed material for at least three dozen weapons.

A key policy challenge is how to build a barrier between the latent nuclear weapons capability and actual weapons production. This is difficult when, in Iran's case today, the distinction is blurred almost to the point of invisibility. The United States and its allies do, however, have several policy tools to help keep Iran's enrichment program from unlimited expansion. If Iran continues to defy the Security Council, its enrichment program can be con-

strained by export controls, sanctions, financial pressure, interdiction, and other means of exploiting Iran's vulnerabilities.

Among the dangers presented by Iran's nuclear program is the risk that it will start a domino effect in the region. Many of Iran's neighbors are concerned about its growing weapons capability. For some states, such as its gulf neighbors, an Iranian nuclear weapon would present a direct and dire threat. For others, such as Egypt and Turkey, the threat is indirect and more tied to concerns about the power balance and loss of relative status and influence in the region. Together, these concerns have contributed to a surge of interest in nuclear power in the region, almost certainly, in part, to signal to Iran and to their own populations that they have a hedging strategy.

Since 2006, 15 countries in the Middle East have announced new or revived plans to explore civilian nuclear energy. They've justified their interest in terms of electricity needs, energy diversification, a desire to conserve oil and gas for export earnings, and the role of nuclear energy in retarding global warming. They do not talk openly about it in strategic terms, and certainly do not say they want nuclear energy as the building block for an atomic bomb, but they do see nuclear energy as a status symbol and a way to keep technological pace with Iran. The question is how to keep this interest confined to purely civilian nuclear programs. Keeping Iran from getting nuclear weapons is the best preventative.

Nuclear power, in itself, is not a proliferation threat. It can contribute to proliferation risks by providing cover for clandestine activities and an industrial and personnel infrastructure that could be useful to a weapons program. However, it is only the sensitive areas of the fuel cycle, primarily uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing, that present the problem. If states agreed to forgo these technologies and to accept enforceable transparency measures, then nuclear power can contribute to their economic development without sparking proliferation concerns.

A good example of this is the decision by the United Arab Emirates to forgo enrichment and reprocessing, and to accept the IAEA safeguards additional protocol. This sets a positive model for the region and beyond, in stark contrast with Iran. If such a stance helps the UAE to acquire state-of-the-art nuclear technology from the West, the Iranian people might well ask their leaders why they persist with policies that lead to increasing political and economic isolation while their gulf neighbors can freely enjoy the benefits of peaceful nuclear cooperation.

Mr. Chairman, I'll stop here and submit the rest of my testimony and prepared remarks.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fitzpatrick follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK FITZPATRICK, SENIOR FELLOW FOR NON-PROLIFERATION, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

It is an honor to testify before this hearing on a matter that I have been following for almost 12 years, both in and out of government. Iran today has reached a status I have long dreaded: It operates a semi-industrial-scale uranium enrichment facility and is building up a stockpile of enriched uranium that is of no current use to its civil nuclear energy program but that could be put to weapons purposes. Meanwhile Iran is also building a research reactor that will be ideal for producing plutonium—the other path to nuclear weapons. Whether or not Iran chooses to go down the

weapons route, its persistence in developing such capabilities could have profoundly disturbing consequences, including by potentially sparking a proliferation cascade in the Middle East and beyond.

The danger is compounded by Iran's failure to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s investigation of past Iranian nuclear activities and its verification of new undertakings. Iran refuses to answer questions about the strong evidence of past nuclear weapons development work, including, for example, evidence of foreign help with experiments on a detonator suitable for an implosion-type weapon. Iran has also unilaterally and illegally rejected its treaty obligation to provide advance declarations of new nuclear facilities and to allow inspectors regular access to facilities under construction, such as the research reactor. What Iran chooses not to disclose is difficult to discover.

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For a weapon, the low-enriched uranium first would have to be further enriched to 90 percent or more. Although it may be counterintuitive, about two-thirds of the effort required to produce weapons-grade uranium has already been expended by the time it is enriched to just 3.5 percent. Nevertheless, the further enrichment to weapons-grade would still take several weeks. Based on public information, it is impossible to say how long it would then take Iran to reconvert the gaseous highly enriched uranium to metal and fashion a weapon from it, but a very rough estimate might assign at least 6 months or more to this task. Other nations would then have some time to react, provided they could muster the political will to do so.

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underwent a startup test last week can be run safely only on fuel made in Russia. Iran's claims about the purpose of its enrichment program obfuscate this point.

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Among the dangers presented by Iran's nuclear program is the risk that it will start a domino effect in the region. Many of Iran's neighbors are concerned about its growing weapons capability. For some states, such as its gulf neighbors, an Iranian nuclear weapon would present a direct and dire threat. For others, such as Egypt and Turkey, the threat is indirect, and more tied to concerns about the balance of power and loss of relative status and influence in the region. Together, these concerns have contributed to a surge of interest in nuclear power in the region, almost certainly in part to signal to Iran—and to their own populations—that they have a hedging strategy.

Since 2006, 15 countries in the Middle East have announced new or revived plans to explore civilian nuclear energy. They have justified their interest in terms of electricity needs, energy diversification, a desire to conserve oil and gas for export earnings, and the role of nuclear energy in retarding global warming. They do not talk openly about it in strategic terms, and certainly do not say they want nuclear energy as the building block for an atomic bomb. But they do see nuclear energy as a status symbol, and a way to keep technological pace with Iran. The question is how to keep this interest confined to purely civilian nuclear programs. Keeping Iran from getting nuclear weapons is the best preventative.

Nuclear power in itself is not a proliferation threat. It can contribute to proliferation risks by providing cover for clandestine activities and an industrial and personnel infrastructure that could be useful to a weapons programme. However, it is only the sensitive areas of the fuel cycle—primarily uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing—that pose the problem. If states agree to forgo these technologies and to accept enforceable transparency measures, then nuclear power can contribute to their economic development without sparking proliferation concerns.

The introduction of nuclear energy elsewhere in the Middle East should not be seen as a foregone conclusion. To date, no commercial contracts have been signed; no irreversible decisions have been made, and most of the national plans have been limited to feasibility studies. Indeed, there is reason to doubt the will and ability of many of the states in the region to follow through with the large technical, financial and political challenges of nuclear-energy development. These hurdles have postponed many nuclear energy plans in the past and are likely to do so again. From a technical standpoint, most of these states are starting from a very low base, lacking the necessary physical infrastructure, legal systems, and trained scientific and engineering personnel. Those states that do go ahead will take 10–15 years before nuclear power becomes a national reality. There is time, therefore, to put in place a robust regime of policies and practices that can serve as a bulwark against a proliferation cascade in the region.

In a book-length assessment last year of "Nuclear Programmes in the Middle East: In the Shadow of Iran," the International Institute for Strategic Studies concluded that if any one of Iran's neighbors were to seek to acquire nuclear weapons in response, this would put additional pressure on others to do the same. A proliferation cascade would become more likely if Israel felt obliged to relinquish its longstanding doctrine of nuclear "opacity" or ambiguity, whereby it refuses to confirm or deny any aspect of its nuclear activities.

The policies and practices adopted by the next states to embark on nuclear power projects can set a new standard to help correct the damaging Iranian precedent. Central to this new standard should be a shared understanding that the proliferation risks of nuclear energy are manageable as long as countries accept full transparency with enforceable verification and concentrate on the technologies they really need for nuclear power, while relying on more economical imports of nuclear fuel, rather than indigenous development of sensitive parts of the fuel cycle. A good

example of this is the decision by the United Arab Emirates unequivocally to forgo enrichment and reprocessing and to accept the IAEA safeguards Additional Protocol. This sets a positive model for the region and beyond, in stark contrast with Iran. If such a stance helps the UAE to acquire state-of-the-art nuclear technology from the West, the Iranian people might well ask their leaders why they persist with policies that lead to increasing political and economic isolation while their gulf neighbours can freely enjoy the benefits of peaceful nuclear cooperation.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Mr. Fitzpatrick, thank you. It's very important testimony, very detailed, and we are very, very appreciative for that update, and look forward to some questions.

Mr. Sadjadpour.

STATEMENT OF KARIM SADJADPOUR, ASSOCIATE, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. SADJADPOUR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar. It's an honor to be here—

The CHAIRMAN. Is your mike on?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I believe it is, yes.

The CHAIRMAN. There it is, yes.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I will speak louder.

I will be uncharacteristically brief for a Persian. I will be brief in my oral testimony, and I've gone into much greater detail in my written.

We're here to talk about the nuclear proliferation threat from Iran today, but I would submit that Iran has a sizable influence on six major U.S. foreign policy challenges. There is nuclear proliferation, Iraq, Afghanistan, the Arab-Israeli conflict, energy security, and terrorism.

And starting with this premise, I would argue, as you said, Mr. Chairman, that shunning Iran is no longer an option. I would argue confronting Iran militarily will exacerbate each of these issues I just mentioned. And the option we're left with is talking to Iran. But, the devil is in the details.

I think the first question which the Obama administration must probe is a seemingly simple one, and that is, Why does Iran behave the way that it does? Is Iranian behavior driven by this immutable ideology which was born out of the 1979 revolution and is really incapable of changing? Or is Iranian behavior somehow a reaction to punitive United States measures? Meaning, could a different approach—namely, a diplomatic United States approach—beget a more conciliatory Iranian response? I don't think we know the answers to these questions, but the only way to test these hypotheses is with direct dialog.

I would argue that the nuclear issue, which we're here to talk about today, is a symptom of the mistrust between the United States and Iran, but is not an underlying cause of tension. And for this reason, I don't believe that there exists a technical solution to this nuclear dispute. If President Ahmadinejad were to announce a press conference tomorrow declaring that Iran has put its nuclear program to rest, no one would believe him, nor should we. And I believe that, again, there does not exist a technical solution to this issue; it will require a broader political accommodation between the United States and Iran, whereby Washington reaches a *modus vivendi* with Tehran and Iran ceases its hostile approach toward Israel. And we can go into more detail about this.

Now, I would make three points with regards to policy recommendations. And the first point is to commence the dialog with Iran by aiming to build confidence on areas of common interests. And of the six issues that I mentioned initially, I believe that Afghanistan and Iraq are the two best forums in which to build confidence with Iran. These are two areas where there are broad overlapping interests. There are certainly some competing interests as well, but there are broad overlapping interests between the two countries; namely, in Afghanistan. Iran does not want to see a resurgence of the Taliban, a Sunni fundamentalist cult which they almost fought a war with a little more than a decade ago. Iran, like the United States, wants to see drug trafficking curtailed. And Iran, having received over 2 million Afghan refugees in the last few decades, certainly does not want to see continued instability in Afghanistan. And likewise, we have common interests with Iran in Iraq.

So, I would say the first—the best step to begin this conversation, after 30 years of cumulative mistrust, is to try to allay this mistrust by working on these areas of common interest. And I think those conversations, in and of themselves, could have an impact on Iran's nuclear disposition. If the United States is able to set a new tone and context for the relationship in Afghanistan and elsewhere, I think that, in and of itself, could change the calculations—the nuclear calculations—of Iran's leadership.

The second point I would make is to focus on the supreme leader in Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei, not the President, Mahmoud Ahmadi-najad. Ayatollah Khamenei's constitutional authority dwarfs that of the President. He has authority over the main levers of state—the judiciary, the military, the media; and, in the last several years, he has emerged more powerful than he's ever been. If you look at the most influential institutions within Iran, the Revolutionary Guards, the Guardian Council, the Presidency, the Parliament, they're all currently led by individuals who were either directly appointed by Khamenei or unfailingly loyal to him.

So, I think the focus should be on Ayatollah Khamenei. And I've gone into much greater detail in my testimony—my written testimony, about Khamenei. But, if I had to describe him in one word, it would be "mistrustful." He is deeply mistrustful of U.S. intentions. He believes that U.S. policy is not behavior change, but regime change. And he is reluctant to show any type of compromise, because he believes that if you compromise, you project weakness and it will invite even more pressure. So, I think one of the great challenges of the Obama administration will be to (a) deal directly with Khamenei, and (b) try to allay his profound sense of mistrust, and see how that might affect Iran's nuclear calculations.

The third point I would make—which is very much in line with Senator Lugar's initial comments—is that it's absolutely imperative that we maintain an airtight international approach. That includes not only the Europeans, but also the Russians, the Chinese, and others. What's absolutely critical is that each country approaches Iran with the same talking points, with the same redlines, because if different countries approach Iran with diverging redlines, I believe the entire diplomatic approach could unravel. Iran is very

adept at exploiting rifts within the international community and it's absolutely critical that they receive the same talking points from all of our allies.

Now, I see two major obstacles to any type of confidence-building or potential thawing in the relationship. And the first obstacle I describe as the "spoilers." These are factions, entities, and individuals who would not benefit from a warming of the United States-Iran relationship. Many are hard-liners in Tehran who thrive in isolation, in the sense that they have quasi-monopolies on economic power, on political power, and they recognize that, were Iran to open up to the world, it would dilute the hold they have on power now. And in the past, these spoilers have been incredibly adept at sabotaging or torpedoing any type of confidence-building. They will send arms shipments, meant to be discovered, to Hamas, to Hezbollah. They will commit gratuitous human rights abuses. One of my friends, Roxana Saberi, who's an Iranian-American journalist, was imprisoned last month in Tehran. She's been in Evin prison for the last month. And I believe these types of actions are meant to gratuitously sabotage any hope for confidence-building.

And I think we, the United States, should not react by ceasing dialog with Iran, because that's precisely what these spoilers are hoping to achieve. And it's going to be tough, but I think we need to continue forward.

And the big question is the will and the opinion of Ayatollah Khamenei himself. And despite his hostile rhetoric, we don't know, deep down, whether he's interested in having an amicable relationship or not with the United States. But, I would argue that if we reach out to Tehran, and he rebuffs our overtures, it will create major issues and problems for him in Tehran, because, as Senator Lugar mentioned early on, he's presiding over a population which is overwhelmingly in favor of a normalization with Iran, and even amongst the political elite in Tehran, behind closed doors the majority recognize that the "Death to America" culture of 1979 is obsolete in 2009. So, I think that even if Iran's senior leadership rebuffs our efforts at overtures, it could create problems for them, and could create cleavages in Tehran.

The second big obstacle I see is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And I see this as the biggest point of contention between the United States and Iran, not the nuclear issue. And what I would argue is that some type of a parallel-track negotiation—Arab-Israeli negotiations, headed by Senator Mitchell—could do a great deal in forwarding United States-Iran confidence-building.

Iran's position toward Israel is incredibly rigid. I don't see them changing that position anytime soon, but the important caveat is that Iran's leadership has long said that they will accept any agreement which the Palestinians themselves accept. I truly believe forward progress on the Arab-Israeli peace front could do wonders for United States-Iran confidence-building.

The last point, which I will end on, is human rights and democracy, because I think there's a valid concern among some that if we talk to the Iranian regime, we're somehow selling out the demands of the Iranian people, or by dealing with the Iranian regime—engagement with the Iranian regime will be at the expense of the Iranian people. And on this issue I would simply defer to Iran's

human rights and democracy activists themselves; Iranian Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi argues that allaying the threat perception of the regime in Tehran, and trying to reintegrate Iran into the international global economy, will really expedite political and economic reform in Iran by creating more fertile ground for democracy and human rights.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sadjadpour follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KARIM SADJADPOUR, ASSOCIATE, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT
FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you very much for the opportunity to testify today. Given Iran's sizable influence on issues of critical importance to the United States—namely Iraq, Afghanistan, the Arab-Israeli conflict, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and energy security—the longstanding Washington policy debate about whether or not to “engage” has been rendered obsolete. Continuing to shun Iran will not ameliorate any of the above challenges, and confronting Iran militarily will exacerbate all of them. The option we are left with is talking to Tehran.

Advocating dialogue is easy, but the devil is in the details. With whom in Iran should we talk? What should we talk about? How should we go about talking? When should we talk? I hope to address these questions today.

That Iran continues to be a primary national security concern is evidence of the failure of our steadfast attempts to alter Tehran's behavior by isolating it politically and economically. Thirty years after the 1979 revolution, Iran remains the State Department's “most active” state sponsor of terrorism, fervently opposes Israel's existence, defiantly moves forward with its nuclear ambitions, and continues to repress its own population. More than any previous U.S. President, George W. Bush redoubled efforts to counter Iranian regional influence and weaken its government. Yet Iran's international reach is greater today than ever, and Tehran's hard-liners are firmly in control.

In charting a new strategy, the Obama administration must first probe a seemingly simple but fundamental question: Why does Iran behave the way it does? Is Iranian foreign policy rooted in an immutable ideological opposition to the United States, or is it a reaction to punitive U.S. policies? Could a diplomatic U.S. approach beget a more conciliatory Iranian response? The only way to test these hypotheses is direct dialogue.

Engagement with the Iranian regime need not, and should not, come at the expense of the Iranian people. According to activists like Nobel Peace Laureate Shirin Ebadi, the United States can more effectively strengthen Iranian civil society and human rights with policies that allay Tehran's threat perception and facilitate, rather than impede, the country's reintegration into the global economy. To be sure, there are no quick fixes or panaceas. The Islamic Republic is not on the verge of collapse, and an abrupt political upheaval could well produce an even worse result. The only groups in Iran that are both organized and armed are the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the Bassij militia.

Our first steps vis-a-vis Iran are critical, for they will set the tenor for the next 4 years.

While the nuclear dispute dominates the headlines, recent history has shown an approach that focuses primarily on punitive measures is the best guarantor of hostile Iranian policies aimed at counterbalancing the United States. What's needed is a comprehensive approach that aims to build confidence, moderate Iranian policies, and subtly create more fertile ground for political reform in Tehran, all at the same time.

I. IRANIAN POLITICAL AND NUCLEAR REALITIES

Understanding Ayatollah Khamenei

American policymakers have often struggled to understand where and how power is wielded in Tehran, and for good reason. After the fall of the Shah in 1979, the father of the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, aimed to set up the nascent Islamic Republic's power structure in a way that would make it impervious to foreign influence. This meant creating multiple power centers whose competition would provide checks and balances to prevent one branch or individual from becoming too powerful and potentially susceptible to outside influence. The result has been frequent polit-

ical paralysis, an inability to make big decisions, and a tendency to muddle along with entrenched policies.

It is within this context that Khamenei's successor, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, governs as the most powerful individual in a highly factionalized, autocratic regime. Khamenei may not make national decisions unilaterally, but neither can any major decisions be taken without his consent. He rules the country by consensus rather than decree, with his own survival and that of the theocratic system as his top priorities.

Despite the outsize attention paid to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Khamenei's constitutional authority dwarfs that of the President. He controls the main levers of state, namely the judiciary, the military, and the media. His power base has expanded considerably over the last several years as the country's most important institutions—the elite Revolutionary Guards, Guardian Council, Presidency, and Parliament—are all currently led by individuals who were either directly appointed by Khamenei or remain unfailingly obsequious to him.

A careful reading of three decades worth of Khamenei's writings and speeches present arguably the most accurate reflection of Iranian domestic and foreign policy aims and actions. They reveal a resolute Leader with a remarkably consistent and coherent—though highly cynical and conspiratorial—world view. Four themes dominate his political discourse—justice, independence, self-sufficiency, and Islamic piety—and he interweaves them seamlessly: Islam embodies justice, independence requires self-sufficiency, and foreign powers are hostile to an independent, Islamic Iran. From Khamenei's perspective, Iran's enmity toward the United States and Israel as well as the rationale for its nuclear ambitions can be explained within this framework.

Despite his hostile rhetoric, Khamenei's 20-year track record depicts a risk-averse figure who has courted neither confrontation nor accommodation with the West. His distrust of the United States is profound, believing strongly that U.S. opposition to Iran is not motivated by Tehran's external behavior—its nuclear ambitions, opposition toward Israel, or support for Hezbollah—but because Iran's strategic location and energy resources are too valuable to the United States to be controlled by an independent-minded Islamic government. Washington's ultimate goal, Khamenei believes, is to restore the “patron-client” relationship with Tehran that existed under the Shah.

In this context, whether U.S. officials announce that they wish to isolate Iran or have a dialogue with it, Khamenei presumes nefarious intentions. He holds strongly that Tehran must not compromise in the face of U.S. pressure or intimidation, for it would project weakness and encourage even greater pressure: “If the officials of a country get daunted by the bullying of the arrogant powers and, as a result, begin to retreat from their own principles and make concessions to those powers, these concessions will never come to an end! First, they will pressure you into recognizing such and such an illegitimate regime, then they will force you not to call your constitution Islamic! They will never stop obtaining concessions from you through pressure and intimidation, and you will be forced to retreat from your values and principles step by step! Indeed, the end to U.S. pressure and intimidation will only come when Iranian officials announce they are ready to compromise Islam and their popular government of the Islamic Republic, and the United States may bring to power in this country whoever it wants!”

Given that Khamenei perceives Washington to be hostile to the Islamic Republic's very existence, challenging U.S. interests has become an important foreign policy priority for the Iranian Government. This has motivated Tehran to seek out curious alliances with faraway countries, such as Venezuela and Belarus, and to offer support to groups with whom it has little in common apart from enmity toward the United States, such as the Sunni fundamentalist Taliban in Afghanistan (against whom Iran nearly went to war a decade ago).

Based on his reading of Washington's cold war policies, Khamenei's primary concern with respect to the United States is not a military attack, but rather a political and cultural onslaught intended to create cleavages among the country's political elites. This onslaught would spread “Western vice” and cultural influence to undermine the roots of Iran's traditional society, create popular disillusionment with the Islamic system, and foment ethnic and sectarian unrest.

Notwithstanding Khamenei's mistrust of the United States, the role of both ideology and political expediency are important to his anti-American worldview. A conciliatory approach toward the United States and a nonbelligerent approach toward Israel would be parting ways with two of the three ideological symbols of the Islamic Republic (the other being the mandatory hejab for women). For Khamenei, if the Islamic revolution was all about momentous change, the years since have been about maintaining the revolutionary status quo.

Nor is Khamenei's rationale purely ideological; his writings and speeches suggest he agrees with myriad Iran scholars and analysts who argue that if Iran were to open up to the United States, it would spur major cultural, political, and economic reform. Given that Khamenei's selection as Supreme Leader was based on his fealty to revolutionary ideals and the vision of Ayatollah Khomeini—whose political views crystallized in the 1970s during the time of the Shah—the chances of him being willing, or able, to reinvent himself at age 69 do not appear strong.

Nuclear politics

A strong consensus exists within the nonproliferation community that Tehran aspires for a nuclear weapons capability. What's less clear is the precise impetus for Iran's nuclear ambitions. Does Iran want a nuclear weapons capability to dominate the Middle East and threaten Israel? Or is Iran a misunderstood, vulnerable nation driven by a need to protect itself from unstable neighbors and a hostile U.S. Government? Or could Tehran simply moving forward with its nuclear program to gain leverage with the United States?

The Iranian state limits the scope of the public nuclear debate in order to project an appearance of national unity. Talk of suspending uranium enrichment, or pursuing the development of nuclear weapons, is taboo. Instead, the debate permitted pits "moderates" who advocate confidence-building with the West in order to pursue a full fuel cycle against "hard-liners" who favor continuing forward without delay or compromise in order to present Iran's nuclear capability as a *fait accompli*. Any debates which probe the efficacy of suspending uranium enrichment or building a nuclear bomb happen behind closed doors, among a small coterie of officials.

By all accounts Khamenei is the most influential figure in determining nuclear policy, and for the Leader the nuclear issue has come to symbolize the core themes of the revolution: The struggle for independence from unjust foreign powers, the necessity of self-sufficiency, and Islam's high esteem for the sciences. He has consistently and unequivocally stated that while Iran is opposed to nuclear weapons, it has no intention of forsaking its "inalienable" right to a full fuel cycle.

Khamenei's vision of an ideal Iran is a country that is scientifically and technologically advanced enough to be self-sufficient, self-sufficient enough to be economically independent, and economically independent enough to be politically independent. In this context, he believes that the United States is not opposed to Iran's nuclear ambitions because of the proliferation threat, but rather because of the potential independence and economic leverage that Iran would derive from it: "[The United States] does not want an Islamic and independent country to achieve scientific progress and possess advanced technology in the Middle East region, a region which possesses most of the world's oil and which is one of the most sensitive regions in the world. They are worried about anything that can help the regional nations to achieve independence, self-reliance and self-sufficiency . . . They want Iran's energy to be always dependent on oil, since oil is vulnerable to the policies of world powers. They aim to control other nations with invisible ropes."

Despite U.N. Security Council resolutions, heightened sanctions, and military threats from the United States, Tehran's approach to the nuclear issue has remained defiant. According to Khamenei, this is a concerted strategy: "Rights cannot be achieved by entreating. If you supplicate, withdraw and show flexibility, arrogant powers will make their threat more serious."

For the last several years, soaring oil prices and an internationally unpopular Bush administration, together with U.S. difficulties and Iranian leverage in Iraq, have bolstered Iran's nuclear position. It remains to be seen how the contraction of oil prices, changed dynamics in Iraq, the global economic recession, and a diplomatic approach by the Obama administration may alter Iran's nuclear calculations.

The nuclear issue and popular opinion

As previously mentioned, Iran enjoys no open, honest debate about the nuclear issue. State-controlled media outlets—still the number one source of information for most Iranians—have been warned not to veer outside the framework of government-mandated talking points. The country's ruling elites have made a tremendous effort to appeal to Iranians' keen sense of nationalism, pointing out Western double standards, extolling the virtues of nuclear energy, and praising the country's scientists. Despite all of this, however, popular opinion regarding the nuclear issue is more nuanced than what the Iranian Government would like the world to believe.

Certainly many Iranians, even those unsympathetic to the regime, support their country's nuclear ambitions for a variety of reasons: National pride; the belief that Iran needs to prepare for life after oil; the resentment of Western double standards which permit India, Pakistan, and Israel to have nuclear programs; and the percep-

tion that because Iran lives in a dangerous neighborhood, it needs not only a nuclear energy program but also a nuclear weapon.

What's questionable is how deep, informed, and widespread Iranian popular support for the nuclear program is. As the former Economist correspondent in Tehran best put it: "It would be quite remarkable if a populace increasingly disengaged from politics were suddenly energized by something as arcane as nuclear fuel and its byproducts . . . For most Iranians, the price of food and the government's failure to lower it are more important [than the nuclear program]."

Some among Iran's political elite have conceded that nuclear pride has been manufactured by the government. In the words of Mohammed Atrianfar, a close adviser to former President Hashemi Rafsanjani: "People have been hearing these things about having the right to have or to possess this [nuclear] capability. And, naturally, if you ask an Iranian whether [they] want this right or not, they would say they do want it. But if you ask, though, 'What is nuclear energy?' they might not be able to tell you what it is."

After suffering 500,000 casualties in the horrendous war with Saddam Hussein's Iraq, few Iranians romanticize the idea of conflict or militarization. In a strikingly candid opinion piece in the Financial Times, former Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Abbas Maleki, dismissed the notion that the nuclear program is driven by popular demand: "Reports suggest that Tehran's official joy over the nuclear breakthrough is shared by a large segment of Iranian society. Such reports should not be taken as evidence that the Iranian people share their government's views, and should not be used as a pretext for using force against Iran's population . . . The general public does not consider the nuclear issue to be of vital importance. Nuclear technology will do little for the average Iranian; it cannot create more jobs for a country that needs 1 million jobs annually, it cannot change the chronic low efficiency, productivity, and effectiveness of the economy and management, and it will do nothing to improve Iran's commercial ties with the rest of the world."

Public opinion is clearly an important component of Tehran's nuclear strategy, and the government is capable of mobilizing large crowds in order to project an appearance of national unity. Up until now, popular opposition to the government's nuclear posture has been negligible. This will likely remain the case as long as Iranians continue to perceive corruption and mismanagement—not an isolation-inducing foreign policy—to be the primary cause of domestic economic malaise. If and when domestic economic conditions deteriorate to such a degree that has a drastic impact on people's daily lives, however, Ayatollah Khamenei may well decide to change course. When push comes to shove the paramount concern of the country's theocratic elite is the regime's survival, not its ideology.

II. U.S. POLICY OPTIONS

While the primary focus of today's hearings is Iran's nuclear ambitions, it is important to understand that the nuclear issue is a symptom of the deep mistrust between Washington and Tehran, not the underlying cause of tension. Given that neither side trusts the other's intentions, there are no technical solutions to this nuclear dispute, only political ones. If a resolution is to be found, it will require a broader diplomatic accommodation between Washington and Tehran, whereby the United States reaches a *modus vivendi* with Iran, and Tehran ceases its hostile approach toward Israel.

Before any substantive discussions or negotiations take place, an initial meeting—held in private—simply reacquainting the U.S. Government with the Iranian Government is in order. Washington should make it clear to Tehran that the United States is genuinely interested in establishing a new tone and context for the relationship. To increase the likelihood of success in engaging with Iran, the Obama administration should adhere to seven prescriptions in framing a process of engagement. I briefly examine each, below.

1. *Build confidence on issues of common interest*

Once serious discussions commence, building confidence with Iran will be easier if efforts initially concentrate on areas of shared interest, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, rather than those of little or no common interest, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the nuclear issue. Constructive discussions in Kabul and Baghdad could have a positive spillover on the nuclear dispute. If Iran's nuclear ambitions do indeed reflect a sense of insecurity vis-a-vis the United States, building cooperation and goodwill in Iraq and Afghanistan could help to allay Tehran's threat perception and compel its leaders to reassess their nuclear approach.

2. *Focus on Khamenei, not Ahmadinejad*

Successful engagement with Iran will require a direct channel of communication with the Supreme Leader's office, such as former-Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, one of Khamenei's chief foreign policy advisers. Khamenei must be convinced that Washington is prepared to recognize the legitimacy of the Islamic Republic and must be disabused of his conviction that U.S. policy aims to bring about regime change, not negotiate behavior change. He will never agree to any arrangement in which Iran is expected to publicly retreat or admit defeat; nor can he be forced to compromise through pressure alone. Besides the issue of saving face, he believes deeply that compromise in the face of pressure is counterproductive, because it projects weakness and only encourages greater pressure.

After three decades of being immersed in a "death to America" culture, it may not be possible for Khamenei to reorient himself. But if there's one thing that is tried and true, it's that an engagement approach toward Iran that aims to ignore, bypass, or undermine Khamenei is guaranteed to fail.

3. *Begin cautiously*

Notwithstanding private, introductory discussions, as well as ambassadorial-level meetings in Kabul and Baghdad, we should refrain from making any grand overtures to Tehran that could redeem Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's leadership style and increase his popularity ahead of the country's June 2009 Presidential elections. Since assuming office in August 2005, Ahmadinejad has used his influence to amplify objectionable Iranian foreign practices while curtailing domestic political and social freedoms and flagrantly disregarding human rights; his continued presence could serve as an insurmountable obstacle to confidence building with the United States.

Though they are not totally free or fair, Iranian elections are notoriously unpredictable. Just as Ahmadinejad's 2005 election shocked seasoned observers, given his considerable mismanagement of the economy, his defeat in 2009 is certainly a possibility. As such, it is better for Washington to begin cautiously until Iran's domestic situation becomes clearer.

Such an approach should not, and need not, be interpreted by Tehran as a U.S. effort to "game" Iran's Presidential elections. To be clear, Washington should refrain from commenting on the Iranian campaign, and should certainly refrain from expressing a preference for any particular candidate.

4. *Speak softly*

While threatening violence against Iran has become a way for U.S. politicians to appear tough on national security, such rhetoric has empowered Tehran's hardliners and enhanced Iran's stature on the streets of Cairo, Ramallah, and Jakarta as the Muslim world's only brave, anti-imperialist nation that speaks truth to power. Additionally, when oil prices jump with each threat against Iran, Iran's nuclear program and its financial patronage of Hezbollah and Hamas become more affordable.

While the Iranian Government is certainly complicit in engaging in bellicose rhetoric, the United States should not take its behavioral cues from an insecure, repressive, and undemocratic regime. Instead of reciprocating threats and name calling, the Obama administration should project the dignity and poise of a superpower. A hostile rhetorical line allows Iran's leadership to paint the United States as an aggressor—both internationally and domestically.

5. *Don't let the spoilers set the tenor*

Small but powerful cliques—both within Iran and among Iran's Arab allies—have entrenched economic and political interests in preventing United States-Iranian reconciliation. Within Iran these actors—including powerful septuagenarian clergymen and nouveau riche Revolutionary Guardsmen—recognize that improved ties with Washington would induce political and economic reforms and competition and undermine the quasi-monopolies they enjoy in isolation. Among Iran's Arab allies such as Hezbollah and Hamas, the prospect of United States-Iranian accommodation could mean an end to their primary source of funding.

For this reason, when and if a serious dialogue commences, the spoilers will likely attempt to torpedo it. Their tactics will vary. They may commit gratuitous human rights abuses (such as the recent imprisonment of my friend Roxana Saberi, an Iranian-American journalist), issue belligerent rhetoric, or target U.S. soldiers and interests in Iraq or Afghanistan. Though staying the course in tough diplomacy with Iran will require heavy expenditures of both personal leadership and political capital, if Washington pulls back from confidence-building with Tehran in retaliation for an egregious act committed by the spoilers, they will have achieved their goal.

6. *Maintain an international approach*

Tehran is highly adept at identifying and exploiting rifts in the international community, and diplomatic efforts to check Iran's nuclear ambitions will unravel if key countries approach Iran with competing redlines. A common approach by the European Union and the United States is absolutely imperative.

Uniting China and Russia behind the U.S. position will prove more difficult given divergent national interests, though Moscow certainly has an interest in avoiding a nuclear-armed Iran within missile range. A more robust U.S. effort at direct dialogue with Tehran will send the signal to Brussels, Moscow, and Beijing that Washington is serious about reaching a diplomatic resolution to this dispute, which should strengthen the health of the coalition.

7. *Be Discreet*

When it comes to United States-Iranian interaction, the record shows that "secret" or "private" discussions out of public earshot have a greater success rate. Building confidence in the public realm will be difficult, as politicians on both sides will likely feel the need to use harsh rhetoric to maintain appearances. Moreover, the likelihood that spoilers can torpedo the process either through words or actions is more limited if they do not know what is going on.

Recognizing that its regional influence derives in large measure from its defiance of the United States, Iran would likely prefer not to publicly advertise its discussions with the United States unless or until real progress has been made. Discreet discussions are also a more effective forum for Washington to raise concerns over Iranian human rights abuses, as public criticism has done little to improve Iran's record over the last three decades.

III. WHAT'S REALISTIC?

Given three decades of compounded mistrust and ill will, the results of any process of United States-Iran engagement will not be quick, and antagonism will not melt away after one, two, or perhaps even many meetings. While the initial pace will likely be painfully slow—as each side assesses whether the other truly has good intentions—no realistic alternative would serve U.S. national security imperatives on issues ranging from Iraq, Afghanistan, nuclear proliferation, energy security, and terrorism.

Mindful of the potentially enormous implications that a changed relationship with Washington would have for the Islamic Republic's future, however, there are a variety of reasons why even a sincere, sustained U.S. attempt at dialogue may not initially bear fruit:

- Historically, the Islamic Republic has tended to make difficult decisions only under duress. Iran's overconfident hard-liners may not currently feel compelled to make any compromises;
- Paralyzed by the competing ambitions of various factions and institutions, the Islamic Republic may prove incapable of reaching an internal consensus, falling back on long-entrenched policies;
- If it remains unconvinced of U.S. intentions, the Iranian regime may shun increased ties with Washington, believing the overture to be a Trojan horse for a counterrevolution;
- Fearful of the unpredictable domestic change which an opening with the United States might catalyze, Iran's leadership may well perceive reconciliation with Washington as an existential threat.

None of these, however, are arguments against engagement. On the contrary, an outright rejection of a U.S. overture would prove costly for Iran's leadership. Behind the scenes, a sizable portion of the country's political and military elite recognizes that the "death to America" culture of 1979 is obsolete today. Together with Iran's disillusioned population, they know the country will never be able to fulfill its enormous potential as long as its relationship with the United States remains adversarial.

During the Bush administration, many Iranians came to believe it was the United States, not Iran, which opposed an improvement in relations. When and if it becomes evident that a small clique of hard-liners in Tehran is the chief impediment, internal political and popular opposition could build and potentially large, unpredictable cleavages could be created within the Iranian political system. In essence, the Obama administration may well face the unique challenge of simultaneously creating unity in the United States and divisions in Iran.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Sadjadpour. It was very interesting testimony. I know there'll be considerable followup.

Ambassador Wisner, I should introduce you, probably, as Ambassador to Everywhere. [Laughter.]

You've had about as many ambassadorships as anybody I know.

STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK G. WISNER II, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ZAMBIA, EGYPT, THE PHILIPPINES, AND INDIA, NEW YORK, NY

Ambassador WISNER. Mr. Chairman, Senator Lugar, gentlemen, I'm, as my colleagues on the dais are here today, extremely pleased to return to the committee and have a chance to engage with you on this extraordinarily important subject.

Like my colleagues, I, too, will enter my written testimony for the record and give you, instead, a brief summary of the principal points I made, and address, in addition, the nuclear issue and its effect on the region and the international community, the principal focus of your hearing.

I'm going to start, however, roughly in the same direction that Karim Sadjadpour just undertook to provide a political context, for if we do not figure out exactly where we are and where we're headed, then engaging on the nuclear question is a much more complicated exercise.

So, first, let me open with a core contention. Senator Kerry, it matches your opening remarks. And that is, Iran is important, Iran is dangerous, Iran is urgent, and we have no choice but to deal with Iran, despite the negatives, for Iran is vitally important to the region, it touches on every issue that we face in the Middle East, and every interest of every one of our friends and allies. In short, if we're to make any progress with the questions we face in Iraq, Afghanistan, over the nuclear question, energy issues, Israel, Palestine, we have to be able to take Iran into account and deal with it.

I reached that conclusion over a decade ago, when I was sent to deal with the Russians on the question of nuclear technology flight to Iran. I haven't budged for a moment since. Engaging Iran diplomatically—not just plain talking, but engaging and finding grounds for negotiations—is a political imperative.

The second point I would make is similar, as well, to my colleagues', and that is, I do not believe in a military option. I have grave questions about its utility in the nuclear case, and, I believe, in all the other issues that we would face—we face with Iran, there is no room for a military response. In fact, the opposite is true. The engagement on the military—on a military option with Iran would set us back, not only with Iran and our ability to make progress on the many issues with which we need traction, but beyond Iran, throughout the Muslim world.

My third point is that I am a relative optimist about the possibility of political engagement with Iran, including on the nuclear issue. I don't limit my remarks to my sense of the situation to recent signals received from the leadership in Tehran or other Iranian diplomatic representatives, nor do I limit myself to the gen-

erally favorable reaction our new President has had when he—after his advent in his White House, throughout the region.

I look more closely at the enormous vulnerabilities that Iran has today: Her political isolation, the weakness of her economy, her internal political divisions. But, I look further than that, at the long traditions of Iranian statecraft, which are based on realism, a sense that Iran has got to survive in a very difficult world, and that Iran is a nation that must manage its national security, and that is its overwhelming imperative.

It's those issues, the issues of national survival, that are first and foremost on Iran's mind. And that gives me some hope that we can get traction if we choose to engage, and engage fully. But, I won't pretend, for a moment, that dealing with the Iranians will not be extremely tough. There will be many setbacks, many deceptions. Iran is a tough adversary across any negotiating table.

My fifth point is that I personally welcome, as I'm certain all of us do, the appointment of a new special representative to take a hard look at Iran and our foreign policy, Dennis Ross, a man with great experience in the region, an expert in the field of statecraft. And I can only wish him well.

But, as we approach the question of engagement with Iran, I think there are some questions we've got to keep in mind, so let me add a few thoughts to the list my colleagues have already outlined.

I believe that you cannot pick and choose issues with the Iranians. And I include the nuclear issue. If you try to take one issue out of the cherry pie, you will not succeed in addressing it. We must have a global approach to the questions we deal with Iran. All are related to Iranian perceptions of national dignity and national security.

Second, I believe that it is vitally important to get the political context right, at the top. If you don't have the Ayatollah, the Supreme Leader, engaged with the President of the United States, an agreement on what constitutes the terrain of engagement, you won't be able to engage on any single issue, including the nuclear issue.

In short—and I cite it in my testimony the example of President Nixon and Chairman Mao—if you don't have an understanding, at the top, of what constitutes an acceptable political engagement, you cannot pick apart the issues and be able to sustain a negotiation.

The third point I'd make is, it's a long ways from here to where we need to end up with Iran. The outcome, at the end of the day, is full restoration of diplomatic relations, but there are many steps along that way. They could start, literally, very shortly, Senator Kerry, with our diplomats being able to speak to Iranians around the world. That's now not possible. It can go beyond, to very careful reconsideration of the commitments we made in Algiers in 1981, not to interfere in Iran's internal affairs. We could deal with the dangers we face every day in the gulf, where our Navy and Iranian ships come uncomfortably close to one another, air flights between the United States, Iran, cooperation on mutual issues, like narcotics, diplomatic travel—all—all, in my judgment, ways on a way station to build both confidence and create an environment in

which we can deal with the tough questions, including the nuclear one.

I further advise great caution in coming close to any question related to Iranian domestic politics. I do not believe our pretensions to regime change have done anything but set the prospect of diplomacy back and created enormous complexities. It shows us, in fact, doubling back on our own word that we struck in 1981.

But, I don't recommend we make any apologies, either. We don't need to apologize for our past history, and Iran has every reason to stay in the bounds of propriety in speaking about us.

We need not try to figure out who's going to be on top in Iran. Our job is to deal with Iran as a nation. It is not a problem, or a cluster of problems, a nation, a country with major regional influence, a nation with which the United States must come to terms.

I, finally, believe that it is vitally important we broaden our diplomacy. If we engage Iran, we can't do it alone. We've got to be prepared to sit down and do business with Syria, with the Palestinians, with the range of interests we face elsewhere in the Middle East. We also have to take into account the extraordinary sensitivities of those we are close to in the region, the Sunni Arabs, Israel, that rightly feels disobliged by the threats that Iran has sent, our European allies, the Russians, the Chinese, Japan. Their interests, in each case, are at play. There is no way we can proceed in any engagement with Iran without great transparency, without making it clear where we're headed and how we're going to go about it. Tactics are a different matter. We can engage in timing and in our meetings on grounds of secrecy, but strategic transparency is vital.

So, let me turn, then, with a couple of thoughts on the nuclear question. I warn, however, in addressing it, not to look at it in isolation, for it is not one issue between the United States and Iran, but part of the whole, and has to be dealt with in a context. But, it is so vitally important. However old and however longstanding the Iranian program is—and yes, it goes back to the time of the Shah—and however worn the Iranian arguments of legality, the Iranian nuclear pretensions are inherently destabilizing. There is so little trust between Iran and ourselves and the region that one can look at it in no other way.

No nation in the region is unaffected by what Iran has attempted to do with its nuclear capability. And as we think about the NPT regime, a breakout by Iran is truly worrying. As Henry Kissinger is wont to argue, if you think of Russia in the old days, and the United States, and then China, Russia, and the United States, and then Europeans, and now India and Pakistan, how many miscalculations each time you increase the circle of nuclear weapons-holders can we face without a severe nuclear problem occurring?

So, I would prefer, like everyone, not to have a nuclear Iran, but I also believe, as we approach it and try to contain the Iranian issue, we must not break ranks with the Europeans or our Security Council partners, the Russians and the Chinese. Getting together and having common points are going to—is going to be very tough, and it will, by necessity, mean we'll have to water down the lines we use.

Sanctions, of course, have their place. Trade controls, financial controls set a standard of concern about how we see the nuclear

issue. But, I think, like each one of you, I sense we need a new approach, a different way of looking at the issue. We need to be talking to the Iranians, more than the one-off appearance of Bill Burns under the previous administration. We need to be sustained. We have to deal with the Iranians within the strategic situation that they face.

And that means we're going to have to manage our relationships with our friends in the region very carefully, including defensive measures. We have to think about enhancing antimissile systems among our Arab friends. We have to think of security guarantees. We're going to even have to think about ways—special ways we can deal with Israel's well-founded concerns.

But, in the end, I've come, in my own mind, to a question that troubles me, but has to be on the table, and that is Iran, for reasons of its own, both reasons of pride and national security, is determined to produce a nuclear weapons capability, and it is not going to be dissuaded in any easy manner.

I, therefore, have come to believe that the line of argument Ambassador Luers and Ambassador Pickering advanced in the New York Review of Books several weeks ago, of arguing that we, in the end, have to accept a degree of Iranian uranium enrichment inside of Iran, under international ownership and supervision, intense IAEA scrutiny, is a line of approach that is worth pursuing.

Finally, gentlemen, let me close by noting that I believe it's not only the nuclear issue that drives us to conclude to engage with Iran. We've put off the question of dealing with Iran for much too long, and the stakes have gone up. The miscalculations that could occur, the possibility of violent confrontation, and the opportunities lost by not engaging, the costs are simply too high.

We need a political engagement, and we need one that keeps the international community alive to the fact that the United States is capable of conducting diplomacy.

And search—search, as Iranians are beginning to hint these days, for common ground. Don't know if we'll find it.

We won't get there easily, but we have to try.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Wisner follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK G. WISNER, FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO ZAMBIA, EGYPT, THE PHILIPPINES, AND INDIA, NEW YORK, NY

No issue on our national security agenda is more urgent nor more fraught with danger than the United States deeply troubled and potentially violent relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The crisis between the United States and Iran is longstanding. For better than the past quarter century, we and the Islamic Republic have been at odds. From the early days of the Iranian revolution, that government's assertion of a radical Islamic identity and its determination to reassert. Iran's national standing and influence have given the United States, Iran's neighbors, and many others around the world cause for grave concern.

In recent years, Iran's actions, and its position on questions which go to the heart of the stability of the Middle East, have continued to stoke suspicions and tensions. Since 2005, Iran's decision to proceed with a nuclear enrichment program has been of special concern to the United States and the international community. Iran has been largely deaf to entreaties from the Security Council and governments around the world. Iran is endowed today with 5,000 centrifuges and is moving toward the capability to produce nuclear weapons. It has failed to satisfy world opinion that its nuclear intentions are benign.

Iran's espousal of Hezbollah and Hamas is a direct threat to Israel's security; the atmosphere between Israel and Iran has been further embittered by the Islamic Republic's questioning of Israel's right to exist and its President's denial of the Holocaust. All of us recall how close the region came to all out warfare as a result of the summer war in Lebanon. Iran's ties to Hezbollah and Syria played an important part. In a word, Iran and Israel stand virtually with daggers drawn.

The United States stands today, in dangerous proximity to Iran. Our ships sail near Iran's coast and incidents on the high seas between the two of us are always a possibility. Given tensions in the gulf, conflict resulting from an incident could spread rapidly and endanger international shipping and especially the export of the region's hydrocarbons. Our soldiers are stationed on Iran's borders in Iraq and Afghanistan. Iranians have often been associated with actions which endanger American forces. The airwaves are filled with charges and countercharges of subversion and interference. In a word, we are too close to one another for comfort, especially since there are no adequate mechanisms for managing misunderstandings and incidents.

At the same time, we have come to realize that without Iran there is no way to address the most important issues the United States faces in the Middle East. As the region's largest state, Iran plays a key role in Iraq, Afghanistan, in regional energy markets, in the security of the gulf, in the question of nonproliferation and in the confrontation between Israel and the Palestinians. Iran's relationship with the Palestinians, Shiite communities in the Middle East, with Syria and its reach into the Arab nations of the gulf make Iran a truly important force in virtually every state and every issue in the Middle East. In fact, the questions which join the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran are so broad and so interconnected that addressing them singly is not possible.

At the same time, I am convinced that the use of force will not solve any of the issues in contention between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Specifically, I believe that military strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities would be the height of folly. I am unpersuaded a military strike would be decisive and the damage to our interests in Iraq, Afghanistan and the gulf would be huge. The effect on United States standing in the Muslim world would be massive, wiping out the goodwill our new administration has generated. Our ability to deal across the board with Iran would be fatally compromised.

I arrive at these conclusions, having followed closely the situation in Iran and the history of our ties to Iran, since the fall of the Shah. I was never privileged to serve in Iran during my 37 years as a diplomat and representative of the United States. But I lived and worked in the Middle East and I was persuaded throughout my career that Iran was central to the calculation of our interests in the region.

How important Iran is to the United States came home directly to me in 1997 when I was asked to discuss with the Russian Government the flow of missile technology from the Russian Federation to Iran. It became clear to me that there was no way to stop Iran from seeking missile technology unless we could address Iranian national security concerns and this would have meant dealing directly with the Iranian Government. Talking with Russia alone was not sufficient and threats and sanctions did not and could not contain Iran's determination to arm itself and deter the threats it believed it faced.

In meeting with your committee today, I do not bring to the table privileged information, based on official intelligence. My sources are different. I have met frequently with Iranians, including members of the Iranian Government over the past 10 years. I have followed the literature and worked with institutions like the UN-USA, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and the Asia Society which have organized exchanges with Iranian officials and private citizens. The views I express at this hearing are entirely my own.

In the course of my remarks, I will make a case for engagement with the Islamic Republic of Iran. I will outline points we should consider in the weeks and months ahead as the United States shapes its diplomacy. As difficult as our recent history with Iran has been, I believe we and Iran are fated to engage one another and that engagement will begin in the next year or so. I am an optimist, even though I recognize we and Iran have been estranged, frequently bitterly so. Unlike other crises in which nations and peoples are divided on grounds of principle, faith, or ethnicity or assert overlapping claims to territory, our differences with Iran are largely political and can be addressed and resolved by political leaders.

In this regard, I welcome the decision of Secretary Clinton to appoint Dennis Ross as her adviser for West Asia. Mr. Ross will bring to his duties and the question of Iran, years of experience in the region. He is a man of deep intellect, an accomplished diplomat and one of the leading experts of his generation on the practice of foreign policy and statecraft.

A WORD OF BACKGROUND

Many have argued in recent years that Iran has an upper hand when it comes to dealing with the United States in the Middle East. Iranians know we are bogged down in difficult conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Those who hold this view further argue that by destroying Saddam and ejecting the Taliban from Afghanistan, we have strengthened Iran immeasurably. Their argument runs that we have failed to force Iran to abandon its nuclear ambitions and our failure to move Iran has emboldened Iran's leaders to defy the United States. The ground is not favorable, therefore, to diplomatic engagement, they assert.

I do not agree with this contention. In fact, I believe we and the Iranians approach each other with a mutual sense of vulnerability. No nation is more sensitive to its weaknesses than is Iran. Iran knows that it is isolated in its region and many of its neighbors are hostile. Internationally, Iran enjoys very little support. Iran's religious expression, Shiite Islam, is a minority faith and it survives in the Muslim world more by sufferance and accommodation than confrontation.

Iranians know their economy is weak and the current downturn in petroleum prices has left Iran vulnerable. GDP has shrunk; deficits have ballooned; unemployment runs high and inflation is rampant. Iranian politics are deeply contentious. While few Iranians contest the legitimacy of their Islamic Republic, many have doubts about their cleric's ability to lead a modern nation-state.

All Iranians recognize Iran's body politic is riven with factions. In addition, Iranians look at their history with pessimism. For the past 200 years, they believe Iran has been a victim of foreign interference; Iran, they feel, has been humiliated. Iranians also know they would pay a terrible price if the Islamic Republic and the United States were ever to go to war. The memories of Iran's huge losses on the battlefields with Iraq are painfully fresh in Iranian minds.

As we set out to engage Iran, it is essential to keep a core thought in mind: Iranians will not be humiliated. But Iranians are also realists. Iran is not only a great nation, borne of an ancient civilization; it is a proud one. Although Iranians espouse their religious faith with passion, I believe their leaders have long set aside pretensions to champion a Shiite revolutionary ideology. Of course, the majority of Iranians care about the fate of their coreligionists but they are more intent in seeing their nation recognized for its many accomplishments. They believe that they live in a hostile world and they must be able to defend themselves or deter their opponents. Iran wants its influence in the region restored in large part because a strong and respected Iran will be a secure Iran. Part of the reason for the hold of the Islamic Republic over Iranian opinion has been its ability to identify itself with the cause of Iranian national security and Iranian national dignity.

At the same time, Iran recognizes facts and among those facts is the United States. Whatever language they choose in public, Iran's leaders know that the United States is a power in the Middle East and that Iran and the United States must, one day, come to terms with one another. In recent weeks, spokesmen for the Islamic Republic have begun to say it is in Iran's interest that her government and the United States look for common ground and seek to manage disagreements. This disposition reinforces my view that there is promise in engaging Iran and moving soon to find a basis for pursuing diplomacy. Bluntly put, Iran has reacted well to the advent of the Obama administration.

But I argue that we must be realistic and cautious. There will be no rapid breakthroughs with Iran. Reaching understandings will take years and will be plagued with setbacks. Statecraft, as defined by Iranians, places great store on careful calculation and caution. It also recognizes the imperatives of power. No Iranian will approach a negotiation if he believes that he is playing a weak hand. In addition, the history of our relationship is such that Iran's leaders will not take us at our word anymore than we will take Iran's word at face value. Iran's leaders hold deeply to the view that the United States is committed to "regime change." That attitude runs as deep in Iran as do our suspicions of Iran's nuclear ambitions. There is little confidence between the United States and Iran. Overcoming the divide will not occur easily nor quickly; neither can force the other to accept its point of view. Neither we nor Iran will accept promises; both of us will require facts.

HOW TO PROCEED

In the proceeding paragraphs, I have attempted to set the stage for the conduct of diplomacy. Engagement with Iran, as with any power, is a means to an end—not an end in itself. We have to be clear about what we want to achieve before we engage our diplomacy and, for the moment, our objectives have not been defined. I hope that the deliberations of this committee will contribute to a definition of objectives. As a contribution to your debate, let me advance the following thoughts.

- *Be prepared to address all issues.* A diplomatic engagement with Iran will fail if we attempt to “cherry pick” the issues. The problems we and Iran face are numerous and they are interconnected. The Iranian side attaches special importance to national security and national honor. We and Iran cannot address Iraq without considering the gulf; it is not possible to deal with the nuclear question without coming to grips with Iran’s conception of its security environment: In addition, the past quarter century is littered with cases of single issue engagements with Iran. Each time we and Iran have tried to close on one problem, we have found that its resolution led to a dead-end and did not contribute to the resolution of other issues. The reason is simple—we and Iran have not agreed on a political context.
- *Top down; not bottom up.* The only way to engage Iran is to begin with a political understanding between our leaders. That understanding must be based on a mutual recognition that the United States has legitimate interests in the Middle East and that Iran is a regional power with its own national interests. “Live and let live” is key to a political understanding with Iran. We must set aside pretensions to regime change. We and Iran can operate on the basis of different principals and still respect one another. Debates over human rights and democracy, for example, can take place without either side questioning the other’s legitimacy. If we need an example of “top down” diplomacy, we have only to look at President Nixon’s and Chairman Mao’s decision to engage. Once the two leaders had reached a basic understanding of the principals which would guide relations between our two countries, our diplomats were able to address the specific questions which divided us. That example should be instructive in the case of Iran. To launch successful diplomacy our President and Iran’s Supreme Leader must “shake hands” and, in doing so, create a political context for our engagement.
- *Building confidence.* Engaging Iran will require constant attention to the issue of confidence. We do not trust each other; we will only deal with facts. This said, words matter. Removing regime change from our vocabulary and our legislation is a good signal; the Iranians should drop offensive language they use in our regard. We should return to the principle we negotiated in Algiers in 1981 when we agreed that the United States would not interfere in Iran’s internal affairs. In the Algiers Accord, we also agreed to address questions which divided us. Financial claims are an example but one could add to it direct air flights, restrictions on diplomatic travel, counternarcotics cooperation and confidence-building contacts between naval forces in the gulf. Reviving the Algiers Accord would also provide for expanded cultural, educational, and scientific exchanges. As we proceed in our engagement with Iran, there will be reason to establish an interests section. At the end of the day, diplomatic relations must be restored. In the immediate future, we should drop restrictions on contacts between American diplomats and representatives of the Islamic Republic.
- *Avoid domestic politics.* Some argue that the United States should not seek to negotiate with Iran before it holds its Presidential election. I disagree. Putting the question in these terms implies that we have favorites in Iran’s political race. Our interests lie in dealing with the government and nation of Iran; Iranians will pick their leaders. I recommend that we begin without delay to design a policy of engagement with Iran and explain it to our friends and allies; that we send the appropriate signals and make the necessary contacts to begin talking without regard to the timing of the Iranian Presidential contest. In all likelihood, by the time needed to prepare our diplomacy, Iran’s election and the runoff will have taken place.
- *Setting objectives.* As a matter of priority, we need to decide how to approach the nuclear issue, Iraq and Afghanistan. With regard to nuclear enrichment a fresh examination of our objective is in order. It is not possible to eliminate Iran’s program: Since 2005 we have made no progress in convincing Iran to give up its program. Unilateral and multilateral sanctions have been painful to Iran but insufficient to force a change of policy. Instead, Iran every day moves closer to developing a nuclear weapons capability. Trying to force Iran to forgo enrichment is, to my way of thinking, a losing proposition and we are not likely to secure strong international support. Neither Russia nor China have their hearts in further sanctions.
- Iran attaches great importance to its nuclear program for reasons of national prestige, economics, and national security. If it is nothing else, the program is highly popular. If we are to stop Iran from crossing the weapons threshold, we have to move quickly. I am persuaded by the arguments advanced recently in the New York Review of Books by former Ambassadors Luers and Pickering and Jim Walsh that we should attempt to convince Iran to accept the international

supervision and ownership of nuclear enrichment facilities, even if they are located on Iranian soil. The way to start would be an agreement to suspend sanctions on our part and a suspension of enrichment on Iran's part.

- Similarly in Iraq and Afghanistan, we need to advance Iran's interest in stability along its borders. Iran wants the al-Maliki regime in Iraq to succeed but it recognizes the need for reconciliation among Iraq's ethnic and religious groups. In Afghanistan, a return of the Taliban to Kabul is inimical to Iranian interests, a disposition we can harness to our advantage. In fact, Tehran today is sending signals it wishes to discuss Afghanistan. For openers, we must make it clear the United States seeks no permanent base for its forces in either country.
- *Involving other nations.* A negotiation with the Islamic Republic is not simply about the United States and Iran. The interests of Israel, the Sunni Arabs, our European allies and Russia and China are in play. It is essential that we explain carefully to them what we intend to achieve with Iran and how we intend to go about it before we engage the Iranians. If we fail to make ourselves clear, we will lose the important international support we require to conduct a sustainable relationship with Iran as well as sustain confidence in cooperation with the United States as we pursue other regional and international goals. In a word, we must never allow Israel nor the neighboring Arab States to believe we are prepared to negotiate with Iran behind their backs.

Americans have put off decisions about Iran for too long. But the stakes have gone up sharply in recent years and the risks of miscalculation and therefore violence are too great. We have learned that sanctions and threats will not move Iran nor will we be able to carry the international community if our policies do not provide for political engagement with Iran. Most of all, the past quarter century should have taught us that we cannot impose our will on Iran. We can only work to find common ground based on a mutuality of respect and interests. I hope that these hearings will contribute to an early and sustained engagement with Iran. Only then will we know if that common ground exists.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.
Ambassador Haass.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD N. HAASS, PRESIDENT,
COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEW YORK, NY**

Ambassador HAASS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for inviting me before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee today. I realize, 35 years ago, it was here that I had my first job beyond the corner drugstore and Baskin-Robbins. So, it's good to be back.

The CHAIRMAN. Welcome back. We've still got a few openings.
[Laughter.]

Ambassador HAASS. What I thought I'd focus on in my oral remarks is the prescriptive side of what we're talking about today, in part because it would be so hard to do better than what we've heard analytically.

I agree: The United States should offer to talk with the Government of Iran, not as a reward, but simply as a recognition that ignoring it has not weakened or isolated Iran. To put it bluntly, regime change is a wish, not a strategy, and we need to have a strategy.

In doing that, the United States should resist setting preconditions on negotiations over Iran's nuclear program or other troubling aspects of its foreign or domestic policy. What matters most in a negotiation is not where you begin, but where you come out, and we should not lose sight of that.

We should also—and I think here I'm seconding my good friend Frank Wisner—resist Iranian calls for preconditions or for apologies by the United States. The focus of any negotiation should be

the present and future. And if the Iranians insist on apologies by the United States, I would simply take it as a sign they are not serious.

It's true that we should have a comprehensive agenda, but among the things we should be resisting, I would suggest, is linkage. We should be open to making progress where we can. To put it another way, we don't have to have progress everywhere in order to have progress anywhere. It may well be that Iraq and Afghanistan are two places the United States and Iran can realize some accommodation, despite the fact that we may well be unable to in the nuclear realm or vis-a-vis, say, Hamas. My own experience, by the way when President Bush put me in charge of coordinating our policy toward Afghanistan after 9/11, was that the United States and Iran could make some progress working together in that country.

As others have said, and I echo it, United States policy needs to be multilateral, with the IAEA, the other major powers, and Iran's neighbors; there's no serious unilateral option for the United States. And the goal should be to get international agreement on what we want from Iran and what we are prepared to do for Iran, but also on what we are prepared to do to Iran if we can't get that agreement.

There's probably a division of labor between what happens bilaterally between the United States and Iran if such talks are undertaken, and what happens multilaterally. And I would simply say that it then becomes important that the United States makes sure the various tracks are coordinated. It's a similar challenge that the United States faces with the North Korean negotiations. It ought not to be insuperable.

Russia will be a particularly important element of any talks. It ought to be a priority of the United States to gain Russian cooperation on Iran. And, as has been reported, and I support this, the United States should be willing to set aside its plans for missile deployments in Central Europe and Eastern Europe if we can gain Russian support for our Iran policy. Foreign policy by the United States needs to be about priorities. And to put it bluntly, the Iran issue is a priority for us.

I would be wary of a containment policy of Iran in the region. It could simply, I believe, reinforce tensions between Shias and Sunnis within countries, which would not be in our interest. I also believe that, to the extent the choice in the region becomes one of supporting either Iran as opposed to Sunnis, the sorts of people who will come to the fore in the Sunni world will not be people we are going to applaud or welcome. Sunni extremism, as we have learned the hard way, is just as much a threat to United States interests in the region as can be Shia extremism or Iranian-backed imperial policies.

Let me turn to the nuclear program for a few minutes. There are three choices. There's the military choice, there's the acquiescence choice, and there's the diplomatic choice.

The military choice is a classic preventive attack. And I underscore the word "preventive." We are not yet at a moment where we would have to contemplate preemptive strikes. No Iranian capability or use of that capability is imminent. So, the military option

that is before the United States is a classic preventive strike to try to stop or interrupt what you might describe as a gathering threat. The question is what such a strike could accomplish. It is impossible to destroy what you don't know about, and it's not always possible to destroy what you do know about. So I believe we need to be sober about what a military strike could accomplish.

But, second, and perhaps just as important, whatever it could accomplish, we should not delude ourselves that the scenario would stop there. Iran would surely retaliate, using tools that are available to it in places where it can exercise or deploy those tools—I would think in Iraq and Afghanistan—and also possibly in ways that would dramatically increase the price of energy. I would simply say that coming against the backdrop of where we are economically, we need to think hard about that.

I also believe, based on my own experience, that despite the occasional whisperings of certain Arab governments that they would welcome such a strike, I am not persuaded that, in reality, they would. One should always be careful about what governments are willing to tell us privately, but not say publicly. We should not, therefore, assume that we would have anything like the widespread support in the Arab world that certain individuals in the Arab world suggest.

And last, after a preventive strike, the Iranians would then go about reconstructing their nuclear option, with even greater determination and greater domestic support to do so, and they would probably then go about it in a way where a second preventive strike would be that much more difficult. So even under the most optimistic scenarios, a successful preventive strike would not solve the problem, by any means, either as regards Iran's nuclear program or its foreign policy more broadly.

So, let me turn to the second option, that of tolerating or acquiescing in some type of an Iranian large-scale enrichment capability, what you might call a "near-nuclear-weapons option." Even if it didn't go any farther than that, it would have consequences and costs. I believe it would increase Iranian assertiveness around the region, which is already quite great, as we've seen over the last half-dozen years. It would prompt other countries to follow suit, as has already been described. It would also leave Israel and Iran on something of a hair-trigger. Imagine if you had the sort of crisis that you had several years ago in Lebanon between Israel and Hezbollah. In a context in which Iran had a near or actual nuclear weapons capability, the potential for instability, and, conceivably, the introduction of nuclear threats or nuclear use into the Middle East could not be dismissed.

More broadly, if Iran developed some sort of a near nuclear capability, we would obviously want to introduce greater sanctions and threats to deter it from crossing redlines. For example, the redline from going to low-enriched uranium to high-enriched uranium. Weaponization would be yet another redline, as would testing.

We also want to think about setting down certain understandings about what would happen if Iran carried out a transfer of materials or capabilities. And obviously there is the question of use.

And on our side, on top of all of that, there are things that we would do to enhance defense in the region. This would involve such

things as missile defense, selective security guarantees to local states, declaratory policy toward Iran about such issues as mobilization of nuclear forces, crossing various redlines, transfer, or use. Essentially, we would be in the business of nuclear management, with all the policy elements that that would introduce into our foreign policy.

Given that, the best course is obviously a diplomatic one that would lead Iran to suspend, or, better yet, give up, its national enrichment program. We would offer political, economic, energy, and strategic incentives for Iran to do so, again along with threats about what would happen if it did not do so. These would, again, be put forward multilaterally.

It is unlikely that we will succeed down this path, given how popular the so-called “right to enrich” is within Iran, and given how far along Iran is.

I believe a negotiation really will need to focus on whether Iran is allowed to have some enrichment activity. Or, to put it another way, on how the right to enrich is defined. What is the scale and what is the degree of transparency? What is the degree of IAEA access? I would simply say our response ought to be calibrated to this so that sanctions relief, such as it is, would be directly linked to what it was Iran agreed to, in terms of scale of a program, state of a program, and transparency of a program.

I would like to make two final points. The first relates to the timing of all of this. I believe the United States now ought to use the time to put together a preferred national position, and then ought to use the next few months to sell it internationally. If there is an effective road to Tehran, it most certainly passes through such places as Moscow, London, Paris, Berlin, and Beijing. And so, it may actually then render moot this question of timing—when we would put something forward vis-a-vis the Iranian election. My own sense is, it will take several months for us to line up the sort of necessary international support that we would need. This is probably just as well. I am uneasy about introducing new proposals in the context of the Iranian election cycle, though I also totally agree with the dangers of thinking that we can somehow play Iranian politics in ways that’ll work in our favor. So, again, my focus would be on lining up international support.

My last point is that whatever it is we line up, we ought to do it, ultimately, publicly. It’s odd for me to say this, because, as someone who’s spent a lot of his career as a diplomat, we like to do things in private, but this ought to be done in public as much as possible. And the reason is twofold. It is important to let the Iranian people see the reasonableness and the attractiveness of what could be theirs if they agreed to play the international game, so to speak, by the rules. And it’s important, also, that the Iranian Government be pressured by the Iranian people to explain why it has sacrificed Iran’s future, why it has compromised what could be Iran’s standard of living, to pursue this nuclear dream. Let the regime have to justify that against the backdrop of inflation that is above 30 percent, against rising unemployment, against the backdrop of low oil prices. It should be made public to let them explain their choice.

Going public has another advantage: It helps here, and it helps around the world. If we can demonstrate that what we are offering Iran is reasonable, I would suggest it will make it less difficult for us to rally the sort of international support we want. If it comes to escalation, whether sanctions or what have you, it's important that we, in a sense, take the high road, that we show that we have passed the "reasonable" test, and that it is Iran that has essentially rejected a fair and reasonable course offered to it.

Thanks you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Haass follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD N. HAASS, PRESIDENT, COUNCIL ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS, NEW YORK, NY

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to testify before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on the subject of Iran and U.S. policy toward Iran.

Iran constitutes one of the most serious and most difficult national security challenges facing the United States. What I plan to do in this statement is offer some judgments about Iran and then put forward several suggestions for U.S. policy.

Thirty years after the Islamic revolution, Iran is one of the most influential local states in the greater Middle East. Its strategic position has benefited enormously from Saddam Hussein's fall from power, the weakening of the Iraqi state, and the coming to power in Baghdad of a Shia-led government. Iraq is no longer able nor is it inclined to offset Iran. In addition, the ouster from power of the Taliban in Afghanistan was a long-time Iranian objective. The rise of political Islam and groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in the Palestinian territories provides Iran with powerful instruments. And Iran was also (at least until fairly recently) the beneficiary of high energy prices. The net result is that Iran is now something of an imperial power, one that defines its interests broadly and seeks to influence a large number and wide range of regional matters.

Iran's political system is *sui generis* and difficult to categorize. It combines elements of both theocratic authoritarianism and democracy. Public opinion matters there, though, and debates take place both within the government and between the government and society. These differences should not be exaggerated. Iran is not about to descend into revolutionary unrest. The United States should jettison the notion of regime change as the centerpiece of its policy toward Iran. The focus should be on modifying Iran's behavior; over time, there is the possibility of meaningful and desirable societal and political evolution, but this is more likely to happen from an Iran that is integrated into the region and the world than from one that is cut off and able to indulge in the most extreme forms of radicalism and nationalism.

Fundamental differences exist between United States and Iranian outlooks and foreign policies. Even a short list of such differences includes attitudes toward Israel, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation in addition to the specific grievances each holds vis-a-vis the past behavior of the other. At the same time, there are areas in which the United States and Iran agree more than they disagree. Afghanistan comes to mind in this regard, as both governments oppose a Taliban return to power and continued opium production. There is also at least some common interest in Iraq, as both the United States and Iran want to avoid Iraq's becoming a failed state.

The notion of talking with the Iranian Government at an official level makes good sense. To do so is not to reward the Iranian Government but rather to judge that ignoring Iran—a policy of neglect—has not weakened the regime or its influence and will not in the future.

In approaching Iran, the United States should resist setting preconditions. In particular, it makes no sense to demand as a precondition what is a potential objective of the interaction. What matters in a negotiation is not where you begin but where you come out. This applies principally but not only to Iran's nuclear activities.

In the same vein, the Obama administration should resist Iranian demands that the United States meet certain preconditions. Exchanges about the distant past and calls for apologies for alleged or real actions are a distraction. The agenda should focus on the present and future. An Iran that insists on such preconditions is not serious about negotiating.

The United States should not engage in linkage, i.e., demanding that progress materialize in one or more areas in order for there to be progress in others. Rather, the goal should be to make progress where it is possible. (There is, for example, no

reason to rule out cooperation in Afghanistan because we cannot agree about Hamas.) That said, it is a fact of life that disagreements in some realms of the relationship will affect what the United States does in reaction to that concern and what it may choose to do overall.

U.S. policy must be thoroughly multilateral. This means working with the IAEA on nuclear matters and coordinating nuclear-related policy—what is sought from Iran, what will be offered to Iran if it meets these requirements, what will be done to Iran if it does not—with the EU, Russia, China, and others who are important trading partners of Iran. It also means consulting with Israel, the Arab States, and Turkey. There should be a multilateral negotiation (on the nuclear issue) and a bilateral negotiation (on all issues, including Afghanistan, Iraq, regional security, terrorism, support for Hamas and Hezbollah, and miscellaneous bilateral concerns as well as the nuclear issue). One requirement for the Obama administration will be to make sure these two tracks are closely coordinated.

Russia is of particular importance. Foreign policy must determine priorities, and gaining Russian cooperation on Iran should be high on any such list. Supporting Russian accession to the WTO, slowing the pace of NATO enlargement, exercising restraint on going ahead with plans for missile defense in Europe, supporting calls for a Russian nuclear fuel bank or Russian participation in any international consortium that would provide fuel for nuclear powerplants—all ought to be on the table.

The United States should avoid institutionalizing a containment policy that would divide the region along Sunni-Shia or Arab-Persian lines. This would likely increase tensions within those countries that have significant Sunni and Shia populations. It would also reinforce the most radical Sunni elements in the Arab world—the same elements that are at the core of groups such as al-Qaeda. And it ignores the potential to involve Iran in efforts where our goals overlap or at least are not in total opposition.

Iran has advanced much farther in its nuclear program and has done so in less time than most experts predicted. The latest reports are that Iran possesses roughly a ton of low-enriched uranium. It would require only several months to adapt Iran's centrifuges so that it could produce highly enriched uranium. The United States and the world would have warning of this action only if it were done at declared facilities and if the IAEA enjoyed sufficient access.

There are three choices when it comes to Iran's nuclear program. One involves military force. Consideration of military options inevitably involves several judgments. The first is what a use of force—a classic preventive attack—might accomplish. Presumably it would destroy a large portion of Iran's nuclear facilities, although just how much is unknown given the uncertainty associated with any military action and the reality that we may not know where all the components of the nuclear program are located.

There is also the question of what a preventive strike would trigger. Iran would likely retaliate against American personnel and interests in Iraq, Afghanistan, and possibly elsewhere. Iran might also take steps to interfere with the production and flow of oil and gas, thereby reducing supplies and driving up prices. Such a development would add to the already severe global economic slowdown. Iran would likely move to reconstitute its nuclear program, but in a manner that made a second preventive attack far more difficult to carry out. An attack would also likely further radicalize Iran; most Iranians would conclude that such an attack would never have been undertaken had Iran possessed a nuclear weapon and been in a position to deter it.

It is possible that the threats of sanctions and military force (as well as the lure of economic and political integration) will persuade Iran to renounce its nuclear program. This is unlikely, though, given the popularity the program enjoys in the country. More likely is an Iranian decision to continue to enrich uranium but not test or build actual weapons. Such a near-nuclear option would put Iran in a position to produce weapons-grade uranium that could be "weaponized" in a matter of months. It is also possible that Iran will decide to cross this line and test and build weapons as India, Pakistan, and North Korea all have. But this is less likely given that it would be inconsistent with Iran's public statements and would run the risk of more significant sanctions, including an enforced denial of refined gasoline exports to Iran, as well as a preventive armed strike on any and all facilities known to be associated with Iran's nuclear program.

Still, even an Iran that "limited" itself to a near-nuclear option would change the strategic landscape. Nevertheless, one alternative to launching or supporting a preventive attack is a policy of living with an Iranian nuclear weapon or with an Iranian program that could produce one or more weapons in a matter of months. Although there is a high probability that Iran could be deterred from using nuclear

weapons, this approach contains significant drawbacks. An Iran with nuclear weapons or an option to build them in short order is likely to be even more assertive throughout the region. A second risk of this “acceptance” approach is that other states in the region (including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey) might be tempted to follow in Iran’s footsteps, a process that would be destabilizing every step of the way. Even if they did not, this situation would place Israel and Iran on something of a nuclear hair-trigger. Mutual assured destruction is for understandable reasons not an attractive notion to a state such as Israel given its small number of large cities, its relatively small population, and the history of the Jewish people.

Managing an Iranian nuclear or near-nuclear capability will bring to the fore a number of decisions, including whether the United States should station or provide missile defense to local states, extend security guarantees to selected states, and issue a clear declaratory policy. Iran must know that any use or transfer of nuclear materials will bring devastating consequences to the country and those who rule it. Iran must also know that it would make itself vulnerable to a preemptive attack if the United States received evidence that Iran was altering the alert status of its nuclear forces. The United States should also consider selected enhancement of Israel’s own nuclear capacities. The overall goal is to bolster deterrence and to increase defense should deterrence ever break down.

Far preferable to either attacking Iran or accepting a nuclear Iran would be persuading Iran to suspend or give up its enrichment effort altogether or, failing either of those outcomes, to accept significant limits on it. In return, some of the current sanctions in place would be suspended. In addition, Iran should be offered assured access to adequate supplies of nuclear fuel for the purpose of producing electricity. Normalization of political ties could be part of the equation. As part of such a negotiation, the United States should be willing to discuss what Iran (as a signatory of the NPT) describes as its “right to enrich.” It may well be necessary to acknowledge this right, provided that Iran accepts both limits on its enrichment program (no HEU) and enhanced safeguards. Such a right must be earned by Iran, not conceded by the United States.

The optimal timing of a new U.S. diplomatic initiative can be debated. The rationale for delay is to reduce the risks that the United States and Iran’s nuclear option will enjoy center stage in the upcoming Iranian election campaign. Such a focus would be unfortunate because it would distract attention away from Iran’s economy (the Achilles heel of the incumbents) and because public debate on the nuclear issue at this time in Iran would likely push all candidates to embrace more nationalist positions. Reaching out now could also allow the incumbents to argue that their radicalism brought the United States to the negotiating table. There is the possibility that the next Iranian Government will be different than (and preferable to) the current one. The problem with delay, however, is that it provides Iran additional time to produce enriched uranium. What is more, “gaming” another country’s politics, and in particular Iran’s given its conspiratorial bent, can be difficult at best and counterproductive at worst. Still, I lean toward waiting until after Iran’s June election before launching a new initiative, but with the caveat that the time be used to develop the substance of a new comprehensive offer that the Europeans, Russians, and Chinese would support. The best road to Tehran runs through Brussels, Moscow, and Beijing. Should this road prove rocky, the dilemma over when to launch a new diplomatic initiative may well become moot as the United States will need the months until June to work to garner international support for a new approach to Tehran.

The basic elements of any policy proposal toward Iran need to be made public. The Iranian Government should have to explain to its own public why it pursues certain foreign policies that incur significant direct and indirect costs to the country.

Public diplomacy will also help pave the way for escalatory steps against Iran if they should be deemed necessary. It is important that the American public, Congress, and the media here, as well as foreign publics and governments, understand the reasonableness of what was offered to Iran and the fact that it was rejected.

Two final points. The current economic crisis is having a mixed effect. On one hand, the fall in world oil prices and Iran’s economic plight increase opportunities for using economic leverage effectively. These conditions also create internal pressures on the Iranian regime. At the same time, there is little or no cushion in the global economy, and a major crisis involving Iran that led to substantially higher oil prices would cause a sharp worsening of the global slowdown. This latter set of concerns constrains U.S. options.

Finally, a successful policy toward Iran will require more than a different policy toward Iran. It will also require a broader foreign policy response, beginning with a serious move to reduce U.S. and global consumption of oil. This is the only way to protect against future price increases that would resume massive flows of dollars

to Iran. A successful Iran policy will also require movement on the Arab-Israeli front. This argues for U.S. efforts to broker an Israel-Syria peace treaty. It also calls for greater efforts to improve prospects for progress between Israelis and Palestinians. This means providing moderates with an argument that moderation pays, something that will entail building up the economy on the West Bank and putting in place an ambitious diplomatic process that holds out real hope of a two-state outcome.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you all very much. Very complicated questions, obviously. Appreciate your testimony enormously.

Let me just begin by asking, right up front: What is the appropriate redline? Is there a redline that needs to be drawn? Obviously, the Bush administration drew some, and we passed by them in sequence. So, the message is one of ambiguity, if not impotence. And the question now to be asked by a new administration, and by us here, Is there a redline? If so, what is it?

Ambassador HAASS. Is that question to me?

The CHAIRMAN. Sure. Ambassador Haass, Ambassador Wisner, and then I'd like—

Ambassador HAASS. Let me just say one thing, Mr. Chairman, that's implicit in your question. Redlines have consequences. When the United States says something is a redline, when the United States says a course of action is unacceptable, those are not words that we ought to use lightly. If we do, we simply devalue the currency, and that will have consequences, not simply vis-a-vis Iran, but vis-a-vis every other thing we do in the world diplomatically.

The CHAIRMAN. I couldn't agree with you more, but let me say, as a preface to the rest of your answer, many countries, ourselves included, have already made many public declarations about the unacceptability of a nuclear weapon in Iran, and that is the current policy that's also been adopted by the sanctions regime and otherwise. So, the question is, Are we prepared to enforce that? And if so, how does one?

Ambassador HAASS. What I would do is avoid anything that would undo that position. There's no reason to invite or give a green light to Iran going down that path. What I would do, though—coming back to something I said before—is have a relationship between Iran's progression down a nuclear path and what it would expect, were it to cross certain thresholds. Right now, what we have is Iran at what you might call an industrial-scale low-enriched threshold. It has crossed that threshold, it reached that threshold.

The CHAIRMAN. Correct.

Ambassador HAASS. And if they stay there and do not roll that back, what I would try to do is negotiate an international package of sanctions that would stay in place, so long as they stayed at that level and did not roll it back. And I would also make clear what would be the incentives for them to step back.

I would then have additional packages of sanctions and other measures that would be introduced were they to go through other potential steps. For example, an even greater scale of enrichment, as Mark laid out, or—

The CHAIRMAN. There are a series of sanctions, which we've talked about here—

Ambassador HAASS. Right.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. That can get much tougher.

Ambassador HAASS. Right, including, for example, when we would try to get a U.N. Security Council resolution that would call for a ban on the export to Iran of refined petroleum, one of the things that Iran's economy, as you know, needs. And a followup to that, almost akin to some of the Iraq resolutions from 1990-91, would be to provide the authority for all necessary means to enforce such a ban on petroleum exports to Iran. So I would be prepared to suggest—

The CHAIRMAN. You'd be prepared to do that, notwithstanding whatever potential impact there might be on oil prices?

Ambassador HAASS. I would think that's the sort of policy review we should go through domestically and that we might want to sell internationally. And, as I say in my written statement, one of the things we've got to do if we're going to down this path with Iran, is, we can't do it in isolation from a serious strategy to try to reduce American use of, and consumption of, oil. To leave ourselves as exposed as we are reduces our ability to do the sort of escalatory measures we're just discussing here.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wisner.

Ambassador WISNER. Senator, I've followed, as you have, our diplomacy now for a number of years, and we have talked throughout about redlines, unacceptability, we've set deadlines, we've—I think, frankly, as we look at the next stage, we should start emphasizing the positive. Richard Haass has outlined many steps that we could take. I've tried to indicate the importance of addressing Iran's security circumstances, of engaging it more generally. Begin to emphasize the positive side of the agenda.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I understand that.

Ambassador WISNER. That does not—

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that.

Ambassador WISNER. That does not mean removing from the table the negative side. But, rather than emphasizing publicly the negative side and then being unable to deliver on it, either in our dealings with the Security Council, notably the Russians and the Chinese, I would prefer to downplay the negative, but be very serious about organizing it to get—

The CHAIRMAN. Well, here's the problem. Here's the problem with that. And it's the problem with our overall policy, it's the problem with the road we've traveled. You know, these folks are smart. People know how to read the tea leaves. You either have consequences or you don't, in foreign policy. And if people believe that you don't, they're going to make a set of judgments, accordingly. It would be my preference, and everybody on this committee's preference, that Iran understand, you know, we're not—you know, regime change isn't on the table, we're not sitting here—you know, we're looking for a way to engage and to find the positive. But, if they continue to try to develop a bomb, which is the judgment most people are making they are doing—

Ambassador WISNER. Well—

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. There's a question whether they're developing the capability or whether they'd then go to the weaponization. And so, that's sort of part of my question. Do we draw a line that we mean something about, and then go out to the international community—because either the arms race of the Mid-

dle East is unacceptable—I mean, Egypt, Saudi Arabia—if they feel threatened and decide this, then the whole thing begins to unravel. So, we have to decide, What is the line at which we are serious, at which the world is prepared to take steps? And the Iranians have to understand that, do they not?

Ambassador WISNER. Iran—I—Senator, you're absolutely right. The redline that I'm suggesting is one we draw internally, but using it to threaten the Iranians—we've seen the consequences—

The CHAIRMAN. Doesn't do a lot, I agree.

Ambassador WISNER [continuing]. Of threat. Doesn't do a lot. That we have our own redline. That we organize our diplomacy to meet that redline, I'm fully in support of. I want to try to change the approach to the problem so we're trying to engage the Iranians, showing there's flexibility in our diplomacy, while internally we are very tough about the provisions—

The CHAIRMAN. What we might do. Fair enough.

So, Mr. Sadjadpour, how do we make certain that, as we engage in that process, that the talking—the delay is not—the process is not misinterpreted, that there is a clarity to what we believe is real, and it's communicated in a way that it isn't a threat, that it's a reality, but not a bullying, if you will, not a sort of, you know, pressure point, it's just a reality, and we reduce the tensions, but they don't misinterpret the fact that we're engaging in the diplomacy as an excuse to then put us in a position where alternatives have been taken away from everybody.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. Well, I think it's a delicate balance, Senator Kerry, because, as I see it, the short-term tactics and the long-term strategy are at loggerheads, in the sense that I think, in the short term, it's imperative that we make it very clear to the Iranians and to President Ahmadinejad that a belligerent noncompromising approach is not going to reap rewards. And what we've challenged them with is greater sanctions, greater political and economic isolation.

The problem, as I see it, is that the hard-liners in Tehran thrive in isolation. I describe them as weeds that only grow in the dark. So isolation is not necessarily a stick to them; in some ways, it's a carrot. And ultimately, our problem with Iran is the character of the Iranian regime. And my concern is that the measures we're taking to send the signal to them that their belligerent approach is not going to reap rewards actually strengthens the individuals we're trying to hurt.

So, I've been doing some research in Dubai, because Dubai is the place—Dubai is the arena where Iran is most effectively circumventing the sanctions regime and allaying its economic isolation. And when I talk to businessmen in Dubai, Iranian businessmen who are going back and forth, and European businessmen, and foreign businessmen who are dealing with Iran, the recommendations they always have are to have more targeted sanctions, targeting senior officials within Tehran, as opposed to broader sanctions which simply strengthen the regime's hold over the economy and are not conducive to economic and political reform.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, my time is up. I want to recognize Senator Lugar. But, as I do, let me just say that I agree completely—I think it was Ambassador Haass who said—you know, I don't

think we should pretend that we have the ability to affect the Iranian elections. We don't. But, I don't think we should give any read of any kind of interpretation, in the next months, that allows anybody to exploit it or play games with it. And I completely believe that we must be organizing the international community's clear understanding of what this line is or isn't, of what we're prepared to do, or not, and then engage in the diplomacy that makes it as attractive and as feasible and as possible to be able to, all of us, move down a different road.

I was struck by the fact—I mean, there is—there really is a positive side to what a relationship could produce, in terms of Afghanistan, Iraq, energy, any number of other issues. And those are much bigger than any of the other kinds of things that have been allowed to define this. So, I hope we'll take advantage of that.

Senator LUGAR.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me just pick up where you left off. One of the positive aspects, although it may be superficial, is that there is a new administration here in the United States. There is a congratulatory letter that has arrived from the President of Iran to President Obama. Some would say that it is not sincere, but, nevertheless, this might be true of communications from leaders of many countries around the world who look for a new policy.

Some of you have suggested that we formulate, in the next few weeks, a new policy, and that we do so publicly. In other words, that the American people have some idea what the arguments are, as they will, listening to our conversation this morning. As people try to pin down what it is we want to do we must remember that are not only selling it to the international community, but also to the American people.

We've been on a different course, at least some Americans have been, starting with the "axis of evil." This policy identified three targets, and Iran was one of them. And the regime-change idea has been out there, and it still may have some supporters that believe we should provide foreign assistance to help various groups within Iran who are democratically inclined to infiltrate the system. This strategy still has supporters and so we continue to have a debate within our own congregation here.

But, let us say that we finally decide what this policy is—and I think, as you said, Dr. Haass, this may not come easily for us, quite apart from our explanation to our allies. Nevertheless let's say we try to sell it to the allies, and we reencounter some of the problems that we have had already seen with Russia and China, but, likewise, with Europeans who have commercial interests and others. It is not an easy sell to any of the above, each of the governments have different agendas.

Meanwhile, we are busy working through the problems of Afghanistan and Pakistan which intersect Iran. And, as some of you have suggested, this will probably require, at minimum, some Americans talking to some Iranians. As we formulate our overall policy, we must determine the best way to communicate with Iranians. How do we reach out to those elements of Iranian society who we believe have some affinity for us. In other words, how do we ensure that our efforts to communicate with people in Iran

produce results. As all of you have said, we want the people of Iran to be watching and monitoring international discussions and negotiations on these matters. Not only do we want our allies and the American people watching how we are attempting to build a comprehensive relationship. An equally important message to the Iranian people is that we here in the United States have differences of opinion but we're trying to resolve those.

Finally, discussions of additional economic sanctions on Iran continue. A wide variety of forms and degrees of sanctions have been suggested. The global economic crisis is making this process harder for all involved. It is difficult to set a baseline for action when the condition of the United States economy in 2009 is unknown as are the economies of Russia, China, or Iran.

Six months ago we could not have imagined what changes the economic crisis would have on foreign policy. The collapse of banking institutions, currencies, and economies has dramatically changed the international landscape. The economies of countries who rely on incomes generated from natural resources have changed markedly. Iran is such a case. As you've pointed out, perhaps the Ayatollah is unaffected by the economy but the rest of the country is feeling the effects. Conceivably, the GDP of Iran may sink almost interminably, and you would still have those preaching that you're on the right trail. If we had communicated better and been more transparent in what we are doing, the Iranian people would have a better understanding of the rationale and implications of sanctions and they would appreciate how and why we take each step. The sanctions will have more consequence and greater affect on Iranian society if we better understood the Iranian economy.

For the moment, we have a superficial idea of the affects of sanctions on politics of the country, the rural people who may or may not have been very well served, quite apart from students and so forth. But, we've really not concentrated, in an academic way, on the effects of sanctions in Iran. And we probably ought to have that as a part of our argument with the international community, because other economies are going to be affected by either turning on or off various situations.

But, the overall effect of this could be positive, even if there are not decisive steps taken. In other words, the fact that we are engaging with the American people, the world community, and hopefully Iranians themselves on how nuclear strategy ought to proceed in Iran. The goal would be to help Iranians to come to grips with the costs and tradeoffs of the nuclear program and options that would permit their stated objectives while reassuring the international community of their stated peaceful intentions.

Before we adopt a new policy, we're going to have to convince our constituents and the international community that our proposal is the most appropriate and most likely to succeed and your suggestions here today have helped this immeasurably.

Let me just ask if any of you have any reactions to this overall summary that we've tried to give.

Yes, Richard.

Ambassador HAASS. As I listened to both you and Senator Kerry, and to my colleagues here, I increasingly think, for the United

States, diplomatically, the single biggest question in the nuclear realm that will meet us in the next few months is whether we are prepared to accept a limited Iranian right to enrich. If we basically insist that they have zero enrichment, I believe there is a negligible chance we can ever get them to accept that, or that we could ever set in motion a debate in that country where, no matter what was offered to them, it would be a desirable deal. And I also believe a zero-enrichment insistence would make it very difficult for us to build the requisite degree of multilateral international support for the kind of sanctions escalation we're thinking of.

So, my own position is that we ought to think very hard about defining an acceptable, limited Iranian enrichment capability. We would do that and say, "If you limit enrichment to this, and if you accept this degree of transparency and inspection, we can then offer you the following incentives. We may still keep in place some limited sanctions, because our preference would be that you go down to zero. And if you don't accept this"—going back to Senator Kerry's question, which is also really in yours—"as you go down certain paths, the mix of incentives and sanctions would change in a way that would not be to your liking." But, I really do believe some willingness to accept the so-called—or, quote/unquote "right to enrich" is essential, both for winning the argument in Iran, that what we're offering to them is worth their taking, and for winning the argument in places like Moscow and Beijing.

And I'm sad to say I think we've reached that point. We can argue whether, 7 or 8 years ago, we might have been able to head off ever reaching that point. But, I believe that is where foreign policy is now.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Sadjadpour.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I would second Dr. Haass's comments, and I would say that—I would argue we need not concede that right before the negotiations take place, but certainly, as part of an end game, I think it would be something more palatable not only to Iran but also to our allies.

I would make a couple of points. One is that when the United States prosecuted the Iraq war, we pursued very strong resolutions at the U.N., and therefore, we achieved a very weak coalition. And I think our strategy with regards to Iran needs to be the opposite, in the sense that we pursue, initially, somewhat weaker resolutions in order to achieve a broader airtight coalition. Because I think what the Iranian leadership fears is not an amplification of existing United States sanctions or European sanctions. What they fear is the day when not even the Russians or the Chinese or the Indians are returning their phone calls. This is what I think will concentrate Iranian minds the most.

And the second point, as you mentioned, Senator Lugar, is the contraction of oil prices. I once did a study charting the price of oil from 1979 to the present, and charting major Iranian foreign policy milestones. And I can tell you, it's not coincidental that, in 1997, when then-President Khatami first called for a dialog of civilizations, oil was at \$12 a barrel, and when President Ahmadinejad first denied the Holocaust, oil was at \$70 a barrel. So, I think we will—this will be our best weapon in continuing forward with Iran,

this contraction of oil prices, coupled with a very airtight multilateral approach.

Senator LUGAR. Well, my time is expired, but I appreciate almost a description of metrics of trying to determine how much enrichment is possible, or how we're progressing. On the other hand, what—how the screws are turned, what they do with regard to this, whether it be the oil prices, the international community, and what have you. But, it's very helpful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Lugar.

Senator CASEY.

Senator CASEY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. And I appreciate this opportunity for us to examine, with these experts, the national security challenge that we face with regard to Iran, and also to explore the options. So, thank you for making this opportunity possible. It's a critically important issue.

I wanted to try to get to about three areas, if possible. The first one, I wanted to direct Mr. Fitzpatrick's attention to just a very brief background that I'll provide, and then also your testimony on some of the technical aspects of this. For those of us who are not scientists I want to try to achieve some clarity.

One of the problems with the question of where Iran is with its nuclear capability, both where they are and what the timeframe is—it's almost like we get a continual stream of pronouncements about where they are and what the timeframe is—after a while, there's kind of a blizzard of facts and seemingly inconsistent assertions about it. Even this weekend, we saw Secretary Gates saying something, and Admiral Mullen saying something, which seemed to be, if you read it carefully—you can read them together and may not have an inconsistency, but the way they're sometimes articulated can be confusing.

I'm looking at two descriptions here. One is yours. I'll start with a general summary, here, of something that isn't in your testimony, but I think is consistent, the annual threat assessment presented—or submitted, I should say—to the Senate Committee on Intelligence, saying that the key components that Iran had to successfully complete in order to obtain a nuclear weapon are the following. One, production of fissile material; we know that. Two, effective means for delivery, for weapon delivery. And three, design, weaponization, and testing of the warhead.

And I noticed in your testimony—first of all, it's helpful when you make statements in your testimony like “having a stockpile of enriched uranium is not the same thing as having a bomb.” In the public press, sometimes they get confused. But, I was interested, on the top of page three of your testimony, where you say, “For a weapon, the low-enriched uranium first would have to be further enriched to 90 percent or more.” And then you go on from there.

Could you answer the question in two ways? No. 1, what are the specific steps the Iranian regime would have to take to reach the point where they could actually launch a nuclear weapon? In other words, the ultimate threat. And No. 2, what is the timeframe that you think—within which that could happen? Because we hear all kinds of timeframes—2010 to 2015, some say 2013. Just like the

question itself, the timeframe has become kind of a blizzard of assertions.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you, Mr. Senator. I'll try to answer the question directly.

The first step, Iran would have to enrich further to 90 percent. As I said, most of the work has already been done by the time you get to low enriched, but it'll take several weeks to get to highly enriched. They could do that either at Natanz, in which case they would probably have to reconfigure the cascades, or, if they had some hidden facility somewhere, which we don't know whether they do or not, but maybe, in a worst-case scenario, one might think that they might, so—

Senator CASEY. So, that would be step one.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. That would be step one, further enriching to HEU.

Step two would be to take this highly enriched gasified uranium, reconvert it to metal form, and fashion the metal into a pit for a weapon. And then, associated with that, build the weapon itself, the various firing mechanisms and so forth. And all of that kind of work is unclassified, and I said in my testimony, an estimate—you know, an estimate might be at least 6 months or more.

A third step would be, then, to—

Senator CASEY. Six months for that step.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. For that—at least 6 months for that step of weaponization.

Then the third step would be to have some means of delivering the weapon. The means that is usually talked about is a missile, and Iran is—been working steadily on missiles, and there is evidence that they were trying to design a nose cone that could accommodate a weapon. And that's probably the most likely, but one could also deliver a nuclear weapon in the back of a truck, and, you know, it—so, the—but—so, the delivery, it's a little bit hard to answer that question of how long to build a missile and how far they are in being able to mate the two.

I think the reason that the intelligence community has given this wide range of 2010–15 is because the 2010 is the worst case. If they were to take the uranium they have now, further enrich it to HEU, takes several months, and then at least 6 months to weaponize it, and then maybe they already have a missile they could use. So, that's the 2010. But, each of those—there's a lot of big "ifs" there, and therefore, it might take longer.

And one should stress, just having one weapon doesn't really—you know, that's a huge risk for them to take; to try to further enrich it, the inspectors would know. Just to get one weapon? It doesn't seem logical that they would do that. So, probably they would want to be able to—you know, if you're going to take that risk, you'd have more.

Senator CASEY. Thank you for that. And I wanted to pursue this subject a little further, but I'll move on, because I know we have limited time.

I wanted to move to the question of the relationship between this threat—and I'm directing my question to Ambassador Wisner and also Mr. Haass—the question of this threat, that we're here to discuss, and the posture that Iran has to Israel, which is obviously

extremely adverse and hostile. And I guess the first question I have is with regard to what's happening right now. Is it your belief that Iran is actively undermining the peace process in the Middle East right now? And if that is your belief, what's the evidence of that?

Ambassador WISNER. Senator, the obvious facts are on the table. The Iranians do not recognize the state of Israel. We have, in the President of Iran, a Holocaust denier. Iran has been a principal source of advice, finance arms to Hezbollah. Iran is deeply involved with Hamas. Many aspects that you look at with regard to Iranian behavior that are distinctly hostile to the state of Israel.

But, I don't think—and I think your question goes—whether that's the whole story. I believe the Iranians are ambivalent about Israel. They are realists at heart. They do not believe that Israel can be eliminated. But they are also determined to make the point that Israel cannot be a launching pad, for us or anyone else, in a threat to them.

I spent one evening, some years ago, with former Iranian President, and said, "Don't you realize, Mr. President, how dangerous it is, the armaments you're giving to Hezbollah? The militarization of southern Lebanon, the undertakings with Hamas, it can blow Israel at war in Lebanon, it spreads to Syria, we're involved, you're involved." And Katami looked back at me, and he said, "Got to remember, we plan our defense along external lines. We're trying to keep you from putting your hand around our throat."

Now, I don't ask that you take such a statement at face value, but to try to look at the world that Iran sees from inside of Iran leads me back to the point that Senator Lugar made, and that is that it is vitally important we address—we sit down and begin, as part of our dialog, an exploration of what is security to Iran and how to deal with the issue of security.

I am enormously taken by what Richard Haass said, Senator Lugar, in talking about finding a way to accept a degree of Iranian enrichment, but I warn Richard, all of us, that if you go too quickly to that conclusion, without rooting it in a security understanding with the Iranians, you may have cast aside a vitally useful way of settling the nuclear matter, because you won't have dealt with confidence, you won't have dealt with the core issues of Iranian security.

So, I like what Richard proposed to you, but I would say, "Careful, don't play that card too quickly."

Senator CASEY. I think my time's—

Ambassador WISNER. Get your hands around the security question. Forgive me for—

Senator CASEY. That's OK. My time is up, but I wanted to, maybe, take 1 minute, if it's possible, Mr. Haass, just to respond, as well.

Ambassador HAASS. I don't believe Iran can stop what's probably the most promising possibility for a diplomatic breakthrough between Israel and its neighbors, which is Israel and Syria. The Syrian Government is in a position, if it wants—and there's some reason to believe it might—to enter into serious negotiations with Israel that could end the state of war between those two countries. Iran wouldn't like it, but I do not believe Iran is in a position to

prevent it. Of all the situations in the Middle East, it's the one that's most ripe for diplomatic progress. Iran has many more cards to play, obviously, vis-a-vis the Palestinians; but there, I'd simply say Iran cannot prevent the United States or the European Union or anybody else from building up Palestinian policing capabilities or improving the economic situation on the West Bank. Nor can Iran prevent President Obama from giving a major speech in which he articulates what the United States believes a fair and reasonable Middle East settlement might look like, which, in turn, would give the moderates in the Palestinian world a powerful argument for explaining to their own people why moderation works and the guys with the guns will get them nowhere.

So, yes, Iran has tried and will continue to try to frustrate the Middle East peace process, but they do not have a veto over what can happen.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Sadjadpour, I know you want to respond quickly, so why don't you do that, if you'd just keep it tight—

Mr. SADJADPOUR. OK, I just wanted to briefly recount an anecdote—a brief anecdote—that will give you an idea of Iran's vision for the Middle East. I once relayed to a senior Iranian diplomat a question which a Shiite Lebanese friend of mine once asked me. He said, "Think of all the money Iran has spent over the years on Hezbollah since Hezbollah's inception in 1982. We can say upward of \$2 billion. And, likewise, Hamas. And think of how many Shiite Lebanese Iran could have educated to become doctors and lawyers and engineers instead of arming Hezbollah. And likewise, the Palestinians. And how much better off would those communities be, vis-a-vis Israel?" And his response to me was very telling. He said, "What good would that have done for Iran?" I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Do you think, had we educated them to become doctors and lawyers and engineers, they're going to come back to South Lebanon and Gaza and fight Israel? No. They will remain doctors and lawyers and engineers."

And my point is that Iran is to the Middle East, in a way, what Rush Limbaugh is to the United States, in the sense that they know they can be the champions of the alienated and the dispossessed, but they know they can't be the champions of the upwardly mobile. And I think the problem with our strategy and Israel's strategy in the Middle East the last several years, if you look at the last three wars which have been prosecuted in the Middle East, the Iraq war, the 2006 Lebanon war, and the recent war in Gaza, is that we've created—we've increased the ranks of the alienated and the dispossessed, and we've created more fertile ground for Iran's ideology throughout the region.

Senator CASEY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We're going to resist the temptation to talk about foreign policy and Rush Limbaugh. [Laughter.]

Senator Risch.

Senator RISCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I am a member of the Intelligence Committee, and I need to state, for the record, a disclaimer, and that is, I want to make certain that—and state, in certain terms, that no question I

ask should be interpreted to suggest that I'm referring to any facts other than those facts that are widely known and are in the public domain. Any suggestion to the contrary would be inaccurate.

Having said that, I'm struck this morning by how parochial this discussion has been. And I've listened to the—each of you describe the problem, and I'm—I can't—until I walked in to this hearing this morning, I thought the only two people on the face of this planet that believed that Israel would allow Iran to completely develop a nuclear weapon were the President and the Ayatollah in Iran. But, I'm struck that perhaps there's other people that think otherwise.

If you look at the history of this, what Israel has done in the past, particularly in Iraq, and second, most recently, in Syria, and think that that points to anything other than the fact that Israel is not going to allow this to happen, regardless of what we do, we say, we hold negotiations, or we impose sanctions, it seems to me to be incredibly naive. Certainly, their intelligence, one would have to assume, is as good as our intelligence. And although I agree that a military strike will not completely take out all of the nuclear capability, it will certainly destroy links in the chain that will put them off for probably years. It just seems to me that this discussion needs to be—needs to include, in a lot more focused fashion, what's going to happen when Israel does what I think it inevitably will do to keep the Iranians from completing a nuclear weapon.

And, Mr. Wisner, I'd like your response to that.

Ambassador WISNER. Happy to give it.

I have followed, as you have, the signals the Israelis have sent, from military exercises to political statements by governments that have been, in the past, and will, in the future be, in Israel. And any Iranian who doesn't take very seriously the Israeli threat to an Iranian nuclear capability is misjudging his nation's most vital interests. I have no doubt about that.

But, where I depart, Senator, from the thrust of your remarks, if I understand you correctly, is, I think an Israel nuclear response—an Israeli military response to Iranian nuclear development is going to put all of us in a really, really very difficult situation.

First of all, it is not clear to me that we will know, and Israel will know, when Iran has crossed this redline. There will be a tremendous amount of ambiguity; ambiguity that Israel might accept—it would take a—not take a chance, but it would put us in terrific harm's way.

Second, I do not believe that you can knock out the Iranian nuclear capability, as my colleagues have asserted. The nuclear technologies have been indigenized in Iran. The ability to come back very quickly would be on the table.

Third, I believe we will pay the price for an Israeli strike, just as much as Israel will, and that our other objectives will be compromised.

Therefore, I would like to think that the right approach for the United States, looking at the anxieties of Israel, is to look at Israel's defenses, to talk to Israel in terms of security guarantees, to be able to dialogue with Israel on your overall diplomacy, to open up other ways to consider a response to the Iranian problem

that is not purely military. Otherwise, I suggest we will fail to stop the nuclear development in Iran, and we will further endanger the peace of the region and Israel's own most vital security interests.

Senator RISCH. Well, Ambassador Wisner, I don't disagree with you, and I'm certainly not—I hope you didn't think that I was suggesting that that was a good thing. I think, however, that, given what we know, it seems to me a reasonable conclusion that that's where Israel will wind up on this. If you look at the threat that they felt from, most recently, Syria, and, before that, some years before that, Iraq, it wasn't nearly the threat that they feel right now with Iran breathing down their neck.

And, with all due respect regarding your anticipation that Iran would come back very quickly, I would say that I don't think, necessarily, the Israelis share that conclusion. And, as a result of all that, I think that we need to, as we analyze this—and I think all of you are thinking about this—we need to factor in that whole scenario, because we're tremendously parochial. We're sitting here talking, "Well, we'll do this, we'll do that. If we do this, the Iranians will do that." We've got to factor in—if you just put yourself, for a moment, in the shoes of the leaders of Israel, they look at this entirely differently than we look at it. And having said that, I think that needs to be factored in.

Ambassador Haass, I know you've been wanting to get your two cents' worth in.

Ambassador HAASS. Yes, let me suggest why I don't share your certainty about Israeli behavior. One reason is, if you look at some historic Israeli comments about Iran's nuclear program, Iran has already reached the point that some Israelis said would be a red-line and would be unacceptable, which is to have an industrial-strength enrichment program. So, all I'm saying is, the Israeli debate is somewhat fluid.

Second of all, Israel, in the past, has made calculations that we never thought possible. I was involved in one of those incidents, as you will recall, which was in 1991, when Iraqi missiles struck Israel, and Israel, at the behest of the United States, did not exercise its obvious right of self-defense. So, again, all I'm saying is, I would not assume that Israel has made up its mind on these things.

I also believe, as Ambassador Wisner said, that some of the things the United States offers to Israel could affect Israeli calculations, in the way of defense, possible contributions to Israel's own capabilities, and so forth.

Last, though, I think it's a healthy thing that we don't know the answer to the question you've raised, and nor do the Iranians. And if I were an Iranian political leader or planner, I would not assume or rule out in any way that Israel might attack. There's a decent possibility they could, which is one of the reasons I said in my statement that I believe the most likely scenario is one where Iran stops short of a point that would dramatically increase the possibility of the scenario you suggest. If Iran goes to HEU, to highly enriched uranium, if Iran tests, if it weaponizes, it increases, to an unknown degree, the probability of the scenario you are suggesting. I believe, as a result, it is far more likely that Iran will decide, for the foreseeable future, to park, if you'll pardon the untechnical

word, its capability in this realm at the level of large-scale low enrichment, in part because of the uncertainty about how Israel and the United States might react.

Senator RISCH. Well, I would just conclude with—I think that anyone who thinks that Israel hasn't thought this through and has an idea of where they're going to go with this, I think would be very naive. And, again, I want to urge, in the strongest terms, that everyone should factor this into our ideas of where we are going with this, because, again, you know, admittedly, Israel has not acted, to this point. But, you remember, they took 4,000 rockets from Hamas before they acted, recently, in Gaza. And so, they are a little bit like us, in that they will—they'll wait and do what they have to do. But, this—as we know—we've watched the Europeans negotiate with Iran for, what, 5 years, 5½ years; and, through all those negotiations, and through all of this, all they do is put one foot in front of the other, getting toward where I think, and even Ambassador Wisner has concluded, that they will eventually wind up, regardless of what we do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Risch. Very important line of questioning. Appreciate it.

Senator Kaufman.

Senator KAUFMAN. Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing. I think it's incredibly worthwhile.

And I think—to direct my—comments by Senator Risch, I think the panel's talked about missed opportunities, and I think several of you mentioned that the time is now to operate. And I think that Senator Risch's comments are one more indication that we have to move quickly on this thing, and that we have to—we have to move carefully, and we have to be careful about what we do. But, we have used up all of our get-out-of-jail-free cards.

Ambassador Haass, you said that you thought life's a matter of priorities, something I definitely agree with. And you said that, therefore, we should be thinking about missile defense in our relations with the Russians, and how that may be something we trade. Do you have any suggestions, does anyone on the panel have suggestions, things that might work the same way with China?

Ambassador HAASS. Well, I'd say two things about China. Well, maybe three. One is, China has a different relationship with Iran, as you know, than does Russia, and has a different set of calculations. Another, which is good for us, is that China has no interest in the price of oil going up, as a large importer, which gives China a stake in energy security and the peaceful working-out of this issue. And going back to the previous comments, if China is concerned that certain scenarios could lead to uses of force, it will concentrate some minds in Beijing.

Second, China does not want to be the odd man out on the U.N. Security Council. We have reason to believe we can get the British and French to line up with us on most approaches. It's why I put such an emphasis, as do others, on Russia. I believe that if we can get Russia to line up, Beijing will be extremely reluctant to be the odd man out.

Third, the United States and China have a developed and, shall we say, integrated relationship. And China, right now, is suffering

significantly as a result of the American economic slowdown. Its unemployment rates are going up and they've had to essentially stop the movement or resettlement of people from rural areas into urban ones. They are obviously going to worry about the political consequences of a lack of economic growth, given that their last quarter had no economic growth. All of those things argue against Iran scenarios that could place greater stress on the world economy.

For all of those reasons, reinforcing the arguments you've heard today, we ought to take a serious diplomatic effort at bringing the Chinese on board. I'm not suggesting it's going to be easy in any way. And as Frank Wisner said, we may have to dilute what it is we want. But I believe it is well within the realm of possibility, particularly if the Obama administration makes clear to the Chinese that this is a priority for the United States, and China's behavior on this issue will be at the head of the list of how this administration will come to judge China and its willingness to take our vital national interests into account.

Senator KAUFMAN. Ambassador Wisner.

Ambassador WISNER. I like what Richard just said. I'd just add a footnote, and that is, the Chinese, in coming to the decision that he described, will arrive at it very painfully. The Chinese have, deeply rooted in their view, a predisposition against interference in other nations' activities. They are very hard to move, and they are very hard to break loose from the Russians. I'm thinking of many examples in recent years it has proved to be the case.

Rationally, Richard's put his finger on why there is a reason and an opening, but I come together with him in saying that if there is a chance of moving Chinese diplomacy, it will have to be a very high American priority and be clearly understood by the Chinese to matter to the Obama administration.

Senator KAUFMAN. And it's also interesting how often around this town different people want different things to be our No. 1 priority with China. I mean, we've got so many things to talk about China. But, I think you make a good point on this being one of our very highest priorities.

Mr. Sadjadpour, on Meet the Press, Secretary Gates said he's been searching, for 30 years, for the elusive Iranian moderate. I know you know a lot about what's going on in Iran. What are the forces of moderation in Iran? And do you think they'll have any impact on the June elections?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I'm sorry?

Senator KAUFMAN. On the elections. What are the forces for moderation in Iran? And do you think they'll have any impact on the elections?

Mr. SADJADPOUR. I would describe the internal debate in Iran as somewhat akin to the debate we have in the United States between textualist and constructionist scholars of the Constitution, in the sense that you have many Iranians, hard-liners, who believe that anti-Americanism is central to the identity of the Islamic Republic, and one of the core pillars of the revolution. And if you abandon this anti-Americanism, then what's left of the revolution and what's left of the Islamic Republic?

And I think you have plenty more moderates—and I would say, the vast majority of the population—who understand that it's time to move on, that policies that came into play in 1979 are not constructive in 2009. And—I would put, again, the vast majority of the Iranian people in that category—and, based on my time in Tehran, the vast majority of the political elite.

At the moment, I think the hard-liners very much benefit from this antagonistic relationship with the United States. And that's why they want to continue to propagate it.

Senator KAUFMAN. Yes.

Mr. SADJADPOUR. And, you know, it allows them a pretext—this threat perception from the United States—it allows them a pretext to clamp down on the population, narrow the accepted realm of political discourse, and rig elections.

But I do think, like Ambassador Wisner, having had private conversations with former President Khatami, that he is in the constructionist camp, in the sense that he knows very well that Iran will never fulfill its enormous potential as long as its relationship with the United States remains adversarial. And I think we should make it clear to the Iranians that, when and if they are ready to change their approach, there's a standing offer from the United States that we will be ready to reciprocate.

Senator KAUFMAN. Mr. Fitzpatrick, you talked about the domino effect with Iran's nuclear program, and I noticed in your testimony you said 15 countries in the Middle East. I never realized that that many have announced new or revived plans to explore civilian nuclear energy in 2006. What do you think the regional governments think about Iran's nuclear program?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I think most of them are very concerned about it. In the gulf region, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, they see it as a potential direct threat, because they've had, some of them, territorial disputes, they have sectorial disputes, Iran has, in the past, interfered in their domestic politics. Other countries a little bit further afield feel that if Iran had a nuclear weapons capability, their own status would necessarily decline. Egypt used to be the center of the Muslim world, and they see the financial center moving to the gulf, they see the political center increasingly being encroached upon by Iran, and they would worry about that status. Turkey is in a kind of a similar position.

All of the—several of these countries, though, are willing to forgo an enrichment and reprocessing capability. And I think it's a very positive momentum that the United States and its policies can try to promote this positive momentum. It'll be very difficult to get Egypt to accept any constraints, as long as Israel doesn't accept any constraints. And that's why a lot of these issues are intertwined. But, there is some positive momentum in the region.

Senator KAUFMAN. Great.

Ambassador Haass, you talked about how important public opinion was. Is there anything the United States should be doing, or could be doing, to influence public opinion in Iran, about nuclear, especially?

Ambassador HAASS. The best thing we can do, Senator, is to come up with an offer that demonstrates to the Iranian man or woman on the street how his or her standard of living would go up

significantly if Iran accepted the sort of limits the international community wants to place on its nuclear program and that this could be done consistent with Iran's pride, its national honor. Or, to put it another way, that their government is following a course, if they continue down the nuclear path, that is sacrificing the quality of life for every Iranian. Iran is not a democracy, but there is a degree of open debate. There are democratic elements, if you will, in Iranian society.

Future Iranian leaders will have to deal with this sort of pressure from below. Our public diplomacy ought to be the exact replica of our private diplomacy. So, we shouldn't think of public diplomacy as something differently there. In this case, it ought to be exactly the same as what we say, and I believe that will help us with Iran. And, as I said before, it will help us here at home, and it'll help us in Moscow, and, coming back to your previous question, in Beijing.

Senator KAUFMAN. OK. Thank you all.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Kaufman.

Let me just say to the panel, we have a vote that's gone off. Senator Menendez will have his full time for questioning and still be able to get over to make the vote. And I will leave it to him to adjourn the hearing.

But, I just want to thank you, on behalf of the committee. This has been enormously instructive, very, very helpful. There are many other questions. We are going to leave the record open, and we would like to impose on you to submit some questions for the record, if we can.

The CHAIRMAN. And this is a conversation that will continue. We have several days of hearings, some classified. And subsequently, we'd like to engage as we sort of think about the road forward.

But, this has been enormously helpful today. We thank you.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for your testimony. I was grabbing at some of it in my office, read some of it along the way. And I have two sets of questions.

One is, there are news reports that came out today that President Obama sent a letter to Russia's President last month suggesting that he would back off deploying a new missile defense system in Eastern Europe if Moscow would help stop Iran from developing the long-range weapons that we are concerned about. And that letter supposedly, further on, said the United States would not need to proceed with such an interceptor system, which, of course, the Russians have vigorously opposed, if Iran halted any efforts to build nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles.

Do you think that that is a sufficient enough incentive to get the Russians to be engaged in a manner in which we would like to see? And it's open to anyone who wants to—

Ambassador HAASS. I would describe it as necessary, but possibly not sufficient. There's a logic to it, in any event. I think it was Secretary Gates who also noted the linkage, that if the missile system is largely designed to counter an Iranian missile that might be carrying a nuclear warhead, if we can get Russian help to place a

limit on the Iranian nuclear program, the rationale for the missile program obviously fades significantly. But, I don't think we could get what we want from the Russians on this, in isolation from the rest of the United States-Russian relationship.

And that, then, returns to something your former colleague, Vice President Biden, said when he talked about resetting the button on the United States-Russian relationship. The administration will have to think about how hard we criticize the Russians over what's going on domestically there, whether we're willing to support WTO accession, the question of how we handle, not just Georgia, but Georgian and Ukrainian desires to become members of NATO, and so forth.

We are going to have to look at this against all those factors. Also, there is the question of United States-Russian nuclear negotiations. It's going to have to be done in the fullness of the relationship. But, the short answer is, if we were to make clear the linkage with the missile deployment proposal, and if it were done in the context of an overall improvement in United States-Russian relations, yes, then I think this is manageable.

Senator MENENDEZ. Anyone have a different view?

Ambassador WISNER. I don't have a different view, but I would only add one more circle of complexity, and that is, it's not just about the United States and Russia; we're going to have to be extremely careful who we deal with the Czechs and the Poles. And the way we presented the matter to NATO, there's going to have to be an acceptance that the linkage we're talking about, in fact, affects—is an effective linkage.

So, I think we've only seen a—my sense is that we've seen just the tip of the iceberg of what is actually in play, and we've got to learn a lot more before we can make a judgment.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, it sounds like a much broader agenda in order to get them engaged in the way in which we want. And the clock is ticking.

I've heard all of you basically testify, please let me know if I'm wrong, that we should be more vigorously engaging Iran. And the "P5+1" process committed themselves to a dual-track process. But, I have not received a sense of what they view that dual process—the elements of that dual process, moving forward. Do you all have ideas about that? At the same time as we're talking, the clock is also ticking, and so, what do you think that dual process being, or should it be in the process, both on the negotiation-engagement side, as well as on the sanctions side?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you, Senator.

I think everyone engaged in the P5 process is dedicated to the proposition that Iran should be presented these clear choices of either cooperating with the world and receiving cooperation in exchange, or pursuing the path they are on, of obtaining a nuclear weapons capability, and the isolation, politically and economically, that goes with that.

And most of the other partners are willing to see some strengthening of both sides of this choice, but there are differences of opinion in the other nations.

Sometimes there is a view, in this country, that the Europeans are united in thinking that we should only pursue engagement,

and not strengthen the disincentives part of it. And the Europeans are quite different on that.

I work and live in London. The British and French are probably to the right of the United States right now. They're a little worried, frankly, about U.S. policy of unconditional engagement. I think they will follow United States leadership, but they have some concerns, because their policy had been that if Iran broke the deal with them of suspending its enrichment program, that there wouldn't be negotiations on the nuclear front. So, we're going to have to work closely with the British and French if the United States embarks on a different policy.

Senator MENENDEZ. Any other views? Any views on what the sanction side of this should be as we pursue the negotiation side?

Ambassador HAASS. Well, I think what's come out of the conversation this morning, Senator, is a general view that those sanctions and incentives ought to be linked fairly directly to Iranian behavior in this area.

You could almost think of it as a sliding scale, that if they continue down the path of, say, continued low enrichment, there would be one mix of sanctions; and if they were to cross certain other thresholds, they would then be met with an escalation of sanctions. Conversely, if they dialed back their capabilities, placed real limits on the scale of enrichment and accepted intrusive inspections that gave the world confidence, the mix of benefits and sanctions would turn more in the favor of the benefits. So, it's almost useful to think of it as multiple redlines, almost a spectrum, and then a rheostat of approaches that blend desanctioning and sanctioning.

Such an approach has the advantage of having at least the potential to garner some international support, which is essential. It might also play well in Iran, because it makes more stark the consequences of policy choices by the Iranian Government, and we want them to have to think about those consequences and put them on the defensive and force them to think about, in advance, the difficulty of defending the choices we don't want them to make.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, thank you. I'm going to have to go to this vote, but I appreciate your collective testimony and your answers to my question.

And with that, seeing no other members, the committee is adjourned. Thank you for your testimony.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW YORK

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this critical hearing. I want to also recognize our distinguished panelists for joining us today to share their expertise and recommendations and look forward to hearing their testimony.

Iran's stated interest in nuclear technology is one of the most serious national security challenges facing the United States and the entire international community.

Over the past 8 years, we have seen the growth in Iran's power and influence in the region, threatening our Nation's interests in the Middle East.

Iran is a chief supporter of terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, supplying them with both weapons and financial assistance to carry out their attacks.

As we heard from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, ADM Michael Mullen, who I had the honor to meet with last week, Iran now has enough uranium that if fur-

ther purified, could be used to build an atomic bomb—a process that could be completed in just months.

This alarming news is compounded by the fact that Iran's Government is isolated and its economy vulnerable—making them even more dangerous and unpredictable. Iran's nuclear quest is an existential threat to our ally Israel, the Middle East as a whole, and to world stability.

To address this growing concern, the United States has begun a process of engagement with Iran. There is good reason to believe that there are elements in Iran who recognize that it is in Iran's best interest to engage.

Effective engagement now is essential.

Additionally, while offering positive incentives to Iran, the United States must continue to strengthen international pressure to make it clear to Iran that its failure to work with the international community will have significant repercussions. We must continue to work with Russia and China by using diplomatic solutions to influence Iran favorably.

These additional measures should include targeted sanctions on the Revolutionary Guard, which this body urged the Secretary of State to include on the list of recognized terrorist groups; a measure I supported.

We should also seek increased limitations on Iran's importation of refined petroleum products. Despite being a major oil producer, Iran imports close to half its gasoline. I support the efforts of our colleagues in the House who recently sent a letter to Secretary of Energy Chu requesting that he reevaluate a recent federal contract awarded to the Swiss firm that is Iran's leading supplier of gasoline.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing and I look forward to receiving the testimony of our distinguished panelists.

RESPONSES OF MARK FITZPATRICK TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD FROM
SENATOR JOHN F. KERRY

Question #1. The February 2009 report by the IAEA Director General found that Iran, at its Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant, is reportedly feeding uranium into nearly 4,000 centrifuges (of the "IR-1" design) and has about 1,600 more installed in reserve. The latter figure is a significant increase from the November report. The report also noted a 10-machine cascade of "IR-2" centrifuges and a single "IR-3" centrifuge.

- Is there anything about the publicly available evidence, such as the amount of uranium that has been fed into the centrifuges, that provides information about whether Iran is getting better at operating its centrifuges?

Answer. In 2008, Iran rapidly improved the operation of its centrifuge cascades, moving from 20 percent to 85 percent of claimed capacity (based on the UF₆ feed rate). The most recent IAEA report indicated a feed rate of 80 percent. It is not clear whether the feed rate is based solely on technical capabilities or whether political calculations are also a factor. However, the 80–85 percent feed rate does suggest that Iran has overcome many of the technical difficulties it previously was experiencing operating centrifuge cascades. Based on the reported quantities of low-enriched uranium produced, Iran seems to be maintaining a fairly steady rate of production with its operating centrifuge machines. The ability to maintain steady production is an important indicator of capability. At the current scale, however, this consideration is only applicable to enrichment for weapons purposes. If the main intent was the long-term production of low-enriched uranium for power reactor fuel, Iran would not have rushed to install nearly 6,000 centrifuges before testing smaller cascades for longer sustained periods.

- What does Iran's development of two other designs of centrifuges tell us about Iranian understanding of centrifuge technology?

Answer. Iran's development of more advanced centrifuge designs suggests a growing familiarization with this enrichment technology. After having received a head start from the A.Q. Khan network, which supplied it with both P-1 and P-2 centrifuge technology, Iran apparently has been able to modify this technology further. Efforts to produce advanced centrifuges appear to be still at the R&D stage. It is not clear whether Iran has all the material and components it would need to be able to produce large numbers of these newer centrifuges. If there is such a bottleneck, strict export controls and sanctions enforcement can help to keep Iran's program limited.

Question #2. The February 2009 report of the IAEA Director General stated that the IAEA had not made any progress on the remaining issues "which give rise to

concerns about possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme." To make such progress, the report stated, "Iran needs to provide substantive information, and access to relevant documentation, locations and individuals, in connection with all of the outstanding issues."

- Do you think the current Iranian regime will ever be able to fully answer the questions about Iran's past efforts that the IAEA has posed?

Answer. I see no reason why Iran would not be able to fully answer questions about its past nuclear activities, but whether it will ever summon the political will to do so is another matter, since it almost surely would mean admission of nuclear weapons development work. Such a full admission would probably require a strategic change on the part of Iran to reject such work in the future. Obtaining a full admission of past nuclear weapons work may also require a decision on the part of the rest of the international community not to apply punitive sanctions based on such an admission—a "get out of jail free" card, as it were. This would be worth considering as long as it came with full disclosure by Iran and verification measures that provided confidence that its current nuclear activities were entirely for peaceful means.

- What steps should the United States take or avoid to get satisfactory answers to these questions?

Answer. The United States should continue to strongly support the IAEA's investigation of Iran's past activities. Given the administration's stated intent to engage in "tough, direct" diplomacy with Iran, as reflected in President Obama's Nohruz message, the context in which Iran must consider its stance at the IAEA may be evolving. Of course, the United States and others should not lose sight of the fact that the IAEA has a verification task in Iran regardless of external political dynamics. That job is central not only to the Iran issue, but to the continued viability of the nuclear nonproliferation regime.

Question #3. You stated in your testimony that publicly available information suggests that, if Iran decided to build the core of a nuclear weapon, it might take Iran at least 6 months to convert highly enriched uranium hexafluoride gas to metal and fashion a weapon from it, in addition to the several weeks it would take to enrich a stockpile of low-enriched uranium to highly enriched levels. You also say that Iran could not take the additional enrichment and conversion steps you talked about to ready its low-enriched uranium stockpile for a bomb without tipping off international inspectors. How quickly would inspectors find out, and therefore, how much warning time might the world have?

Answer. The IAEA conducts about 12 unannounced inspections a year at Natanz, on a random basis. Although not all such random visits include access to the cascade halls, the IAEA's surveillance cameras can detect movements in and out of halls. In addition, the feed and withdrawal areas are under containment and surveillance and checked monthly. The safeguards measures at Natanz are not ideal; of particular importance they do not include remote monitoring. At the current scale of operations, however, the combination of unannounced inspections and surveillance cameras means that if Iran were to try to divert nuclear material or to produce HEU at Natanz, it would probably have no longer than a month and probably less than that before the international community was alerted through the IAEA.

Question. Do you believe that Iran has decided to develop a latent deterrent by producing fissile material, even if it does not proceed with weaponization or nuclear testing?

Answer. I have seen no evidence to suggest that Iran has made a decision to produce weapons-usable fissile material. There is no need for it to make such a decision for the time being, however, especially since it could not produce any more than the bare minimum of highly enriched uranium necessary for one implosion-type weapon. That said, there is no plausible logic to the enrichment program at Natanz unless it includes a desire to create at least the option to produce fissile material for weapons.

Question #4. How relevant is any assessment of Iran's intentions, given the relatively small amount of time it would take to convert a program for ostensibly peaceful civilian uses into a bomb program?

Answer. In the case of Iran, capabilities are the most critical factor in assessing worst-case possibilities, but intentions are not irrelevant. If capabilities were all that mattered, nations might have reason to be concerned by the small number of months it might take countries such as Japan and the Netherlands to produce a

nuclear weapon. But these nations have not given any reason for concern about their intentions. In the case of Iran, there are ample reasons to be concerned.

Question #5. In your testimony, you mentioned “strong evidence” of past nuclear weapons development activities, including, for instance, evidence of foreign assistance with experiments on a detonator suitable for an implosion-type bomb. What unclassified information is available regarding this foreign help you describe in your testimony?

Answer. The IAEA’s September 15, 2008, Iran report (GOV/2008/28) said the Agency had obtained information indicating that “experimentation in connection with symmetrical initiation of a hemispherical high explosive charge suitable for an implosion type nuclear device . . . may have involved the assistance of foreign expertise.” An October 10, 2008, New York Times article by Elaine Sciolino (“Nuclear Aid by Russian to Iranians Suspected”) reported that the IAEA was investigating whether a Russian scientist, acting on his own, helped Iran conduct complex experiments on how to detonate a nuclear weapon. My own interviews have confirmed that the IAEA has strong evidence that a former U.S.S.R. nuclear weapons expert was working in Iran.

Question #6. The Iranians were caught red-handed in mid-2002 running a secret nuclear program in violation of their obligations to the IAEA and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). Yet they managed to string out negotiations with the international community to the point where today they are operating an enrichment facility buried under about 75 feet of concrete to protect against possible air strikes.

- What impact does the Iranian case have on the NPT regime? How will it affect the ability to restrain the ambitions of other countries tempted to pursue a nuclear weapons capability under the guise of a peaceful civilian nuclear program?

Answer. The NPT has withstood several challenges over the years and remains a strong cornerstone of the global nonproliferation regime. If the NPT system is unable to prevent Iran from producing nuclear weapons, however, this failure may call into question the very purpose and utility of the treaty, and it could trigger a proliferation turning point. This is not to say that other nations would necessarily pursue a nuclear weapons capability under the guise of a peaceful civilian nuclear program. Even if the sanctions that are levied against Iran do not ultimately persuade it to change its course, these sanctions, if strong enough, can serve a secondary function as a disincentive to others, if combined with other policy tools, including the strengthening of defense commitments, that reduce proliferation motivations.

- How can we strengthen the NPT regime so that countries like Iran are discouraged from following North Korea’s example by withdrawing from the NPT, barring IAEA inspectors, and reconfiguring their technologies to produce weapons-grade material?

Answer. The North Korean case underscores the need to strengthen the NPT Article X withdrawal clause. I believe that, at a minimum, the Security Council should adopt a resolution stating that an NPT party that withdraws from the treaty remains responsible for safeguards violations committed while it was a party to the treaty. The first priority, however, should be on swift measures to stem proliferation programs as soon as a problem is discovered. The U.N. Security Council does not necessarily need to wait to take up a proliferation issue until there is a formal IAEA finding of noncompliance.

- Pierre Goldschmidt, a former Deputy Director General of the IAEA, has proposed that the Security Council pass a resolution establishing automatic actions that would take place if a country were to withdraw from the NPT, and making clear that if such a country is in violation of the NPT when it withdraws, its obligations under the treaty would continue and all nuclear materials previously provided to it would be withdrawn. How useful would such a Security Council resolution be, and how difficult would it be to pass it?

Answer. Dr. Goldschmidt’s proposal has strong merit, in that it would establish a new legal standard ensuring that states cannot easily escape their NPT obligations and pay no legal penalty for violations. Adopting such a resolution would be difficult, however. The members of the Security Council have generally resisted resolutions that would provide for automatic responses to future situations.

Question #7. In your testimony you portrayed the nuclear program envisioned by the United Arab Emirates as a model for the region. The United States and the United Arab Emirates have signed an agreement for cooperation on civil nuclear energy, though it has not yet entered into force. That agreement is built on the UAE

carrying out a pledge to forgo domestic uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing facilities.

- Should the United States cooperate with the UAE civilian program, even with the concerns about their ability to prevent sensitive technologies from being diverted to other destinations?

Answer. A nuclear cooperation agreement that locks in the UAE's commitment not to pursue enrichment or reprocessing technologies would be a useful precedent and would set a very clear contrast with the case of Iran. I believe it would be inadvisable to hold up the proposed 123 agreement with the UAE on other grounds, such as the past history of Dubai as a hub for the Khan nuclear black market network. The UAE is implementing new export control laws put in place at Washington's recommendation. In order to crack down on Iranian front companies, the UAE in 2008 sharply reduced the number of business licenses and work visas to Iranian citizens. Nevertheless, UAE export controls still need to be tightened, particularly in the emirate of Dubai, in order to stem the flow of illicit transshipments to Iran in contravention of U.N. sanctions. One way to assist the UAE in this effort would be to give the U.N.-Iran sanctions monitoring committee real responsibility and a hands-on role by stationing customs experts in Dubai.

- Should we offer a similar deal—cooperation on civil nuclear matters in exchange for a civilian nuclear industry that did not include enrichment and reprocessing facilities—to other countries in the region?

Answer. If states agree not to pursue enrichment and reprocessing and agree to full nuclear transparency through good-faith implementation of the IAEA Additional Protocol, then there is no reason on proliferation grounds not to enter into nuclear cooperation agreements that codify such agreements. Indeed, it would be ideal if such conditions became the "gold standard" and were encouraged by other nuclear exporting states as well.

